

Polybius: The Histories

Translated by W. R. Paton

From BOOK ONE

HAD previous chroniclers neglected to speak in praise of History in general, it might perhaps have been necessary for me to recommend everyone to choose for study and welcome such treatises as the present, since there is no more ready corrective of conduct than knowledge of the past. But all historians, one may say without exception, and in no half-hearted manner, but making this the beginning and end of their labor, have impressed on us that the soundest education and training for a life of active politics is the study of History, and that the surest and indeed the only method of learning how to bear bravely the vicissitudes of fortune, is to recall the calamities of others. Evidently therefore one, and least of all myself, would think it his duty at this day to repeat what has been so well and so often said. For the very element of unexpectedness in the events I have chosen as my theme will be sufficient to challenge and incite young and old alike to peruse these pages. For who is so worthless or indolent as not to wish to know by what means and under what system of polity the Romans in less than fifty-three years have succeeded in subjecting nearly the whole inhabited world to their sole government—a thing unique in history? Or who again is there so passionately devoted to other spectacles or studies as to regard anything as of greater moment than the acquisition of this knowledge?

2. How striking and grand is the spectacle presented by the period with which I purpose to deal, will be most clearly apparent if we set beside and compare with the Roman dominion the most famous empires of the past, those which have formed the chief theme of historians. Those worthy of being thus set beside it and compared are these. The Persians for a certain period possessed a great rule and dominion, but so often as they ventured to overstep the boundaries of Asia they imperiled not only the security of this empire, but their

own existence. The Lacedaemonians, after having for many years disputed the hegemony of Greece, at length attained it but to hold it uncontested for scarce twelve years. The Macedonian rule in Europe extended but from the Adriatic to the Danube, which would appear a quite insignificant portion of the continent. Subsequently, by overthrowing the Persian empire they became supreme in Asia also. But though their empire was now regarded as the greatest in extent and power that had ever existed, they left the larger part of the inhabited world as yet outside it. For they never even made a single attempt on Sicily, Sardinia, or Africa, and the most warlike nations of Western Europe were, to speak the simple truth, unknown to them. But the Romans have subjected to their rule not portions, but nearly the whole of the world, and possess an empire which is not only immeasurably greater than any which preceded it, but need not fear rivalry in the future. In the course of this work it will become more clearly intelligible by what steps this power was acquired, and it will also be seen how many and how great advantages accrue to the student from the systematic treatment of history.

3. The date from which I propose to begin is the 140th Olympiad [220-216 BCE], and the events are the following: (1) in Greece the so-called Social War, the first waged against the Aetolians by the Achaeans in league with and under the leadership of Philip of Macedon, the son of Demetrius and father of Perseus, (2) in Asia the war for Coele-Syria between Antiochus and Ptolemy Philopator, (3) in Italy, Africa, and the adjacent regions, the war between Rome and Carthage, usually known as the Hannibalic War. These events immediately succeed those related at the end of the work of Aratus of Sicyon. Previously the doings of the world had been, so to say, dispersed, as they were held together by no unity of initiative, results, or locality; but ever since this date history has been an organic

whole, and the affairs of Italy and Africa have been inter-linked with those of Greece and Asia, all leading up to one end. And this is my reason for beginning where I do. For it was owing to their defeat of the Carthaginians in the Hannibalic War that the Romans, feeling that the chief and most essential step in their scheme of universal aggression had now been taken, were first emboldened to reach out their hands to grasp the rest and to cross with an army to Greece and Asia.

Now were we Greeks well acquainted with the two states which disputed the empire of the world, it would not perhaps have been necessary for me to deal at all with their previous history, or to narrate what purpose guided them, and on what sources of strength they relied, in entering upon such a vast undertaking. But as neither the former power nor the earlier history of Rome and Carthage is familiar to most of us, I thought it necessary to prefix this Book and the next to the actual history, in order that no one after becoming engrossed in the narrative may find himself at a loss, and ask by what counsel and trusting to what power and resources the Romans embarked on that enterprise which has made them lords over our land and our seas, but that from these Books and the preliminary sketch in them it may be clear to readers that they had quite adequate grounds for conceiving the ambition of a world-empire and adequate means for achieving their purpose. 4. For what gives my work its peculiar quality, and what is most remarkable in the present age, is this. Fortune having guided almost all the affairs of the world in one direction and having forced them to incline towards one and the same end, a historian should bring before his readers under one synoptical view the operations by which she has accomplished her general purpose. Indeed it was this chiefly that invited and encouraged me to undertake my task; and secondarily the fact that none of my contemporaries have undertaken to write a general history, in which case I should have been much less eager to take this in hand. As it is, I observe that while several modern writers deal with particular wars and certain matters connected with them, no one, as far as I am

aware, has even attempted to inquire critically when and whence the general and comprehensive scheme of events originated and how it led up to the end. I therefore thought it quite necessary not to leave unnoticed or allow to pass into oblivion this the finest and most beneficent of the performances of Fortune. For though she is ever producing something new and ever playing a part in the lives of men, she has not in a single instance ever accomplished such a work, ever achieved such a triumph, as in our own times. We can no more hope to perceive this from histories dealing with particular events than to get at once a notion of the form of the whole world, its disposition and order, by visiting, each in turn, the most famous cities, or indeed by looking at separate plans of each: a result by no means likely. He indeed who believes that by studying isolated histories he can acquire a fairly just view of history as a whole, is, as it seems to me, much in the case of one, who, after having looked at the dis severed limbs of an animal once alive and beautiful, fancies he has been as good as an eyewitness of the creature itself in all its action and grace. For could anyone put the creature together on the spot, restoring its form and the comeliness of life, and then show it to the same man, I think he would quickly avow that he was formerly very far away from the truth and more like one in a dream. For we can get some idea of a whole from a part, but never knowledge or exact opinion. Special histories therefore contribute very little to the knowledge of the whole and conviction of its truth. It is only indeed by study of the interconnection of all the particulars, their resemblances and differences, that we are enabled at least to make a general survey, and thus derive both benefit and pleasure from history.

5. I shall adopt as the starting-point of this book the first occasion on which the Romans crossed the sea from Italy. This follows immediately on the close of Timaeus' History and took place in the 129th Olympiad [264-261 BCE]. Thus we must first state how and when the Romans established their position in Italy, and what prompted them afterwards to

cross to Sicily, the first country outside Italy where they set foot. The actual cause of their crossing must be stated without comment; for if I were to seek the cause of the cause and so on, my whole work would have no clear starting-point and principle. The starting-point must be an era generally agreed upon and recognized, and one self-apparent from the events, even if this involves my going back a little in point of date and giving a summary of intervening occurrences. For if readers are ignorant or indeed in any doubt as to what are the facts from which the work opens, it is impossible that what follows should meet with acceptance or credence; but once we produce in them a general agreement on this point they will give ear to all the subsequent narrative.

6. It was then the nineteenth year after the battle of Aegospotami and the sixteenth before that of Leuctra, the year in which the Spartans made the peace known as that of Antalcidas with the King of Persia, that in which also Dionysius the Elder, after defeating the Italian Greeks in the battle at the river Elleporos, was besieging Rhegium, and that in which the Gauls, after taking Rome itself by assault, occupied the whole of that city except the Capitol [387-386 BCE]. The Romans, after making a truce on conditions satisfactory to the Gauls and being thus contrary to their expectation reinstated in their home and as it were now started on the road of aggrandizement, continued in the following years to wage war on their neighbors. After subduing all the Latins by their valor and the fortune of war they fought first against the Etruscans, then against the Celts, and next against the Samnites, whose territory was conterminous with that of the Latins on the East and North. After some time the Tarentines, fearing the consequences of their insolence to the Roman envoys, begged for the intervention of Pyrrhus. (This was in the year [280 BCE] preceding the expedition of those Gauls who met with the reverse at Delphi and then crossed to Asia.) The Romans had ere this reduced the Etruscans and Samnites and had vanquished the Italian Celts in many battles, and they now for the first time attacked the rest of Italy not as if it were a

foreign country, but as if it rightfully belonged to them. Their struggle with the Samnites and Celts had made them veritable masters in the art of war, and after bravely supporting this war with Pyrrhus and finally expelling himself and his army from Italy [274 BCE], they continued to fight with and subdue those who had sided with him. When, with extraordinary good fortune, they had reduced all these peoples and had made all the inhabitants of Italy their subjects excepting the Celts, they undertook the siege of Rhegium now held by certain of their compatriots.

7. For very much the same fortune had befallen the two cities on the Straits, Messene and Rhegium. Certain Campanians serving under Agathocles had long cast covetous eyes on the beauty and prosperity of Messene; and not long before the events I am speaking of they availed themselves of the first opportunity to capture it by treachery. After being admitted as friends and occupying the city, they first expelled or massacred the citizens and took possession of the wives and families of their unhappy victims, just as chance assigned them at the time of the outrage. They next divided among themselves the land and all other property. Having thus possessed themselves so quickly and easily of a fine city and territory, they were not long in finding imitators of their exploit. For the people of Rhegium, when Pyrrhus crossed to Italy, dreading an attack by him and fearing also the Carthaginians who commanded the sea, begged from the Romans a garrison and support. The force which was sent, four thousand in number and under the command of Decius, a Campanian, kept the city and their faith for some time, but at length, anxious to rival the Mamertines and with their co-operation, played the people of Rhegium false, and eagerly coveting a city so favorably situated and containing so much private wealth, expelled or massacred the citizens and possessed themselves of the city in the same manner as the Campanians had done. The Romans were highly displeased, yet could do nothing at the time, as they were occupied with the wars I have already mentioned. But when they had a free hand they shut up the

culprits in the city and proceeded to lay siege to it as I have stated above. When Rhegium fell, most of the besieged were slain in the actual assault, having defended themselves desperately, as they knew what awaited them, but more than three hundred were captured. When they were sent to Rome [271 BCE], the Consuls had them all conducted to the forum and there, according to the Roman custom, scourged and beheaded; their object being to recover as far as possible by this punishment their reputation for good faith with the allies. The city and territory of Rhegium they at once restored to the citizens.

8. The Mamertines (for this was the name adopted by the Campanians after their seizure of Messene), as long as they enjoyed the alliance of the Romans who had occupied Rhegium, not only remained in secure possession of their own city and territory but caused no little trouble to the Carthaginians and Syracusans about the adjacent territories, levying tribute from many parts of Sicily. When, however, they were deprived of this support, the captors of Rhegium being now closely invested, they were at once in their turn driven to take refuge in their city by the Syracusans owing to the following causes. Not many years before the Syracusan army had quarreled with those in the city. They were then posted near Mergane and appointed two magistrates chosen from their own body, Artemidorus and Hiero, who was subsequently king of Syracuse [275 BCE]. He was still quite young but naturally qualified to be a ruler and statesman of a kind. Having accepted the command, he gained admittance to the city through certain relatives, and after overpoAvering the opposite party, administered affairs with such mildness and magnanimity that the Syracusans, though by no means inclined to approve camp elections, on this occasion unanimously accepted him as their general. From his first measures it was evident at once to all capable of judging that his ambition was not limited to a mere command.

