BOOK III.

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CHAPTER I.--For a Sect or Commonwealth to last long, it must often be brought back to its Beginnings.

Doubtless, all the things of this world have a limit set to their duration; yet those of them the bodies whereof have not been suffered to grow disordered, but have been so cared for that either no change at all has been wrought in them, or, if any, a change for the better and not for the worse, will run that course which Heaven has in a general way appointed them. And since I am now speaking of mixed bodies, for States and Sects are so to be regarded, I say that for them these are wholesome changes which bring them back to their first beginnings.

Those States consequently stand surest and endure longest which, either by the operation of their institutions can renew themselves, or come to be renewed by accident apart from any design. Nothing, however, can be clearer than that unless thus renewed these bodies do not last. Now the way to renew them is, as I have said, to bring them back to their beginnings, since all beginnings of sects, commonwealths, or kingdoms must needs have in them a certain excellence, by virtue of which they gain their first reputation and make their first growth. But because in progress of time this excellence becomes corrupted, unless something be done to restore it to what it was at first, these bodies necessarily

decay; for as the physicians tell us in speaking of the human body, "Something or other is daily added which sooner or later will require treatment."[1]

As regards commonwealths, this return to the point of departure is brought about either by extrinsic accident or by intrinsic foresight. As to the first, we have seen how it was necessary that Rome should be taken by the Gauls, that being thus in a manner reborn, she might recover life and vigour, and resume the observances of religion and justice which she had suffered to grow rusted by neglect. This is well seen from those passages of Livius wherein he tells us that when the Roman army was 'sent forth against the Gauls, and again when tribunes were created with consular authority, no religious rites whatever were celebrated, and wherein he further relates how the Romans not only failed to punish the three Fabii, who contrary to the law of nations had fought against the Gauls, but even clothed them with honour. For, from these instances, we may well infer that the rest of the wise ordinances instituted by Romulus, and the other prudent kings, had begun to be held of less account than they deserved, and less than was essential for the maintenance of good government.

And therefore it was that Rome was visited by this calamity from without, to the end that all her ordinances might be reformed, and the people taught that it behoved them not only to maintain religion and justice, but also to esteem their worthy citizens, and to prize their virtues beyond any advantages of which they themselves might seem to

have been deprived at their instance. And this, we find, was just the effect produced. For no sooner was the city retaken, than all the ordinances of the old religion were at once restored; the Fabii, who had fought in violation of the law of nations, were punished; and the worth and excellence of Camillus so fully recognized, that the senate and the whole people, laying all jealousies aside, once more committed to him the entire charge of public affairs.

It is necessary then, as I have said already, that where men dwell together in a regulated society, they be often reminded of those ordinances in conformity with which they ought to live, either by something inherent in these, or else by some external accident. A reminder is given in the former of these two ways, either by the passing of some law whereby the members of the society are brought to an account; or else by some man of rare worth arising among them, whose virtuous life and example have the same effect as a law. In a Commonwealth, accordingly, this end is served either by the virtues of some one of its citizens, or by the operation of its institutions.

The institutions whereby the Roman Commonwealth was led back to its starting point, were the tribuneship of the people and the censorship, together with all those laws which were passed to check the insolence and ambition of its citizens. Such institutions, however, require fresh life to be infused into them by the worth of some one man who fearlessly devotes himself to give them effect in opposition to the power of those who set them at defiance.

Of the laws being thus reinforced in Rome, before its capture by the Gauls, we have notable examples in the deaths of the sons of Brutus, of the Decemvirs, and of Manlius Frumentarius; and after its capture, in the deaths of Manlius Capitolinus, and of the son of Manlius Torquatus in the prosecution of his master of the knights by Papirius Cursor, and in the impeachment of the Scipios. Such examples as these, being signal and extraordinary, had the effect, whenever they took place, of bringing men back to the true standard of right; but when they came to be of rarer occurrence, they left men more leisure to grow corrupted, and were attended by greater danger and disturbance. Wherefore, between one and another of these vindications of the laws, no more than ten years, at most, ought to intervene; because after that time men begin to change their manners and to disregard the laws; and if nothing occur to recall the idea of punishment, and unless fear resume its hold on their minds, so many offenders suddenly spring up together that it is impossible to punish them without danger. And to this purport it used to be said by those who ruled Florence from the year 1434 to 1494, that their government could hardly be maintained unless it was renewed every five years; by which they meant that it was necessary for them to arouse the same terror and alarm in men's minds, as they inspired when they first assumed the government, and when all who offended against their authority were signally chastised. For when the recollection of such chastisement has died out, men are emboldened to engage in new designs, and to speak ill of their rulers; for which the only remedy is to restore things to what they were at first.

A republic may, likewise, be brought back to its original form, without recourse to ordinances for enforcing justice, by the mere virtues of a single citizen, by reason that these virtues are of such influence and authority that good men love to imitate them, and bad men are ashamed to depart from them. Those to whom Rome owed most for services of this sort, were Horatius Cocles, Mutius Scævola, the two Decii, Atilius Regulus, and divers others, whose rare excellence and generous example wrought for their city almost the same results as might have been effected by ordinances and laws. And if to these instances of individual worth had been added, every ten years, some signal enforcement of justice, it would have been impossible for Rome ever to have grown corrupted. But when both of these incitements to virtuous behavior began to recur less frequently, corruption spread, and after the time of Atilius Regulus, no like example was again witnessed. For though the two Catos came later, so great an interval had elapsed before the elder Cato appeared, and again, so long a period intervened between him and the younger, and these two, moreover, stood so much alone, that it was impossible for them, by their influence, to work any important change; more especially for the younger, who found Rome so much corrupted that he could do nothing to improve his fellow-citizens.

This is enough to say concerning commonwealths, but as regards sects, we see from the instance of our own religion that here too a like renewal is needed. For had not this religion of ours been brought back to its original condition by Saint Francis and Saint Dominick, it must soon

have been utterly extinguished. They, however, by their voluntary poverty, and by their imitation of the life of Christ, rekindled in the minds of men the dying flame of faith; and by the efficacious rules which they established averted from our Church that ruin which the ill lives of its prelates and heads must otherwise have brought upon it. For living in poverty, and gaining great authority with the people by confessing them and preaching to them, they got them to believe that it is evil to speak ill even of what is evil; and that it is good to be obedient to rulers, who, if they do amiss, may be left to the judgment of God. By which teaching these rulers are encouraged to behave as badly as they can, having no fear of punishments which they neither see nor credit. Nevertheless, it is this renewal which has maintained, and still maintains, our religion.

Kingdoms also stand in need of a like renewal, and to have their laws restored to their former force; and we see how, by attending to this, the kingdom of France has profited. For that kingdom, more than any other, lies under the control of its laws and ordinances, which are maintained by its parliaments, and more especially by the parliament of Paris, from which last they derive fresh vigour whenever they have to be enforced against any prince of the realm; for this assembly pronounces sentence even against the king himself. Heretofore this parliament has maintained its name as the fearless champion of the laws against the nobles of the land; but should it ever at any future time suffer wrongs to pass unpunished, and should offences multiply, either these will have to be corrected with great disturbance to the State, or the kingdom

itself must fall to pieces.

This, then, is our conclusion--that nothing is so necessary in any society, be it a religious sect, a kingdom, or a commonwealth, as to restore to it that reputation which it had at first, and to see that it is provided either with wholesome laws, or with good men whose actions may effect the same ends, without need to resort to external force. For although this last may sometimes, as in the case of Rome, afford an efficacious remedy, it is too hazardous a remedy to make us ever wish to employ it.

And that all may understand how much the actions of particular citizens helped to make Rome great, and how many admirable results they wrought in that city, I shall now proceed to set them forth and examine them; with which survey this Third Book of mine, and last division of the First Decade of Titus Livius, shall be brought to a close. But, although great and notable actions were done by the Roman kings, nevertheless, since history has treated of these at much length, here I shall pass them over, and say no more about these princes, save as regards certain things done by them with an eye to their private interest. I shall begin, therefore, with Brutus, the father of Roman freedom.

[Footnote 1: "Quod quotidie aggregatur aliquid quod quandoque indiget curatione."]

CHAPTER II.--That on occasion it is wise to feign Folly.

Never did any man by the most splendid achievements gain for himself so great a name for wisdom and prudence as is justly due to Junius Brutus for feigning to be a fool. And although Titus Livius mentions one cause only as having led him to assume this part, namely, that he might live more securely and look after his patrimony; yet on considering his behavior we may believe that in counterfeiting folly it was also his object to escape notice, and so find better convenience to overthrow the kings, and to free his country whenever an occasion offered. That this was in his mind is seen first of all from the interpretation he gave to the oracle of Apollo, when, to render the gods favourable to his designs, he pretended to stumble, and secretly kissed his mother earth; and, again, from this, that on the death of Lucretia, though her father, her husband, and others of her kinsmen were present, he was the first to draw the dagger from her wound, and bind the bystanders by oath never more to suffer king to reign in Rome.

From his example all who are discontented with their prince are taught, first of all, to measure, and to weigh their strength, and if they find themselves strong enough to disclose their hostility and proclaim open war, then to take that course as at once the nobler and less dangerous; but, if too weak to make open war, then sedulously to court the favour of the prince, using to that end all such methods as they may judge

needful, adapting themselves to his pleasures, and showing delight in whatever they see him delight in. Such an intimacy, in the first place, enables you to live securely, and permits you, without incurring any risk, to share the happy fortunes of the prince, while it affords you every facility for carrying out your plans. Some, no doubt, will tell you that you should not stand so near the prince as to be involved in his downfall; nor yet at such a distance that when he falls you shall be too far off to use the occasion for rising on his ruin. But although this mean course, could we only follow it, were certainly the best, yet, since I believe it to be impracticable, we must resort to the methods above indicated, and either keep altogether aloof, or else cleave closely to the prince. Whosoever does otherwise, if he be of great station, lives in constant peril; nor will it avail him to say, "I concern myself with nothing; I covet neither honours nor preferment; my sole wish is to live a quiet and peaceful life." For such excuses, though they be listened to, are not accepted; nor can any man of great position, however much and sincerely he desire it, elect to live this life of tranquillity since his professions will not be believed; so that although he might be contented to be let alone, others will not suffer him to be so. Wherefore, like Brutus, men must feign folly; and to play the part effectively, and so as to please their prince, must say, do, see, and praise things contrary to their inclinations.

But now, having spoken of the prudence shown by Brutus when he sought to recover the freedom of Rome, let us next speak of the severity which he used to maintain it.

CHAPTER III.--That to preserve a newly acquired Freedom we must slay the Sons of Brutus.

The severity used by Brutus in preserving for Rome the freedom he had won for her, was not less necessary than useful. The spectacle of a father sitting on the judgment, and not merely sentencing his own sons to death, but being himself present at their execution, affords an example rare in history. But those who study the records of ancient times will understand, that after a change in the form of a government, whether it be from a commonwealth to a tyranny or from a tyranny to a commonwealth, those who are hostile to the new order of things must always be visited with signal punishment. So that he who sets up as a tyrant and slays not Brutus, and he who creates a free government and slays not the sons of Brutus, can never maintain himself long. But since I have elsewhere treated of this matter at large, I shall merely refer to what has there been said concerning it, and shall cite here one instance only, happening in our own days, and memorable in the history of our country.

I speak of Piero Soderini, who thought by his patience and goodness to overcome the very same temper which prompted the sons of Brutus to revert to the old government, and who failed in the endeavour. For although his sagacity should have taught him the necessity, while chance

and the ambition of those who attacked him furnished him with the opportunity of making an end of them, he never could resolve to strike the blow; and not merely believed himself able to subdue disaffection by patience and kindness, and to mitigate the enmity of particular men by the rewards he held out to them, but also persuaded himself, and often declared in the presence of his friends, that he could not confront opposition openly, nor crush his adversaries, without assuming extraordinary powers and passing laws destructive of civil equality; which measures, although not afterward used by him for tyrannical ends, would so alarm the community, that after his death they would never again consent to appoint a Gonfalonier for life, an office which he judged it essential both to maintain and strengthen. Now although these scruples of his were wise and good, we ought never out of regard for what is good, to suffer an evil to run its course, since it may well happen that the evil will prevail over the good. And Piero should have believed that as his acts and intentions were to be judged by results, he might, if he lived and if fortune befriended him, have made it clear to all, that what he did was done to preserve his country, and not from personal ambition; and he might have so contrived matters that no successor of his could ever turn to bad ends the means which he had used for good ends. But he was misled by a preconceived opinion, and failed to understand that ill-will is not to be vanquished by time nor propitiated by favours. And, so, from not knowing how to resemble Brutus, he lost power, and fame, and was driven an exile from his country.

That it is as hard a matter to preserve a princedom as it is to preserve a commonwealth, will be shown in the Chapter following.

CHAPTER IV.--That an Usurper is never safe in his Princedom while those live whom he has deprived of it.

From what befell the elder Tarquin at the hands of the sons of Ancus, and Servius Tullius at the hands of Tarquin the Proud, we see what an arduous and perilous course it is to strip a king of his kingdom and yet suffer him to live on, hoping to conciliate him by benefits. We see, too, how the elder Tarquin was ruined by his belief that he held the kingdom by a just title, since it had been given him by the people and confirmed to him by the senate, never suspecting that the sons of Ancus would be so stirred by resentment that it would be impossible to content them with what contented all the rest of Rome. Servius Tullius again, was ruined through believing that he could conciliate the sons of Ancus by loading them with favours.

By the fate of the first of these kings every prince may be warned that he can never live securely in his princedom so long as those from whom he has taken it survive; while the fate of the second should remind all rulers that old injuries are not to be healed by subsequent benefits, and least of all when the new benefit is less in degree than the injury suffered. And, truly, Servius was wanting in wisdom when he imagined that the sons of Tarquin would contentedly resign themselves to be the sons-in-law of one whom they thought should be their subject. For the desire to reign is so prevailing a passion, that it penetrates the minds not only of those who are rightful heirs, but also of those who are not; as happened with the wife of the younger Tarquin, who was daughter to

Servius, but who, possessed by this madness, and setting at naught all filial duty, incited her husband to take her father's kingdom, and with it his life; so much nobler did she esteem it to be a queen than the daughter of a king. But while the elder Tarquin and Servius Tullius lost the kingdom from not knowing how to secure themselves against those whom they had deprived of it, the younger Tarquin lost it from not observing the ordinances of the old kings, as shall be shown in the following Chapter.

CHAPTER V.--How an Hereditary King may come to lose his Kingdom.

Tarquin the Proud, when he had put Servius Tullius to death, inasmuch as the latter left no heirs, took secure possession of the kingdom, having nothing to fear from any of those dangers which had stood in the way of his predecessors. And although the means whereby he made himself king were hateful and monstrous, nevertheless, had he adhered to the ancient ordinances of the earlier kings, he might have been endured, nor would he have aroused both senate and people to combine against him and deprive him of his government. It was not, therefore, because his son Sextus violated Lucretia that Tarquin was driven out, but because he himself had violated the laws of the kingdom, and governed as a tyrant, stripping the senate of all authority, and bringing everything under his own control. For all business which formerly had been transacted in public, and with the sanction of the senate, he caused to be transacted in his palace, on his own responsibility, and to the displeasure of every one else, and so very soon deprived Rome of whatever freedom she had enjoyed under her other kings.

Nor was it enough for him to have the Fathers his enemies, but he must needs also kindle the commons against him, wearing them out with mere mechanic labours, very different from the enterprises in which they had been employed by his predecessors; so that when Rome overflowed with instances of his cruelty and pride, he had already disposed the minds of all the citizens to rebel whenever they found the opportunity. Wherefore, had not occasion offered in the violence done to Lucretia,

some other had soon been found to bring about the same result. But had Tarquin lived like the other kings, when Sextus his son committed that outrage, Brutus and Collatinus would have had recourse to him to punish the offender, and not to the commons of Rome. And hence let princes learn that from the hour they first violate those laws, customs, and usages under which men have lived for a great while, they begin to weaken the foundations of their authority. And should they, after they have been stripped of that authority, ever grow wise enough to see how easily princedoms are preserved by those who are content to follow prudent counsels, the sense of their loss will grieve them far more, and condemn them to a worse punishment than any they suffer at the hands of others. For it is far easier to be loved by good men than by bad, and to obey the laws than to seek to control them.

And to learn what means they must use to retain their authority, they have only to take example by the conduct of good princes, such as Timoleon of Corinth, Aratus of Sicyone, and the like, in whose lives they will find such security and content, both on the side of the ruler and the ruled, as ought to stir them with the desire to imitate them, which, for the reasons already given, it is easy for them to do. For men, when they are well governed, ask no more, nor look for further freedom; as was the case with the peoples governed by the two whom I have named, whom they constrained to continue their rulers while they lived, though both of them sought repeatedly to return to private life.

But because, in this and the two preceding Chapters, I have noticed the

ill-will which arose against the kings, the plots contrived by the sons of Brutus against their country, and those directed against the elder Tarquin and Servius Tullius, it seems to me not out of place to discourse of these matters more at length in the following Chapter, as deserving the attention both of princes and private citizens.

CHAPTER VI.--Of Conspiracies.

It were an omission not to say something on the subject of conspiracies, these being a source of much danger both to princes and to private men. For we see that many more princes have lost their lives and states through these than in open warfare; power to wage open war upon a prince being conceded to few, whereas power to conspire against him is denied to none. On the other hand, since conspiracies are attended at every stage by difficulties and dangers, no more hazardous or desperate undertakings can be engaged in by any private citizen; whence it comes that while many conspiracies are planned, few effect their object. Wherefore, to put princes on their guard against these dangers, and to make subjects more cautious how they take part in them, and rather learn to live content under whatever government fortune has assigned them, I shall treat of them at length, without omitting any noteworthy circumstance which may serve for the instruction of either. Though, indeed, this is a golden sentence Of Cornelius Tacitus, wherein he says that "the past should have our reverence, the present our obedience,

and that we should wish for good princes, but put up with any."[1] For assuredly whosoever does otherwise is likely to bring ruin both on himself and on his country.

But, to go deeper into the matter, we have first of all to examine against whom conspiracies are directed; and we shall find that men conspire either against their country or their prince; and it is of these two kinds of conspiracy that at present I desire to speak. For of conspiracies which have for their object the surrender of cities to enemies who are besieging them, and of all others contrived for like ends, I have already said enough.

First, then, I shall treat of those conspiracies which are directed against a prince, and begin by inquiring into their causes, which are manifold, but of which one is more momentous than all the rest; I mean, the being hated by the whole community. For it may reasonably be assumed, that when a prince has drawn upon himself this universal hatred, he must also have given special offence to particular men, which they will be eager to avenge. And this eagerness will be augmented by the feeling of general ill-will which the prince is seen to have incurred. A prince ought, therefore, to avoid this load of public hatred. How he is to do so I need not stop here to explain, having discussed the matter already in another place; but if he can guard against this, offence given to particular men will expose him to but few attacks. One reason being, that there are few men who think so much of an injury done them as to run great risks to revenge it; another, that

assuming them to have both the disposition and the courage to avenge themselves, they are restrained by the universal favour which they see entertained towards the prince.

Injuries are either to a man's life, to his property, or to his honour. As regards the first, they who threaten injuries to life incur more danger than they who actually inflict them; or rather, while great danger is incurred in threatening, none at all is incurred from inflicting such injuries. For the dead are past thinking of revenge; and those who survive, for the most part leave such thoughts to the dead. But he whose life is threatened, finding himself forced by necessity either to do or suffer, becomes a man most dangerous to the prince, as shall be fully explained hereafter.

After menaces to life, injuries to property and honour stir men more than any others, and of these a Prince has most to beware. For he can never strip a man so bare of his possessions as not to leave him some weapon wherewith to redress his wrongs, nor ever so far dishonour him as to quell the stubborn spirit which prompts revenge. Of all dishonours those done to the women of a household are the worst; after which come such personal indignities as nerved the arm of Pausanias against Philip of Macedon, and of many another against other princes; and, in our own days, it was no other reason that moved Giulio Belanti to conspire against Pandolfo, lord of Siena, than that Pandolfo, who had given him his daughter to wife, afterwards took her from him, as presently shall be told. Chief among the causes which led the Pazzi to conspire against

the Medici, was the law passed by the latter depriving them of the inheritance of Giovanni Bonromei.

Another most powerful motive to conspire against a prince is the desire men feel to free their country from a usurper. This it was which impelled Brutus and Cassius to conspire against Cæsar, and countless others against such tyrants as Phalaris, Dionysius, and the like. Against this humour no tyrant can guard, except by laying down his tyranny; which as none will do, few escape an unhappy end. Whence the verses of Juvenal:--

"Few tyrants die a peaceful death, and few
The kings who visit Proserpine's dread lord,
Unscathed by wounds and blood."[2]

Great, as I have said already, are the dangers which men run in conspiring; for at all times they are in peril, whether in contriving, in executing, or after execution. And since in conspiracies either many are engaged, or one only (for although it cannot properly be said of one man that he conspires, there may exist in him the fixed resolve to put the prince to death), it is only the solitary plotter who escapes the first of these three stages of danger. For he runs no risk before executing his design, since as he imparts it to none, there is none to bring it to the ear of the prince. A deliberate resolve like this may be conceived by a person in any rank of life, high or low, base or noble, and whether or no he be the familiar of his prince. For every one must,

at some time or other, have leave to speak to the prince, and whoever has this leave has opportunity to accomplish his design. Pausanias, of whom we have made mention so often, slew Philip of Macedon as he walked between his son and his son-in-law to the temple, surrounded by a thousand armed guards. Pausanias indeed was noble, and known to the prince, but Ferdinand of Spain was stabbed in the neck by a poor and miserable Spaniard; and though the wound was not mortal, it sufficed to show that neither courage nor opportunity were wanting to the would-be-assassin. A Dervish, or Turkish priest, drew his scimitar on Bajazet, father of the Sultan now reigning, and if he did not wound him, it was from no lack either of daring or of opportunity. And I believe that there are many who in their minds desire the deed, no punishment or danger attending the mere wish, though there be but few who dare do it. For since few or none who venture, escape death, few are willing to go forward to certain destruction.

But to pass from these solitary attempts to those in which several are engaged, I affirm it to be shown by history that all such plots have been contrived by men of great station, or by those who have been on terms of close intimacy with the prince, since no others, not being downright madmen, would ever think of conspiring. For men of humble rank, and such as are not the intimates of their prince, are neither fed by the hopes nor possessed of the opportunities essential for such attempts. Because, in the first place, men of low degree will never find any to keep faith with them, none being moved to join in their schemes by those expectations which encourage men to run great risks; wherefore,

so soon as their design has been imparted to two or three, they are betrayed and ruined. Or, assuming them fortunate enough to have no traitor of their number, they will be so hampered in the execution of their plot by the want of easy access to the prince, that they are sure to perish in the mere attempt. For if even men of great position, who have ready access to the prince, succumb to the difficulties which I shall presently notice, those difficulties must be infinitely increased in the case of men who are without these advantages. And because when life and property are at stake men are not utterly reckless, on perceiving themselves to be weak they grow cautious, and though cursing the tyrant in their hearts, are content to endure him, and to wait until some one of higher station than they, comes forward to redress their wrongs. So that should we ever find these weaklings attempting anything, we may commend their courage rather than their prudence.

We see, however, that the great majority of conspirators have been persons of position and the familiars of their prince, and that their plots have been as often the consequence of excessive indulgence as of excessive injury; as when Perennius conspired against Commodus, Plautianus against Severus, and Sejanus against Tiberius; all of whom had been raised by their masters to such wealth, honours, and dignities, that nothing seemed wanting to their authority save the imperial name. That they might not lack this also, they fell to conspiring against their prince; but in every instance their conspiracies had the end which their ingratitude deserved.

The only instance in recent times of such attempts succeeding, is the conspiracy of Jacopo IV. d'Appiano against Messer Piero Gambacorti, lord of Pisa. For Jacopo, who had been bred and brought up by Piero, and loaded by him with honours, deprived him of his State. Similar to this, in our own days, was the conspiracy of Coppola against King Ferdinand of Aragon. For Coppola had reached such a pitch of power that he seemed to himself to have everything but sovereignty; in seeking to obtain which he lost his life; though if any plot entered into by a man of great position could be expected to succeed, this certainly might, being contrived, as we may say, by another king, and by one who had the amplest opportunities for its accomplishment. But that lust of power which blinds men to dangers darkened the minds of those to whom the execution of the scheme was committed; who, had they only known how to add prudence to their villainy, could hardly have missed their aim.

The prince, therefore, who would guard himself against plots, ought more to fear those men to whom he has been too indulgent, than those to whom he has done great wrongs. For the latter lack opportunities which the former have in abundance; and the moving cause is equally strong in both, lust of power being at least as strong a passion as lust of revenge. Wherefore, a prince should entrust his friends with so much authority only as leaves a certain interval between his position and theirs; that between the two something be still left them to desire. Otherwise it will be strange if he do not fare like those princes who have been named above.

But to return from this digression, I say, that having shown it to be necessary that conspirators should be men of great station, and such as have ready access to the prince, we have next to consider what have been the results of their plots, and to trace the causes which have made them succeed or fail. Now, as I have said already, we find that conspiracies are attended by danger at three stages: before during, and after their execution; for which reason very few of them have had a happy issue; it being next to impossible to surmount all these different dangers successfully. And to begin with those which are incurred beforehand, and which are graver than all the rest, I say that he must be both very prudent and very fortunate who, when contriving a conspiracy, does not suffer his secret to be discovered.

Conspiracies are discovered either by disclosures made, or by conjecture. Disclosures are made through the treachery or folly of those to whom you communicate your design. Treachery is to be looked for, because you can impart your plans only to such persons as you believe ready to face death on your behalf, or to those who are discontented with the prince. Of men whom you can trust thus implicitly, one or two may be found; but when you have to open your designs to many, they cannot all be of this nature; and their goodwill towards you must be extreme if they are not daunted by the danger and by fear of punishment. Moreover men commonly deceive themselves in respect of the love which they imagine others bear them, nor can ever be sure of it until they have put it to the proof. But to make proof of it in a matter like this is very perilous; and even if you have proved it already, and found it

true in some other dangerous trial, you cannot assume that there will be the same fidelity here, since this far transcends every other kind of danger. Again, if you gauge a man's fidelity by his discontent with the prince, you may easily deceive yourself; for so soon as you have taken this discontented man into your confidence, you have supplied him with the means whereby he may become contented; so that either his hatred of the prince must be great indeed, or your influence over him extraordinary, if it keep him faithful. Hence it comes that so many conspiracies have been discovered and crushed in their earliest stage, and that when the secret is preserved among many accomplices for any length of time, it is looked on as a miracle; as in the case of the conspiracy of Piso against Nero, and, in our own days, in that of the Pazzi against Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici; which last, though more than fifty persons were privy to it, was not discovered until it came to be carried out.

Conspiracies are disclosed through the imprudence of a conspirator when he talks so indiscreetly that some servant, or other person not in the plot, overhears him; as happened with the sons of Brutus, who, when treating with the envoys of Tarquin, were overheard by a slave, who became their accuser; or else through your own weakness in imparting your secret to some woman or boy whom you love, or to some other such light person; as when Dymnus, who was one of those who conspired with Philotas against Alexander the Great, revealed the plot to Nicomachus, a youth whom he loved, who at once told Cebalinus, and Cebalinus the king.

Of discoveries by conjecture we have an instance in the conspiracy of Piso against Nero; for Scaevinus, one of the conspirators, the day before he was to kill Nero, made his will, liberated all his slaves and gave them money, and bade Milichus, his freedman, sharpen his old rusty dagger, and have bandages ready for binding up wounds. From all which preparations Milichus conjecturing what work was in hand, accused Scaevinus before Nero; whereupon Scaevinus was arrested, and with him Natalis, another of the conspirators, who the day before had been seen to speak with him for a long time in private; and when the two differed in their account of what then passed between them, they were put to the torture and forced to confess the truth. In this way the conspiracy was brought to light, to the ruin of all concerned.

Against these causes of the discovery of conspiracies it is impossible so to guard as that either through treachery, want of caution, or levity, the secret shall not be found out, whenever more than three or four persons are privy to it. And whenever more than one conspirator is arrested, the plot is certain to be detected, because no two persons can perfectly agree in a false account of what has passed between them. If only one be taken, should he be a man of resolute courage, he may refuse to implicate his comrades; but they on their part must have no less courage, to stay quiet where they are, and not betray themselves by flight; for if courage be absent anywhere, whether in him who is taken or in those still at large, the conspiracy is revealed. And what is related by Titus Livius as having happened in the conspiracy against Hieronymus, tyrant of Syracuse, is most extraordinary, namely, that on

the capture of one of the conspirators, named Theodorus, he, with great fortitude, withheld the names of all his accomplices, and accused friends of the tyrant; while his companions, on their part, trusted so completely in his courage, that not one of them quitted Syracuse or showed any sign of fear.

All these dangers, therefore, which attend the contrivance of a plot, must be passed through before you come to its execution; or if you would escape them, you must observe the following precautions: Your first and surest, nay, to say truth, your only safeguard, is to leave your accomplices no time to accuse you; for which reason you must impart the affair to them, only at the moment when you mean it to be carried out, and not before. Those who have followed this course have wholly escaped the preliminary dangers of conspiracies, and, generally speaking, the others also; indeed, I may say that they have all succeeded, and that it is open to every prudent man to act as they did. It will be enough to give two instances of plots effected in this way. Nelematus, unable to endure the tyranny of Aristotimus, despot of Epirus, assembling many of his friends and kinsmen in his house, exhorted them to free their country; and when some of them asked for time to consider and mature their plans, he bade his slaves close the doors, and told those assembled that unless they swore to go at once and do as he directed he would make them over to Aristotimus as prisoners. Alarmed by his threats, they bound themselves by a solemn oath, and going forth at once and without delay, successfully carried out his bidding. A certain Magus having fraudulently usurped the throne of Persia; Ortanes, a grandee of

that realm, discovering the fraud, disclosed it to six others of the chief nobility, telling them that it behoved them to free the kingdom from the tyranny of this impostor. And when some among them asked for time, Darius, who was one of the six summoned by Ortanes, stood up and said, "Either we go at once to do this deed, or I go to the Magus to accuse you all." Whereupon, all rising together, without time given to any to change his mind, they went forth and succeeded in effecting their end. Not unlike these instances was the plan taken by the Etolians to rid themselves of Nabis, the Spartan tyrant, to whom, under pretence of succouring him, they sent Alasamenes, their fellow-citizen, with two hundred foot soldiers and thirty horsemen. For they imparted their real design to Alasamenes only, charging the rest, under pain of exile, to obey him in whatever he commanded. Alasamenes repaired to Sparta, and never divulged his commission till the time came for executing it; and so succeeded in putting Nabis to death.

It was, therefore, by the precautions they observed, that the persons of whom I have just now spoken escaped all those perils that attend the contrivance of conspiracies; and any following their example may expect the like good fortune. And that all may learn to do as they did I shall notice the case of Piso, of which mention has before been made. By reason of his rank, his reputation, and the intimate terms on which he lived with Nero, who trusted him without reserve, and would often come to his garden to sup with him, Piso was able to gain the friendship of many persons of spirit and courage, and well fitted in every way to take part in his plot against the emperor, which, under these circumstances,

might easily have been carried out. For when Nero came to his garden, Piso could readily have communicated his design to those friends of his, and with suitable words have encouraged them to do what, in fact, they would not have had time to withdraw from, and was certain to succeed. And were we to examine all similar attempts, it would be seen that there are few which might not have been effected in the manner shown. But since most men are very ignorant of practical affairs, they commit the gravest blunders, especially in matters which lie, as this does, a little way out of the beaten track.

Wherefore, the contriver of a plot ought never, if he can help it, to communicate his design until the moment when it is to be executed; or if he must communicate it, then to some one man only, with whom he has long been intimate, and whom he knows to be moved by the same feelings as himself. To find one such person is far easier than to find several, and, at the same time, involves less risk; for though this one man play you false, you are not left altogether without resource, as you are when your accomplices are numerous. For I have heard it shrewdly said that to one man you may impart anything, since, unless you have been led to commit yourself by writing, your denial will go as far as his assertion. Shun writing, therefore, as you would a rock, for there is nothing so damning as a letter under your own hand.

Plautianus, desiring to procure the deaths of the Emperor Severus and his son Caracalla, intrusted the business to the tribune Saturninus, who, being more disposed to betray than obey Plautianus, but at the same

time afraid that, if it came to laying a charge, Plautianus might be believed sooner than he, asked him for a written authority, that his commission might be credited. Blinded by ambition, Plautianus complied, and forthwith was accused by Saturninus and found guilty; whereas, but for that written warrant, together with other corroborating proofs, he must have escaped by his bold denial of the charge. Against the testimony of a single witness, you have thus some defence, unless convicted by your own handwriting, or by other circumstantial proof against which you must guard. A woman, named Epicharis, who had formerly been a mistress of Nero, was privy to Piso's conspiracy, and thinking it might be useful to have the help of a certain captain of triremes whom Nero had among his body-guards, she acquainted him with the plot, but not with the names of the plotters. This fellow, turning traitor, and accusing Epicharis to Nero, so stoutly did she deny the charge, that Nero, confounded by her effrontery, let her go.

In imparting a plot to a single person there are, therefore, two risks: one, that he may come forward of his own accord to accuse you; the other, that if arrested on suspicion, or on some proof of his guilt, he may, on being convicted, in the hope to escape punishment, betray you. But in neither of these dangers are you left without a defence; since you may meet the one by ascribing the charge to the malice of your accuser, and the other by alleging that the witness his been forced by torture to say what is untrue. The wisest course, however, is to impart your design to none, but to act like those who have been mentioned above; or if you impart it, then to one only: for although even in this

course there be a certain degree of danger, it is far less than when many are admitted to your confidence.

A case nearly resembling that just now noticed, is where an emergency, so urgent as to leave you no time to provide otherwise for your safety, constrains you to do to a prince what you see him minded to do to you. A necessity of this sort leads almost always to the end desired, as two instances may suffice to show. Among the closest friends and intimates of the Emperor Commodus, were two captains of the pretorian guards, Letus and Electus, while among the most favoured of his distresses was a certain Martia. But because these three often reproved him for his manner of living, as disgraceful to himself and to his station, he resolved to rid himself of them; and so wrote their names, along with those of certain others whom he meant should be put to death the next night, in a list which he placed under the pillow of his bed. But on his going to bathe, a boy, who was a favourite of his, while playing about his room and on his bed, found the list, and coming out of the chamber with it in his hand, was met by Martia, who took it from him, and on reading it and finding what it contained, sent for Letus and Electus. And all three recognizing the danger in which they stood, resolved to be beforehand with the tyrant, and losing no time, murdered him that very night.

The Emperor Caracalla, being with his armies in Mesopotamia, had with him Macrinus, who was more of a statesman than a soldier, as his prefect. But because princes who are not themselves good are always

afraid lest others treat them as they deserve, Caracalla wrote to his friend Maternianus in Rome to learn from the astrologers whether any man had ambitious designs upon the empire, and to send him word. Maternianus, accordingly, wrote back that such designs were entertained by Macrinus. But this letter, ere it reached the emperor, fell into the hands of Macrinus, who, seeing when he read it that he must either put Caracalla to death before further letters arrived from Rome, or else die himself, committed the business to a centurion, named Martialis, whom he trusted, and whose brother had been slain by Caracalla a few days before, who succeeded in killing the emperor.

We see, therefore, that an urgency which leaves no room for delay has almost the same results as the method already noticed as followed by Nelematus of Epirus. We see, too, what I remarked almost at the outset of this Discourse, that the threats of princes expose them to greater danger than the wrongs they actually inflict, and lead to more active conspiracies: and, therefore, that a prince should be careful not to threaten; since men are either to be treated kindly or else got rid of, but never brought to such a pass that they have to choose between slaying and being slain.

As to the dangers attending the execution of plots, these result either from some change made in the plan, or from a failure in courage on the part of him who is to carry it out; or else from some mistake he falls into through want of foresight, or from his not giving the affair its finishing stroke, as when some are left alive whom it was meant to put

to death. Now, nothing causes so much disturbance and hindrance in human affairs, as to be forced, at a moment's notice and without time allowed for reflection, to vary your plan of action and adopt a different one from that fixed on at the first. And if such changes cause confusion anywhere, it is in matters appertaining to war, and in enterprises of the kind we are now speaking of; for in such affairs as these, there is nothing so essential as that men be prepared to do the exact thing intrusted to them. But when men have for many days together turned their whole thoughts to doing a thing in a certain way and in a certain order, and the way and order are suddenly altered, it is impossible but that they should be disconcerted and the whole scheme ruined. For which reason, it is far better to do everything in accordance with the preconcerted plan, though it be seen to be attended with some disadvantages, than, in order to escape these, to involve yourself in an infinity of dangers. And this will happen when you depart from your original design without time given to form a new one. For when time is given you may manage as you please.

The conspiracy of the Pazzi against Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici is well known. The scheme agreed on was to give a banquet to the Cardinal S. Giorgio, at which the brothers should be put to death. To each of the conspirators a part was assigned: to one the murder, to another the seizure of the palace, while a third was to ride through the streets and call on the people to free themselves. But it so chanced that at a time when the Pazzi, the Medici, and the Cardinal were all assembled in the cathedral church of Florence to hear High Mass, it became known

that Giuliano would not be present at the banquet; whereupon the conspirators, laying their heads together, resolved to do in church what they were to have done elsewhere. This, however, deranged the whole scheme. For Giovambattista of Montesecco, would have no hand in the murder if it was to be done in a church; and the whole distribution of parts had in consequence to be changed; when, as those to whom the new parts were assigned had no time allowed them to nerve their minds to their new tasks, they managed matters so badly that they were overpowered in their attempt.

Courage fails a conspirator either from his own poorness of spirit, or from his being overcome by some feeling of reverence. For such majesty and awe attend the person of a prince, that it may well happen that he softens or dismays his executioners. When Caius Marius was taken by the people of Minturnum, the slave sent in to slay him, overawed by the bearing of the man, and by the memories which his name called up, became unnerved, and powerless to perform his office. And if this influence was exercised by one who was a prisoner, and in chains, and overwhelmed by adverse fortune, how much more must reverence be inspired by a prince who is free and uncontrolled, surrounded by his retinue and by all the pomp and splendour of his station; whose dignity confounds, and whose graciousness conciliates.

Certain persons conspiring against Sitalces, king of Thrace, fixed a day for his murder, and assembled at the place appointed, whither the king had already come. Yet none of them raised a hand to harm him, and all

departed without attempting anything against him or knowing why they refrained; each blaming the others. And more than once the same folly was repeated, until the plot getting wind, they were taken and punished for what they might have done, yet durst not do.

Two brothers of Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, conspired against him, employing as their tool a certain priest named Giennes, a singing-man in the service of the Duke. He, at their request, repeatedly brought the Duke into their company, so that they had full opportunity to make away with him. Yet neither of them ever ventured to strike the blow; till at last, their scheme being discovered, they paid the penalty of their combined cowardice and temerity. Such irresolution can only have arisen from their being overawed by the majesty of the prince, or touched by his graciousness.

In the execution of conspiracies, therefore, errors and mishaps arise from a failure of prudence or courage to which all are subject, when, losing self-control, they are led in their bewilderment to do and say what they ought not. That men are thus confounded, and thrown off their balance, could not be better shown than in the words of Titus Livius, where he describes the behaviour of Alasamenes the Etolian, at the time when he resolved on the death of Nabis the Spartan, of whom I have spoken before. For when the time to act came, and he had disclosed to his followers what they had to do, Livius represents him as "collecting his thoughts which had grown confused by dwelling on so desperate an enterprise." For it is impossible for any one, though of the most

steadfast temper and used to the sight of death and to handle deadly weapons, not to be perturbed at such a moment. For which reason we should on such occasions choose for our tools those who have had experience in similar affairs, and trust no others though reputed of the truest courage. For in these grave undertakings, no one who is without such experience, however bold and resolute, is to be trusted.

The confusion of which I speak may either cause you to drop your weapon from your hand, or to use words which will have the same results. Quintianus being commanded by Lucilla, sister of Commodus, to slay him, lay in wait for him at the entrance of the amphitheatre, and rushing upon him with a drawn dagger, cried out, "The senate sends you this;" which words caused him to be seized before his blow descended. In like manner Messer Antonio of Volterra, who as we have elsewhere seen was told off to kill Lorenzo de' Medici, exclaimed as he approached him, "Ah traitor!" and this exclamation proved the salvation of Lorenzo and the ruin of that conspiracy.

For the reasons now given, a conspiracy against a single ruler may readily break down in its execution; but a conspiracy against two rulers is not only difficult, but so hazardous that its success is almost hopeless. For to effect like actions, at the same time, in different places, is well-nigh impossible; nor can they be effected at different times, if you would not have one counteract another. So that if conspiracy against a single ruler be imprudent and dangerous, to conspire against two, is in the last degree fool-hardy and desperate.

And were it not for the respect in which I hold the historian, I could not credit as possible what Herodian relates of Plautianus, namely, that he committed to the centurion Saturninus the task of slaying single-handed both Severus and Caracalla, they dwelling in different places; for the thing is so opposed to reason that on no other authority could I be induced to accept it as true.

Certain young Athenians conspired against Diocles and Hippias, tyrants of Athens. Diocles they slew; but Hippias, making his escape, avenged him. Chion and Leonidas of Heraclea, disciples of Plato, conspired against the despots Clearchus and Satirus. Clearchus fell, but Satirus survived and avenged him. The Pazzi, of whom we have spoken so often, succeeded in murdering Giuliano only. From such conspiracies, therefore, as are directed against more heads than one, all should abstain; for no good is to be got from them, whether for ourselves, for our country, or for any one else. On the contrary, when those conspired against escape, they become harsher and more unsufferable than before, as, in the examples given, Florence, Athens, and Heraclea had cause to know. True it is that the conspiracy contrived by Pelopidas for the liberation of his country, had to encounter every conceivable hindrance, and yet had the happiest end. For Pelopidas had to deal, not with two tyrants only, but with ten; and so far from having their confidence, could not, being an outlaw, even approach them. And yet he succeeded in coming to Thebes, in putting the tyrants to death, and in freeing his country. But whatever he did was done with the aid of one of the counsellors of the tyrants, a certain Charon, through whom he had all facilities for

executing his design. Let none, however, take this case as a pattern; for that it was in truth a desperate attempt, and its success a marvel, was and is the opinion of all historians, who speak of it as a thing altogether extraordinary and unexampled.

The execution of a plot may be frustrated by some groundless alarm or unforeseen mischance occurring at the very moment when the scheme is to be carried out. On the morning on which Brutus and his confederates were to slay Cæsar, it so happened that Cæsar talked for a great while with Cneus Pompilius Lenas, one of the conspirators; which some of the others observing, were in terror that Pompilius was divulging the conspiracy to Cæsar; whose life they would therefore have attempted then and there, without waiting his arrival in the senate house, had they not been reassured by seeing that when the conference ended he showed no sign of unusual emotion. False alarms of this sort are to be taken into account and allowed for, all the more that they are easily raised. For he who has not a clear conscience is apt to assume that others are speaking of him. A word used with a wholly different purpose, may throw his mind off its balance and lead him to fancy that reference is intended to the matter he is engaged on, and cause him either to betray the conspiracy by flight, or to derange its execution by anticipating the time fixed. And the more there are privy to the conspiracy, the likelier is this to happen.

As to the mischances which may befall, since these are unforeseen, they can only be instanced by examples which may make men more cautious.

Giulio Belanti of Siena, of whom I have spoken before, from the hate he bore Pandolfo Petrucci, who had given him his daughter to wife and afterwards taken her from him, resolved to murder him, and thus chose his time. Almost every day Pandolfo went to visit a sick kinsman, passing the house of Giulio on the way, who, remarking this, took measures to have his accomplices ready in his house to kill Pandolfo as he passed. Wherefore, placing the rest armed within the doorway, one he stationed at a window to give the signal of Pandolfo's approach. It so happened however, that as he came nigh the house, and after the look-out had given the signal, Pandolfo fell in with a friend who stopped him to converse; when some of those with him, going on in advance, saw and heard the gleam and clash of weapons, and so discovered the ambuscade; whereby Pandolfo was saved, while Giulio with his companions had to fly from Siena. This plot accordingly was marred, and Giulio's schemes baulked, in consequence of a chance meeting. Against such accidents, since they are out of the common course of things, no provision can be made. Still it is very necessary to take into account all that may happen, and devise what remedies you can.