9. For observing that the Syracusans, every time they dispatch their forces on an

expedition accompanied by their supreme magistrates, begin quarreling among themselves and introducing continual changes, and knowing that Leptines had a wider circle of dependents and enjoyed more credit than any other burgher and had an especially high name among the common people, he allied himself with him by marriage, so that whenever he had to take the field himself he might leave him behind as a sort of reserve force. He married, then, the daughter of this Leptines, and finding that the veteran mercenaries were disaffected and turbulent, he marched out in force professedly against the foreigners who had occupied Messene. He met the enemy near Centuripa and offered battle near the river Cyamo-sorus. He held back the citizen cavalry and infantry at a distance under his personal command as if he meant to attack on another side, but advancing the mercenaries he allowed them all to be cut up by the Carapanians. During their rout he himself retired safely to Syracuse with the citizens. Having thus efficiently accomplished his purpose and purged the army of its turbulent and seditious element, he himself enlisted a considerable number of mercenaries and henceforth continued to rule in safety. Observing that the Mamertines, owing to their success, were behaving in a bold and reckless manner, he efficiently armed and trained the urban levies and leading them out engaged the enemy [208 BCE] in the Mylaean plain near the river Longanus, and inflicted a severe defeat on them, capturing their leaders. This put an end to the audacity of the Mamertines, and on his return to Syracuse he was with one voice proclaimed king by all the allies.

10. The Mamertines had previously, as I above narrated, lost their support from Rhegium and had now suffered complete disaster at home for the reasons I have just stated. Some of them appealed to the Carthaginians, proposing to put themselves and the citadel into their hands, while others sent an embassy to Rome, offering to surrender the city and begging for assistance as a kindred people. The Romans were long at a loss, the succor demanded being so obviously unjustifiable. For they had just inflicted on their own fellow-citizens the

highest penalty for their treachery to the people of Rhegium, and now to try to help the Mamertines, who had been guilty of like offence not only at Messene but at Rhegium also, was a piece of injustice very difficult to excuse. But fully aware as they were of this, they yet saw that the Carthaginians had not only reduced Libya to subjection, but a great part of Spain, besides, and that they were also in possession of all the islands in the Sardinian and Tyrrhenian Seas. They were therefore in great apprehension lest, if they also became masters of Sicily, they would be most troublesome and dangerous neighbors, hemming them in on all sides and threatening every part of Italy. That they would soon be supreme in Sicily, if the Mamertines were not helped, was evident; for once Messene had fallen into their hands, they would shortly subdue Syracuse also, as they were absolute lords of almost all the rest of Sicily. The Romans, foreseeing this and viewing it as a necessity for themselves not to abandon Messene and thus allow the Carthaginians as it were to build a bridge over to Italy, debated the matter for long, and, even at the end, the Senate did not sanction the proposal for the reason given above, considering that the objection on the score of inconsistency was equal in weight to the advantage to be derived from intervention. The commons however, worn out as they were by the recent wars and in need of any and every kind of restorative, listened readily to the military commanders, who, besides giving the reasons above stated for the general advantageousness of the war, pointed out the great benefit in the way of plunder which each and every one would evidently derive from it. They were therefore in favor of consenting; and when the measure had been passed by the people they appointed to the command one of the Consuls, Appius Claudius, who was ordered to cross to Messene [204 BCE]. The Mamertines, partly by menace and partly by stratagem, dislodged the Carthaginian commander, who was already established in the citadel, and then invited Appius to enter, placing the city in his hands. The Carthaginians crucified their general, thinking him guilty of a lack both of judgment and of courage in abandoning the

citadel. Acting for themselves they stationed their fleet in the neighborhood of Cape Pelorias, and with their land forces pressed Messene close in the direction of Sunes. Hiero now, thinking that present circumstances were favorable for expelling from Sicily entirely the foreigners who occupied Messene, made an alliance with the Carthaginians, and quitting Syracuse with his army marched towards that city. Pitching his camp near the Chalcidian mountain on the side opposite to the Carthaginians he cut off this means of exit from the city as well. Appius, the Roman consul, at the same time succeeded at great risk in crossing the Straits by night and entering the city. Finding that the enemy had strictly invested Messene on all sides and regarding it as both inglorious and perilous for himself to be besieged, as they commanded both land and sea, he at first tried to negotiate with both, desiring to deliver the Mamertines from the war. But when neither paid any attention to him, he decided perforce to risk an engagement and in the first place to attack the Syracusans. Leading out his forces he drew them up in order of battle, the king of Syracuse readily accepting the challenge. After a prolonged struggle Appius was victorious and drove the whole hostile force back to their camp. After despoiling the dead he returned to Messene. Hiero, divining the final issue of the whole conflict, retreated in haste after nightfall to Syracuse. 12. On the following day Appius, learning of his retirement and encouraged thereby, decided not to delay but to attack the Carthaginians. He ordered his troops to be in readiness early and sallied forth at break of day. Engaging the enemy he slew many of them and compelled the rest to retreat in disorder to the neighboring cities. Having raised the siege by these successes, he advanced fearlessly, devastating the territory of the Syracusans and of their allies, one disputing the open country with him. Finally he sat down before Syracuse and commenced to besiege it.

Such then was the occasion and motive of this the first crossing of the Romans from Italy with an armed force, an event which I take to be the most natural starting-point of this whole

work. I have therefore made it my serious base, but went also somewhat further back in order to leave no possible obscurity in my statements of general causes. To follow out this previous history—how and when the Romans after the disaster to Rome itself began their progress to better fortunes, and again how and when after conquering Italy they entered on the path of foreign enterprise—seems to me necessary for anyone who hopes to gain a proper general survey of their present supremacy. My readers need not therefore be surprised if, in the further course of this work, I occasionally give them in addition some of the earlier history of the most famous states; for I shall do so in order to establish such a fundamental view as will make it clear in the sequel starting from what origins and how and when they severally reached their present position. This is exactly what I have just done about the Romans.

From BOOK SIX

I. from the Preface

I am aware that some will wonder why I have deferred until the present occasion my account of the Roman constitution, thus being obliged to interrupt the due course of my narrative. Now, that I have always regarded this account as one of the essential parts of my whole design, I have, I am sure, made evident in numerous passages and chiefly in the prefatory remarks dealing with the fundamental principles of this history, where I said that the best and most valuable result I aim at is that readers of my work may gain a knowledge how it was and by virtue of what peculiar political institutions that in less than in fifty-three years nearly the whole world was overcome and fell under the single dominion of Rome, a thing the like of which had never happened before. Having made up my mind to deal with the matter, I found no occasion more suitable than the present for turning my attention to the constitution and testing the truth of what I am about to say on the subject. For just as those who pronounce in private on the characters of bad or good men, do not, when they really resolve to put their opinion to the test, choose for investigation those periods of their life which they passed in

composure and repose, but seasons when they were afflicted by adversity or blessed with success, deeming the sole test of a perfect man to be the power of bearing high-mindedly and bravely the most complete reverses of fortune, so it should be in our judgment of states. Therefore, as I could not see any greater or more violent change in the fortunes of the Romans than this which has happened in our own times, I reserved my account of the constitution for the present occasion. [. . .]

What chiefly attracts and chiefly benefits students of history is just this — the study of causes and the consequent power of choosing what is best in each case. Now the chief cause of success or the reverse in all matters is the form of a state's constitution; for springing from this, as from a fountain-head, all designs and plans of action not only originate, but reach their consummation.

II. On the Forms of States

3. In the case of those Greek states which have often risen to greatness and have often experienced a complete change of fortune, it is an easy matter both to describe their past and to pronounce as to their future. For there is no difficulty in reporting the known facts, and it is not hard to foretell the future by inference from the past. But about the Roman state it is neither at all easy to explain the present situation owing to the complicated character of the constitution, nor to foretell the future owing to our ignorance of the peculiar features of public and private life at Rome in the past. Particular attention and study are therefore required if one wishes to attain a clear general view of the distinctive qualities of their constitution.

Most of those whose object it has been to instruct us methodically concerning such matters, distinguish three kinds of constitutions, which they call kingship, aristocracy, and democracy. Now we should, I think, be quite justified in asking them to enlighten us as to whether they represent these three to be the sole varieties or rather to be the best; for in either case my opinion is that they are wrong. For it is evident that we must

regard as the best constitution a combination of all these three varieties, since we have had proof of this not only theoretically but by actual experience, Lycurgus having been the first to draw up a constitution — that of Sparta — on this principle. Nor on the other hand can we admit that these are the only three varieties; for we have witnessed monarchical and tyrannical governments, which while they differ very widely from kingship, yet bear a certain resemblance to it, this being the reason why monarchs in general falsely assume and use, as far as they can, the regal title. There have also been several oligarchical constitutions which seem to bear some likeness to aristocratic ones, though the divergence is, generally, as wide as possible. The same holds good about democracies.

4. The truth of what I say is evident from the following considerations. It is by no means every monarchy which we can call straight off a kingship, but only that which is voluntarily accepted by the subjects and where they are governed rather by an appeal to their reason than by fear and force. Nor again can we style every oligarchy an aristocracy, but only that where the government is in the hands of a selected body of the justest and wisest men. Similarly that is no true democracy in which the whole crowd of citizens is free to do whatever they wish or purpose, but when, in a community where it is traditional and customary to reverence the gods, to honor our parents, to respect our elders, and to obey the laws, the will of the greater number prevails, this is to be called a democracy. We should therefore assert that there are six kinds of governments, the three above mentioned which are in everyone's mouth and the three which are naturally allied to them, I mean monarchy, oligarchy, and mob-rule. Now the first of these to come into being is monarchy, its growth being natural and unaided; and next arises kingship derived from monarchy by the aid of art and by the correction of defects. Monarchy first changes into its vicious allied form, tyranny; and next, the abolishment of both gives birth to aristocracy. Aristocracy by its very nature degenerates into oligarchy; and when the commons inflamed by anger take

vengeance on this government for its unjust rule, democracy comes into being; and in due course the license and lawlessness of this form of government produces mob-rule to complete the series. The truth of what I have just said will be quite clear to anyone who pays due attention to such beginnings, origins, and changes as are in each case natural. For he alone who has seen how each form naturally arises and develops, will be able to see when, how, and where the growth, perfection, change, and end of each are likely to occur again. And it is to the Roman constitution above all that this method, I think, may be successfully applied, since from the outset its formation and growth have been due to natural causes.

5. Perhaps this theory of the natural transformations into each other of the different forms of government is more elaborately set forth by Plato and certain other philosophers; but as the arguments are subtle and are stated at great length, they are beyond the reach of all but a few. I therefore will attempt to give a short summary of the theory, as far as I consider it to apply to the actual history of facts and to appeal to the common intelligence of mankind. For if there appear to be certain omissions in my general exposition of it, the detailed discussion which follows will afford the reader ample compensation for any difficulties now left unsolved.

What then are the beginnings I speak of and what is the first origin of political societies? When owing to floods, famines, failure of crops or other such causes there occurs such a destruction of the human race as tradition tells us has more than once happened, and as we must believe will often happen again, all arts and crafts perishing at the same time, then in the course of time, when springing from the survivors as from seeds men have again increased in numbers and just like other animals form herds — it being a matter of course that they too should herd together with those of their kind owing to their natural weakness — it is a necessary consequence that the man who excels in bodily strength and in courage will lead and rule over the rest. We observe and should regard as a most genuine

work of nature this very phenomenon in the case of the other animals which act purely by instinct and among whom the strongest are always indisputably the masters —I speak of bulls, boars, cocks, and the like. It is probable then that at the beginning men lived thus, herding together like animals and following the lead of the strongest and bravest, the ruler's strength being here the sole limit to his power and the name we should give his rule being monarchy.

6. But when in time feelings of sociability and companionship begin to grow in such gatherings of men, than kingship has struck root; and the notions of goodness, justice, and their opposites begin to arise in men. The manner in which these notions come into being is as follows. Men being all naturally inclined to sexual intercourse, and the consequence of this being the birth of children, whenever one of those who have been reared does not on growing up show gratitude to those who reared him or defend them, but on the contrary takes to speaking ill of them or ill treating them, it is evident that he will displease and offend those who have been familiar with his parents and have witnessed the care and pains they spent on attending to and feeding their children. For seeing that men are distinguished from the other animals by possessing the faculty of reason, it is obviously improbable that such a difference of conduct should escape them, as it escapes the other animals: they will notice the thing and be displeased at what is going on, looking to the future and reflecting that they may all meet with the same treatment. Again when a man who has been helped or succored when in danger by another does not show gratitude to his preserver, but even goes to the length of attempting to do him injury, it is clear that those who become aware of it will naturally be displeased and offended by such conduct, sharing the resentment of their injured neighbor and imagining themselves in the same situation. From all this there arises in everyone a notion of the meaning and theory of duty, which is the beginning and end of justice. Similarly, again, when any man is foremost in defending his fellows from

danger, and braves and awaits the onslaught of the most powerful beasts, it is natural that he should receive marks of favor and honor from the people, while the man who acts in the opposite manner will meet with reprobation and dislike. From this again some idea of what is base and what is noble and of what constitutes the difference is likely to arise among the people; and noble conduct will be admired and imitated because it is advantageous, while base conduct will be avoided. Now when the leading and most powerful man among the people always throws the weight of his authority on the side of the notions on such matters which generally prevail, and when in the opinion of his subjects he apportions rewards and penalties according to desert, they yield obedience to him no longer because they fear his force, but rather because their judgment approves him; and they join in maintaining his rule even if he is quite enfeebled by age, defending him with one consent and battling against those who conspire to overthrow his rule. Thus by insensible degrees the monarch becomes a king, ferocity and force having yielded the supremacy to reason.

7. Thus is formed natural among men the first notion of goodness and justice, and their opposites; this is the beginning and birth of true kingship. For the people maintain the supreme power not only in the hands of these men themselves, but in those of their descendants, from the conviction that those born from and reared by such men will also have principles like to theirs. And if they ever are displeased with the descendants, they now choose their kings and rulers no longer for their bodily strength and brute courage, but for the excellency of their judgment and reasoning powers, as they have gained experience from actual facts of the difference between the one class of qualities and the other. In old times, then, those who had once been chosen to the royal office continued to hold it until they grew old, fortifying and enclosing fine strongholds with walls and acquiring lands, in the one case for the sake of the security of their subjects and in the other to provide them with abundance of the necessities of life. And

while pursuing these aims, they were exempt from all vituperation or jealousy, as neither in their dress nor in their food did they make any great distinction, they lived very much like everyone else, not keeping apart from the people. But when they received the office by hereditary succession and found their safety now provided for, and more than sufficient provision of food, they gave way to their appetites owing to this superabundance, and came to think that the rulers must be distinguished from their subjects by a peculiar dress, that there should be a peculiar luxury and variety in the dressing and serving of their viands, and that they should meet with no denial in the pursuit of their amours, however lawless. These habits having given rise in the one case to envy and offence and in the other to an outburst of hatred and passionate resentment, the kingship changed into a tyranny; the first steps towards its overthrow were taken by the subjects, and conspiracies began to be formed. These conspiracies were not the work of the worst men, but of the noblest, most high-spirited, and most courageous, because such men are least able to brook the insolence of princes.

8. The people now having got leaders, would combined with them against the ruling powers for the reasons I stated above; kingship and monarchy would be utterly abolished, and in their place aristocracy would begin to grow. For the commons, as if bound to pay at once their debt of gratitude to the abolishers of monarchy, would make them their leaders and entrust their destinies to them. At first these chiefs gladly assumed this charge and regarded nothing as of greater importance than the common interest, administering the private and public affairs of the people with paternal solicitude. But here again when children inherited this position of authority from their fathers, having no experience of misfortune and none at all of civil equality and liberty of speech, and having been brought up from the cradle amid the evidences of the power and high position of their fathers, they abandoned themselves some to greed of gain and unscrupulous money-making, others to indulgence in wine and the convivial excess

which accompanies it, and others again to the violation of women and the rape of boys; and thus converting the aristocracy into an oligarchy aroused in the people feelings similar to those of which I just spoke, and in consequence met with the same disastrous end as the tyrant.

9. For whenever anyone who has noticed the jealousy and hatred with which year are regarded by the citizens, has the courage to speak or act against the chiefs of the state he has the whole mass of the people ready to back him. Next, when they have either killed or banished the oligarchs, they no longer venture to set a king over them, as they still remember with terror the injustice they suffered from the former ones, nor can they entrust the government with confidence to a select few, with the evidence before them of their recent error in doing so. Thus the only hope still surviving unimpaired is in themselves, and to this they resort, making the state a democracy instead of an oligarchy and assuming the responsibility for the conduct of affairs. Then as long as some of those survive who experienced the evils of oligarchical dominion, they are well pleased with the present form of government, and set a high value on equality and freedom of speech. But when a new generation arises and the democracy falls into the hands of the grandchildren of its founders, they have become so accustomed to freedom and equality that they no longer value them, and begin to aim at pre-eminence; and it is chiefly those of ample fortune who fall into this error. So when they begin to lust for power and cannot attain it through themselves or their own good qualities, they ruin their estates, tempting and corrupting the people in every possible way. And hence when by their foolish thirst for reputation they have created among the masses an appetite for gifts and the habit of receiving them, democracy in its turn is abolished and changes into a rule of force and violence. For the people, having grown accustomed to feed at the expense of others and to depend for their livelihood on the property of others, as soon as they find a leader who is enterprising but is excluded

from the houses of office by his penury, institute the rule of violence; and now uniting their forces massacre, banish, and plunder, until they degenerate again into perfect savages and find once more a master and monarch.

Such is the cycle of political revolution, the course appointed by nature in which constitutions change, disappear, and finally return to the point from which they started. Anyone who clearly perceives this may indeed in speaking of the future of any state be wrong in his estimate of the time the process will take, but if his judgment is not tainted by animosity or jealousy, he will very seldom be mistaken as to the stage of growth or decline it has reached, and as to the form into which it will change. And especially in the case of the Roman state will this method enable us to arrive at a knowledge of its formation, growth, and greatest perfection, and likewise of the change for the worse which is sure to follow some day. For, as I said, this state, more than any other, has been formed and has grown naturally, and will undergo a natural decline and change to its contrary. The reader will be able to judge of the truth of this from the subsequent parts of this work.

10. At present I will give a brief account of the legislation of Lycurgus, a matter not alien to my present purpose. Lycurgus had perfectly well understood that all the above changes take place necessarily and naturally, and had taken into consideration that every variety of constitution which is simple and formed on principle is precarious, as it is soon perverted into the corrupt form which is proper to it and naturally follows on it. For just as rust in the case of iron and wood-worms and ship-worms in the case of timber are inbred pests, and these substances, even though they escape all external injury, fall a prey to the evils engendered in them, so each constitution has a vice engendered in it and inseparable from it. In kingship it is despotism, in aristocracy oligarchy, and in democracy the savage rule of violence; and it is impossible, as I said above, that each of these should not in course of time change into this vicious form. Lycurgus, then,

foreseeing this, did not make his constitution simple and uniform, but united in it all the good and distinctive features of the best governments, so that none of the principles should grow unduly and be perverted into its allied evil, but that, the force of each being neutralized by that of the others, neither of them should prevail and outbalance another, but that the constitution should remain for long in a state of equilibrium like a well-trimmed boat, kingship being guarded from arrogance by the fear of the commons, who were given a sufficient share in the government, and the commons on the other hand not venturing to treat the kings with contempt from fear of the elders, who being selected from the best citizens would be sure all of them to be always on the side of justice; so that that part of the state which was weakest owing to its subservience to traditional custom, acquired power and weight by the support and influence of the elders. The consequence was that by drawing up his constitution thus he preserved liberty at Sparta for a longer period than is recorded elsewhere.

Lycurgus then, foreseeing, by a process of reasoning, whence and how events naturally happen, constructed his constitution untaught by adversity, but the Romans while they have arrived at the same final result as regards their form of government, have not reached it by any process of reasoning, but by the discipline of many struggles and troubles, and always choosing the best by the light of the experience gained in disaster have thus reached the same result as Lycurgus, that is to say, the best of all existing constitutions.

V. On the Roman Constitution at its Prime

11. From the crossing of Xerxes to Greece [...] and for thirty years after this period, it was always one of those polities which was an object of special study, and it was at its best and nearest to perfection at the time of the Hannibalic war, the period at which I interrupted my narrative to deal with it. Therefore now that I have described its growth, I will explain what were the conditions at the time when by their defeat at

Cannae the Romans were brought face to face with disaster.

I am quite aware that to those who have been born and bred under the Roman Republic my account of it will seem somewhat imperfect owing to the omission of certain details. For as they have complete knowledge of it and practical acquaintance with all its parts, having been familiar with these customs and institutions from childhood, they will not be struck by the extent of the information I give but will demand in addition all I have omitted: they will not think that the author has purposely omitted small peculiarities, but owing to ignorance he has been silent regarding the origins of many things and some points of capital importance. Had I mentioned them, they would not have been impressed by my doing so, regarding them as small and trivial points, but as they are omitted they will demand their inclusion as if they were vital matters, through a desire themselves to appear better informed than the author. Now a good critic should not judge authors by what they omit, but by what they relate, and if he finds any falsehood in this, he may conclude that the omissions are due to ignorance; but if all the writer says is true, he should admit that he has been silent about these matters deliberately and not from ignorance.

These remarks are meant for those who find fault with authors in caviling rather than just spirit. [. . .]

In so far as any view of matter we form applies to the right occasion, so far expressions of approval or blame are sound. When circumstances change, and when applied to these changed conditions, the most excellent and true reflections of authors seem often not only not acceptable, but utterly offensive. [. . .]

The three kinds of government that I spoke of above all shared in the control of the Roman state. And such fairness and propriety in all respects was shown in the use of these three elements for drawing up the constitution and in its subsequent administration that it was

impossible even for a native to pronounce with certainty whether the whole system was aristocratic, democratic, or monarchical. This was indeed only natural for if one fixed one's eyes on the power of the consuls, the constitution seemed completely monarchical and royal; if on that of the senate it seemed again to be aristocratic; and when one looked at the power of the masses, it seemed clearly to be a democracy. The parts of the state falling under the control of each element were and with a few modifications still are as follows.

12. The consuls, previous to leading out their legions, exercise authority in Rome over all public affairs, since all the other magistrates except the tribunes are under them and bound to obey them, and it is they who introduce embassies to the senate. Besides this it is they who consult the senate on matters of urgency, they who carry out in detail the provisions of its decrees. Again as concerns all affairs of state administered by the people it is their duty to take these under their charge, to summon assemblies, to introduce measures, and to preside over the execution of the popular decrees. As for preparation for war and the general conduct of operations in the field, here their power is almost uncontrolled; for they are empowered to make what demands they choose on the allies, to appoint military tribunes, to levy soldiers and select those who are fittest for service. They also have the right of inflicting, when on active service, punishment on anyone under their command; and they are authorized to spend any sum they decide upon from the public funds, being accompanied by a quaestor who faithfully executes their instructions. So that if one looks at this part of the administration alone, one may reasonably pronounce the constitution to be a pure monarchy or kingship I may remark that any changes in these matters or in others of which I am about to speak that may be made in present or future times do not in any way affect the truth of the views I here state.