It now only remains for us to consider those dangers which follow after the execution of a plot. These in fact resolve themselves into one, namely, that some should survive who will avenge the death of the murdered prince. The part of avenger is likely to be assumed by a son, a brother, or other kinsman of the deceased, who in the ordinary course of events might have looked to succeed to the princedom. And such persons are suffered to live, either from inadvertence, or from some of the

causes noted already, as when Giovann' Andrea of Lampognano, with the help of his companions, put to death the Duke of Milan. For the son and two brothers of the Duke, who survived him, were able to avenge his death. In cases like this, indeed, the conspirators may be held excused, since there is nothing they can do to help themselves. But when from carelessness and want of due caution some one is allowed to live whose death ought to have been secured, there is no excuse. Certain conspirators, after murdering the lord, Count Girolamo of Forli, made prisoners of his wife and of his children who were still very young. By thinking they could not be safe unless they got possession of the citadel, which the governor refused to surrender, they obtained a promise from Madonna Caterina, for so the Countess was named, that on their permitting her to enter the citadel she would cause it to be given up to them, her children in the mean time remaining with them as hostages. On which undertaking they suffered her to enter the citadel. But no sooner had she got inside than she fell to upbraid them from the walls with the murder of her husband, and to threaten them with every kind of vengeance; and to show them how little store she set upon her children, told them scoffingly that she knew how others could be got. In the end, the rebels having no leader to advise them, and perceiving too late the error into which they had been betrayed, had to pay the penalty of their rashness by perpetual banishment.

But of all the dangers which may follow on the execution of a plot, none is so much or so justly to be feared as that the people should be well affected to the prince whom you have put to death. For against this

danger conspirators have no resource which can ensure their safety. Of this we have example in the case of Cæsar, who as he had the love of the Roman people was by them avenged; for they it was who, by driving out the conspirators from Rome, were the cause that all of them, at different times and in different places, came to violent ends.

Conspiracies against their country are less danger for those who take part in them than conspiracies against princes; since there is less risk beforehand, and though there be the same danger in their execution, there is none afterwards. Beforehand, the risks are few, because a citizen may use means for obtaining power without betraying his wishes or designs to any; and unless his course be arrested, his designs are likely enough to succeed; nay, though laws be passed to restrain him, he may strike out a new path. This is to be understood of a commonwealth which has to some degree become corrupted; for in one wherein there is no taint of corruption, there being no soil in which evil seed can grow, such designs will never suggest themselves to any citizen.

In a commonwealth, therefore, a citizen may by many means and in many ways aspire to the princedom without risking destruction, both because republics are slower than princes are to take alarm, are less suspicious and consequently less cautious, and because they look with greater reverence upon their great citizens, who are in this way rendered bolder and more reckless in attacking them. Any one who has read Sallust's account of the conspiracy of Catiline, must remember how, when that conspiracy was discovered, Catiline not only remained in Rome, but even

made his appearance in the senatehouse, where he was suffered to address the senate in the most insulting terms,--so scrupulous was that city in protecting the liberty of all its citizens. Nay, even after he had left Rome and placed himself at the head of his army, Lentulus and his other accomplices would not have been imprisoned, had not letters been found upon them clearly establishing their guilt. Hanno, the foremost citizen of Carthage, aspiring to absolute power, on the occasion of the marriage of a daughter contrived a plot for administering poison to the whole senate and so making himself prince. The scheme being discovered, the senate took no steps against him beyond passing a law to limit the expense of banquets and marriage ceremonies. So great was the respect they paid to his quality.

True, the execution of a plot against your country is attended with greater difficulty and danger, since it seldom happens that, in conspiring against so many, your own resources are sufficient by themselves; for it is not every one who, like Cæsar, Agathocles, or Cleomenes, is at the head of an army, so as to be able at a stroke, and by open force to make himself master of his country. To such as these, doubtless, the path is safe and easy enough; but others who have not such an assembled force ready at their command, must effect their ends either by stratagem and fraud, or with the help of foreign troops. Of such stratagems and frauds we have an instance in the case of Pisistratus the Athenian, who after defeating the Megarians and thereby gaining the favour of his fellow-citizens, showed himself to them one morning covered with wounds and blood, declaring that he had been thus

outraged through the jealousy of the nobles, and asking that he might have an armed guard assigned for his protection. With the authority which this lent him, he easily rose to such a pitch of power as to become tyrant of Athens. In like manner Pandolfo Petrucci, on his return with the other exiles to Siena, was appointed the command of the public guard, as a mere office of routine which others had declined. Very soon, however, this armed force gave him so much importance that he became the supreme ruler of the State. And many others have followed other plans and methods, and in the course of time, and without incurring danger, have achieved their aim.

Conspirators against their country, whether trusting to their own forces or to foreign aid, have had more or less success in proportion as they have been favoured by Fortune. Catiline, of whom we spoke just now, was overthrown. Hanno, who has also been mentioned, failing to accomplish his object by poison, armed his partisans to the number of many thousands; but both he and they came to an ill end. On the other hand, certain citizens of Thebes conspiring to become its tyrants, summoned a Spartan army to their assistance, and usurped the absolute control of the city. In short, if we examine all the conspiracies which men have engaged in against their country, we shall find that few or none have been quelled in their inception, but that all have either succeeded, or have broken down in their execution. Once executed, they entail no further risks beyond those implied in the nature of a princedom. For the man who becomes a tyrant incurs all the natural and ordinary dangers in which a tyranny involves him, and has no remedies against them save

those of which I have already spoken.

This is all that occurs to me to say on the subject of conspiracies. If I have noticed those which have been carried out with the sword rather than those wherein poison has been the instrument, it is because, generally speaking, the method of proceeding is the same in both. It is true, nevertheless, that conspiracies which are to be carried out by poison are, by reason of their uncertainty, attended by greater danger. For since fewer opportunities offer for their execution, you must have an understanding with persons who can command opportunities. But it is dangerous to have to depend on others. Again, many causes may hinder a poisoned draught from proving mortal; as when the murderers of Commodus, on his vomiting the poison given him, had to strangle him.

Princes, then, have no worse enemy than conspiracy, for when a conspiracy is formed against them, it either carries them off, or discredits them: since, if it succeeds, they die; while, if it be discovered, and the conspirators be put to death themselves, it will always be believed that the whole affair has been trumped up by the prince that he might glut his greed and cruelty with the goods and blood of those whom he has made away with. Let me not, however, forget to warn the prince or commonwealth against whom a conspiracy is directed, that on getting word of it, and before taking any steps to punish it, they endeavour, as far as they can, to ascertain its character, and after carefully weighing the strength of the conspirators with their own, on finding it preponderate, never suffer their knowledge of the plot to

appear until they are ready with a force sufficient to crush it. For otherwise, to disclose their knowledge will only give the signal for their destruction. They must strive therefore to seem unconscious of what is going on; for conspirators who see themselves detected are driven forward by necessity and will stick at nothing. Of this precaution we have an example in Roman history, when the officers of the two legions, who, as has already been mentioned, were left behind to defend the Capuans from the Samnites, conspired together against the Capuans. For on rumours of this conspiracy reaching Rome, Rutilius the new consul was charged to see to it; who, not to excite the suspicions of the conspirators, publicly gave out that by order of the senate the Capuan legions were continued in their station. The conspirators believing this, and thinking they would have ample time to execute their plans, made no effort to hasten matters, but remained at their ease, until they found that the consul was moving one of the two legions to a distance from the other. This arousing their suspicion, led them to disclose their designs and endeavour to carry them out.

Now, we could have no more instructive example than this in whatever way we look at it. For it shows how slow men are to move in those matters wherein time seems of little importance, and how active they become when necessity urges them. Nor can a prince or commonwealth desiring for their own ends to retard the execution of a conspiracy, use any more effectual means to do so, than by artfully holding out to the conspirators some special opportunity as likely soon to present itself; awaiting which, and believing they have time and to spare for what they

have to do, they will afford that prince or commonwealth all the leisure needed to prepare for their punishment. Whosoever neglects these precautions hastens his own destruction, as happened with the Duke of Athens, and with Guglielmo de' Pazzi. For the Duke, who had made himself tyrant of Florence, on learning that he was being conspired against, without further inquiry into the matter, caused one of the conspirators to be seized; whereupon the rest at once armed themselves and deprived him of his government. Guglielmo, again, being commissary in the Val di Chiana in the year 1501, and learning that a conspiracy was being hatched in Arezzo to take the town from the Florentines and give it over to the Vitelli, repaired thither with all haste; and without providing himself with the necessary forces or giving a thought to the strength of the conspirators, on the advice of the bishop, his son, had one of them arrested. Which becoming known to the others, they forthwith rushed to arms, and taking the town from the Florentines, made Guglielmo their prisoner. Where, however, conspiracies are weak, they may and should be put down without scruple or hesitation.

Two methods, somewhat opposed to one another, which have occasionally been followed in dealing with conspiracies, are in no way to be commended. One of these was that adopted by the Duke of Athens, of whom I have just now spoken, who to have it thought that he confided in the goodwill of the Florentines, caused a certain man who gave information of a plot against him, to be put to death. The other was that followed by Dion the Syracusan, who, to sound the intentions of one whom he suspected, arranged with Calippus, whom he trusted, to pretend to get up

a conspiracy against him. Neither of these tyrants reaped any advantage from the course he followed. For the one discouraged informers and gave heart to those who were disposed to conspire, the other prepared an easy road to his own death, or rather was prime mover in a conspiracy against himself. As the event showed. For Calippus having free leave to plot against Dion, plotted to such effect, that he deprived him at once of his State and life.

[Footnote 1: Tac. Hist. iv. 8.]

[Footnote 2: Ad generum Cereris sine caede et vulnere pauci
Descendunt reges, et sicca morte tiranni.
Juv. Sat. x. 112.]

CHAPTER VII.--Why it is that changes from Freedom to Servitude, and from Servitude to Freedom, are sometimes made without Bloodshed, but at other times reek with Blood.

Since we find from history that in the countless changes which have been made from freedom to servitude and from servitude to freedom, sometimes an infinite multitude have perished, while at others not a soul has suffered (as when Rome made her change from kings to consuls, on which occasion none was banished save Tarquin, and no harm was done to any other), it may perhaps be asked, how it happens that of these revolutions, some have been attended by bloodshed and others not.

The answer I take to be this. The government which suffers change either has or has not had its beginning in violence. And since the government which has its beginning in violence must start by inflicting injuries on many, it must needs happen that on its downfall those who were injured will desire to avenge themselves; from which desire for vengeance the slaughter and death of many will result. But when a government originates with, and derives its authority from the whole community, there is no reason why the community, if it withdraw that authority, should seek to injure any except the prince from whom it withdraws it. Now the government of Rome was of this nature, and the expulsion of the Tarquins took place in this way. Of a like character was the government of the Medici in Florence, and, accordingly, upon their overthrow in the year 1494, no injury was done to any save themselves.

In such cases, therefore, the changes I speak of do not occasion any very great danger. But the changes wrought by men who have wrongs to revenge, are always of a most dangerous kind, and such, to say the least, as may well cause dismay in the minds of those who read of them. But since history abounds with instances of such changes I need say no more about them.

CHAPTER VIII.--That he who would effect Changes in a Commonwealth, must give heed to its Character and Condition

I have said before that a bad citizen cannot work grave mischief in a commonwealth which has not become corrupted. This opinion is not only supported by the arguments already advanced, but is further confirmed by the examples of Spurius Cassius and Manlius Capitolinus. For Spurius, being ambitious, and desiring to obtain extraordinary authority in Rome, and to win over the people by loading them with benefits (as, for instance, by selling them those lands which the Romans had taken from the Hernici,) his designs were seen through by the senate, and laid him under such suspicion, that when in haranguing the people he offered them the money realized by the sale of the grain brought from Sicily at the public expense, they would have none of it, believing that he offered it as the price of their freedom. Now, had the people been corrupted, they would not have refused this bribe, but would have opened rather than closed the way to the tyranny.

The example of Manlius is still more striking. For in his case we see what excellent gifts both of mind and body, and what splendid services to his country were afterwards cancelled by that shameful eagerness to reign which we find bred in him by his jealousy of the honours paid Camillus. For so darkened did his mind become, that without reflecting what were the institutions to which Rome was accustomed, or testing the material he had to work on, when he would have seen that it was still unfit to be moulded to evil ends, he set himself to stir up tumults

against the senate and against the laws of his country.

And herein we recognize the excellence of this city of Rome, and of the materials whereof it was composed. For although the nobles were wont to stand up stoutly for one another, not one of them stirred to succour Manlius, and not one of his kinsfolk made any effort on his behalf, so that although it was customary, in the case of other accused persons, for their friends to put on black and sordid raiment, with all the other outward signs of grief, in order to excite pity for the accused, none was seen to do any of these things for Manlius. Even the tribunes of the people, though constantly ready to promote whatever courses seemed to favour the popular cause, and the more vehemently the more they seemed to make against the nobles, in this instance sided with the nobles to put down the common enemy. Nay the very people themselves, keenly alive to their own interests, and well disposed towards any attempt to damage the nobles, though they showed Manlius many proofs of their regard, nevertheless, when he was cited by the tribunes to appear before them and submit his cause for their decision, assumed the part of judges and not of defenders, and without scruple or hesitation sentenced him to die. Wherefore, I think, that there is no example in the whole Roman history which serves so well as this to demonstrate the virtues of all ranks in that republic. For not a man in the whole city bestirred himself to shield a citizen endowed with every great quality, and who, both publicly and privately, had done so much that deserved praise. But in all, the love of country outweighed every other thought, and all looked less to his past deserts than to the dangers which his present

conduct threatened; from which to relieve themselves they put him to death. "Such," says Livius, "was the fate of a man worthy our admiration had he not been born in a free State."

And here two points should be noted. The first, that glory is to be sought by different methods in a corrupt city, and in one which still preserves its freedom. The second, which hardly differs from the first, that in their actions, and especially in matters of moment, men must have regard to times and circumstances and adapt themselves thereto. For those persons who from an unwise choice, or from natural inclination, run counter to the times will for the most part live unhappily, and find all they undertake issue in failure; whereas those who accommodate themselves to the times are fortunate and successful. And from the passage cited we may plainly infer, that had Manlius lived in the days of Marius and Sylla, when the body of the State had become corrupted, so that he could have impressed it with the stamp of his ambition, he might have had the same success as they had, and as those others had who after them aspired to absolute power; and, conversely, that if Sylla and Marius had lived in the days of Manlius, they must have broken down at the very beginning of their attempts.

For one man, by mischievous arts and measures, may easily prepare the ground for the universal corruption of a city; but no one man in his lifetime can carry that corruption so far, as himself to reap the harvest; or granting that one man's life might be long enough for this purpose, it would be impossible for him, having regard to the

ordinary habits of men, who grow impatient and cannot long forego the gratification of their desires, to wait until the corruption was complete. Moreover, men deceive themselves in respect of their own affairs, and most of all in respect of those on which they are most bent; so that either from impatience or from self-deception, they rush upon undertakings for which the time is not ripe, and so come to an ill end. Wherefore to obtain absolute authority in a commonwealth and to destroy its liberties, you must find the body of the State already corrupted, and corrupted by a gradual wasting continued from generation to generation; which, indeed, takes place necessarily, unless, as has been already explained, the State be often reinforced by good examples, or brought back to its first beginnings by wise laws.

Manlius, therefore, would have been a rare and renowned man had he been born in a corrupt city; and from his example we see that citizens seeking to introduce changes in the form of their government, whether in favour of liberty or despotism, ought to consider what materials they have to deal with, and then judge of the difficulty of their task. For it is no less arduous and dangerous to attempt to free a people disposed to live in servitude, than to enslave a people who desire to live free.

And because it has been said above, that in their actions men must take into account the character of the times in which they live, and guide themselves accordingly, I shall treat this point more fully in the following Chapter.

CHAPTER IX.--That to enjoy constant good Fortune we must change with the Times.

I have repeatedly noted that the good or bad fortune of men depends on whether their methods of acting accord with the character of the times. For we see that in what they do some men act impulsively, others warily and with caution. And because, from inability to preserve the just mean, they in both of these ways overstep the true limit, they commit mistakes in one direction or the other. He, however, will make fewest mistakes, and may expect to prosper most, who, while following the course to which nature inclines him, finds, as I have said, his method of acting in accordance with the times in which he lives.

All know that in his command of the Roman armies, Fabius Maximus displayed a prudence and caution very different from the audacity and hardihood natural to his countrymen; and it was his good fortune that his methods suited with the times. For Hannibal coming into Italy in all the flush of youth and recent success, having already by two defeats stripped Rome of her best soldiers and filled her with dismay, nothing could have been more fortunate for that republic than to find a general able, by his deliberateness and caution, to keep the enemy at bay. Nor, on the other hand, could Fabius have fallen upon times better suited to the methods which he used, and by which he crowned himself with glory. That he acted in accordance with his natural bent, and not from a

reasoned choice, we may gather from this, that when Scipio, to bring the war to an end, proposed to pass with his army into Africa, Fabius, unable to depart from his characteristic methods and habits, strenuously opposed him; so that had it rested with him, Hannibal might never have left Italy. For he perceived not that the times had changed, and that with them it was necessary to change the methods of prosecuting the war. Had Fabius, therefore, been King of Rome, he might well have caused the war to end unhappily, not knowing how to accommodate his methods to the change in the times. As it was, he lived in a commonwealth in which there were many citizens, and many different dispositions; and which as it produced a Fabius, excellent at a time when it was necessary to protract hostilities, so also, afterwards gave birth to a Scipio, at a time suited to bring them to a successful close.

And hence it comes that a commonwealth endures longer, and has a more sustained good fortune than a princedom, because from the diversity in the characters of its citizens, it can adapt itself better than a prince can to the diversity of times. For, as I have said before, a man accustomed to follow one method, will never alter it; whence it must needs happen that when times change so as no longer to accord with his method, he will be ruined. Piero Soderini, of whom I have already spoken, was guided in all his actions by patience and gentleness, and he and his country prospered while the times were in harmony with these methods. But, afterwards, when a time came when it behoved him to have done with patience and gentleness, he knew not how to drop them, and was ruined together with his country. Pope Julius II., throughout the whole

of his pontificate, was governed by impulse and passion, and because the times were in perfect accord, all his undertakings prospered. But had other times come requiring other qualities, he could not have escaped destruction, since he could not have changed his methods nor his habitual line of conduct.

As to why such changes are impossible, two reasons may be given. One is that we cannot act in opposition to the bent of our nature. The other, that when a man has been very successful while following a particular method, he can never be convinced that it is for his advantage to try some other. And hence it results that a man's fortunes vary, because times change and he does not change with them. So, too, with commonwealths, which, as we have already shown at length, are ruined from not altering their institutions to suit the times. And commonwealths are slower to change than princes are, changes costing them more effort; because occasions must be waited for which shall stir the whole community, and it is not enough that a single citizen alters his method of acting.

But since I have made mention of Fabius Maximus who wore out Hannibal by keeping him at bay, I think it opportune to consider in the following Chapter whether a general who desires to engage his enemy at all risks, can be prevented by that enemy from doing so.

CHAPTER X.--That a Captain cannot escape Battle when his Enemy forces it on him at all risks.

"Cneius Sulpitius when appointed dictator against the Gauls, being unwilling to tempt Fortune by attacking an enemy whom delay and a disadvantageous position would every day render weaker, protracted the war."

When a mistake is made of a sort that all or most men are likely to fall into, I think it not amiss to mark it again and again with disapproval. Wherefore, although I have already shown repeatedly how in affairs of moment the actions of the moderns conform not to those of antiquity, still it seems to me not superfluous, in this place, to say the same thing once more. For if in any particular the moderns have deviated from the methods of the ancients, it is especially in their methods of warfare, wherein not one of those rules formerly so much esteemed is now attended to. And this because both princes and commonwealths have devolved the charge of such matters upon others, and, to escape danger, have kept aloof from all military service; so that although one or another of the princes of our times may occasionally be seen present in person with his army, we are not therefore to expect from him any further praiseworthy behaviour. For even where such personages take part in any warlike enterprise, they do so out of ostentation and from no nobler motive; though doubtless from sometimes seeing their soldiers face to face, and from retaining to themselves the title of command, they are likely to make fewer blunders than we find made by republics,

and most of all by the republics of Italy, which though altogether dependent upon others, and themselves utterly ignorant of everything relating to warfare, do yet, that they may figure as the commanders of their armies, take upon them to direct their movements, and in doing so commit countless mistakes; some of which have been considered elsewhere but one is of such importance as to deserve notice here.

When these sluggard princes or effeminate republics send forth any of their Captains, it seems to them that the wisest instruction they can give him is to charge him on no account to give battle, but, on the contrary, to do what he can to avoid fighting. Wherein they imagine themselves to imitate the prudence of Fabius Maximus, who by protracting the war with Hannibal, saved the Roman commonwealth; not perceiving that in most instances such advice to a captain is either useless or hurtful. For the truth of the matter is, that a captain who would keep the field, cannot decline battle when his adversary forces it on him at all hazards. So that the instruction to avoid battle is but tantamount to saying, "You shall engage when it pleases your enemy, and not when it suits yourself." For if you would keep the field and yet avoid battle, the only safe course is to interpose a distance of at least fifty miles between you and your enemy, and afterwards to maintain so vigilant a look-out, that should he advance you will have time to make your retreat. Another method is to shut yourself up in some town. But both of these methods are extremely disadvantageous. For by following the former, you leave your country a prey to the enemy, and a valiant prince would far sooner risk the chances of battle than prolong a war in a

manner so disastrous to his subjects; while by adopting the latter method, and shutting yourself up in a town with your army, there is manifest danger of your being besieged, and presently reduced by famine and forced to surrender. Wherefore it is most mischievous to seek to avoid battle in either of these two ways.

To intrench yourself in a strong position, as Fabius was wont to do, is a good method when your army is so formidable that the enemy dare not advance to attack you in your intrenchments; yet it cannot truly be said that Fabius avoided battle, but rather that he sought to give battle where he could do so with advantage. For had Hannibal desired to fight, Fabius would have waited for him and fought him. But Hannibal never dared to engage him on his own ground. So that an engagement was avoided as much by Hannibal as by Fabius, since if either had been minded to fight at all hazards the other would have been constrained to take one of three courses, that is to say, one or other of the two just now mentioned, or else to retreat. The truth of this is confirmed by numberless examples, and more particularly by what happened in the war waged by the Romans against Philip of Macedon, the father of Perseus. For Philip being invaded by the Romans, resolved not to give them battle; and to avoid battle, sought at first to do as Fabius had done in Italy, posting himself on the summit of a hill, where he intrenched himself strongly, thinking that the Romans would not venture to attack him there. But they advancing and attacking him in his intrenchments, drove him from his position; when, unable to make further resistance, he fled with the greater part of his army, and was only saved from utter

destruction by the difficulty of the ground, which made it impossible for the Romans to pursue him.