13. To pass to the senate. In the first place it has the control of the treasury, all revenue and expenditure being regulated by it. For with the exception of payments made to the consuls,

the quaestors are not allowed to disburse for any particular object without a decree of the senate. And even the item of expenditure which is far heavier and more important than any other — the outlay every five years by the censors on public works, whether constructions or repairs — is under the control of the senate, which makes a grant to the censors for the purpose. Similarly crimes committed in Italy which require a public investigation, such as treason, conspiracy, poisoning, and assassination, are under the jurisdiction of the senate. Also if any private person or community in Italy is in need of arbitration or indeed claims damages or requires succor or protection, the senate attends to all such matters. It also occupies itself with the dispatch of all embassies sent to countries outside of Italy for the purpose either of settling differences, or of offering friendly advice, or indeed of imposing demands, or of receiving submission, or of declaring war; and in like manner with respect to embassies arriving in Rome it decides what reception and what answer should be given to them. All these matters are in the hands of the senate, nor have the people anything whatever to do with them. So that again to one residing in Rome during the absence of the consuls the constitution appears to be entirely aristocratic; and this is the conviction of many Greek states and many of the kings, as the senate manages all business connected with them.

14. After this we are naturally inclined to ask what part in the constitution is left for the people, considering that the senate controls all the particular matters I mentioned, and, what is most important, manages all matters of revenue and expenditure, and considering that the consuls again have uncontrolled authority as regards armaments and operations in the field. But nevertheless there is a part and a very important part left for the people. For it is the people which alone has the right to confer honors and inflict punishment, the only bonds by which kingdoms and states and in a word human society in general are held together. For where the distinction between these is overlooked or is observed but ill applied, no affairs can be properly administered. How

indeed is this possible when good and evil men are held in equal estimation? It is by the people, then, in many cases the offences punishable by a fine are tried when the accused have held the highest office; and they are the only court which may try on capital charges. As regards the latter they have a practice which is praiseworthy and should be mentioned. Their usage allows those on trial for their lives when found guilty liberty to depart openly, thus inflicting voluntary exile on themselves, if even only one of the tribes that pronounce the verdict has not yet voted. Such exiles enjoy safety in the territories of Naples, Praeneste, Tibur, and other *civitates foederatae*. Again it is the people who bestow office on the deserving, the noblest regard of virtue in a state; the people have the power of approving or rejecting laws, and what is most important of all, they deliberate on the question of war and peace. Further in the case of alliances, terms of peace, and treaties, it is the people who ratify all these or the reverse. Thus here again one might plausibly say that the people's share in the government is the greatest, and that the constitution is a democratic one.

15. Having stated how political power is distributed among the different parts of the state, I will now explain how each of the three parts is enabled, if they wish, the counteract or co-operate with the others. The consul, when he leaves with his army invested with the powers I mentioned, appears indeed to have absolute authority in all matters necessary for carrying out his purpose; but in fact he requires the support of the people and the senate, and is not able to bring his operations to a conclusion without them. For it is obvious that the legions require constant supplies, and without the consent of the senate, neither corn, clothing, nor pay can be provided; so that the commander's plans come to nothing, if the senate chooses to be deliberately negligent and obstructive. It also depends on the senate whether or not a general can carry out completely his conceptions and designs, since it has the right of either superseding him when his year's term of office has expired or of retaining him in command. Again it is in its

power to celebrate with pomp and to magnify the successes of a general or on the other hand to obscure and belittle them. For the processions they call triumphs, in which the generals bring the actual spectacle of their achievements before the eyes of their fellow-citizens, cannot be properly organized and sometimes even cannot be held at all, unless the senate consents and provides the requisite funds. As for the people it is most indispensable for the consuls to conciliate them, however far away from home they may be; for, as I said, it is the people which ratifies or annuls terms of peace and treaties, and what is most important, on laying down office the consuls are obliged to account for their actions to the people. So that in no respect is it safe for the consuls to neglect keeping in favor with both the senate and the people.

16. The senate again, which possesses such great power, is obliged in the first place to pay attention to the commons in public affairs and respect the wishes of the people, and it cannot carry out inquiries into the most grave and important offences against the state, punishable with death, and their correction, unless the *senatus consultum* is confirmed by the people. The same is the case in matters which directly affect the senate itself. For if anyone introduces a law meant to deprive the senate of some of its traditional authority, or to abolish the precedence and other distinctions of the senators or even to curtail them of their private fortunes, it is the people alone which has the power of passing or rejecting any such measure. And what is most important is that if a single one of the tribunes interposes, the senate is unable to decide finally about any matter, and cannot even meet and hold sittings; and here it is to be observed that the tribunes are always obliged to act as the people decree and to pay every attention to their wishes. Therefore for all these reasons the senate is afraid of the masses and must pay due attention to the popular will.

17. Similarly, again, the people must be submissive to the senate and respect its members both in public and in private. Through the whole of Italy a vast number of

contracts, which it would not be easy to enumerate, are given out by the censors for the construction and repair of public buildings, and besides this there are many things which are farmed, such as navigable rivers, harbors, gardens, mines, lands, in fact everything that forms part of the Roman dominion. Now all these matters are undertaken by the people, and one may almost say that everyone is interested in these contracts and the work they involved. For certain people are the actual purchasers from the censors of the contracts, others are the partners of these first, others stand surety for them, others pledge their own fortunes to the state for this purpose. Now in all these matters the senate is supreme. It can grant extension of time; it can relieve the contractor if any accident occurs; and if the work proves to be absolutely impossible to carry out it can liberate him from his contract. There are in fact many ways in which the senate can either benefit or indicate those who manage public property, as all these matters are referred to it. What is even most important is that the judges in most civil trials, whether public or private, are appointed from its members, where the action involves large interests. So that all citizens being at the mercy of the senate, and looking forward with alarm to the uncertainty of litigation, are very shy of obstructing or resisting its decisions. Similarly everyone is reluctant to oppose the projects of the consuls as all are generally and individually under their authority when in the field.

18. Such being the power that each part has of hampering the others or co-operating with them, their union is adequate to all emergencies, so that it is impossible to find a better political system than this. For whenever the menace of some common danger from abroad compels them to act in concord and support each other, so great does the strength of the state become, that nothing which is requisite can be neglected, as all are zealously competing in devising means of meeting the need of the hour, nor can any decision arrived at fail to be executed promptly, as all are co-operating both in public and in private to the accomplishment of the task which they have

set themselves; and consequently this peculiar form of constitution possesses an irresistible power of attaining every object upon which it is resolved. When again they are freed from external menace, and reap the harvest of good fortune and affluence which is the result of their success, and in the enjoyment of this prosperity are corrupted by flattery and idleness and wax insolent and overbearing, as indeed happens often enough, it is then especially that we see the state providing itself a remedy for the evil from which it suffers. For when one part having grown out of proportion to the others aims at supremacy and tends to become too predominant, it is evident that, as for the reasons above given none of the three is absolute, but the purpose of the one can be counterworked and thwarted by the others, none of them will excessively outgrow the others or treat them with contempt. All in fact remains *in statu quo*, on the one hand, because any aggressive impulse is sure to be checked and from the outset each estate stands in dread of being interfered with by the others. [. . .]

VII. The Roman Republic compared with others

43. One may say that nearly all authors have handed down to us the reputation for excellence enjoyed by the constitutions of Sparta, Crete, Mantinea, and Carthage. Some make mention also of those of Athens and Thebes. I leave these last two aside; for I am myself convinced that the constitutions of Athens and Thebes need not be dealt with at length, considering that these states neither grew by a normal process, nor did they remain for long in their most flourishing state, nor were the changes they underwent immaterial; but after a sudden effulgence so to speak, the work of chance and circumstance, while still apparently prosperous and with every prospect of a bright future, they experienced a complete reverse of fortune. For the Thebans, striking at the Lacedaemonians through their mistaken policy and the hatred their allies bore them, owing to the admirable qualities of one or at most two men, who had detected these weaknesses, gained in Greece a reputation for superiority. Indeed, that the successes of the

Thebans at that time were due not to the form of their constitution, but to the high qualities of their leading men, was made manifest to all by Fortune immediately afterwards. For the success of Thebes grew, attained its height, and ceased with the lives of Epaminondas and Pelopidas; and therefore we must regard the temporary splendor of that state as due not to its constitution, but to its men. We must hold very much the same opinion about the Athenian constitution. For Athens also, though she perhaps enjoyed more frequent periods of success, after her most glorious one of all which was coeval with the excellent administration of Themistocles, rapidly experienced a complete reverse of fortune owing to the inconstancy of her nature. For the Athenian populace always more or less resembles a ship without a commander. In such a ship when fear of the billows or the danger of a storm induces the mariners to be sensible and attend to the orders of the skipper, they do their duty admirably. But when they grow over-confident and begin to entertain contempt for their superiors and to quarrel with each other, as they are no longer all of the same way of thinking, then with some of them determined to continue the voyage, and others putting pressure on the skipper to anchor, with some letting out the sheets and others preventing them and ordering the sails to be taken in, not only does the spectacle strike anyone who watches it as disgraceful owing to their disagreement and contention, but the position of affairs is a source of actual danger to the rest of those on board; so that often after escaping from the perils of the widest seas and fiercest storms they are shipwrecked in harbor and when close to the shore. This is what has more than once befallen the Athenian state. After having averted the greatest and most terrible dangers owing to the high qualities of the people and their leaders, it has come to grief at times by sheer heedlessness and unreasonableness in seasons of unclouded tranquility. Therefore I need say no more about this constitution or that of Thebes, states in which everything is managed by the uncurbed impulse of a mob in the one case exceptionally headstrong and ill-

tempered and in the other brought up in an atmosphere of violence and passion.

45. To pass to the constitution of Crete, two points here demand our attention. How was it that the most learned of the ancient writers — Ephorus, Xenophon, Callisthenes, and Plato — state in the first place that it is one and the same with that of Lacedaemon and in the second place pronounce it worthy of commendation? In my own opinion neither of these assertions is true. Whether or not I am right the following observations will show. And first as to its dissimilarity with the constitution of Sparta. The peculiar features of the Spartan state are said to be first the land laws by which no citizen may own more than another, but all must possess an equal share of the public land; secondly their view of money-making; for, money being esteemed of no value at all among them, the jealous contention due to the possession of more or less is utterly done away with; and thirdly the fact that of the magistrates by whom or by whose co-operation the whole administration is conducted, the kings hold a hereditary office and the members of the Gerousia are elected for life. In all these respects the Cretan practice is exactly the opposite. Their laws go as far as possible in letting them acquire land to the extent of their power, as the saying is, and money is held in such high honor among them that its acquisition is not only regarded as necessary, but as most honorable. So much in fact do sordid love of gain and lust for wealth prevail among them, that the Cretans are the only people in the world in whose eyes no gain is disgraceful. Again their magistracies are annual and elected on a democratic system. So that it often causes surprise how these authors proclaim to us, that two political systems the nature of which is so opposed, are allied and akin to each other. Besides overlooking such differences, these writers go out of their way to give us their general views, saying that Lycurgus was the only man who ever saw the points of vital importance for good government. For, there being two things to which a state owes its preservation, bravery against the enemy and concord among the citizens, Lycurgus by

doing away with the lust for wealth did away also with all civil discord and broils. In consequence of which the Lacedaemonians, being free from these evils, excel all the Greeks in the conduct of their internal affairs and in their spirit of union. After asserting this, although they witness that the Cretans, on the other hand, owing to their ingrained lust of wealth are involved in constant broils both public and private, and in murders and civil wars, they regard this as immaterial, and have the audacity to say that the two political systems are similar. Ephorus actually, apart from the names, uses the same phrases in explaining the nature of the two states; so that if one did not attend to the proper names it would be impossible to tell of which he is speaking.