Philip, therefore, who had no mind to fight, encamping too near the Romans, was forced to fly; and learning from this experience that to escape fighting it was not enough for him to intrench himself on a hill, yet not choosing to shut himself up in a walled town, he was constrained to take the other alternative of keeping at a distance of many miles from the Roman legions. Accordingly, when the Romans entered one province, he betook himself to another, and when they left a province he entered it. But perceiving that by protracting the war in this way, his condition grew constantly worse, while his subjects suffered grievously, now from his own troops, at another time from those of the enemy, he at last resolved to hazard battle, and so came to a regular engagement with the Romans.

It is for your interest, therefore, not to fight, when you possess the same advantages as Fabius, or as Cneius Sulpitius had; in other words, when your army is so formidable in itself that the enemy dare not attack you in your intrenchments, and although he has got within your territory has yet gained no footing there, and suffers in consequence from the want of necessary supplies. In such circumstances delay is useful, for the reasons assigned by Titus Livius when speaking of Sulpitius. In no other circumstances, however, can an engagement be avoided without dishonour or danger. For to retire as Philip did, is nothing else than defeat; and the disgrace is greater in proportion as your valour has

been less put to the proof. And if Philip was lucky enough to escape, another, not similarly favoured by the nature of the ground, might not have the same good fortune.

That Hannibal was not a master in the arts of warfare there is none will venture to maintain. Wherefore, when he had to encounter Scipio in Africa, it may be assumed that had he seen any advantage in prolonging the war he would have done so; and, possibly, being a skilful captain and in command of a valiant army, he might have been able to do what Fabius did in Italy. But since he took not that course, we may infer that he was moved by sufficient reasons. For the captain who has got an army together, and perceives that from want of money or friends he cannot maintain it long, must be a mere madman if he do not at once, and before his army melts away, try the fortunes of battle; since he is certain to lose by delay, while by fighting he may chance to succeed. And there is this also to be kept in view, that we must strive, even if we be defeated, to gain glory; and that more glory is to be won in being beaten by force, than in a defeat from any other cause. And this we may suppose to have weighed with Hannibal. On the other hand, supposing Hannibal to have declined battle, Scipio, even if he had lacked courage to follow him up and attack him in his intrenched camp, would not have suffered thereby; for as he had defeated Syphax, and got possession of many of the African towns, he could have rested where he was in the same security and with the same convenience as if he had been in Italy. But this was not the case with Hannibal when he had to encounter Fabius, nor with the Gauls when they were opposed to Sulpitius.

Least of all can he decline battle who invades with his army the country of another; for seeking to enter his enemy's country, he must fight whenever the enemy comes forward to meet him; and is under still greater necessity to fight, if he undertake the siege of any town. As happened in our own day with Duke Charles of Burgundy, who, when beleaguering Morat, a town of the Swiss, was by them attacked and routed; or as happened with the French army encamped against Novara, which was in like manner defeated by the Swiss.

CHAPTER XI.--That one who has to contend with many, though he be weaker than they, will prevail if he can withstand their first onset.

The power exercised in Rome by the tribunes of the people was great, and, as I have repeatedly explained, was necessary, since otherwise there would have been no check on the ambition of the nobles, and the commonwealth must have grown corrupted far sooner than it did. But because, as I have said elsewhere, there is in everything a latent evil peculiar to it, giving rise to new mischances, it becomes necessary to provide against these by new ordinances. The authority of the tribunes, therefore, being insolently asserted so as to become formidable to the nobility and to the entire city, disorders dangerous to the liberty of the State must thence have resulted, had not a method been devised by Appius Claudius for controlling the ambition of the tribunes. This was, to secure that there should always be one of their number timid, or venal, or else a lover of the general good, who could be influenced to oppose the rest whenever these sought to pass any measure contrary to the wishes of the senate. This remedy was a great restraint on the excessive authority of the tribunes, and on many occasions proved serviceable to Rome.

I am led by this circumstance to remark, that when many powerful persons are united against one, who, although no match for the others collectively, is also powerful, the chances are more in favour of this single and less I powerful person, than of the many who together are much stronger. For setting aside an infinity of accidents which can be

turned to better account by one than by many, it will always happen that, by exercising a little dexterity, the one will be able to divide the many, and weaken the force which was strong while it was united. In proof whereof, I shall not refer to ancient examples, though many such might be cited, but content myself with certain modern instances taken from the events of our own times.

In the year 1484, all Italy combined against the Venetians, who finding their position desperate, and being unable to keep their army any longer in the field, bribed Signer Lodovico, who then governed Milan, and so succeeded in effecting a settlement, whereby they not only recovered the towns they had lost, but also obtained for themselves a part of the territories of Ferrara; so that those were by peace the gainers, who in war had been the losers. Not many years ago the whole world was banded together against France; but before the war came to a close, Spain breaking with the confederates and entering into a separate treaty with France, the other members of the league also, were presently forced to make terms.

Wherefore we may always assume when we see a war set on foot by many against one, that this one, if he have strength to withstand the first shock, and can temporize and wait his opportunity, is certain to prevail. But unless he can do this he runs a thousand dangers: as did the Venetians in the year 1508, who, could they have temporized with the French, and so got time to conciliate some of those who had combined against them, might have escaped the ruin which then overtook them.

But not possessing such a strong army as would have enabled them to temporize with their enemies, and consequently not having the time needed for gaining any to their side, they were undone. Yet we know that the Pope, as soon as he had obtained what he wanted, made friends with them, and that Spain did the like; and that both the one and the other of these powers would gladly have saved the Lombard territory for themselves, nor would, if they could have helped it, have left it to France, so as to augment her influence in Italy.

The Venetians, therefore, should have given up a part to save the rest; and had they done so at a time when the surrender would not have seemed to be made under compulsion, and before any step had been taken in the direction of war, it would have been a most prudent course; although discreditable and probably of little avail after war had been begun. But until the war broke out, few of the Venetian citizens recognized the danger, fewer still the remedy, and none ventured to prescribe it.

But to return to the point whence we started, I say that the same safeguard for their country which the Roman senate found against the ambition of the tribunes in their number, is within the reach of the prince who is attacked by many adversaries, if he only know to use prudently those methods which promote division.

CHAPTER XII.--A prudent Captain will do what he can to make it necessary for his own Soldiers to fight, and to relieve his Enemy from that necessity.

Elsewhere I have noted how greatly men are governed in what they do by Necessity, and how much of their renown is due to her guidance, so that it has even been said by some philosophers, that the hands and tongues of men, the two noblest instruments of their fame, would never have worked to perfection, nor have brought their labours to that pitch of excellence we see them to have reached, had they not been impelled by this cause. The captains of antiquity, therefore, knowing the virtues of this necessity, and seeing the steadfast courage which it gave their soldiers in battle, spared no effort to bring their armies under its influence, while using all their address to loosen its hold upon their enemies. For which reason, they would often leave open to an adversary some way which they might have closed, and close against their own men some way they might have left open.

Whosoever, therefore, would have a city defend itself stubbornly, or an army fight resolutely in the field, must before all things endeavour to impress the minds of those whom he commands with the belief that no other course is open to them. In like manner a prudent captain who undertakes the attack of a city, will measure the ease or difficulty of his enterprise, by knowing and considering the nature of the necessity which compels the inhabitants to defend it; and where he finds that necessity to be strong, he may infer that his task will be difficult,

but if otherwise, that it will be easy.

And hence it happens that cities are harder to be recovered after a revolt than to be taken for the first time. Because on a first attack, having no occasion to fear punishment, since they have given no ground of offence, they readily surrender; but when they have revolted, they know that they have given ground of offence, and, fearing punishment, are not so easily brought under. A like stubbornness grows from the natural hostility with which princes or republics who are neighbours regard one another; which again is caused by the desire to dominate over those who live near, or from jealousy of their power. This is more particularly the case with republics, as in Tuscany for example; for contention and rivalry have always made, and always will make it extremely hard for one republic to bring another into subjection. And for this reason any one who considers attentively who are the neighbours of Florence, and who of Venice, will not marvel so much as some have done, that Florence should have spent more than Venice on her wars and gained less; since this results entirely from the Venetians finding their neighbouring towns less obstinate in their resistance than the Florentines theirs. For all the towns in the neighbourhood of Venice have been used to live under princes and not in freedom; and those who are used to servitude commonly think little of changing masters, nay are often eager for the change. In this way Venice, though she has had more powerful neighbours than Florence, has been able, from finding their towns less stubborn, to subdue them more easily than the latter, surrounded exclusively by free cities, has had it in her power to do.

But, to return to the matter in hand, the captain who attacks a town should use what care he can, not to drive the defenders to extremities, lest he render them stubborn; but when they fear punishment should promise them pardon, and when they fear for their freedom should assure them that he has no designs against the common welfare, but only against a few ambitious men in their city; for such assurances have often smoothed the way to the surrender of towns. And although pretexts of this sort are easily seen through, especially by the wise, the mass of the people are often beguiled by them, because desiring present tranquillity, they shut their eyes to the snares hidden behind these specious promises. By means such as these, therefore, cities innumerable have been brought into subjection, as recently was the case with Florence. The ruin of Crassus and his army was similarly caused: for although he himself saw through the empty promises of the Parthians, as meant only to blind the Roman soldiers to the necessity of defending themselves, yet he could not keep his men steadfast, they, as we clearly gather in reading the life of this captain, being deceived by the offers of peace held out to them by their enemies.

On the other hand, when the Samnites, who, at the instance of a few ambitious men, and in violation of the terms of the truce made with them, had overrun and pillaged lands belonging to the allies of Rome, afterwards sent envoys to Rome to implore peace, offering to restore whatever they had taken, and to surrender the authors of these injuries and outrages as prisoners, and these offers were rejected by the Romans,

and the envoys returned to Samnium bringing with them no hope of an adjustment, Claudius Pontius, who then commanded the army of the Samnites, showed them in a remarkable speech, that the Romans desired war at all hazards, and declared that, although for the sake of his country he wished for peace, necessity constrained him to prepare for war; telling them "that was a just war which could not be escaped, and those arms sacred in which lay their only hopes." And building on this necessity, he raised in the minds of his soldiers a confident expectation of success. That I may not have to revert to this matter again, it will be convenient to notice here those examples from Roman history which most merit attention. When Caius Manilius was in command of the legions encamped against Veii, a division of the Veientine army having got within the Roman intrenchments, Manilius ran forward with a company of his men to defend them, and, to prevent the escape of the Veientines, guarded all the approaches to the camp. The Veientines finding themselves thus shut in, began to fight with such fury that they slew Manilius, and would have destroyed all the rest of the Roman army, had not the prudence of one of the tribunes opened a way for the Veientines to retreat. Here we see that so long as necessity compelled, the Veientines fought most fiercely, but on finding a path opened for escape, preferred flight to combat. On another occasion when the Volscians and Equians passed with their armies across the Roman frontier, the consuls were sent out to oppose them, and an engagement ensued. It so happened that when the combat was at its height, the army of the Volscians, commanded by Vectius Mescius, suddenly found themselves shut in between their own camp, which a division of the

Romans had occupied, and the body of the Roman army; when seeing that they must either perish or cut a way for themselves with their swords, Vectius said to them, "Come on, my men, here is no wall or rampart to be scaled: we fight man with man; in valour we are their equals, and necessity, that last and mightiest weapon, gives us the advantage." Here, then, necessity is spoken of by Titus Livius as the last and mightiest weapon.

Camillus, the wisest and most prudent of all the Roman commanders, when he had got within the town of Veii with his army, to make its surrender easier and not to drive its inhabitants to desperation, called out to his men, so that the Veientines might hear, to spare all whom they found unarmed. Whereupon the defenders throwing away their weapons, the town was taken almost without bloodshed. And this device was afterwards followed by many other captains.

CHAPTER XIII.--Whether we may trust more to a valiant Captain with a weak Army, or to a valiant Army with a weak Captain.

Coriolanus being banished from Rome betook himself to the Volscians, and when he had got together an army wherewith to avenge himself on his countrymen, came back to Rome; yet, again withdrew, not constrained to retire by the might of the Roman arms, but out of reverence for his mother. From this incident, says Titus Livius, we may learn that the spread of the Roman power was due more to the valour of her captains than of her soldiers. For before this the Volscians had always been routed, and only grew successful when Coriolanus became their captain.

But though Livius be of this opinion, there are many passages in his history to show that the Roman soldiers, even when left without leaders, often performed astonishing feats of valour, nay, sometimes maintained better discipline and fought with greater spirit after their consuls were slain than they had before. For example, the army under the Scipios in Spain, after its two leaders had fallen, was able by its valour not merely to secure its own safety, but to overcome the enemy and preserve the province for the Roman Republic. So that to state the case fairly, we find many instances in which the valour of the soldiers alone gained the day, as well as many in which success was wholly due to the excellence of the captain. From which it may be inferred that the one stands in need of the other.

And here the question suggests itself: which is the more formidable, a

good army badly led, or a good captain commanding an indifferent army; though, were we to adopt the opinion of Cæsar on this head, we ought lightly to esteem both. For when Cæsar went to Spain against Afranius and Petreius, who were there in command of a strong army, he made little account of them, saying, "that he went to fight an army without a captain," indicating thereby the weakness of these generals. And, conversely, when he went to encounter Pompeius in Thessaly, he said, "I go against a captain without an army."[1]

A further question may also be raised, whether it is easier for a good captain to make a good army, or for a good army to make a good captain. As to this it might be thought there was barely room for doubt, since it ought to be far easier for many who are good to find one who is good or teach him to become so, than for one who is good to find or make many good. Lucullus when sent against Mithridates was wholly without experience in war: but his brave army, which was provided with many excellent officers, speedily taught him to be a good captain. On the other hand, when the Romans, being badly off for soldiers, armed a number of slaves and gave them over to be drilled by Sempronius Gracchus, he in a short time made them into a serviceable army. So too, as I have already mentioned, Pelopidas and Epaminondas after rescuing Thebes, their native city, from Spartan thraldom, in a short time made such valiant soldiers of the Theban peasantry, as to be able with their aid not only to withstand, but even to defeat the Spartan armies. So that the question may seem to be equally balanced, excellence on one side generally finding excellence on the other.

A good army, however, when left without a good leader, as the Macedonian army was on the death of Alexander, or as those veterans were who had fought in the civil wars, is apt to grow restless and turbulent. Wherefore I am convinced that it is better to trust to the captain who has time allowed him to discipline his men, and means wherewith to equip them, than to a tumultuary host with a chance leader of its own choosing. But twofold is the merit and twofold the glory of those captains who not only have had to subdue their enemies, but also before encountering them to organize and discipline their forces. This, however, is a task requiring qualities so seldom combined, that were many of those captains who now enjoy a great name with the world, called on to perform it, they would be much less thought of than they are.

[Footnote 1: Professus ante inter suos, ire se ad exercitum sine duce, et inde reversurum ad ducem sine exercitu. (Suet. in Vita J. Caes.)]

CHAPTER XIV.--Of the effect produced in Battle by strange and unexpected Sights or Sounds.

That the disorder occasioned by strange and unexpected sights or sounds may have momentous consequences in combat, might be shown by many instances, but by none better than by what befell in the battle fought between the Romans and the Volscians, when Quintius, the Roman general, seeing one wing of his army begin to waver, shouted aloud to his men to stand firm, for the other wing was already victorious. Which words of his giving confidence to his own troops and striking the enemy with dismay won him the battle. But if a cry like this, produce great effect on a well disciplined army, far greater must be its effect on one which is ill disciplined and disorderly. For by such a wind the whole mass will be moved, as I shall show by a well-known instance happening in our own times.

A few years ago the city of Perugia was split into the two factions of the Baglioni and the Oddi, the former holding the government, the latter being in exile. The Oddeschi, however, with the help of friends, having got together an armed force which they lodged in villages of their own near Perugia, obtained, by the favour of some of their party, an entrance into the city by night, and moving forward without discovery, came as far as the public square. And as all the streets of Perugia are barred with chains drawn across them at their corners, the Oddeschi had in front of them a man who carried an iron hammer wherewith to break the fastenings of the chains so that horsemen might pass. When the only

chain remaining unbroken was that which closed the public square, the alarm having now been given, the hammerman was so impeded by the crowd pressing behind him that he could not raise his arm to strike freely. Whereupon, to get more room for his work, he called aloud to the others to stand back; and the word back passing from rank to rank those furthest off began to run, and, presently, the others also, with such precipitancy, that they fell into utter disorder. In this way, and from this trifling circumstance, the attempt of the Oddeschi came to nothing.

Here we may note that discipline is needed in an army, not so much to enable it to fight according to a settled order, as that it may not be thrown into confusion by every insignificant accident. For a tumultuary host is useless in war, simply because every word, or cry, or sound, may throw it into a panic and cause it to fly. Wherefore it behoves a good captain to provide that certain fixed persons shall receive his orders and pass them on to the rest, and to accustom his soldiers to look to these persons, and to them only, to be informed what his orders are. For whenever this precaution is neglected the gravest mishaps are constantly seen to ensue.

As regards strange and unexpected sights, every captain should endeavour while his army is actually engaged with the enemy, to effect some such feint or diversion as will encourage his own men and dismay his adversary since this of all things that can happen is the likeliest to ensure victory. In evidence whereof we may cite the example of Cneius Sulpitius, the Roman dictator, who, when about to give battle to the

Gauls, after arming his sutlers and camp followers, mounted them on mules and other beasts of burden, furnished them with spears and banners to look like cavalry, and placing them behind a hill, ordered them on a given signal, when the fight was at the hottest, to appear and show themselves to the enemy. All which being carried out as he had arranged, threw the Gauls into such alarm, that they lost the battle.

A good captain, therefore, has two things to see to: first, to contrive how by some sudden surprise he may throw his enemy into confusion; and next, to be prepared should the enemy use a like stratagem against him to discover and defeat it; as the stratagem of Semiramis was defeated by the King of India. For Semiramis seeing that this king had elephants in great numbers, to dismay him by showing that she, too, was well supplied, caused the skins of many oxen and buffaloes to be sewn together in the shape of elephants and placed upon camels and sent to the front. But the trick being detected by the king, turned out not only useless but hurtful to its contriver. In a battle which the Dictator Mamercus fought against the people of Fidenae, the latter, to strike terror into the minds of the Romans, contrived that while the combat raged a number of soldiers should issue from Fidenae bearing lances tipped with fire, thinking that the Romans, disturbed by so strange a sight, would be thrown into confusion.

We are to note, however, with regard to such contrivances, that if they are to serve any useful end, they should be formidable as well as seem so; for when they menace a real danger, their weak points are not

so soon discerned. When they have more of pretence than reality, it will be well either to dispense with them altogether, or resorting to them, to keep them, like the muleteers of Sulpitius, in the background, so that they be not too readily found out. For any weakness inherent in them is soon discovered if they be brought near, when, as happened with the elephants of Semiramis and the fiery spears of the men of Fidenae, they do harm rather than good. For although by this last-mentioned device the Romans at the first were somewhat disconcerted, so soon as the dictator came up and began to chide them, asking if they were not ashamed to fly like bees from smoke, and calling on them to turn on their enemy, and "with her own flames efface that Fidenae whom their benefits could not conciliate," they took courage; so that the device proved of no service to its contrivers, who were vanquished in the battle.

CHAPTER XV.--That one and not many should head an Army: and why it is harmful to have more Leaders than one.

The men of Fidenae rising against the colonists whom the Romans had settled among them, and putting them to the sword, the Romans to avenge the insult appointed four tribunes with consular powers: one of whom they retained to see to the defence of Rome, while the other three were sent against the Fidenati and the Veientines. But these three falling out among themselves, and being divided in their counsels, returned from their mission with discredit though not with loss. Of which discredit they were themselves the cause. That they sustained no loss was due to the valour of their soldiers But the senate perceiving the source of the mischief, to the end that one man might put to rights what three had thrown into confusion, resorted to the appointment of a dictator.

Here we see the disadvantage of having several leaders in one army or in a town which has to defend itself. And the case could not be put in clearer words than by Titus Livius, where he says, "The three tribunes with consular authority gave proof how hurtful it is in war to have many leaders; for each forming a different opinion, and each abiding by his own, they threw opportunities in the way of their enemies." And though this example suffice by itself to show the disadvantage in war of divided commands, to make the matter still plainer I shall cite two further instances, one ancient and one modern.

In the year 1500, Louis XII. of France, after recovering Milan, sent

troops to restore Pisa to the Florentines, Giovambattista Ridolfi and Luca d'Antonio Albizzi going with them as commissaries. Now, because Giovambattista had a great name, and was older than Luca, the latter left the whole management of everything to him; and although he did not show his jealousy of him by opposing him, he betrayed it by his silence, and by being so careless and indifferent about everything, that he gave no help in the business of the siege either by word or deed, just as though he had been a person of no account. But when, in consequence of an accident, Giovambattista had to return to Florence, all this was changed; for Luca, remaining in sole charge, behaved with the greatest courage, prudence, and zeal, all which qualities had been hidden while he held a joint command. Further to bear me out I shall again borrow the words of Titus Livius, who, in relating how when Quintius and Agrippa his colleague were sent by the Romans against the Equians, Agrippa contrived that the conduct of the war should rest with Quintius, observes, "Most wholesome is it that in affairs of great moment, supreme authority be vested in one man." Very different, however, is the course followed by the republics and princes of our own days, who, thinking to be better served, are used to appoint several captains or commissioners to fill one command; a practice giving rise to so much confusion, that were we seeking for the causes of the overthrow of the French and Italian armies in recent times, we should find this to be the most active of any.

Rightly, therefore, may we conclude that in sending forth an army upon service, it is wiser to entrust it to one man of ordinary prudence, than

to two of great parts but with a divided command.

CHAPTER XVI.--That in Times of Difficulty true Worth is sought after; whereas in quiet Times it is not the most deserving, but those who are recommended by Wealth or Connection who are most in favour.