Such are the points in which I consider these two political systems to differ, and I will now give my reasons for not regarding that of Crete as worthy of praise or imitation. In my opinion there are two fundamental things in every state, by virtue of which its principle and constitution is either desirable or the reverse. I mean customs and laws. What is desirable in these makes men's private lives righteous and well ordered and the general character of the state gentle and just, while what is to be avoided has the opposite effect. So just as when we observe the laws and customs of a people to be good, we have no hesitation in pronouncing that the citizens and the state will consequently be good also, thus when we notice that men are covetous in their private lives and that their public actions are unjust, we are plainly justified in saying that their laws, their particular customs, and the state as a whole are bad. Now it would be impossible to find except in some rare instances personal conduct more treacherous or a public policy more unjust than in Crete. Holding then the Cretan constitution to be neither similar to that of Sparta nor in any way deserving of praise and imitation, I dismiss it from the comparison which I have proposed to make.

Nor again is it fair to introduce Plato's republic which also is much belauded by some

philosophers. For just as we do not admit to athletic contests artists or athletes who are not duly entered and have not been in training, so we have no right to admit this constitution to the competition for the prize of merit, unless it first give an exhibition of its actual working. Up to the present it would be just the same thing to discuss it with a view to comparison with the constitutions of Sparta, Rome, and Carthage, as to take some statue and compare it with living and breathing men. For even if the workmanship of the statue were altogether praiseworthy, the comparison of a lifeless thing with a living being would strike spectators as entirely imperfect and incongruous.

48. Dismissing, therefore, these constitutions, we will return to that of Sparta. To me it seems as far as regards the maintenance of concord among the citizens, the security of the Laconian territory and the preservation of the freedom of Sparta, the legislation of Lycurgus and the foresight he exhibited were so admirable that one is forced to regard his institutions as of divine rather than human origin. For the equal division of landed property and the simple and common diet were calculated to produce temperance in the private lives of the citizens and to secure the commonwealth as a whole from civil strife, as was the training in the endurance of hardships and dangers to form brave and valorous men. Now when both these virtues, fortitude and temperance, are combined in one soul or in one city, evil will not readily originate within such men or such peoples, nor will they be easily overmastered by their neighbors. By constructing, therefore, his constitution in this manner and out of these elements, Lycurgus secured the absolute safety of the whole territory of Laconia, and left to the Spartans themselves a lasting heritage of freedom. But as regards the annexation of neighboring territories, supremacy in Greece, and, generally speaking, an ambitious policy, he seems to me to have made absolutely no provision for such contingencies, either in particular enactments or in the general constitution of the state. What he left undone, therefore, was to bring to bear on the citizens

some force or principle, by which, just as he had made them simple and contented in their private lives, he might make the spirit of the city as a whole likewise contented and moderate. But now, while he made them most unambitious and sensible people as regards their private lives and the institutions of their city, he left them most ambitious, domineering, and aggressive towards the rest of the Greeks.

49. For who is not aware that they were almost the first of the Greeks to cast longing eyes on the territory of their neighbors, making war on the Messenians out of covetousness and for the purpose of enslaving them? And is it not narrated by all historians how out of sheer obstinacy they bound themselves by an oath not to desist from the siege before they had taken Messene? It is no less universally known that owing to their desire of domination in Greece they were obliged to execute the behests of the very people they had conquered in battle. For they conquered the Persians when they invaded Greece, fighting for her freedom; but when the invaders had withdrawn and fled they betrayed the Greek cities to them by the peace of Antalcidas, in order to procure money for establishing their sovereignty over the Greeks; and here a conspicuous defect in their constitution revealed itself. For as long as they aspired to rule over their neighbors or over the Peloponnesians alone, they found the supplies and resources furnished by Laconia itself adequate, as they had all they required ready to hand, and quickly returned home whether by land or sea. But once they began to undertake naval expeditions and to make military campaigns outside the Peloponnese, it was evident that neither their iron currency nor the exchange of their crops for commodities which they lacked, as permitted by the legislation of Lycurgus, would suffice for their needs, since these enterprises demanded a currency in universal circulation and supplies drawn from abroad; and so they were compelled to be beggars from the Persians, to impose tribute on the islanders, and exact contributions from all the Greeks, as they recognized that under the legislation of

Lycurgus it was impossible to aspire, I will not say to supremacy in Greece, but to any position of influence.

50. But what is the purpose of this digression? It is to show from the actual evidence of facts, that for the purpose of remaining in secure possession of their own territory and maintaining their freedom the legislation of Lycurgus is amply sufficient, and to those who maintain this to be the object of political constitutions we must admit that there is not and never was any system or constitution superior to that of Lycurgus. But if anyone is ambitious of greater things, and esteems it finer and more glorious than that to be the leader of many men and to rule and lord it over many and have the eyes of all the world turned to him, it must be admitted that from this point of view the Laconian constitution is defective, while that of Rome is superior and better framed for the attainment of power, as is indeed evident from the actual course of events. For when the Lacedaemonians endeavored to obtain supremacy in Greece, they very soon ran the risk of losing their own liberty; whereas the Romans, who had aimed merely at the subjection of Italy, in a short time brought the whole world under their sway, the abundant supplies they had at their command conducing in no small measure to this result.

51. The constitution of Carthage seems to me to have been originally well contrived as regards its most distinctive points. For there were kings, and the house of Elders was an aristocratical force, and the people were supreme in matters proper to them, the entire frame of the state much resembling that of Rome and Sparta. But at the time when they entered on the Hannibalic War, the Carthaginian constitution had degenerated, and that of Rome was better. For as every body or state or action has its natural periods first of growth, then of prime, and finally of decay, and as everything in them is at its best when they are in their prime, it was for this reason that the difference between the two states manifested itself at this time. For by as much as the power and prosperity of Carthage

had been earlier than that of Rome, by so much had Carthage already begun to decline; while Rome was exactly at her prime, as far as at least as her system of government was concerned. Consequently the multitude at Carthage had already acquired the chief voice in deliberations; while at Rome the senate still retained this; and hence, as in one case the masses deliberated and in the other the most eminent men, the Roman decisions on public affairs were superior, so that although they met with complete disaster, they were finally by the wisdom of their counsels victorious over the Carthaginians in the war.

52. But to pass to differences of detail, such as, to begin with, the conduct of war, the Carthaginians naturally are superior at sea both in efficiency and equipment, because seamanship has long been their national craft, and they busy themselves with the sea more than any other people; but as regards military service on land the Romans are much more efficient. They indeed devote their whole energies to this matter, whereas the Carthaginians entirely neglect their infantry, though they do pay some slight attention to their cavalry. The reason of this is that the troops they employ are foreign and mercenary, whereas those of the Romans are natives of the soil and citizens. So that in this respect also we must pronounce the political system of Rome to be superior to that of Carthage, the Carthaginians continuing to depend for the maintenance of their freedom on the courage of a mercenary force but the Romans on their own valor and on the aid of their allies. Consequently even if they happen to be worsted at the outset, the Romans redeem defeat by final success, while it is the contrary with the Carthaginians. For the Romans, fighting as they are for their country and their children, never can abate their fury but continue to throw their whole hearts into the struggle until they get the better of their enemies. It follows that though the Romans are, as I said, much less skilled in naval matters, they are on the whole successful at sea owing to the gallantry of their men; for although skill in seamanship is of no small importance in naval battles, it is chiefly the

courage of the marines that turns the scale in favor of victory Now not only do Italians in general naturally excel Phoenicians and Africans in bodily strength and personal courage, but by their institutions also they do much to foster a spirit of bravery in the young men A single instance will suffice to indicate the pains taken by the state to turn out men who will be ready to endure everything in order to gain a reputation in their country for valor.

53. Whenever any illustrious man dies, he is carried at his funeral into the forum to the so-called *rostra*, sometimes conspicuous in an upright posture and more rarely reclined. Here with all the people standing round, a grown-up son, if he has left one who happens to be present, or if not some other relative mounts the rostra and discourses on the virtues and successful achievements of the dead. As a consequence the multitude and not only those who had a part in these achievements, but those also who had none, when the facts are recalled to their minds and brought before their eyes, are moved to such sympathy that the loss seems to be not confined to the mourners, but a public one affecting the whole people. Next after the interment and the performance of the usual ceremonies, they place the image of the departed in the most conspicuous position in the house, enclosed in a wooden shrine. This image is a mask reproducing with remarkable fidelity both the features and complexion of the deceased. On the occasion of public sacrifices they display these images, and decorate them with much care, and when any distinguished member of the family dies they take them to the funeral, putting them on men who seem to them to bear the closest resemblance to the original in stature and carriage. These representatives wear togas, with a purple border if the deceased was a consul or praetor, whole purple if he was a censor, and embroidered with gold if he had celebrated a triumph or achieved anything similar. They all ride in chariots preceded by the *fascēs*, axes, and other insignia by which the different magistrates are wont to be accompanied according to the respective dignity of the

offices of state held by each during his life; and when they arrive at the rostra they all seat themselves in a row on ivory chairs. There could not easily be a more ennobling spectacle for a young man who aspires to fame and virtue For who would not be inspired by the sight of the images of men renowned for their excellence, all together and as if alive and breathing? What spectacle could be more glorious than this? Besides, he who makes the oration over the man about to be buried, when he has finished speaking of him recounts the successes and exploits of the rest whose images are present, beginning with the most ancient. By this means, by this constant renewal of the good report of brave men, the celebrity of those who performed noble deeds is rendered immortal, while at the same time the fame of those who did good service to their country becomes known to the people and a heritage for future generations. But the most important result is that young men are thus inspired to endure every suffering for public welfare in the hope of winning the glory that attends on brave men. What I say is confirmed by the facts. For many Romans have voluntarily engaged in single combat in order to decide a battle, not a few have faced certain death, some in war to save the lives of the rest, and others in peace to save the republic. Some even when in office have put their own sons to death contrary to every law or custom, setting a higher value on the interest of their country than on the ties of nature that bound them to their nearest and dearest.

55. Many such stories about many men are related in Roman history, but one told of a certain person will suffice for the present as an example and as a confirmation of what I say It is narrated that when Horatius Cocles was engaged in combat with two of the enemy at the far end of the bridge over the Tiber that lies in the front of the town, he saw large reinforcements coming up to help the enemy, and fearing lest they should force the passage and get into town, he turned round and called to those behind him to retire and cut the bridge with all speed. His order was obeyed, and while they were cutting the bridge, he stood to

his ground receiving many wounds, and arrested the attack of the enemy who were less astonished at his physical strength than at his endurance and courage. The bridge once cut, the enemy were prevented from attacking; and Cocles, plunging into the river in full armor as he was, deliberately sacrificed his life, regarding the safety of his country and the glory which in future would attach to his name as of more importance than his present existence and the years of life which remained to him. Such, if I am not wrong, is the eager emulation of achieving noble deeds engendered in the Roman youth by their institutions.