It always has happened and always will, that the great and admirable men of a republic are neglected in peaceful times; because at such seasons many citizens are found, who, envying the reputation these men have justly earned, seek to be regarded not merely as their equals but as their superiors. Touching this there is a notable passage in Thucydides, the Greek historian, where he tells how the republic of Athens coming victorious out of the Peloponessian war, wherein she had bridled the pride of Sparta, and brought almost the whole of Greece under her authority, was encouraged by the greatness of her renown to propose to herself the conquest of Sicily. In Athens this scheme was much debated, Alcibiades and certain others who had the public welfare very little in their thoughts, but who hoped that the enterprise, were they placed in command, might minister to their fame, recommending that it should be undertaken. Nicias, on the other hand, one of the best esteemed of the Athenian citizens, was against it, and in addressing the people, gave it as the strongest reason for trusting his advice, that in advising them not to engage in this war, he urged what was not for his own advantage; for he knew that while Athens remained at peace numberless citizens were ready to take precedence of him: whereas, were war declared, he was certain that none would rank before him or even be looked upon as his equal.

Here we see that in tranquil times republics are subject to the infirmity of lightly esteeming their worthiest citizens. And this offends these persons for two reasons: first, because they are not given the place they deserve; and second, because they see unworthy men and of abilities inferior to their own, as much or more considered than they. Injustice such as this has caused the ruin of many republics. For citizens who find themselves undeservedly slighted, and perceive the cause to be that the times are tranquil and not troubled, will strive to change the times by stirring up wars hurtful to the public welfare. When I look for remedies for this state of things, I find two: first, to keep the citizens poor, so that wealth without worth shall corrupt neither them nor others; second, to be so prepared for war as always to be ready to make war; for then there will always be a need for worthy citizens, as was the case in Rome in early times. For as Rome constantly kept her armies in the field, there was constant opportunity for men to display their valour, nor was it possible to deprive a deserving man of his post and give it to another who was not deserving. Or if ever this were done by inadvertency, or by way of experiment, there forthwith resulted such disorder and danger, that the city at once retraced its steps and reverted to the true path. But other republics which are not regulated on the same plan, and make war only when driven to it by necessity, cannot help committing this injustice, nay, will constantly run into it, when, if the great citizen who finds himself slighted be vindictive, and have some credit and following in the city, disorder will always ensue. And though Rome escaped this danger for a time, she too, as has elsewhere been said, having no longer, after she had conquered Carthage

and Antiochus, any fear of war, came to think she might commit her armies to whom she would, making less account of the valour of her captains than of those other qualities which gain favour with the people. Accordingly we find Paulus Emilius rejected oftener than once when he sought the consulship; nor, in fact, obtaining it until the Macedonian war broke out, which, being judged a formidable business, was by the voice of the whole city committed to his management. After the year 1494 our city of Florence was involved in a series of wars, in conducting which none of our citizens had any success until chance threw the command into the hands of one who showed us how an army should be led. This was Antonio Giacomini, and so long as there were dangerous wars on foot, all rivalry on the part of other citizens was suspended; and whenever a captain or commissary had to be appointed he was unopposed. But when a war came to be undertaken, as to the issue of which no misgivings were felt, and which promised both honour and preferment, so numerous were the competitors for command, that three commissaries having to be chosen to conduct the siege of Pisa, Antonio was left out; and though it cannot with certainty be shown that any harm resulted to our republic from his not having been sent on this enterprise, we may reasonably conjecture that such was indeed the case. For as the people of Pisa were then without means either for subsistence or defence, it may be believed that had Antonio been there he would have reduced them to such extremities as would have forced them to surrender at discretion to the Florentines. But Pisa being besieged by captains who knew neither how to blockade nor how to storm it, held out so long, that the Florentines, who should have reduced it by force, were obliged

to buy its submission. Neglect like this might well move Antonio to resentment; and he must needs have been both very patient and very forgiving if he felt no desire to revenge himself when he could, by the ruin of the city or by injuries to individual citizens. But a republic should beware not to rouse such feelings, as I shall show in the following Chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.--That we are not to offend a Man, and then send him to fill an important Office or Command.

A republic should think twice before appointing to an important command a citizen who has sustained notable wrong at the hands of his fellow-citizens. Claudius Nero, quitting the army with which he was opposing Hannibal, went with a part of his forces into the March of Ancona, designing to join the other consul there, and after joining him to attack Hasdrubal before he came up with his brother. Now Claudius had previously commanded against Hasdrubal in Spain, and after driving him with his army into such a position that it seemed he must either fight at a disadvantage or perish by famine, had been outwitted by his adversary, who, while diverting his attention with proposals of terms, contrived to slip through his hands and rob him of the opportunity for effecting his destruction. This becoming known in Rome brought Claudius into so much discredit both with the senate and people, that to his great mortification and displeasure, he was slightingly spoken of by the whole city. But being afterwards made consul and sent to oppose Hannibal, he took the course mentioned above, which was in itself so hazardous that all Rome was filled with doubt and anxiety until tidings came of Hasdrubal's defeat. When subsequently asked why he had played so dangerous a game, wherein without urgent necessity he had staked the very existence of Rome, Claudius answered, he had done so because he knew that were he to succeed he would recover whatever credit he had lost in Spain; while if he failed, and his attempt had an untoward issue, he would be revenged on that city and On those citizens who had

so ungratefully and indiscreetly wronged him.

But if resentment for an offence like this so deeply moved a Roman citizen at a time when Rome was still uncorrupted, we should consider how it may act on the citizen of a State not constituted as Rome then was. And because there is no certain remedy we can apply to such disorders when they arise in republics, it follows that it is impossible to establish a republic which shall endure always; since in a thousand unforeseen ways ruin may overtake it.

CHAPTER XVIII.--That it is the highest Quality of a Captain to be able to forestall the designs of his Adversary.

It was a saying of Epaminondas the Theban that nothing was so useful and necessary for a commander as to be able to see through the intentions and designs of his adversary. And because it is hard to come at this knowledge directly, the more credit is due to him who reaches it by conjecture. Yet sometimes it is easier to fathom an enemy's designs than to construe his actions; and not so much those actions which are done at a distance from us, as those done in our presence and under our very eyes. For instance, it has often happened that when a battle has lasted till nightfall, the winner has believed himself the loser, and the loser has believed himself the winner and that this mistake has led him who made it to follow a course hurtful to himself. It was from a mistake of this sort, that Brutus and Cassius lost the battle of Philippi. For though Brutus was victorious with his wing of the army Cassius, whose wing was beaten, believed the entire army to be defeated, and under this belief gave way to despair and slew himself. So too, in our own days, in the battle fought by Francis, king of France, with the Swiss at Santa Cecilia in Lombardy, when night fell, those of the Swiss who remained unbroken, not knowing that the rest had been routed and slain, thought they had the victory; and so believing would not retreat, but, remaining on the field, renewed the combat the following morning to their great disadvantage. Nor were they the only sufferers from their mistake, since the armies of the Pope and of Spain were also misled by it, and well-nigh brought to destruction. For on the false report of a victory

they crossed the Po, and had they only advanced a little further must have been made prisoners by the victorious French.

An instance is recorded of a like mistake having been made in the camps both of the Romans and of the Equians. For the Consul Sempronius being in command against the Equians, and giving the enemy battle, the engagement lasted with varying success till nightfall, when as both armies had suffered what was almost a defeat, neither returned to their camp, but each drew off to the neighboring hills where they thought they would be safer. The Romans separated into two divisions, one of which with the consul, the other with the centurion Tempanius by whose valour the army had that day been saved from utter rout. At daybreak the consul, without waiting for further tidings of the enemy, made straight for Rome; and the Equians, in like manner, withdrew to their own country. For as each supposed the other to be victorious, neither thought much of leaving their camp to be plundered by the enemy. It so chanced, however, that Tempanius, who was himself retreating with the second division of the Roman army, fell in with certain wounded Equians, from whom he learned that their commanders had fled, abandoning their camp; on hearing which, he at once returned to the Roman camp and secured it, and then, after sacking the camp of the Equians, went back victorious to Rome. His success, as we see, turned entirely on his being the first to be informed of the enemy's condition. And here we are to note that it may often happen that both the one and the other of two opposed armies shall fall into the same disorder, and be reduced to the same straits; in which case, that which soonest detects the other's

distress is sure to come off best.

I shall give an instance of this which occurred recently in our own country. In the year 1498, when the Florentines had a great army in the territory of Pisa and had closely invested the town, the Venetians, who had undertaken its protection, seeing no other way to save it, resolved to make a diversion in its favour by attacking the territories of the Florentines in another quarter. Wherefore, having assembled a strong force, they entered Tuscany by the Val di Lamona, and seizing on the village of Marradi, besieged the stronghold of Castiglione which stands on the height above it. Getting word of this, the Florentines sought to relieve Marradi, without weakening the army which lay round Pisa. They accordingly raised a new levy of foot-soldiers, and equipped a fresh squadron of horse, which they despatched to Marradi under the joint command of Jacopo IV. d'Appiano, lord of Piombino, and Count Rinuccio of Marciano. These troops taking up their position on the hill above Marradi, the Venetians withdrew from the investment of Castiglione and lodged themselves in the village. But when the two armies had confronted one another for several days, both began to suffer sorely from want of victuals and other necessaries, and neither of them daring to attack the other, or knowing to what extremities the other was reduced, both simultaneously resolved to strike their camps the following morning, and to retreat, the Venetians towards Berzighella and Faenza, the Florentines towards Casaglia and the Mugello. But at daybreak, when both armies had begun to remove their baggage, it so happened that an old woman, whose years and poverty permitted her to pass unnoticed, leaving

the village of Marradi, came to the Florentine camp, where were certain of her kinsfolk whom she desired to visit. Learning from her that the Venetians were in retreat, the Florentine commanders took courage, and changing their plan, went in pursuit of the enemy as though they had dislodged them, sending word to Florence that they had repulsed the Venetians and gained a victory. But in truth this victory was wholly due to their having notice of the enemy's movements before the latter had notice of theirs. For had that notice been given to the Venetians first, it would have wrought against us the same results as it actually wrought for us.

CHAPTER XIX.--Whether Indulgence or Severity be more necessary for controlling a Multitude.

The Roman Republic was distracted by the feuds of the nobles and commons. Nevertheless, on war breaking out, Quintius and Appius Claudius were sent forth in command of Roman armies. From his harshness and severity to his soldiers, Appius was so ill obeyed by them, that after sustaining what almost amounted to a defeat, he had to resign his command. Quintius, on the contrary, by kindly and humane treatment, kept his men obedient and returned victorious to Rome. From this it might seem that to govern a large body of men, it is better to be humane than haughty, and kindly rather than severe.

And yet Cornelius Tacitus, with whom many other authors are agreed, pronounces a contrary opinion where he says, "In governing a multitude it avails more to punish than to be compliant."[1] If it be asked how these opposite views can be reconciled, I answer that you exercise authority either over men used to regard you as their equal, or over men who have always been subject to you. When those over whom you exercise authority are your equals, you cannot trust wholly to punishment or to that severity of which Tacitus speaks. And since in Rome itself the commons had equal weight with the nobles, none appointed their captain for a time only, could control them by using harshness and severity. Accordingly we find that those Roman captains who gained the love of their soldiers and were considerate of them, often achieved greater results than those who made themselves feared by them in an unusual

degree, unless, like Manlius Torquatus, these last were endowed with consummate valour. But he who has to govern subjects such as those of whom Tacitus speaks, to prevent their growing insolent and trampling upon him by reason of his too great easiness, must resort to punishment rather than to compliance. Still, to escape hatred, punishment should be moderate in degree, for to make himself hated is never for the interest of any prince. And to escape hatred, a prince has chiefly to guard against tampering with the property of any of his subjects; for where nothing is to be gained by it, no prince will desire to shed blood, unless, as seldom happens, constrained to do so by necessity. But where advantage is to be gained thereby, blood will always flow, and neither the desire to shed it, nor causes for shedding it will ever be wanting, as I have fully shown when discussing this subject in another treatise.

Quintius therefore was more deserving of praise than Appius. Nevertheless the opinion of Tacitus, duly restricted and not understood as applying to a case like that of Appius, merits approval. But since I have spoken of punishment and indulgence, it seems not out of place to show how a single act of humanity availed more than arms with the citizens of Falerii.

[Footnote 1: "In multitudine regenda plus poena quam obsequium valet." But compare Annals, III. 55, "Obsequium inde in principem et æmulandi amoi validioi quam poena ex legibus et metus."]

CHAPTER XX.--How one humane act availed more with the men of Falerii, than all the might of the Roman Arms.

When the besieging army of the Romans lay round Falerii, the master of a school wherein the best-born youths of the city were taught, thinking to curry favour with Camillus and the Romans, came forth from the town with these boys, on pretence of giving them exercise, and bringing them into the camp where Camillus was, presented them to him, saying, "To ransom these that city would yield itself into your hands." Camillus, however, not only rejected this offer, but causing the schoolmaster to be stripped and his hands tied behind him, gave each of the boys a scourge, and bade them lead the fellow back to the town scourging him as they went. When the citizens of Falerii heard of this, so much were they pleased with the humanity and integrity of Camillus, that they resolved to surrender their town to him without further defence.

This authentic instance may lead us to believe that a humane and kindly action may sometimes touch men's minds more nearly than a harsh and cruel one; and that those cities and provinces into which the instruments and engines of war, with every other violence to which men resort, have failed to force a way, may be thrown open to a single act of tenderness, mercy, chastity, or generosity. Whereof history supplies us with many examples besides the one which I have just now noticed. For we find that when the arms of Rome were powerless to drive Pyrrhus out of Italy, he was moved to depart by the generosity of Fabritius in

disclosing to him the proposal which his slave had made the Romans to poison him. Again, we read how Scipio gained less reputation in Spain by the capture of New Carthage, than by his virtue in restoring a young and beautiful wife unviolated to her husband; the fame of which action won him the love of the whole province. We see, too, how much this generous temper is esteemed by a people in its great men; and how much it is praised by historians and by those who write the lives of princes, as well as by those who lay down rules of human conduct. Among whom Xenophon has taken great pains to show what honours, and victories, and how fair a fame accrued to Cyrus from his being kindly and gracious, without taint of pride, or cruelty, or luxury, or any other of those vices which cast a stain upon men's lives.

And yet when we note that Hannibal, by methods wholly opposite to these, achieved splendid victories and a great renown, I think I am bound to say something in my next Chapter as to how this happened.

CHAPTER XXI.--How it happened that Hannibal pursuing a course contrary to that taken by Scipio, wrought the same results in Italy which the other achieved in Spain.

Some, I suspect, may marvel to find a captain, taking a contrary course, nevertheless arrive at the same ends as those who have pursued the methods above spoken of; since it must seem as though success did not depend on the causes I have named; nay, that if glory and fame are to be won in other ways, these causes neither add to our strength nor advance our fortunes. Wherefore, to make my meaning plain, and not to part company with the men of whom I have been speaking, I say, that as, on the one hand, we see Scipio enter Spain, and by his humane and generous conduct at once secure the good-will of the province, and the admiration and reverence of its inhabitants, so on the other hand, we see Hannibal enter Italy, and by methods wholly opposite, to wit, by violence and rapine, by cruelty and treachery of every kind, effect in that country the very same results. For all the States of Italy revolted in his favour, and all the Italian nations ranged themselves on his side.

When we seek to know why this was, several reasons present themselves, the first being that men so passionately love change, that, commonly speaking, those who are well off are as eager for it as those who are badly off: for as already has been said with truth, men are pampered by prosperity, soured by adversity. This love of change, therefore, makes them open the door to any one who puts himself at the head of new movements in their country, and if he be a foreigner they adopt his

cause, if a fellow-countryman they gather round him and become his partisans and supporters; so that whatever methods he may there use, he will succeed in making great progress. Moreover, men being moved by two chief passions, love and fear, he who makes himself feared commands with no less authority than he who makes himself loved; nay, as a rule, is followed and obeyed more implicitly than the other. It matters little, however, which of these two ways a captain chooses to follow, provided he be of transcendent valour, and has thereby won for himself a great name For when, like Hannibal or Scipio, a man is very valiant, this quality will cloak any error he may commit in seeking either to be too much loved or too much feared. Yet from each of these two tendencies, grave mischiefs, and such as lead to the ruin of a prince, may arise. For he who would be greatly loved, if he swerve ever so little from the right road, becomes contemptible; while he who would be greatly feared, if he go a jot too far, incurs hatred. And since it is impossible, our nature not allowing it, to adhere to the exact mean, it is essential that any excess should be balanced by an exceeding valour, as it was in Hannibal and Scipio. And yet we find that even they, while they were exalted by the methods they followed, were also injured by them. How they were exalted has been shown. The injury which Scipio suffered was, that in Spain his soldiers, in concert with certain of his allies, rose against him, for no other reason than that they stood in no fear of him. For men are so restless, that if ever so small a door be opened to their ambition, they forthwith forget all the love they have borne their prince in return for his graciousness and goodness, as did these soldiers and allies of Scipio; when, to correct the mischief, he was

forced to use something of a cruelty foreign to his nature.

As to Hannibal, we cannot point to any particular instance wherein his cruelty or want of faith are seen to have been directly hurtful to him; but we may well believe that Naples and other towns which remained loyal to the Roman people, did so by reason of the dread which his character inspired. This, however, is abundantly clear, that his inhumanity made him more detested by the Romans than any other enemy they ever had; so that while to Pyrrhus, in Italy with his army, they gave up the traitor who offered to poison him, Hannibal, even when disarmed and a fugitive, they never forgave, until they had compassed his death.

To Hannibal, therefore, from his being accounted impious, perfidious, and cruel, these disadvantages resulted; but, on the other hand, there accrued to him one great gain, noticed with admiration by all historians, namely, that in his army, although made up of men of every race and country, no dissensions ever broke out among the soldiers themselves, nor any mutiny against their leader. This we can only ascribe to the awe which his character inspired, which together with the great name his valour had won for him, had the effect of keeping his soldiers quiet and united. I repeat, therefore, that it is of little moment which method a captain may follow if he be endowed with such valour as will bear him out in the course which he adopts. For, as I have said, there are disadvantages incident to both methods unless corrected by extraordinary valour.

And now, since I have spoken of Scipio and Hannibal, the former of whom by praiseworthy, the latter by odious qualities, effected the same results, I must not, I think, omit to notice the characters of two Roman citizens, who by different, yet both by honourable methods, obtained a like glory.

Chapter XXII.--That the severity of Manlius Torquatus and the gentleness of Valerius Corvinus won for both the same Glory.

There lived in Rome, at the same time, two excellent captains, Manlius Torquatus and Valerius Corvinus, equal in their triumphs and in their renown, and in the valour which in obtaining these they had displayed against the enemy; but who in the conduct of their armies and treatment of their soldiers, followed very different methods. For Manlius, in his command, resorted to every kind of severity, never sparing his men fatigue, nor remitting punishment; while Valerius, on the contrary, treated them with all kindness and consideration, and was easy and familiar in his intercourse with them. So that while the one, to secure the obedience of his soldiers, put his own son to death, the other never dealt harshly with any man. Yet, for all this diversity in their modes of acting, each had the same success against the enemy, and each obtained the same advantages both for the republic and for himself. For no soldier of theirs ever flinched in battle, or rose in mutiny against them, or in any particular opposed their will; though the commands of Manlius were of such severity that any order of excessive rigour came to be spoken of as a Manlian order.

Here, then, we have to consider first of all why Manlius was obliged to use such severity; next, why Valerius could behave so humanely; thirdly, how it was that these opposite methods had the same results; and lastly, which of the two methods it is better and more useful for us to follow. Now, if we well examine the character of Manlius from the moment when

Titus Livius first begins to make mention of him, we shall find him to have been endowed with a rare vigour both of mind and body, dutiful in his behaviour to his father and to his country, and most reverent to his superiors. All which we see in his slaying the Gaul, in his defence of his father against the tribune, and in the words in which, before going forth to fight the Gaul, he addressed the consul, when he said, "Although assured of victory, never will I without thy bidding engage an enemy." But when such a man as this attains to command, he looks to find all others like himself; his dauntless spirit prompts him to engage in daring enterprises, and to insist on their being carried out. And this is certain, that where things hard to execute are ordered to be done, the order must be enforced with sternness, since, otherwise, it will be disobeyed.

And here be it noted that if you would be obeyed you must know how to command, and that they alone have this knowledge who have measured their power to enforce, with the willingness of others to yield obedience; and who issue their orders when they find these conditions combining, but, otherwise, abstain. Wherefore, a wise man was wont to say that to hold a republic by force, there must be a proportion between him who uses the force and him against whom it is used; and that while this proportion obtains the force will operate; but that when he who suffers is stronger than he who uses the force, we may expect to see it brought to an end at any moment.

But returning to the matter in hand, I say that to command things hard

of execution, requires hardness in him who gives the command, and that a man of this temper and who issues such commands, cannot look to enforce them by gentleness. He who is not of such a temper must be careful not to impose tasks of extraordinary difficulty, but may use his natural gentleness in imposing such as are ordinary. For common punishments are not imputed to the prince, but to the laws and ordinances which he has to administer.

We must believe, therefore, that Manlius was constrained to act with severity by the unusual character of the commands which his natural disposition prompted him to issue. Such commands are useful in a republic, as restoring its ordinances to their original efficacy and excellence. And were a republic, as I have before observed, fortunate enough to come frequently under the influence of men who, by their example, reinforce its laws, and not only retard its progress towards corruption, but bring it back to its first perfection, it might endure for ever.

Manlius, therefore, was of those who by the severity of their commands maintained the military discipline of Rome; urged thereto, in the first place, by his natural temper, and next by the desire that whatever he was minded to command should be done. Valerius, on the other hand, could afford to act humanely, because for him it was enough if all were done which in a Roman army it was customary to do. And, since the customs of that army were good customs, they sufficed to gain him honour, while at the same time their maintenance cost him no effort, nor threw on him the

burthen of punishing transgressors; as well because there were none who trangressed, as because had there been any, they would, as I have said, have imputed their punishment to the ordinary rules of discipline, and not to the severity of their commander. In this way Valerius had room to exercise that humane disposition which enabled him at once to gain influence over his soldiers and to content them. Hence it was that both these captains obtaining the same obedience, could, while following different methods, arrive at the same ends. Those, however, who seek to imitate them may chance to fall into the errors of which I have already spoken, in connection with Hannibal and Scipio, as breeding contempt or hatred, and which are only to be corrected by the presence of extraordinary valour, and not otherwise.