56. Again, the laws and customs relating to the acquisition of wealth are better in Rome than at Carthage. At Carthage nothing which results in profit is regarded as disgraceful; at Rome nothing is considered more so than to accept bribes and seek gain from improper channels. For no less strong than their approval of money-making is their condemnation of unscrupulous gain from forbidden sources. A proof of this is that at Carthage candidates for office practice open bribery, whereas at Rome death is the penalty for it. Therefore as the rewards offered to merit are the opposite in the two cases, it is natural that the steps taken to gain them should also be dissimilar.

But the quality in which the Roman commonwealth is most distinctly superior is in my opinion the nature of their religious convictions. I believe that it is the very thing which among other peoples is an object of reproach, I mean superstition, which maintains the cohesion of the Roman State. These matters are clothed in such pomp and introduced to such an extent into their public and private life that nothing could exceed it, a fact which will surprise many. My own opinion at least is that they have adopted this course for the sake of the common people. It is a course which perhaps would not have been necessary had it been possible to form a state composed of wise men, but as every multitude is fickle, full of lawless desires, unreasoned passion, and violent anger, the multitude must be held in by invisible terrors and suchlike pageantry. For this reason I think, not that the

ancients acted rashly and at haphazard in introducing among the people notions concerning the gods and beliefs in the terrors of hell, but that the moderns are most rash and foolish in banishing such beliefs. The consequence is that among the Greeks, apart from other things, members of the government, if they are entrusted with no more than a talent, though they have ten copyists and as many seals and twice as many witnesses, cannot keep their faith; whereas among the Romans those who as magistrates and legates are dealing with large sums of money maintain correct conduct just because they have pledged their faith by oath. Whereas else it is a rare thing to find a man who keeps his hands off public money, and whose record is clean in this respect, among the Romans one rarely comes across a man who has been detected in such conduct. [. . .]

VIII. Conclusion of the Treatise on the Roman Republic

57. That all existing things are subject to decay and change is a truth that scarcely needs proof; for the course of nature is sufficient to force this conviction on us. There being two agencies by which every kind of state is liable to decay, the one external and the other a growth of the state itself, we can lay down no fixed rule about the former, but the latter is a regular process. I have already stated what kind of state is the first to come into being, and what the next, and how the one is transformed into the other; so that those who are capable of connecting the opening propositions of this inquiry with its conclusion will now be able to foretell the future unaided. And what will happen is, I think, evident. When a state has weathered many great perils and subsequently attains to supremacy and uncontested sovereignty, it is evident that under the influence of long established prosperity, life will become more extravagant and the citizens more fierce in their rivalry regarding office and other objects than they ought to be. As these defects go on increasing, the beginning of the change for the worse will be due to love of office and the disgrace entailed by obscurity, as well as to extravagance and purse-proud display; and for

this change the populace will be responsible when on the one hand they think they have a grievance against certain people who have shown themselves grasping, and when, on the other hand, they are puffed up by the flattery of others who aspire to office. For now, stirred to fury and swayed by passion in all their counsels, they will no longer consent to obey or even to be the equals of the ruling caste, but will demand the lion's share for themselves. When this happens, the state will change its name to the finest sounding of all, freedom and democracy, but will change its nature to the worst thing of all, mob-rule.

Having dealt with the origin and growth of the Roman republic, and with its prime and its present condition, and also with the differences for better or worse between it and others, I may now close this discourse more or less so.

58. But, drawing now upon the period immediately subsequent to the date at which I abandoned my narrative to enter on this digression, I will make brief and summary mention of one occurrence; so that, as if exhibiting a single specimen of a good artist's work, I may make manifest not by words only but by actual fact the perfection and strength of principle of the Republic such as it then was. Hannibal, when, after his victory over the Romans at Cannae, the eight thousand who garrisoned the camp fell into his hands, after making them all prisoners, allowed them to send a deputation to those at home on the subject of their ransom and release. Upon their naming ten of their most distinguished members, he sent them off after making them swear that they would return to him. One of those nominated just as he was going out of the camp said he had forgotten something and went back, and after recovering the thing he had left behind again took his departure, thinking that by his return he had kept his faith and absolved himself of his oath. Upon their arrival in Rome they begged and entreated the senate not to grudge the prisoners their release, but to allow each of them to pay three minae and return to his people; for Hannibal, they said, had made this concession. The men

deserved to be released, for they had neither been guilty of cowardice in the battle nor had they done anything unworthy of Rome; but having been left behind to guard the camp, they had, when all the rest had perished in the battle, been forced to yield to circumstances and surrender to the enemy. But the Romans, though they had met with severe reverses in the war, and had now, roughly speaking, lost all their allies and were in momentary expectation of Rome itself being placed in peril, after listening to this plea, neither disregarded their dignity under the pressure of calamity, nor neglected to take into consideration every proper step; but seeing that Hannibal's object in acting thus was both to obtain funds and to deprive the troops opposed to him of their high spirit, by showing that, even if defeated, they might hope for safety, they were so far from acceding to this request, that they did not allow their pity for their kinsmen, or the consideration of the service the men would render them, to prevail, but defeated Hannibal's calculation and the hopes he had based on them by refusing to ransom the men, and at the same time imposed by law on their own troops the duty of either conquering or dying in the field, as there was no hope of safety for them if defeated. Therefore after coming to this decision they dismissed the nine delegates who returned of their own free will, as bound by their oath, while as for the man who had thought to free himself from the oath by a ruse they put him in irons and returned him to the enemy; so that Hannibal's joy at his victory in the battle was not so great as his dejection, when he saw with amazement how steadfast and high-spirited were the Romans in their deliberations.

Livy: Roman History

Translated by J.H. Freese, A.J. Church, and W.J. Brodribb (excerpts from Books 1 & 2)
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From BOOK ONE

Tarquin, having thus gained possession of Gabii, made peace with the nation of the Aequi, and renewed the treaty with the Etruscans. He next turned his attention to the affairs of the city. The chief of these was that of leaving behind him the Temple of Jupiter on the Tarpeian Mount, as a monument of his name and reign; to remind posterity that of two Tarquinius, both kings, the father had vowed, the son completed it. Further, that the open space, to the exclusion of all other forms of worship, might be entirely appropriated to Jupiter and his temple, which was to be erected upon it, he resolved to cancel the inauguration of the small temples and chapels, several of which had been first vowed by King Tadius, in the crisis of the battle against Romulus, and afterward consecrated and dedicated by him. At the very outset of the foundation of this work it is said that the gods exerted their divinity to declare the future greatness of so mighty an empire; for, though the birds declared for the unhallowing of all the other chapels, they did not declare themselves in favor of it in the case of that of Terminus. This omen and augury were taken to import that the fact of Terminus not changing his residence, and that he was the only one of the gods who was not called out of the consecrated bounds devoted to his worship, was a presage of the lasting stability of the state in general. This being accepted as an omen of its lasting character, there followed another prodigy portending the greatness of the empire. It was reported that the head of a man, with the face entire, was found by the workmen when digging the foundation of the temple. The sight of this phenomenon by no doubtful indications portended that this temple should be the seat of empire, and the capital of the world; and so declared the soothsayers, both those who were in the city, and those whom they had summoned from Etruria, to consult on this subject. The king's mind was thereby

encouraged to greater expense; in consequence of which the spoils of Pometia, which had been destined to complete the work, scarcely sufficed for laying the foundation. On this account I am more inclined to believe Fabius (not to mention his being the more ancient authority), that there were only forty talents, than Piso, who says that forty thousand pounds of silver by weight were set apart for that purpose, a sum of money neither to be expected from the spoils of any one city in those times, and one that would more than suffice for the foundations of any building, even the magnificent buildings of the present day.

56. Tarquin, intent upon the completion of the temple, having sent for workmen from all parts of Etruria, employed on it not only the public money, but also workmen from the people; and when this labor, in itself no inconsiderable one, was added to their military service, still the people murmured less at building the temples of the gods with their own hands, than at being transferred, as they afterward were, to other works, which, while less dignified, required considerably greater toil; such were the erection of benches in the circus, and conducting underground the principal sewer, the receptacle of all the filth of the city; two works the like of which even modern splendor has scarcely been able to produce. After the people had been employed in these works, because he both considered that such a number of inhabitants was a burden to the city where there was no employment for them, and further, was anxious that the frontiers of the empire should be more extensively occupied by sending colonists, he sent colonists to Signia and Circeii, to serve as defensive outposts hereafter to the city on land and sea. While he was thus employed a frightful prodigy appeared to him. A serpent gliding out of a wooden pillar, after causing dismay and flight in the palace, not so much struck the king's heart with sudden terror, as it filled him with

anxious solicitude. Accordingly, since Etruscan soothsayers were only employed for public prodigies, terrified at this so to say private apparition, he determined to send to the oracle of Delphi, the most celebrated in the world; and not venturing to entrust the responses of the oracle to any other person, he dispatched his two sons to Greece through lands unknown at that time, and yet more unknown seas. Titus and Arruns were the two who set out. They were accompanied by Lucius Junius Brutus, the son of Tarquinia, the king's sister, a youth of an entirely different cast of mind from that of which he had assumed the disguise. He, having heard that the chief men of the city, among them his own brother, had been put to death by his uncle, resolved to leave nothing in regard to his ability that might be dreaded by the king, nor anything in his fortune that might be coveted, and thus to be secure in the contempt in which he was held, seeing that there was but little protection in justice. Therefore, having designedly fashioned himself to the semblance of foolishness, and allowing himself and his whole estate to become the prey of the king, he did not refuse to take even the surname of Brutus, that, under the cloak of this surname, the genius that was to be the future liberator of the Roman people, lying concealed, might bide its opportunity. He, in reality being brought to Delphi by the Tarquinius rather as an object of ridicule than as a companion, is said to have borne with him as an offering to Apollo a golden rod, enclosed in a staff of cornel-wood hollowed out for the purpose, a mystical emblem of his own mind. When they arrived there, and had executed their father's commission, the young men's minds were seized with the desire of inquiring to which of them the sovereignty of Rome should fall. They say that the reply was uttered from the inmost recesses of the cave, "Young men, whichever of you shall first kiss his mother shall enjoy the sovereign power at Rome." The Tarquinius ordered the matter to be kept secret with the utmost care, that Sextus, who had been left behind at Rome, might be ignorant of the response of the oracle, and have no share in the kingdom; they then cast lots among themselves, to decide which of

them should first kiss his mother, after they had returned to Rome. Brutus, thinking that the Pythian response had another meaning, as if he had stumbled and fallen, touched the ground with his lips, she being, forsooth, the common mother of all mankind. After this they returned to Rome, where preparations were being made with the greatest vigor for a war against the Rutulians.

57. The Rutulians, a very wealthy nation, considering the country and age in which they lived, were at that time in possession of Ardea. Their wealth was itself the actual occasion of the war: for the Roman king, whose resources had been drained by the magnificence of his public works, was desirous of enriching himself, and also of soothing the minds of his subjects by a large present of booty, as they, independently of the other instances of his tyranny, were incensed against his government, because they felt indignant that they had been kept so long employed by the king as mechanics, and in labor only fit for slaves. An attempt was made, to see if Ardea could be taken at the first assault; when that proved unsuccessful, the enemy began to be distressed by a blockade, and by siege-works. In the standing camp, as usually happens when a war is tedious rather than severe, furloughs were easily obtained, more so by the officers, however, than the common soldiers. The young princes also sometimes spent their leisure hours in feasting and mutual entertainments. One day as they were drinking in the tent of Sextus Tarquinius, where Collatinus Tarquinius, the son of Egerius, was also at supper, they fell to talking about their wives. Every one commended his own extravagantly: a dispute thereupon arising, Collatinus said there was no occasion for words, that it might be known in a few hours how far his wife Lucretia excelled all the rest. "If, then," added he, "we have any youthful vigor, why should we not mount our horses and in person examine the behavior of our wives? Let that be the surest proof to every one, which shall meet his eyes on the unexpected arrival of the husband." They were heated with wine. "Come on, then," cried all. They immediately galloped to Rome, where they arrived when darkness was beginning to

fall. From thence they proceeded to Collatia, where they found Lucretia, not after the manner of the king's daughters-in-law, whom they had seen spending their time in luxurious banqueting with their companions, but, although the night was far advanced, employed at her wool, sitting in the middle of the house in the midst of her maids who were working around her. The honor of the contest regarding the women rested with Lucretia. Her husband on his arrival, and the Tarquini, were kindly received; the husband, proud of his victory, gave the young princes a polite invitation. There an evil desire of violating Lucretia by force seized Sextus Tarquinius; both her beauty, and her proved chastity urged him on. Then, after this youthful frolic of the night, they returned to the camp.

58. After an interval of a few days, Sextus Tarquinius, without the knowledge of Collatinus, came to Collatia with one attendant only: there he was made welcome by them, as they had no suspicion of his design, and, having been conducted after supper into the guest chamber, burning with passion, when all around seemed sufficiently secure, and all fast asleep, he came to the bedside of Lucretia, as she lay asleep, with a drawn sword, and with his left hand pressing down the woman's breast, said: "Be silent, Lucretia; I am Sextus Tarquinius. I have a sword in my hand. You shall die if you utter a word." When the woman, awaking terrified from sleep, saw there was no help, and that impending death was nigh at hand, then Tarquin declared his passion, entreated, mixed threats with entreaties, tried all means to influence the woman's mind. When he saw she was resolved, and uninfluenced even by the fear of death, to the fear of death he added the fear of dishonor, declaring that he would lay a murdered slave naked by her side when dead, so that it should be said that she had been slain in base adultery. When by the terror of this disgrace his lust (as it were victorious) had overcome her inflexible chastity, and Tarquin had departed, exulting in having triumphed over a woman's honor by force, Lucretia, in melancholy distress at so dreadful a misfortune, dispatched one and the same messenger both to her father at Rome, and to

her husband at Ardea, bidding them come each with a trusty friend; that they must do so, and use despatch, for a monstrous deed had been wrought. Spurius Lucretius came accompanied by Publius Valerius, the son of Volesus, Collatinus with Lucius Junius Brutus, in company with whom, as he was returning to Rome, he happened to be met by his wife's messenger. They found Lucretia sitting in her chamber in sorrowful dejection. On the arrival of her friends the tears burst from her eyes; and on her husband inquiring, whether all was well, "By no means," she replied, "for how can it be well with a woman who has lost her honor? The traces of another man are on your bed, Collatinus. But the body only has been violated, the mind is guiltless; death shall be my witness. But give me your right hands, and your word of honor, that the adulterer shall not come off unpunished. It is Sextus Tarquinius, who, an enemy last night in the guise of a guest has borne hence by force of arms, a triumph destructive to me, and one that will prove so to himself also, if you be men." All gave their word in succession; they attempted to console her, grieved in heart as she was, by turning the guilt of the act from her, constrained as she had been by force, upon the perpetrator of the crime, declaring that it is the mind sins, not the body; and that where there is no intention, there is no guilt. "It is for you to see," said she, "what is due to him. As for me, though I acquit myself of guilt, I do not discharge myself from punishment; nor shall any woman survive her dishonor by pleading the example of Lucretia." She plunged a knife, which she kept concealed beneath her garment, into her heart, and falling forward on the wound, dropped down expiring. Her husband and father shrieked aloud.

59. While they were overwhelmed with grief, Brutus drew the knife out of the wound, and, holding it up before him reeking with blood, said: "By this blood, most pure before the outrage of a prince, I swear, and I call you, O gods, to witness my oath, that I will henceforth pursue Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, his wicked wife, and all their children, with fire, sword, and all other violent means in my power; nor will I ever suffer them or any other to reign at Rome." Then he

gave the knife to Collatinus, and after him to Lucretius and Valerius, who were amazed at such an extraordinary occurrence, and could not understand the newly developed character of Brutus. However, they all took the oath as they were directed, and, their sorrow being completely changed to wrath, followed the lead of Brutus, who from that time ceased not to call upon them to abolish the regal power. They carried forth the body of Lucretia from her house, and conveyed it to the forum, where they caused a number of persons to assemble, as generally happens, by reason of the unheard-of and atrocious nature of an extraordinary occurrence. They complained, each for himself, of the royal villainy and violence. Both the grief of the father affected them, and also Brutus, who reproved their tears and unavailing complaints, and advised them to take up arms, as became men and Romans, against those who dared to treat them like enemies. All the most spirited youths voluntarily presented themselves in arms; the rest of the young men followed also. From thence, after an adequate garrison had been left at the gates at Collatia, and sentinels appointed, to prevent any one giving intelligence of the disturbance to the royal party, the rest set out for Rome in arms under the conduct of Brutus. When they arrived there, the armed multitude caused panic and confusion wherever they went. Again, when they saw the principal men of the state placing themselves at their head, they thought that, whatever it might be, it was not without good reason. Nor did the heinousness of the event excite less violent emotions at Rome than it had done at Collatia: accordingly, they ran from all parts of the city into the forum, and as soon as they came thither, the public crier summoned them to attend the tribune of the celeres, with which office Brutus happened to be at the time invested. There a harangue was delivered by him, by no means of the style and character which had been counterfeited by him up to that day, concerning the violence and lust of Sextus Tarquinius, the horrid violation of Lucretia and her lamentable death, the bereavement of Tricipitinus, in whose eyes the cause of his daughter's death was more shameful and deplorable than that death itself.

To this was added the haughty insolence of the king himself, and the sufferings and toils of the people, buried in the earth in the task of cleansing ditches and sewers: he declared that Romans, the conquerors of all the surrounding states, instead of warriors had become laborers and stone-cutters. The unnatural murder of King Servius Tullius was recalled, and the fact of his daughter having driven over the body of her father in her impious chariot, and the gods who avenge parents were invoked by him. By stating these and, I believe, other facts still more shocking, which, though by no means easy to be detailed by writers, the then heinous state of things suggested, he so worked upon the already incensed multitude, that they deprived the king of his authority, and ordered the banishment of Lucius Tarquinius with his wife and children. He himself, having selected and armed some of the younger men, who gave in their names as volunteers, set out for the camp at Ardea to rouse the army against the king: the command in the city he left to Lucretius, who had been already appointed prefect of the city by the king. During this tumult Tullia fled from her house, both men and women cursing her wherever she went, and invoking upon her the wrath of the furies, the avengers of parents.

60. News of these transactions having reached the camp, when the king, alarmed at this sudden revolution, was proceeding to Rome to quell the disturbances, Brutus--for he had had notice of his approach--turned aside, to avoid meeting him; and much about the same time Brutus and Tarquinius arrived by different routes, the one at Ardea, the other at Rome. The gates were shut against Tarquin, and sentence of banishment declared against him; the camp welcomed with great joy the deliverer of the city, and the king's sons were expelled. Two of them followed their father, and went into exile to Caere, a city of Etruria. Sextus Tarquinius, who had gone to Gabii, as if to his own kingdom, was slain by the avengers of the old feuds, which he had stirred up against himself by his rapines and murders. Lucius Tarquinius Superbus reigned twenty-five years: the regal form of government lasted, from the building of the city to its deliverance, two hundred and forty-four years.

Two consuls, Lucius Junius Brutus and Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus, were elected by the prefect of at the comitia of centuries, according to the commentaries of Servius Tullius.

From BOOK TWO

1. The acts, civil and military, of the Roman people, henceforth free, their annual magistrates, and the sovereignty of the laws, more powerful than that of men, I will now proceed to recount. The haughty insolence of the last king had caused this liberty to be the more welcome: for the former kings reigned in such a manner that they all in succession may be deservedly reckoned founders of those parts at least of the city, which they independently added as new dwelling-places for the population, which had been increased by themselves. Nor is there any doubt that that same Brutus, who gained such renown from the expulsion of King Superbus, would have acted to the greatest injury of the public weal, if, through the desire of liberty before the people were fit for it, he had wrested the kingdom from any of the preceding kings. For what would have been the consequence, if that rabble of shepherds and strangers, runaways from their own peoples, had found, under the protection of an inviolable sanctuary, either freedom, or at least impunity for former offences, and, freed from all dread of regal authority, had begun to be distracted by tribunician storms, and to engage in contests with the fathers in a strange city, before the pledges of wives and children, and affection for the soil itself, to which people become habituated only by length of time, had united their affections? Their condition, not yet matured, would have been destroyed by discord; but the tranquillizing moderation of the government so fostered this condition, and by proper nourishment brought it to such perfection, that, when their strength was now developed, they were able to bring forth the wholesome fruits of liberty. The first beginnings of liberty, however, one may date from this period, rather because the consular authority was made annual, than because of the royal prerogative was in any way curtailed. The first consuls kept all the privileges and

outward signs of authority, care only being taken to prevent the terror appearing doubled, should both have the fasces at the same time. Brutus, with the consent of his colleague, was first attended by the fasces, he who proved himself afterward as keen in protecting liberty as he had previously shown himself in asserting it. First of all he bound over the people, jealous of their newly-acquired liberty, by an oath that they would suffer no one to be king in Rome, for fear that later they might be influenced by the importunities or bribes of the royal house. Next, that a full house might give additional strength to the senate, he filled up the number of senators, which had been diminished by the assassinations of Tarquinius, to the full number of three hundred, by electing the principal men of equestrian rank to fill their places: from this is said to have been derived the custom of summoning into the senate both the patres and those who were conscripti. They called those who were elected, conscripti, enrolled, that is, as a new senate. It is surprising how much that contributed to the harmony of the state, and toward uniting the patricians and commons in friendship.

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8. After this laws were proposed by the consul, such as not only freed him from all suspicion of aiming at regal power, but had so contrary a tendency, that they even made him popular. At this time he was surnamed Publicola. Above all, the laws regarding an appeal to the people against the magistrates, and declaring accursed the life and property of any one who should have formed the design of seizing regal authority, were welcome to the people. Having passed these laws while sole consul, so that the merit of them might be exclusively his own, he then held an assembly for the election of a new colleague. Spurius Lucretius was elected consul, who, owing to his great age, and his strength being inadequate to discharge the consular duties, died within a few days. Marcus Horatius Pulvillus was chosen in the room of Lucretius. In some ancient authorities I find no mention of Lucretius as consul; they place Horatius

immediately after Brutus. My own belief is that, because no important event signalized his consulate, all record of it has been lost. The Temple of Jupiter on the Capitol had not yet been dedicated; the consuls Valerius and Horatius cast lots which should dedicate it. The duty fell by lot to Horatius. Publicola departed to conduct the war against the Veientes. The friends of Valerius were more annoyed than the circumstances demanded that the dedication of so celebrated a temple was given to Horatius. Having endeavored by every means to prevent it, when all other attempts had been tried and failed, at the moment when the consul was holding the door-post during his offering of prayer to the gods, they suddenly announced to him the startling intelligence that his son was dead, and that, while his family was polluted by death, he could not dedicate the temple. Whether he did not believe that it was true, or whether he possessed such great strength of mind, is neither handed down for certain, nor is it easy to decide. On receiving the news, holding the door-post, without turning off his attention in any other way from the business he was engaged completed the form of prayer, and dedicated the temple. Such were the transactions at home and abroad during the first year after the expulsion of the kings. After this Publius Valerius, for the second time, and Titus Lucretius were elected consuls.