It rests now to determine which of these two methods is the more to be commended. This, I take it, is matter of dispute, since both methods have their advocates. Those writers, however, who have laid down rules for the conduct of princes, describe a character approaching more nearly to that of Valerius than to that of Manlius; and Xenophon, whom I have already cited, while giving many instances of the humanity of Cyrus, conforms closely to what Livius tells us of Valerius. For Valerius being made consul against the Samnites, on the eve of battle spoke to his men with the same kindliness with which he always treated them; and Livius, after telling us what he said, remarks of him: "Never was there a leader more familiar with his men; cheerfully sharing with the meanest among them every hardship and fatigue. Even in the military games, wherein those of the same rank were wont to make trial of their

strength or swiftness, he would good-naturedly take a part, nor disdain any adversary who offered; meeting victory or defeat with an unruffled temper and an unchanged countenance. When called on to act, his bounty and generosity never fell short. When he had to speak, he was as mindful of the feelings of others as of his own dignity. And, what more than anything else secures the popular favour, he maintained when exercising his magistracies the same bearing he had worn in seeking them."

Of Manlius also, Titus Livius speaks in like honourable terms, pointing out that his severity in putting his son to death brought the Roman army to that pitch of discipline which enabled it to prevail against the Latins, nay, he goes so far in his praises that after describing the whole order of the battle, comparing the strength of both armies, and showing all the dangers the Romans ran, and the difficulties they had to surmount, he winds up by saying, that it was the valour of Manlius which alone gained for them this great victory, and that whichever side had Manlius for its leader must have won the day. So that weighing all that the historians tell us of these two captains, it might be difficult to decide between them.

Nevertheless, not to leave the question entirely open, I say, that for a citizen living under a republic, I think the conduct of Manlius more deserving of praise and less dangerous in its consequences. For methods like his tend only to the public good and in no way subserve private ends. He who shows himself harsh and stern at all times and to all men alike, and is seen to care only for the common welfare, will never gain

himself partisans, since this is not the way to win personal friends, to whom, as I said before, the name of partisans is given. For a republic, therefore, no line of conduct could be more useful or more to be desired than this, because in following it the public interest is not neglected, and no room is given to suspect personal ambition.

But the contrary holds as to the methods followed by Valerius. For though the public service they render be the same, misgivings must needs arise that the personal good-will which, in the course of a prolonged command, a captain obtains from his soldiers, may lead to consequences fatal to the public liberty. And if this was not found to happen in the case of Valerius, it was because the minds of the Roman people were not yet corrupted, and because they had never remained for a long time and continuously under his command.

Had we, however, like Xenophon, to consider what is most for the interest of a prince, we should have to give up Manlius and hold by Valerius; for, undoubtedly, a prince should strive to gain the love of his soldiers and subjects, as well as their obedience. The latter he can secure by discipline and by his reputation for valour. But for the former he will be indebted to his affability, kindliness, gentleness, and all those other like qualities which were possessed by Valerius, and which are described by Xenophon as existing in Cyrus. That a prince should be personally loved and have his army wholly devoted to him is consistent with the character of his government; but that this should happen to a person of private station does not consist with his position

as a citizen who has to live in conformity with the laws and in subordination to the magistrates. We read in the early annals of the Venetian Republic, that once, on the return of the fleet, a dispute broke out between the sailors and the people, resulting in tumults and armed violence which neither the efforts of the public officers, the respect felt for particular citizens, nor the authority of the magistrates could quell. But on a certain gentleman, who the year before had been in command of these sailors, showing himself among them, straightway, from the love they bore him, they submitted to his authority and withdrew from the fray. Which deference on their part aroused such jealousy and suspicion in the minds of the Venetian senators that very soon after they got rid of this gentleman, either by death or exile.

The sum of the matter, therefore, is, that the methods followed by Valerius are useful in a prince, but pernicious in a private citizen, both for his country and for himself, for his country, because such methods pave the way to a tyranny; for himself, because his fellow-citizens, growing suspicious of his conduct, are constrained to protect themselves to his hurt. And conversely, I maintain, that the methods of Manlius, while hurtful in a prince are useful in a citizen, and in the highest degree for his country; and, moreover, seldom give offence, unless the hatred caused by his severity be augmented by the jealousy which the fame of his other virtues inspires: a matter now to be considered in connection with the banishment of Camillas.

CHAPTER XXIII.--Why Camillus was banished from Rome.

It has been shown above how methods like those of Valerius are hurtful to the citizen who employs them and to his country, while methods like those of Manlius are advantageous for a man's country, though sometimes they be hurtful to the man himself. This is well seen in the example of Camillus, whose bearing more nearly resembled that of Manlius than that of Valerius, so that Titus Livius, in speaking of him, says, "His virtues were at once hated and admired by his soldiers." What gained him their admiration was his care for their safety, his prudence, his magnanimity, and the good order he maintained in conducting and commanding them. What made him hated was his being more stern to punish than bountiful to reward; and Livius instances the following circumstances as giving rise to this hatred. First, his having applied the money got by the sale of the goods of the Veientines to public purposes, and not divided it along with the rest of the spoils. Second, his having, on the occasion of his triumph, caused his chariot to be drawn by four white horses, seeking in his pride, men said, to make himself the equal of the sun god. And, third, his having vowed to Apollo a tenth of the Veientine plunder, which, if he was to fulfil his vow, he had to recover from his soldiers, into whose hands it had already come.

Herein we may well and readily discern what causes tend to make a prince hateful to his people; the chief whereof is the depriving them of some advantage. And this is a matter of much importance. For when a man is

deprived of what is in itself useful, he never forgets it, and every trifling occasion recalls it to his mind; and because such occasions recur daily, he is every day reminded of his loss. Another error which we are here taught to guard against, is the appearing haughty and proud, than which nothing is more distasteful to a people, and most of all to a free people; for although such pride and haughtiness do them no hurt, they nevertheless hold in detestation any who display these qualities. Every show of pride, therefore, a prince should shun as he would a rock, since to invite hatred without resulting advantage were utterly rash and futile.

CHAPTER XXIV.--That prolonged Commands brought Rome to Servitude.

If we well examine the course of Roman history, we shall find two causes leading to the break-up of that republic: one, the dissensions which arose in connection with the agrarian laws; the other, the prolongation of commands. For had these matters been rightly understood from the first, and due remedies applied, the freedom of Rome had been far more lasting, and, possibly, less disturbed. And although, as touching the prolongation of commands, we never find any tumult breaking out in Rome on that account, we do in fact discern how much harm was done to the city by the ascendency which certain of its citizens thereby gained. This mischief indeed would not have arisen, if other citizens whose period of office was extended had been as good and wise as Lucius Quintius, whose virtue affords a notable example. For terms of accord having been settled between the senate and commons of Rome, the latter, thinking their tribunes well able to withstand the ambition of the nobles, prolonged their authority for a year. Whereupon, the senate, not to be outdone by the commons, proposed, out of rivalry, to extend the consulship of Quintius. He, however, refused absolutely to lend himself to their designs, and insisted on their appointing new consuls, telling them that they should seek to discredit evil examples, not add to them by setting worse. Had this prudence and virtue of his been shared by all the citizens of Rome, the practice of prolonging the terms of civil offices would not have been suffered to establish itself, nor have led to the kindred practice of extending the term of military commands, which in progress of time effected the ruin of their republic.

The first military commander whose term was extended, was Publius Philo; for when his consulship was about to expire, he being then engaged in the siege of Palæopolis, the senate, seeing he had the victory in his hands, would not displace him by a successor, but appointed him Proconsul, which office he was the first to hold. Now, although in thus acting the senate did what they thought best for the public good, nevertheless it was this act of theirs that in time brought Rome to slavery. For the further the Romans carried their arms, the more necessary it seemed to them to grant similar extensions of command, and the oftener they, in fact, did so. This gave rise to two disadvantages: first that a smaller number of men were trained to command; second, that by the long continuance of his command a captain gained so much influence and ascendency over his soldiers that in time they came to hold the senate of no account, and looked only to him. This it was, that enabled Sylla and Marius to find adherents ready to follow them even to the public detriment, and enabled Cæsar to overthrow the liberties of his country; whereas, had the Romans never prolonged the period of authority, whether civil or military, though they might have taken longer to build up their empire, they certainly had been later in incurring servitude.

CHAPTER XXV.--Of the poverty of Cincinnatus and of many other Roman Citizens.

Elsewhere I have shown that no ordinance is of such advantage to a commonwealth, as one which enforces poverty on its citizens. And although it does not appear what particular law it was that had this operation in Rome (especially since we know the agrarian law to have been stubbornly resisted), we find, as a fact, that four hundred years after the city was founded, great poverty still prevailed there; and may assume that nothing helped so much to produce this result as the knowledge that the path to honours and preferment was closed to none, and that merit was sought after wheresoever it was to be found; for this manner of conferring honours made riches the less courted. In proof whereof I shall cite one instance only.

When the consul Minutius was beset in his camp by the Equians, the Roman people were filled with such alarm lest their army should be destroyed, that they appointed a dictator, always their last stay in seasons of peril. Their choice fell on Lucius Quintius Cincinnatus, who at the time was living on his small farm of little more than four acres, which he tilled with his own hand. The story is nobly told by Titus Livius where he says: "This is worth listening to by those who contemn all things human as compared with riches, and think that glory and excellence can have no place unless accompanied by lavish wealth." Cincinnatus, then, was ploughing in his little field, when there arrived from Rome the messengers sent by the senate to tell him he had been made dictator, and

inform him of the dangers which threatened the Republic. Putting on his gown, he hastened to Rome, and getting together an army, marched to deliver Minutius. But when he had defeated and spoiled the enemy, and released Minutius, he would not suffer the army he had rescued to participate in the spoils, saying, "I will not have you share in the plunder of those to whom you had so nearly fallen a prey." Minutius he deprived of his consulship, and reduced to be a subaltern, in which rank he bade him remain till he had learned how to command. And before this he had made Lucius Tarquininus, although forced by his poverty to serve on foot, his master of the knights.

Here, then, we see what honour was paid in Rome to poverty, and how four acres of land sufficed to support so good and great a man as Cincinnatus. We find the same Poverty still prevailing in the time of Marcus Regulus, who when serving with the army in Africa sought leave of senate to return home that he might look after his farm which his labourers had suffered to run to waste. Here again we learn two things worthy our attention: first, the poverty of these men and their contentment under it, and how their sole study was to gain renown from war, leaving all its advantages to the State. For had they thought of enriching themselves by war, it had given them little concern that their fields were running to waste Further, we have to remark the magnanimity of these citizens, who when placed at the head of armies surpassed all princes in the loftiness of their spirit, who cared neither for king nor for commonwealth, and whom nothing could daunt or dismay; but who, on returning to private life, became once more so humble, so frugal, so

careful of their slender means, and so submissive to the magistrates and reverential to their superiors, that it might seem impossible for the human mind to undergo so violent a change.

This poverty prevailed down to the days of Paulus Emilius, almost the last happy days for this republic wherein a citizen, while enriching Rome by his triumphs, himself remained poor. And yet so greatly was poverty still esteemed at this time, that when Paulus, in conferring rewards on those who had behaved well in the war, presented his own son-in-law with a silver cup, it was the first vessel of silver ever seen in his house.

I might run on to a great length pointing out how much better are the fruits of poverty than those of riches, and how poverty has brought cities, provinces, and nations to honour, while riches have wrought their ruin, had not this subject been often treated by others.

CHAPTER XXVI.--How Women are a cause of the ruin of States.

A feud broke out in Ardea touching the marriage of an heiress, whose hand was sought at the same time by two suitors, the one of plebeian, the other of noble birth. For her father being dead, her guardian wished her to wed the plebeian, her mother the noble. And so hot grew the dispute that resort was had to arms, the whole nobility siding with their fellow-noble, and all the plebeians with the plebeian. The latter faction being worsted, left the town, and sent to the Volscians for help; whereupon, the nobles sought help from Rome. The Volscians were first in the field, and on their arrival encamped round Ardea. The Romans, coming up later, shut in the Volscians between themselves and the town, and, reducing them by famine, forced them to surrender at discretion. They then entered Ardea, and putting all the ringleaders in this dispute to the sword, composed the disorders of the city.

In connection with this affair there are several points to be noted. And in the first place we see how women have been the occasion of many divisions and calamities in States, and have wrought great harm to rulers; as when, according to our historian, the violence done to Lucretia drove the Tarquins from their kingdom, and that done to Virginia broke the power of the decemvirs. And among the chief causes which Aristotle assigns for the downfall of tyrants are the wrongs done by them to their subjects in respect of their women, whether by adultery, rape, or other like injury to their honour, as has been sufficiently noticed in the Chapter wherein we treated "of

Conspiracies"

I say, then, that neither absolute princes nor the rulers of free States should underrate the importance of matter, but take heed to the disorders which it may breed and provide against them while remedies can still be used without discredit to themselves or to their governments And this should have been done by the rulers of Ardea who by suffering the rivalry between their citizens to come to a head, promoted their divisions, and when they sought to reunite them had to summon foreign help, than which nothing sooner leads to servitude.

But now let us turn to another subject which merits attention, namely, the means whereby divided cities may be reunited; and of this I propose to speak in the following Chapter.

CHAPTER XXVII.

How a divided City may be reunited, and how it is a false opinion that to hold Cities in subjection they must be kept divided.

From the example of the Roman consuls who reconciled the citizens of Ardea, we are taught the method whereby the feuds of a divided city may be composed, namely, by putting the ringleaders of the disturbances to death; and that no other remedy should be used. Three courses, indeed, are open to you, since you may either put to death, as these consuls did, or banish, or bind the citizens to live at peace with one another, taking security for their good behaviour. Of which three ways the last is the most hurtful, the most uncertain, and the least effectual; because when much blood has been shed, or other like outrage done, it cannot be that a peace imposed on compulsion should endure between men who are every day brought face to face with one another; for since fresh cause of contention may at any moment result from their meeting, it will be impossible for them to refrain from mutual injury. Of this we could have no better instance than in the city of Pistoja.

Fifteen years ago this city was divided between the Panciatichi and Cancellieri, as indeed it still continues, the only difference being that then they were in arms, whereas, now, they have laid them aside. After much controversy and wrangling, these factions would presently proceed to bloodshed, to pulling down houses, plundering property, and all the other violent courses usual in divided cities. The Florentines,

with whom it lay to compose these feuds, strove for a long time to do so by using the third of the methods mentioned; but when this only led to increased tumult and disorder, losing patience, they decided to try the second method and get rid of the ringleaders of both factions by imprisoning some and banishing others. In this way a sort of settlement was arrived at, which continues in operation up to the present hour. There can be no question, however, that the first of the methods named would have been the surest. But because extreme measures have in them an element of greatness and nobility, a weak republic, so far from knowing how to use this first method, can with difficulty be brought to employ even the second. This, as I said at the beginning, is the kind of blunder made by the princes of our times when they have to decide on matters of moment, from their not considering how those men acted who in ancient days had to determine under like conditions. For the weakness of the present race of men (the result of their enfeebling education and their ignorance of affairs), makes them regard the methods followed by the ancients as partly inhuman and partly impracticable. Accordingly, they have their own newfangled ways of looking at things, wholly at variance with the true, as when the sages of our city, some time since, pronounced that Pistoja was to be held by feuds and Pisa by fortresses, not perceiving how useless each of these methods is in itself.

Having spoken of fortresses already at some length, I shall not further refer to them here, but shall consider the futility of trying to hold subject cities by keeping them divided. In the first place, it is

impossible for the ruling power, whether prince or republic, to be friends with both factions. For wherever there is division, it is human nature to take a side, and to favour one party more than another. But if one party in a subject city be unfriendly to you, the consequence will be that you will lose that city so soon as you are involved in war, since it is impossible for you to hold a city where you have enemies both within and without. Should the ruling power be a republic, there is nothing so likely to corrupt its citizens and sow dissension among them, as having to control a divided city. For as each faction in that city will seek support and endeavour to make friends in a variety of corrupt ways, two very serious evils will result: first, that the governed city will never be contented with its governors, since there can be no good government where you often change its form, adapting yourself to the humours now of one party and now of another; and next, that the factious spirit of the subject city is certain to infect your own republic. To which Biondo testifies, when, in speaking of the citizens of Florence and Pistoja, he says, "In seeking to unite Pistoja the Florentines themselves fell out."[1] It is easy, therefore, to understand how much mischief attends on such divisions. In the year 1501, when we lost Arezzo, and when all the Val di Tevere and Val di Chiana were occupied by the Vitelli and by Duke Valentino, a certain M. de Lant was sent by the King of France to cause the whole of the lost towns to be restored to the Florentines; who finding in all these towns men who came to him claiming to be of the party of the Marnocco[2], greatly blamed this distinction, observing, that if in France any of the king's subjects were to say that he was of the king's party, he would be punished; since

the expression would imply that there was a party hostile to the king, whereas it was his majesty's desire that all his subjects should be his friends and live united without any distinction of party. But all these mistaken methods and opinions originate in the weakness of rulers, who, seeing that they cannot hold their States by their own strength and valour, have recourse to like devices; which, if now and then in tranquil times they prove of some slight assistance to them, in times of danger are shown to be worthless.

[Footnote 1: Flav. Blondri Hist., dec. ii. lib. 9. Basle ed. 1559, p. 337]

[Footnote 2: The heraldic Lion of Florence.]

CHAPTER XXVIII.

That a Republic must keep an eye on what its Citizens are about; since often the seeds of a Tyranny lie hidden under a semblance of generous deeds.

The granaries of Rome not sufficing to meet a famine with which the city was visited, a certain Spurius Melius, a very wealthy citizen for these days, privately laid in a supply of corn wherewith to feed the people at his own expense; gaining thereby such general favour with the commons, that the senate, apprehending that his bounty might have dangerous consequences, in order to crush him before he grew too powerful, appointed a dictator to deal with him and caused him to be put to death.

Here we have to note that actions which seem good in themselves and unlikely to occasion harm to any one, very often become hurtful, nay, unless corrected in time, most dangerous for a republic. And to treat the matter with greater fulness, I say, that while a republic can never maintain itself long, or manage its affairs to advantage, without citizens of good reputation, on the other hand the credit enjoyed by particular citizens often leads to the establishment of a tyranny. For which reasons, and that things may take a safe course, it should be so arranged that a citizen shall have credit only for such behaviour as benefits, and not for such as injures the State and its liberties. We must therefore examine by what ways credit is acquired. These, briefly, are two, public or secret. Public, when a citizen gains a great name by

advising well or by acting still better for the common advantage. To credit of this sort we should open a wide door, holding out rewards both for good counsels and for good actions, so that he who renders such services may be at once honoured and satisfied. Reputation acquired honestly and openly by such means as these can never be dangerous. But credit acquired by secret practices, which is the other method spoken of, is most perilous and prejudicial. Of such secret practices may be instanced, acts of kindness done to this or the other citizen in lending him money, in assisting him to marry his daughters, in defending him against the magistrates, and in conferring such other private favours as gain men devoted adherents, and encourage them after they have obtained such support, to corrupt the institutions of the State and to violate its laws.

A well-governed republic, therefore, ought, as I have said, to throw wide the door to all who seek public favour by open courses, and to close it against any who would ingratiate themselves by underhand means. And this we find was done in Rome. For the Roman republic, as a reward to any citizen who served it well, ordained triumphs and all the other honours which it had to bestow; while against those who sought to aggrandize themselves by secret intrigues, it ordained accusations and impeachment; and when, from the people being blinded by a false show of benevolence, these proved insufficient, it provided for a dictator, who with regal authority might bring to bounds any who had strayed beyond them, as instanced in the case of Spurius Melius. And if conduct like his be ever suffered to pass unchastised, it may well be the ruin of a

republic, for men when they have such examples set them are not easily led back into the right path.

CHAPTER XXIX.--That the Faults of a People are due to its Prince.

Let no prince complain of the faults committed by a people under his control; since these must be ascribed either to his negligence, or to his being himself blemished by similar defects. And were any one to consider what peoples in our own times have been most given to robbery and other like offences, he would find that they have only copied their rulers, who have themselves been of a like nature. Romagna, before those lords who ruled it were driven out by Pope Alexander VI., was a nursery of all the worst crimes, the slightest occasion giving rise to wholesale rapine and murder. This resulted from the wickedness of these lords, and not, as they asserted, from the evil disposition of their subjects. For these princes being poor, yet choosing to live as though they were rich, were forced to resort to cruelties innumerable and practised in divers ways; and among other shameful devices contrived by them to extort money, they would pass laws prohibiting certain acts, and then be the first to give occasion for breaking them; nor would they chastise offenders until they saw many involved in the same offence; when they fell to punishing, not from any zeal for the laws which they had made, but out of greed to realize the penalty. Whence flowed many mischiefs, and more particularly this, that the people being impoverished, but not corrected, sought to make good their injuries at the expense of others weaker than themselves. And thus there sprang up all those evils spoken of above, whereof the prince is the true cause.

The truth of what I say is confirmed by Titus Livius where he relates

how the Roman envoys, who were conveying the spoils of the Veientines as an offering to Apollo, were seized and brought on shore by the corsairs of the Lipari islands in Sicily; when Timasitheus, the prince of these islands, on learning the nature of the offering, its destination, and by whom sent, though himself of Lipari, behaved as a Roman might, showing his people what sacrilege it would be to intercept such a gift, and speaking to such purpose that by general consent the envoys were suffered to proceed upon their voyage, taking all their possessions with them. With reference to which incident the historian observes: "The multitude, who always take their colour from their ruler, were filled by Timasitheus with a religious awe." And to like purport we find it said by Lorenzo de' Medici:--

"A prince's acts his people imitate;
For on their lord the eyes of all men wait."[1]

[Footnote 1: E quel che fa il signer, fanno poi molti;
Chè nel signer son tutti gli occhi volti.
(La Rappresentazione di San Giovanni e Paolo.)]

CHAPTER XXX.--That a Citizen who seeks by his personal influence to render signal service to his Country, must first stand clear of Envy. How a City should prepare for its defence on the approach of an Enemy.

When the Roman senate learned that all Etruria was assembled in arms to march against Rome, and that the Latins and Hernicians, who before had been the friends of the Romans, had ranged themselves with the Volscians the ancient enemies of the Roman name, they foresaw that a perilous contest awaited them. But because Camillus was at that time tribune with consular authority they thought all might be managed without the appointment of a dictator, provided the other tribunes, his colleagues would agree to his assuming the sole direction of affairs. This they willingly did; "nor," says Titus Livius, "did they account anything as taken from their own dignity which was added to his."

On receiving their promise of obedience, Camillus gave orders that three armies should be enrolled. Of the first, which was to be directed against the Etruscans, he himself assumed command. The command of the second, which he meant to remain near Rome and meet any movement of the Latins and Hernicians, he gave to Quintius Servilius. The third army, which he designed for the protection of the city, and the defence of the gates and Curia, he entrusted to Lucius Quintius. And he further directed, that Horatius, one of his colleagues, should furnish supplies of arms, and corn, and of all else needful in time of war. Finally he put forward his colleague Cornelius to preside in the senate and public council, that from day to day he might advise what should be done. For

in those times these tribunes were ready either to command or obey as the welfare of their country might require.

We may gather from this passage how a brave and prudent man should act, how much good he may effect, and how serviceable he may be to his country, when by the force of his character and worth he succeeds in extinguishing envy. For this often disables men from acting to the best advantage, not permitting them to obtain that authority which it is essential they should have in matters of importance. Now, envy may be extinguished in one or other of two ways: first, by the approach of some flagrant danger, whereby seeing themselves like to be overwhelmed, all forego their own private ambition and lend a willing obedience to him who counts on his valour to rescue them. As in the case of Camillas, who from having given many proofs of surpassing ability, and from having been three times dictator and always exercised the office for the public good and not for his private advantage, had brought men to fear nothing from his advancement; while his fame and reputation made it no shame for them to recognize him as their superior. Wisely, therefore, does Titus Livius use concerning him the words which I have cited.

The other way in which envy may be extinguished, is by the death, whether by violence or in the ordinary course of nature, of those who have been your rivals in the pursuit of fame or power, and who seeing you better esteemed than themselves, could never acquiesce in your superiority or put up with it in patience. For when these men have been brought up in a corrupt city, where their training is little likely to

improve them, nothing that can happen will induce them to withdraw their pretensions; nay, to have their own way and satisfy their perverse humour, they will be content to look on while their country is ruined. For envy such as this there is no cure save by the death of those of whom it has taken possession. And when fortune so befriends a great man that his rivals are removed from his path by a natural death, his glory is established without scandal or offence, since he is then able to display his great qualities unhindered. But when fortune is not thus propitious to him, he must contrive other means to rid himself of rivals, and must do so successfully before he can accomplish anything. Any one who reads with intelligence the lessons of Holy Writ, will remember how Moses, to give effect to his laws and ordinances, was constrained to put to death an endless number of those who out of mere envy withstood his designs. The necessity of this course was well understood by the Friar Girolamo Savonarola, and by the Gonfalonier Piero Soderini. But the former could not comply with it, because, as a friar, he himself lacked the needful authority; while those of his followers who might have exercised that authority, did not rightly comprehend his teaching. This, however, was no fault of his; for his sermons are full of invectives and attacks against "the wise of this world," that being the name he gave to envious rivals and to all who opposed his reforms. As for Piero Soderini, he was possessed by the belief that in time and with favourable fortune he could allay envy by gentleness-and by benefits conferred on particular men; for as he was still in the prime of life, and in the fresh enjoyment of that good-will which his character and opinions had gained for him, he thought to

get the better of all who out of jealousy opposed him, without giving occasion for tumult, violence, or disorder; not knowing how time stays not, worth suffices not, fortune shifts, and malice will not be won over by any benefit Wherefore, because they could not or knew not how to vanquish this envy, the two whom I have named came to their downfall.

Another point to be noted in the passage we are considering, is the careful provision made by Camillus for the safety of Rome both within and without the city. And, truly, not without reason do wise historians, like our author, set forth certain events with much minuteness and detail, to the end that those who come after may learn how to protect themselves in like dangers. Further, we have to note that there is no more hazardous or less useful defence than one conducted without method or system. This is shown in Camillus causing a third army to be enrolled that it might be left in Rome for the protection of the city. Many persons, doubtless, both then and now, would esteem this precaution superfluous, thinking that as the Romans were a warlike people and constantly under arms, there could be no occasion for a special levy, and that it was time enough to arm when the need came. But Camillus, and any other equally prudent captain would be of the same mind, judged otherwise, not permitting the multitude to take up arms unless they were to be bound by the rules and discipline of military service. Let him, therefore, who is called on to defend a city, taking example by Camillus, before all things avoid placing arms in the hands of an undisciplined multitude, but first of all select and enroll those whom he proposes to arm, so that they may be wholly governed by him as to

where they shall assemble and whither they shall march; and then let him direct those who are not enrolled, to abide every man in his own house for its defence. Whosoever observes this method in a city which is attacked, will be able to defend it with ease; but whosoever disregards it, and follows not the example of Camillus, shall never succeed.

CHAPTER XXXI.--That strong Republics and valiant Men preserve through every change the same Spirit and Bearing.

Among other high sayings which our historian ascribes to Camillus, as showing of what stuff a truly great man should be made, he puts in his mouth the words, "My courage came not with my dictatorship nor went with my exile;" for by these words we are taught that a great man is constantly the same through all vicissitudes of Fortune; so that although she change, now exalting, now depressing, he remains unchanged, and retains always a mind so unmoved, and in such complete accordance with his nature as declares to all that over him Fortune has no dominion.

Very different is the behaviour of those weak-minded mortals who, puffed up and intoxicated with their success, ascribe all their felicity to virtues which they never knew, and thus grow hateful and insupportable to all around them. Whence also the changes in their fortunes. For whenever they have to look adversity in the face, they suddenly pass to the other extreme, becoming abject and base. And thus it happens that feeble-minded princes, when they fall into difficulties, think rather of flight than of defence, because, having made bad use of their prosperity, they are wholly unprepared to defend themselves.

The same merits and defects which I say are found in individual men, are likewise found in republics, whereof we have example in the case of Rome and of Venice. For no reverse of fortune ever broke the spirit of the

Roman people, nor did any success ever unduly elate them; as we see plainly after their defeat at Cannæ, and after the victory they had over Antiochus. For the defeat at Cannæ, although most momentous, being the third they had met with, no whit daunted them; so that they continued to send forth armies, refused to ransom prisoners as contrary to their custom, and despatched no envoy to Hannibal or to Carthage to sue for peace; but without ever looking back on past humiliations, thought always of war, though in such straits for soldiers that they had to arm their old men and slaves. Which facts being made known to Hanno the Carthaginian, he, as I have already related, warned the Carthaginian senate not to lay too much stress upon their victory. Here, therefore, we see that in times of adversity the Romans were neither cast down nor dismayed. On the other hand, no prosperity ever made them arrogant. Before fighting the battle wherein he was finally routed, Antiochus sent messengers to Scipio to treat for an accord; when Scipio offered peace on condition that he withdrew at once into Syria, leaving all his other dominions to be dealt with by the Romans as they thought fit. Antiochus refusing these terms, fought and was defeated, and again sent envoys to Scipio, enjoining them to accept whatever conditions the victor might be pleased to impose. But Scipio proposed no different terms from those he had offered before saying that "the Romans, as they lost not heart on defeat, so waxed not insolent with success."

The contrary of all this is seen in the behaviour of the Venetians, who thinking their good fortune due to valour of which they were devoid, in their pride addressed the French king as "Son of St. Mark;" and making

no account of the Church, and no longer restricting their ambition to the limits of Italy, came to dream of founding an empire like the Roman. But afterwards, when their good fortune deserted them, and they met at Vailà a half-defeat at the hands of the French king, they lost their whole dominions, not altogether from revolt, but mainly by a base and abject surrender to the Pope and the King of Spain. Nay, so low did they stoop as to send ambassadors to the Emperor offering to become his tributaries, and to write letters to the Pope, full of submission and servility, in order to move his compassion. To such abasement were they brought in four days' time by what was in reality only a half-defeat. For on their flight after the battle of Vailà only about a half of their forces were engaged, and one of their two provedditori escaped to Verona with five and twenty thousand men, horse and foot. So that had there been a spark of valour in Venice, or any soundness in her military system, she might easily have renewed her armies, and again confronting fortune have stood prepared either to conquer, or, if she must fall, to fall more gloriously; and at any rate might have obtained for herself more honourable terms. But a pusillanimous spirit, occasioned by the defects of her ordinances in so far as they relate to war, caused her to lose at once her courage and her dominions. And so will it always happen with those who behave like the Venetians. For when men grow insolent in good fortune, and abject inn evil, the fault lies in themselves and in the character of their training, which, when slight and frivolous, assimilates them to itself; but when otherwise, makes them of another temper, and giving them better acquaintance with the world, causes them to be less disheartened by misfortunes and less elated by success.

And while this is true of individual men, it holds good also of a concourse of men living together in one republic, who will arrive at that measure of perfection which the institutions of their State permit. And although I have already said on another occasion that a good militia is the foundation of all States, and where that is wanting there can neither be good laws, nor aught else that is good, it seems to me not superfluous to say the same again; because in reading this history of Titus Livius the necessity of such a foundation is made apparent in every page. It is likewise shown that no army can be good unless it be thoroughly trained and exercised, and that this can only be the case with an army raised from your own subjects. For as a State is not and cannot always be at war, you must have opportunity to train your army in times of peace; but this, having regard to the cost, you can only have in respect of your own subjects.

When Camillus, as already related, went forth to meet the Etruscans, his soldiers on seeing the great army of their enemy, were filled with fear, thinking themselves too to withstand its onset. This untoward disposition being reported to Camillus, he showed himself to his men and by visiting their tents, and conversing with this and the other among them, was able to remove their misgivings; and, finally, without other word of command, he bade them "each do his part as he had learned and been accustomed." Now, any one who well considers the methods followed by Camillus, and the words spoken by him to encourage his soldiers to face their enemy, will perceive that these words and methods could never

have been used with an army which had not been trained and disciplined in time of peace as well as of war. For no captain can trust to untrained soldiers or look for good service at their hands; nay, though he were another Hannibal, with such troops his defeat were certain. For, as a captain cannot be present everywhere while a battle is being fought, unless he have taken all measures beforehand to render his men of the same temper as himself, and have made sure that they perfectly understand his orders and arrangements, he will inevitably be destroyed.

When a city therefore is armed and trained as Rome was, and when its citizens have daily opportunity, both singly and together, to make trial of their valour and learn what fortune can effect, it will always happen, that at all times, and whether circumstances be adverse or favourable, they will remain of unaltered courage and preserve the same noble bearing. But when its citizens are unpractised in arms, and trust not to their own valour but wholly to the arbitration of Fortune, they will change their temper as she changes, and offer always the same example of behaviour as was given by the Venetians.

CHAPTER XXXII.--Of the methods which some have used to make Peace impossible.

The towns of Cære and Velitræ, two of her own colonies, revolted from Rome in expectation of being protected by the Latins. But the Latins being routed and all hopes of help from that quarter at an end, many of the townsmen recommended that envoys should be sent to Rome to make their peace with the senate. This proposal, however, was defeated by those who had been the prime movers of the revolt, who, fearing that the whole punishment might fall on their heads, to put a stop to any talk of an adjustment, incited the multitude to take up arms and make a foray into the Roman territory.

And, in truth, when it is desired that a prince or people should banish from their minds every thought of reconciliation, there is no surer or more effectual plan than to incite them to inflict grave wrong on him with whom you would not have them be reconciled; for, then, the fear of that punishment which they will seem to themselves to have deserved, will always keep them apart. At the close of the first war waged by the Romans against Carthage, the soldiers who had served under the Carthaginians in Sardinia and Sicily, upon peace being proclaimed, returned to Africa; where, being dissatisfied with their pay, they mutinied against the Carthaginians, and choosing two of their number, Mato and Spendio, to be their leaders, seized and sacked many towns subject to Carthage. The Carthaginians, being loath to use force until they had tried all other methods for bringing them to reason, sent

Hasdrubal, their fellow-citizen, to mediate with them, thinking that from formerly having commanded them he might be able to exercise some influence over them. But on his arrival, Spendio and Mato, to extinguish any hope these mutineers might have had of making peace with Carthage, and so leave them no alternative but war, persuaded them that their best course was to put Hasdrubal, with all the other Carthaginian citizens whom they had taken prisoners, to death. Whereupon, they not only put them to death, but first subjected them to an infinity of tortures; crowning their wickedness by a proclamation to the effect that every Carthaginian who might thereafter fall into their hands should meet a like fate. This advice, therefore, and its consummation had the effect of rendering these mutineers relentless and inveterate in their hostility to the Carthaginians.

CHAPTER XXXIII.--That to insure victory in battle you must inspire your Men with confidence in one another and in you.

To insure an army being victorious in battle you must inspire it with the conviction that it is certain to prevail. The causes which give it this confidence are its being well armed and disciplined, and the soldiers knowing one another. These conditions are only to be found united in soldiers born and bred in the same country.

It is likewise essential that the army should think so well of its captain as to trust implicitly to his prudence; which it will always do if it see him careful of its welfare, attentive to discipline, brave in battle, and otherwise supporting well and honourably the dignity of his position. These conditions he fulfils when, while punishing faults, he does not needlessly harass his men, keeps his word with them, shows them that the path to victory is easy, and conceals from them, or makes light of things which seen from a distance might appear to threaten danger. The observance of these precautions will give an army great confidence, and such confidence leads to victory.

This confidence the Romans were wont to inspire in the minds of their soldiers by the aid of religion; and accordingly their consuls were appointed, their armies were enrolled, their soldiers marched forth, and their battles were begun, only when the auguries and auspices were favourable; and without attending to all these observances no prudent captain would ever engage in combat; knowing that unless his soldiers

were first assured that the gods were on their side, he might readily suffer defeat. But if any consul or other leader ever joined battle contrary to the auspices, the Romans would punish him, as they did Claudius Pulcher.

The truth of what I affirm is plainly seen from the whole course of the Roman history, but is more particularly established by the words which Livius puts into the mouth of Appius Claudius, who, when complaining to the people of the insolence of the tribunes, and taxing them with having caused the corruption of the auspices and other rites of religion, is made to say, "And now they would strip even religion of its authority. For what matters it, they will tell you, that the fowls refuse to peck, or come slowly from the coop, or that a cock has crowed? These are small matters doubtless; but it was by not contemning such small matters as these, that our forefathers built up this great republic." And, indeed, in these small matters lies a power which keeps men united and of good courage, which is of itself the chief condition of success.

But the observances of religion must be accompanied by valour, for otherwise they can nothing avail. The men of Praneste, leading forth their army against the Romans, took up their position near the river Allia, on the very spot where the Romans had been routed by the Gauls, selecting this ground that it might inspire their own side with confidence, and dishearten their enemies with the unhappy memories which it recalled But although, for the reasons already noted, this was a course which promised success, the result nevertheless showed that true

valour is not to be daunted by trifling disadvantages. And this the historian well expresses by the words he puts in the mouth of the dictator as spoken to his master of the knights "See how these fellows, in encamping on the banks of the Allia, have chosen their ground in reliance upon fortune. Do you, therefore, relying on discipline and valour, fall upon then centre." For true valour, tight discipline, and the feeling of security gained by repeated victories, are not to be counteracted by things of no real moment, dismayed by empty terrors, or quelled by a solitary mishap. As was well seen when the two Manlii, being consuls in command against the Volscians, rashly allowed a part of their army to go out foraging, and both those who went out and those who stayed behind found themselves attacked at the same moment For from this danger they were saved by the courage of the soldiers, and not by the foresight of the consuls. With regard to which occurrence Titus Livius observes, "Even without a leader the steadfast valour of the soldiers was maintained."

Here I must not omit to notice the device practised by Fabius to give his army confidence, when he led it for the first time into Etruria. For judging such encouragement to be especially needed by his men, since they were entering an unknown country to encounter a new foe, he addressed them before they joined battle, and, after reciting many reasons for expecting a victory, told them, that "he could have mentioned other favourable circumstances making victory certain, had it not been dangerous to disclose them." And as this device was dexterously used it merits imitation.

CHAPTER XXXIV.--By what reports, rumours, or surmises the Citizens of a Republic are led to favour a Fellow-citizen: and-whether the Magistracies are bestowed with better judgment by a People or by a Prince.

I have elsewhere related how Titus Manlius, afterwards named Torquatus, rescued his father from the charge laid against him by Marcus Pomponius, tribune of the people. And though the means he took to effect this were somewhat violent and irregular, so pleasing to everyone were his filial piety and affection, that not only did he escape rebuke, but when military tribunes had to be appointed his name was second on the list of those chosen. To explain his good fortune, it will, I think, be useful to consider what are the methods followed by the citizens of a republic in estimating the character of those on whom they bestow honours, so as to see whether what I have already said on this head be true, namely, that a people is more discriminating in awarding honours than a prince.

I say, then, that in conferring honours and offices, the people, when it has no knowledge of a man from his public career, follows the estimate given of him by the general voice, and by common report; or else is guided by some prepossession or preconceived opinion which it has adopted concerning him. Such impressions are formed either from consideration of a man's descent (it being assumed, until the contrary

appears, that where his ancestors have been great and distinguished citizens their descendant will resemble them), or else from regard to his manners and habits; and nothing can be more in his favour than that he frequents the company of the grave and virtuous, and such as are generally reputed wise. For as we can have no better clue to a man's character than the company he keeps, he who frequents worthy company deservedly obtains a good name, since there can hardly fail to be some similarity between himself and his associates. Sometimes, however, the popular estimate of a man is founded on some remarkable and noteworthy action, though not of public moment, in which he has acquitted himself well. And of all the three causes which create a prepossession in a man's favour, none is so effectual as this last. For the presumption that he will resemble his ancestors and kinsmen is so often misleading, that men are slow to trust and quick to discard it, unless confirmed by the personal worth of him of whom they are judging.

The criterion of character afforded by a man's manners and conversation is a safer guide than the presumption of inherited excellence, but is far inferior to that afforded by his actions; for until he has given actual proof of his worth, his credit is built on mere opinion, which may readily change. But this third mode of judging, which originates in and rests upon his actions, at once gives him a name which can only be destroyed by his afterwards doing many actions of a contrary nature. Those therefore who live in a republic should conform to this third criterion, and endeavour, as did many of the Roman youth, to make their start in life with some extraordinary achievement, either by promoting

a law conducive to the general well-being, or by accusing some powerful citizen as a transgressor of the laws, or by performing some similar new and notable action which cannot fail to be much spoken of.

Actions like this are necessary not only to lay a foundation for your fame, but also to maintain and extend it. To which end, they must continually be renewed, as we find done by Titus Manlius throughout the whole course of his life. For after winning his earliest renown by his bold and singular defence of his father, when some years had passed he fought his famous duel with the Gaul, from whom, when he had slain him, he took the twisted golden collar which gave him the name of Torquatus. Nor was this the last of his remarkable actions, for at a later period, when he was of ripe years, he caused his own son to be put to death, because he had fought without leave, although successfully. Which three actions gained for him at the time a greater name, and have made him more renowned through after ages than all his triumphs and victories, though of these he had as large a share as fell to the lot of any other Roman. The explanation of which is, that while in his victories Manlius had many who resembled him, in these particular actions he stood almost or entirely alone.

So, too, with the elder Scipio, all whose victories together did not obtain for him so much reputation, as did his rescue, while he was yet young, of his father at the Ticino, and his undaunted bearing after the rout at Cannæ, when with his naked sword he constrained a number of the Roman youth to swear never to abandon their country, as some among them

had before been minded to do. It was these two actions, therefore, which laid the foundation of his future fame and paved the way for his triumphs in Spain and Africa. And the fair esteem in which men held him, was still further heightened when in Spain he restored a daughter to her father, a wife to her husband.

Nor is it only the citizen who seeks reputation as leading to civil honours, who must act in this way; the prince who would maintain his credit in his princedom must do likewise; since nothing helps so much to make a prince esteemed as to give signal proofs of his worth, whether by words or by deeds which tend to promote the public good, and show him to be so magnanimous, generous, and just, that he may well pass into a proverb among his subjects. But to return to the point whence I digressed, I say that if a people, when they first confer honours on a fellow-citizen, rest their judgment on any one of the three circumstances above-mentioned, they build on a reasonable foundation; but, when many instances of noble conduct have made a man favourably known, that the foundation is still better, since then there is hardly room for mistake. I speak merely of those honours which are bestowed on a man at the outset of his career, before he has come to be known by continued proof, or is found to have passed from one kind of conduct to another and dissimilar kind, and I maintain that in such cases, so far as erroneous judgments or corrupt motives are concerned, a people will always commit fewer mistakes than a prince.

But since a people may happen to be deceived as regards the character,

reputation, and actions of a man, thinking them better or greater than in truth they are, an error a prince is less likely to fall into from his being informed and warned by his advisers, in order that the people may not lack similar advice, wise founders of republics have provided, that when the highest dignities of the State, to which it would be dangerous to appoint incapable men, have to be filled up, and it appears that some incapable man is the object of the popular choice, it shall be lawful and accounted honourable for any citizen to declare in the public assemblies the defects of the favoured candidate, that the people, being made acquainted therewith, may be better able to judge of his fitness. That this was the practice in Rome we have proof in the speech made by Fabius Maximus to the people during the second Punic war, when in the appointment of consuls public favour leaned towards Titus Ottacilius. For Fabius judging him unequal to the duties of the consulship at such a crisis, spoke against him and pointed out his insufficiency, and so prevented his appointment, turning the popular favour towards another who deserved it more.

In the choice of its magistrates, therefore, a people judges of those among whom it has to choose, in accordance with the surest indications it can get; and when it can be advised as princes are, makes fewer mistakes than they. But the citizen who would make a beginning by gaining the good-will of the people, must, to obtain it, perform, like Titus Manlius, some noteworthy action.

CHAPTER XXXV.--Of the Danger incurred in being the first to recommend new Measures; and that the more unusual the Measures the greater the Danger.

How perilous a thing it is to put one's self at the head of changes whereby many are affected, how difficult to guide and bring them to perfection, and when perfected to maintain them, were too wide and arduous a subject to be treated here. Wherefore I reserve it for a fitter occasion, and shall now speak only of those dangers which are incurred by the citizens of a republic or by the counsellors of a prince in being the first to promote some grave and important measure in such manner that the whole responsibility attending it rests with them. For as men judge of things by their results, any evil which ensues from such measures will be imputed to their author. And although if good ensue he will be applauded, nevertheless in matters of this kind, what a man may gain is as nothing to what he may lose.

Selim, the present sultan, or Grand Turk as he is called, being in readiness, as some who come from his country relate, to set forth on an expedition against Egypt and Syria, was urged by one of his bashaws whom he had stationed on the confines of Persia, to make war upon the Sofi. In compliance with which advice he went on this new enterprise with a vast army. But coming to a great plain, wherein were many deserts and few streams, and encountering the same difficulties as in ancient times had proved the ruin of many Roman armies, he suffered so much from

pestilence and famine, that, although victorious in battle, he lost a great part of his men. This so enraged him against the bashaw on whose advice he had acted, that he forthwith put him to death.