9. By this time the Tarquins had fled to Lars Porsina, King of Clusium. There, mingling advice with entreaties, they now besought him not to suffer them, who were descended from the Etruscans, and of the same stock and name, to live in exile and poverty; now advised him also not to let the rising practice of expelling kings pass unpunished. Liberty in itself had charms enough; and, unless kings defended their thrones with as much vigor as the people strove for liberty, the highest was put on a level with the lowest; there would be nothing exalted in states, nothing to be distinguished above the rest; that the end of regal government, the most beautiful institution both among gods and men, was close at hand. Porsina, thinking it a great honor to the Tuscans both that there

should be a king at Rome, and that one belonging to the Etruscan nation, marched toward Rome with a hostile army. Never before on any other occasion did such terror seize the senate; so powerful was the state of Clusium at that time, and so great the renown of Porsina. Nor did they dread their enemies only, but even their own citizens, lest the common people of Rome, smitten with fear, should, by receiving the Tarquins into the city, accept peace even at the price of slavery. Many concessions were therefore granted to the people by the senate during that period by way of conciliating them. Their attention, in the first place, was directed to the markets, and persons were sent, some to the country of the Volscians, others to Cumae, to buy up corn. The privilege of selling salt also was withdrawn from private individuals because it was sold at an exorbitant price, while all the expense fell upon the state : and the people were freed from duties and taxes, inasmuch as the rich, since they were in a position to bear the burden, should contribute them; the poor, they said, paid taxes enough if they brought up their children. This indulgence on the part of the fathers accordingly kept the state so united during their subsequent adversity in time of siege and famine, that the lowest as much as the highest abhorred the name of king; nor did any single individual afterward gain such popularity by intriguing practices, as the whole body of the senate at that time by their excellent government.

10. On the approach of the enemy, they all withdrew for protection from the country into the city, and protected the city itself with military garrisons. Some parts seemed secured by the walls, others by the Tiber between. The Sublician bridge well-nigh afforded a passage to the enemy, had it not been for one man, Horatius Cocles: in him the protecting spirit of Rome on that day found a defense. He happened to be posted on guard at the bridge: and, when he saw the Janiculum taken by a sudden assault, and the enemy pouring down from thence at full speed, and his own party, in confusion, abandoning their arms and ranks, seizing hold of them one by one, standing in their way, and appealing to the faith of gods and men, he declared, that their flight would

avail them nothing if they deserted their post; if they crossed the bridge and left it behind them, there would soon be greater numbers of the enemy in the Palatium and Capitol than in the Janiculum; therefore he advised and charged them to break down the bridge, by sword, by fire, or by any violent means whatsoever; that he himself would receive the attack of the enemy as far as resistance could be offered by the person of one man. He then strode to the front entrance of the bridge, and being easily distinguished among those whose backs were seen as they gave way before the battle, he struck the enemy with amazement by his surprising boldness as he faced round in arms to engage the foe hand to hand. Two, however, a sense of shame kept back with him, Spurius Larcius and Titus Herminius, both men of high birth, and renowned for their gallant exploits. With them he for a short time stood the first storm of danger, and the severest brunt of the battle. Afterward, as those who were cutting down the bridge called upon them to retire, and only a small portion of it was left, he obliged them also to withdraw to a place of safety. Then, casting his stern eyes threateningly upon all the nobles of the Etruscans, he now challenged them singly, now reproached them all as the slaves of haughty tyrants, who, unmindful of their own freedom, came to attack that of others. For a considerable time they hesitated, looking round one upon another, waiting to begin the fight. A feeling of shame then stirred the army, and raising a shout, they hurled their weapons from all sides on their single adversary; and when they had all stuck in the shield he held before him, and he with no less obstinacy kept possession of the bridge with firm step, they now began to strive to thrust him down from it by their united attack, when the crash of the falling bridge, and at the same time the shout raised by the Romans for joy at having completed their task, checked their assault with sudden consternation. Then Cocles said, "Father Tiberinus, holy one, I pray thee, receive these arms, and this thy soldier, in thy favoring stream." So, in full armor, just as he was, he leaped into the Tiber, and, amid showers of darts that fell upon him, swam across unharmed to his comrades,

having dared a deed which is likely to obtain more fame than belief with posterity. The state showed itself grateful toward such distinguished valor; a statue of him was erected in the comitium, and as much land was given to him as he could draw a furrow round in one day with a plough. The zeal of private individuals also was conspicuous in the midst of public honors. For, notwithstanding the great scarcity, each person contributed something to him in proportion to his private means, depriving himself of his own means of support.

From BOOK TEN

40. When the consul had recounted these particulars, ascertained from the information of the deserters, to the soldiers already enraged of themselves, they then, filled with confidence in both divine and human aid, with one universal shout, demanded the battle; were dissatisfied at the action being deferred to the following day; they are impatient under the intended delay of a day and a night. Papirius, at the third watch, having received his colleague's letter, arose in silence, and sent the keeper of the chickens to take the auspices. There was no one description of men in the camp who felt not earnest wishes for the fight: the highest and the lowest were equally eager; the general watching the ardor of the soldiers, and the soldiers that of the general. This universal zeal spread even to those employed in taking the auspices; for the chickens having refused to feed, the auspex ventured to misrepresent the omen, and reported to the consul that they had fed voraciously. The consul, highly pleased, and giving notice that the auspices were excellent, and that they were to act under the direction of the gods, displayed the signal for battle. Just as he was going out to the field, he happened to receive intelligence from a deserter, that twenty cohorts of Samnites, consisting of about four hundred each, had marched towards Cominium. Lest his colleague should be ignorant of this, he instantly despatched a messenger to him, and then ordered the troops to advance with speed, having already assigned to each division of the army its proper post, and appointed general officers to

command them. The command of the right wing he gave to Lucius Volumnius, that of the left to Lucius Scipio, that of the cavalry to the other lieutenants-general, Caius Caedicius and Caius Trebonius. He ordered Spurius Nautius to take off the panniers from the mules, and to lead them round quickly, together with his auxiliary cohorts, to a rising ground in view; and there to show himself during the heat of the engagement, and to raise as much dust as possible. While the general was employed in making these dispositions, a dispute arose among the keepers of the chickens, about the auspices of the day, which was overheard by some Roman horsemen, who, deeming it a matter not to be slighted, informed Spurius Papirius, the consul's nephew, that there was a doubt about the auspices. The youth, born in an age when that sort of learning which inculcates contempt of the gods was yet unknown, examined into the affair, that he might not carry an uncertain report to the consul; and then acquainted him with it. His answer was, "I very much applaud your conduct and zeal. However, the person who officiates in taking the auspices, if he makes a false report, draws on his own head the evil portended; but to the Roman people and their army, the favourable omen reported to me is an excellent auspice." He then commanded the centurions to place the keepers of the chickens in the front of the line. The Samnites likewise brought forward their standards; their main body followed, armed and decorated in such a manner, that the enemy afforded a magnificent show. Before the shout was raised, or the battle begun, the auspex, wounded by a random cast of a javelin, fell before the standards; which being told to the consul, he said, "The gods are present in the battle; the guilty has met his punishment." While the consul uttered these words, a crow, in front of him, cawed with a clear voice; at which augury, the consul being rejoiced, and affirming, that never had the gods interposed in a more striking manner in human affairs, ordered the charge to be sounded and the shout to be raised.

41. A furious conflict now ensued, but with very unequal spirit [in the combatants]. Anger, hope, and ardour for conquest, hurried

on the Romans to battle, thirsting for their enemy's blood; while the Samnites, for the most part reluctantly, as if compelled by necessity and religious dread, rather stood on their defence, than made an attack. Nor would they, familiarized as they were to defeats, through a course of so many years, have withstood the first shout and shock of the Romans, had not another fear, operating still more powerfully in their breasts, restrained them from flying. For they had before their eyes the whole scene exhibited at the secret sacrifice, the armed priests, the promiscuous carnage of men and cattle, the altars besmeared with the blood of victims and of their murdered countrymen, the dreadful curses, and the direful form of imprecation, drawn up for calling down perdition on their family and race. Prevented by these shackles from running away, they stood, more afraid of their countrymen than of the enemy. The Romans pushed on both the wings, and in the centre, and made great havoc among them, stupified as they were, through their fears of the gods and of men. A faint resistance is now made, as by men whom fear alone prevented from running away. The slaughter had now almost reached to their standards, when, on one side, appeared a cloud of dust, as if raised by the marching of a numerous army: it was Spurius Nautius, (some say Octavius Metius,) commander of the auxiliary cohorts: for these raised a greater quantity of dust than was proportioned to the number of men, the servants of the camp, mounted on the mules, trailing boughs of trees, full of leaves, along the ground. Through the light thus obscured, arms and standards were seen in front; behind, a higher and denser cloud of dust presented the appearance of horsemen bringing up the rear. This effectually deceived, not only the Samnites, but the Romans themselves: and the consul confirmed the mistake, by calling out among the foremost battalions, so that his voice reached also the enemy, that "Cominium was taken, and that his victorious colleague was approaching," bidding his men "now make haste to complete the defeat of the enemy, before the glory should fall to the share of the other army." This he said as he sat on horseback, and then ordered the tribunes

and centurions to open passages for the horse. He had given previous directions to Trebonius and Caedicius, that, when they should see him waving the point of his spear aloft, they should incite the cavalry to charge the enemy with all possible violence. Every particular, as previously concerted, was executed with the utmost exactness. The passages were opened between the ranks, the cavalry darted through, and, with the points of their spears presented, rushed into the midst of the enemy's battalions, breaking down the ranks wherever they charged. Voluminius and Scipio seconded the blow, and taking advantage of the enemy's disorder, made a terrible slaughter. Thus attacked, the cohorts, called *linteatae*, regardless of all restraints from either gods or men, quitted their posts in confusion, the sworn and the unsworn all fled alike, no longer dreading aught but the enemies. The body of their infantry which survived the battle, were driven into the camp at Aquilonia. The nobility and cavalry directed their flight to Bovianum. The horse were pursued by the Roman horse, the infantry by their infantry, while the wings proceeded by different roads; the right, to the camp of the Samnites; the left to the city. Voluminius succeeded first in gaining possession of the camp. At the city, Scipio met a stouter resistance; not because the conquered troops there had gained courage, but because walls were a better defence against armed men than a rampart. From these they repelled the enemy with stones. Scipio, considering that unless the business were effected during their first panic, and before they could recover their spirits, the attack of so strong a town would be very tedious, asked his soldiers "if they could endure, without shame, that the other wing should already have taken the camp, and that they, after all their success, should be repulsed from the gates of the city?" Then, all of them loudly declaring their determination to the contrary, he himself advanced, the foremost, to the gate, with his shield raised over his head: the rest, following under the like cover of their shields conjoined, burst into the city, and dispersing the Samnites who were near the gate, took possession of the walls, but they ventured not to push forward into the interior

of the city in consequence of the smallness of their number.