In like manner, we read of many citizens who having strenuously promoted various measures were banished when these turned out badly. Certain citizens of Rome, for instance, were very active in forwarding a law allowing the appointment of a plebeian to be consul. This law passing, it so happened that the first plebeian consul who went forth with the armies was routed; and had it not been that the party in whose behalf the law was made was extremely powerful, its promoters would have fared badly. It is plain therefore that the counsellors whether of a republic or of a prince stand in this dilemma, that if they do not conscientiously advise whatsoever they think advantageous for their city or prince, they fail in their duty; if they do advise it, they risk their places and their lives; all men being subject to this infirmity of judging advice by the event.

When I consider in what way this reproach or this danger may best be escaped, I find no other remedy to recommend than that in giving advice you proceed discreetly not identifying yourself in a special manner with the measure you would see carried out, but offering your opinion without heat, and supporting it temperately and modestly, so that if the prince or city follow it, they shall do so of their own good-will, and not seem to be dragged into it by your importunity. When you act thus, neither prince nor people can reasonably bear you a grudge in respect of the

advice given by you, since that advice was not adopted contrary to the general opinion. For your danger lies in many having opposed you, who afterwards, should your advice prove hurtful, combine to ruin you. And although in taking this course you fall short of the glory which is earned by him who stands alone against many in urging some measure which succeeds, you have nevertheless two advantages to make up for it: first, that you escape danger; and second, that when you have temperately stated your views, and when, in consequence of opposition, your advice has not been taken, should other counsels prevail and mischief come of them, your credit will be vastly enhanced. And although credit gained at the cost of misfortune to your prince or city cannot be matter of rejoicing, still it is something to be taken into account.

On this head, then, I know of no other advice to offer. For that you should be silent and express no opinion at all, were a course hurtful for your prince or city, and which would not absolve you from danger, since you would soon grow to be suspected, when it might fare with you as with the friend of Perseus the Macedonian king. For Perseus being defeated by Paulus Emilius, and making his escape with a few companions, it happened that one of them, in reviewing the past, began to point out to the king many mistakes which he had made and which had been his ruin. Whereupon Perseus turning upon him said, "Traitor, hast thou waited till now when there is no remedy to tell me these things?" and so saying, slew him with his own hand. Such was the penalty incurred by one who was silent when he should have spoken, and who spoke when he should have been silent; and who found no escape from danger in having

refrained from giving advice. Wherefore, I believe, that the course which I have recommended should be observed and followed.

CHAPTER XXXVI.--Why it has been and still may be affirmed of the Gauls, that at the beginning of a fray they are more than Men, but afterwards less than Women.

The bravery of the Gaul who on the banks of the Anio challenged any among the Romans to fight with him, and the combat that thereupon ensued between him and Titus Manlius, remind me of what Titus Livius oftener than once observes in his history, that "at the beginning of a fray the Gauls are more than men, but ere it is ended show themselves less than women."

Touching the cause of this, many are content to believe that such is their nature, which, indeed, I take to be true; but we are not, therefore, to assume that the natural temper which makes them brave at the outset, may not be so trained and regulated as to keep them brave to the end. And, to prove this, I say, that armies are of three kinds. In one of these you have discipline with bravery and valour as its consequence. Such was the Roman army, which is shown by all historians to have maintained excellent discipline as the result of constant military training. And because in a well-disciplined army none must do anything save by rule, we find that in the Roman army, from which as it conquered the world all others should take example, none either eat, or slept, or bought, or sold, or did anything else, whether in his military or in his private capacity, without orders from the consul. Those armies which do otherwise are not true armies, and if ever they have any success, it is owing to the fury and impetuosity of their onset and not

to trained and steady valour. But of this impetuosity and fury, trained valour, when occasion requires, will make use; nor will any danger daunt it or cause it to lose heart, its courage being kept alive by its discipline, and its confidence fed by the hope of victory which never fails it while that discipline is maintained.

But the contrary happens with armies of the second sort, those, namely, which have impetuosity without discipline, as was the case with the Gauls whose courage in a protracted conflict gradually wore away; so that unless they succeeded in their first attack, the impetuosity to which they trusted, having no support from disciplined valour, soon cooled; when, as they had nothing else to depend on, their efforts ceased. The Romans, on the other hand, being less disquieted in danger by reason of their perfect discipline, and never losing hope, fought steadily and stubbornly to the last, and with the same courage at the end as at the outset; nay, growing heated by the conflict, only became the fiercer the longer it was continued.

In armies of the third sort both natural spirit and trained valour are wanting; and to this class belong the Italian armies of our own times, of which it may be affirmed that they are absolutely worthless, never obtaining a victory, save when, by some accident, the enemy they encounter takes to flight. But since we have daily proofs of this absence of valour, it were needless to set forth particular instances of it.

That all, however, may know on the testimony of Titus Livius what methods a good army should take, and what are taken by a bad army, I shall cite the words he represents Papirius Cursor to have used when urging that Fabius, his master of the knights, should be punished for disobedience, and denouncing the consequences which would ensue were he absolved, saying:--"Let neither God nor man be held in reverence; let the orders of captains and the Divine auspices be alike disregarded; let a vagrant soldiery range without leave through the country of friend or foe; reckless of their military oath, let them disband at their pleasure; let them forsake their deserted standards, and neither rally nor disperse at the word of command; let them fight when they choose, by day or by night, with or without advantage of ground, with or without the bidding of their leader, neither maintaining their ranks nor observing the order of battle; and let our armies, from being a solemn and consecrated company, grow to resemble some dark and fortuitous gathering of cut-throats." With this passage before us, it is easy to pronounce whether the armies of our times be "a dark and fortuitous gathering," or "a solemn and consecrated company;" nay, how far they fall short of anything worthy to be called an army, possessing neither the impetuous but disciplined valour of the Romans, nor even the mere undisciplined impetuosity of the Gauls.

CHAPTER XXXVII.--Whether a general engagement should be preceded by skirmishes; and how, avoiding these, we may get knowledge of a new Enemy.

Besides all the other difficulties which hinder men from bringing anything to its utmost perfection, it appears, as I have already observed, that in close vicinity to every good is found also an evil, so apt to grow up along with it that it is hardly possible to have the one without accepting the other. This we see in all human affairs, and the result is, that unless fortune aid us to overcome this natural and common disadvantage, we never arrive at any excellence. I am reminded of this by the combat between Titus Manlius and the Gaul, concerning which Livius writes that it "determined the issue of the entire war; since the Gauls, abandoning their camp, hastily withdrew to the country about Tivoli, whence they presently passed into Campania."

It may be said, therefore, on the one hand, that a prudent captain ought absolutely to refrain from all those operations which, while of trifling moment in themselves, may possibly produce an ill effect on his army. Now, to engage in a combat wherein you risk your whole fortunes without putting forth your entire strength, is, as I observed before, when condemning the defence of a country by guarding its defiles, an utterly foolhardy course. On the other hand, it is to be said that a prudent captain, when he has to meet a new and redoubtable adversary, ought, before coming to a general engagement, to accustom his men by skirmishes and passages of arms, to the quality of their enemy; that they may learn

to know him, and how to deal with him, and so free themselves from the feeling of dread which his name and fame inspire.

This for a captain is a matter of the very greatest importance, and one which it might be almost fatal for him to neglect, since to risk a pitched battle without first giving your soldiers such opportunities to know their enemy and shake off their fear of him, is to rush on certain destruction. When Valerius Corvinus was sent by the Romans with their armies against the Samnites, these being new adversaries with whom up to that time they had not measured their strength, Titus Livius tells us that before giving battle he made his men make trial of the enemy in several unimportant skirmishes, "lest they should be dismayed by a new foe and a new method of warfare." Nevertheless, there is very great danger that, if your soldiers get the worst in these encounters, their alarm and self-distrust may be increased, and a result follow contrary to that intended, namely, that you dispirit where you meant to reassure.

This, therefore, is one of those cases in which the evil lies so nigh the good, and both are so mixed up together that you may readily lay hold of the one when you think to grasp the other. And with regard to this I say, that a good captain should do what he can that nothing happen which might discourage his men, nor is there anything so likely to discourage them as to begin with a defeat. For which reason skirmishes are, as a rule, to be avoided, and only to be allowed where you fight to great advantage and with a certainty of victory. In like manner, no attempt should be made to defend the passes leading into your

country unless your whole army can co-operate; nor are any towns to be defended save those whose loss necessarily involves your ruin. And as to those towns which you do defend, you must so arrange, both in respect of the garrison within and the army without, that in the event of a siege your whole forces can be employed. All other towns you must leave undefended. For, provided your army be kept together, you do not, in losing what you voluntarily abandon, forfeit your military reputation, or sacrifice your hopes of final success. But when you lose what it was your purpose, and what all know it was your purpose to hold, you suffer a real loss and injury, and, like the Gauls on the defeat of their champion, you are ruined by a mishap of no moment in itself.

Philip of Macedon, the father of Perseus, a great soldier in his day, and of a great name, on being invaded by the Romans, laid waste and relinquished much of his territory which he thought he could not defend; rightly judging it more hurtful to his reputation to lose territory after an attempt to defend it, than to abandon it to the enemy as something he cared little to retain. So, likewise, after the battle of Cannæ, when their affairs were at their worst, the Romans refused aid to many subject and protected States, charging them to defend themselves as best they could. And this is a better course than to undertake to defend and then to fail; for by refusing to defend, you lose only your friend; whereas in failing, you not only lose your friend, but weaken yourself.

But to return to the matter in hand, I affirm, that even when a captain is constrained by inexperience of his enemy to make trial of him by

means of skirmishes, he ought first to see that he has so much the advantage that he runs no risk of defeat; or else, and this is his better course, he must do as Marius did when sent against the Cimbrians, a very courageous people who were laying Italy waste, and by their fierceness and numbers, and from the fact of their having already routed a Roman army, spreading terror wherever they came. For before fighting a decisive battle, Marius judged it necessary to do something to lessen the dread in which these enemies were held by his army; and being a prudent commander, he, on several occasions, posted his men at points where the Cimbrians must pass, that seeing and growing familiar with their appearance, while themselves in safety and within the shelter of their intrenched camp, and finding them to be a mere disorderly rabble, encumbered with baggage, and either without weapons, or with none that were formidable, they might at last assume courage and grow eager to engage them in battle. The part thus prudently taken by Marius, should be carefully imitated by others who would escape the dangers above spoken of and not have to betake themselves like the Gauls to a disgraceful flight, on sustaining some trifling defeat.

But since in this Discourse I have referred by name to Valerius Corvinus, in my next Chapter I shall cite his words to show what manner of man a captain ought to be.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.--Of the Qualities of a Captain in whom his Soldiers can confide.

Valerius Corvinus, as I have said already, was sent in command of an army against the Samnites, who were then new enemies to Rome. Wherefore, to reassure his soldiers and familiarize them with their adversaries, he made them engage with them in various unimportant passages of arms. But not thinking this enough, he resolved before delivering battle to address his men, and by reminding them of their valour and his own, to make it plain how little they should esteem such enemies. And from the words which Titus Livius puts in his mouth we may gather what manner of man the captain ought to be in whom an army will put its trust. For he makes him say:--"Bear ye also this in mind under whose conduct and auspices you are about to fight, and whether he whom you are to obey be great only in exhorting, bold only in words, and all unpractised in arms; or whether he be one who himself knows how to use his spear, to march before the eagles, and play his part in the thickest of the fight. Soldiers! I would have you follow my deeds and not my words, and look to me for example rather than for commands; for with this right hand I have won for myself three consulships, and an unsurpassed renown." Which words rightly understood give every one to know what he must do to merit a captain's rank. And if any man obtain it by other means, he will soon discover that advancement due to chance or intrigue rather takes away than brings reputation, since it is men who give lustre to titles and not titles to men.

From what has been said it will likewise be understood that if great captains when matched against an unfamiliar foe have had to resort to unusual methods for reassuring the minds even of veteran soldiers, much more will it be necessary for them to use all their address when in command of a raw and untried army which has never before looked an enemy in the face. For if an unfamiliar adversary inspire terror even in a veteran army, how much greater must be the terror which any army will inspire in the minds of untrained men. And yet we often find all these difficulties overcome by the supreme prudence of a great captain like the Roman Gracchus or the Theban Epaminondas, of whom I have before spoken, who with untried troops defeated the most practised veterans. And the method they are said to have followed was to train their men for some months in mimic warfare, so as to accustom them to discipline and obedience, after which they employed them with complete confidence on actual service.

No man, therefore, of warlike genius, need despair of creating a good army if only he have the men; for the prince who has many subjects and yet lacks soldiers, has only to thank his own inertness and want of foresight, and must not complain of the cowardice of his people.

CHAPTER XXXIX.--That a Captain should have good knowledge of Places.

Among other qualifications essential in a good captain is a knowledge, both general and particular, of places and countries, for without such knowledge it is impossible for him to carry out any enterprise in the best way. And while practice is needed for perfection in every art, in this it is needed in the highest degree. Such practice, or particular knowledge as it may be termed, is sooner acquired in the chase than in any other exercise; and, accordingly, we find it said by ancient historians that those heroes who, in their day, ruled the world, were bred in the woods and trained to the chase; for this exercise not merely gives the knowledge I speak of, but teaches countless other lessons needful in war. And Xenophon in his life of Cyrus tells us, that Cyrus, on his expedition against the King of Armenia, when assigning to each of his followers the part he was to perform, reminded them that the enterprise on which they were engaged, differed little from one of those hunting expeditions on which they had gone so often in his company; likening those who were to lie in ambush in the mountains, to the men sent to spread the toils on the hill-tops; and those who were to overrun the plain, to the beaters whose business it is to start the game from its lair that it may be driven into the toils. Now, this is related to show how, in the opinion of Xenophon, the chase is a mimic representation of war, and therefore to be esteemed by the great as useful and honourable.

Nor can that knowledge of countries which I have spoken of as necessary

in a commander, be obtained in any convenient way except by the chase. For he who joins therein gains a special acquaintance with the character of the country in which it is followed; and he who has made himself specially familiar with one district, will afterwards readily understand the character of any strange country into which he comes. For all countries, and the districts of which they are made up, have a certain resemblance to one another, so that from a knowledge of one we can pass easily to the knowledge of another. He therefore who is without such practical acquaintance with some one country, can only with difficulty, and after a long time, obtain a knowledge of another, while he who possesses it can take in at a glance how this plain spreads, how that mountain slopes, whither that valley winds, and all other like particulars in respect of which he has already acquired a certain familiarity.

The truth of what I affirm is shown by Titus Livius in the case of Publius Decius, who, being military tribune in the army which the consul Cornelius led against the Samnites, when the consul advanced into a defile where the Roman army were like to be shut in by the enemy, perceiving the great danger they ran, and noting, as Livius relates, a hill which rose by a steep ascent and overhung the enemy's camp, and which, though hard of access for heavy-armed troops, presented little difficulty to troops lightly armed, turned to the consul and said:--"Seest thou, Aulus Cornelius, yonder height over above the enemy, which they have been blind enough to neglect? There, were we manfully to seize it, might we find the citadel of our hopes and of our safety."

Whereupon, he was sent by the consul with three thousand men to secure the height, and so saved the Roman army. And as it was part of his plan to make his own escape and carry off his men safely under shelter of night, Livius represents him as saying to his soldiers:--"Come with me, that, while daylight still serves, we may learn where the enemy have posted their guards, and by what exit we may issue hence." Accordingly, putting on the cloak of a common soldier, lest the enemy should observe that an officer was making his rounds he surveyed their camp in all directions.

Now any one who carefully studies the whole of this passage, must perceive how useful and necessary it is for a captain to know the nature of places, which knowledge had Decius not possessed he could not have decided that it would be for the advantage of the Roman army to occupy this hill; nor could he have judged from a distance whether the hill was accessible or no; and when he reached the summit and desired to return to the consul, since he was surrounded on all sides by the enemy, he never could have distinguished the path it was safe for him to take, from those guarded by the foe. For all which reasons it was absolutely essential that Decius should have that thorough knowledge which enabled him by gaining possession of this hill to save the Roman army, and to discover a path whereby, in the event of his being attacked, he and his followers might escape.

CHAPTER XL.--That Fraud is fair in War.

Although in all other affairs it be hateful to use fraud, in the operations of war it is praiseworthy and glorious; so that he who gets the better of his enemy by fraud, is as much extolled as he who prevails by force. This appears in the judgments passed by such as have written of the lives of great warriors, who praise Hannibal and those other captains who have been most noted for acting in this way. But since we may read of many instances of such frauds, I shall not cite them here. This, however, I desire to say, that I would not have it understood that any fraud is glorious which leads you to break your plighted word, or to depart from covenants to which you have agreed; for though to do so may sometimes gain you territory and power, it can never, as I have said elsewhere, gain you glory.

The fraud, then, which I here speak of is that employed against an enemy who places no trust in you, and is wholly directed to military operations, such as the stratagem of Hannibal at the Lake of Thrasymene, when he feigned flight in order to draw the Roman consul and his army into an ambuscade; or when to escape from the hands of Fabius Maximus he fastened lights to the horns of his oxen. Similar to the above was the deceit practised by Pontius the Samnite commander to inveigle the Roman army into the Caudine Forks. For after he had drawn up his forces behind the hills, he sent out a number of his soldiers, disguised as herdsmen, to drive great herds of cattle across the plain; who being captured by the Romans, and interrogated as to where the Samnite army was, all of

them, as they had been taught by Pontius, agreed in saying that it had gone to besiege Nocera: which being believed by the consuls, led them to advance within the Caudine Valley, where no sooner were they come than they were beset by the Samnites. And the victory thus won by a fraud would have been most glorious for Pontius had he but taken the advice of his father Herennius, who urged that the Romans should either be set at liberty unconditionally, or all be put to death; but that a mean course "which neither gains friends nor gets rid of foes" should be avoided.
And this was sound advice, for, as has already been shown, in affairs of moment a mean course is always hurtful.

CHAPTER XLI.--That our Country is to be defended by Honour or by Dishonour; and in either way is well defended.

The consuls together with the whole Roman army fell, as I have related, into the hands of the Samnites, who imposed on them the most ignominious terms, insisting that they should be stripped of their arms, and pass under the yoke before they were allowed to return to Rome. The consuls being astounded by the harshness of these conditions and the whole army overwhelmed with dismay, Lucius Lentulus, the Roman lieutenant, stood forward and said, that in his opinion they ought to decline no course whereby their country might be saved; and that as the very existence of Rome depended on the preservation of her army, that army must be saved at any sacrifice, for whether the means be honourable or ignominious, all is well done that is done for the defence of our country. And he said that were her army preserved, Rome, in course of time, might wipe out the disgrace; but if her army were destroyed, however gloriously it might perish, Rome and her freedom would perish with it. In the event his counsel was followed.

Now this incident deserves to be noted and pondered over by every citizen who is called on to advise his country; for when the entire safety of our country is at stake, no consideration of what is just or unjust, merciful or cruel, praiseworthy or shameful, must intervene. On the contrary, every other consideration being set aside, that course alone must be taken which preserves the existence of the country and maintains its liberty. And this course we find followed by the people

of France, both in their words and in their actions, with the view of supporting the dignity of their king and the integrity of their kingdom; for there is no remark they listen to with more impatience than that this or the other course is disgraceful to the king. For their king, they say, can incur no disgrace by any resolve he may take, whether it turn out well or ill; and whether it succeed or fail, all maintain that he has acted as a king should.

CHAPTER XLII.--That Promises made on Compulsion are not to be observed.

When, after being subjected to this disgrace, the consuls returned to Rome with their disarmed legions, Spurius Posthumius, himself one of the consuls, was the first to contend in the senate that the terms made in the Caudine Valley were not to be observed. For he argued that the Roman people were not bound by them, though he himself doubtless was, together with all the others who had promised peace; wherefore, if the people desired to set themselves free from every engagement, he and all the rest who had given this promise must be made over as prisoners into the hands of the Samnites. And so steadfastly did he hold to this opinion, that the senate were content to adopt it, and sending him and the rest as prisoners back to Samnium, protested to the Samnites that the peace was not binding. And so kind was Fortune to Posthumius on this occasion, that the Samnites would not keep him as a prisoner, and that on his return to Rome, notwithstanding his defeat, he was held in higher honour by the Romans than the victorious Pontius by his countrymen.

Here two points are to be noted; first, that glory may be won by any action; for although, commonly, it follow upon victory, it may also follow on defeat, if this defeat be seen to have happened through no fault of yours, or if, directly after, you perform some valiant action which cancels it. The other point to be noted is that there is no disgrace in not observing promises wrung from you by force; for promises thus extorted when they affect the public welfare will always be broken

so soon as the pressure under which they were made is withdrawn, and that, too, without shame on the part of him who breaks them; of which we read many instances in history, and find them constantly occurring at the present day. Nay, as between princes, not only are such compulsory promises broken when the force which extorted them is removed, but all other promises as well, are in like manner disregarded when the causes which led to them no longer operate.

Whether this is a thing to be commended or no, and whether such methods ought or ought not to be followed by princes, has already been considered by me in my "Treatise of the Prince" wherefore I say no more on that subject here.

CHAPTER XLIII.--That Men born in the same Province retain through all Times nearly the same Character.

The wise are wont to say, and not without reason or at random, that he who would forecast what is about to happen should look to what has been; since all human events, whether present or to come, have their exact counterpart in the past. And this, because these events are brought about by men, whose passions and dispositions remaining in all ages the same naturally give rise to the same effects; although, doubtless, the operation of these causes takes a higher form, now in one province, and now in another, according to the character of the training wherein the inhabitants of these provinces acquire their way of life.

Another aid towards judging of the future by the past, is to observe how the same nation long retains the same customs, remaining constantly covetous or deceitful, or similarly stamped by some one vice or virtue. Any one reading the past history of our city of Florence, and noting what has recently befallen it, will find the French and German nations overflowing with avarice, pride, cruelty, and perfidy, all of which four vices have at divers times wrought much harm to our city. As an instance of their perfidy, every one knows how often payments of money were made to Charles VIII. of France, in return for which he engaged to restore the fortresses of Pisa, yet never did restore them, manifesting thereby his bad faith and grasping avarice. Or, to pass from these very recent events, all may have heard of what happened in the war in which the Florentines were involved with the Visconti, dukes of Milan, when

Florence, being left without other resource, resolved to invite the emperor into Italy, that she might be assisted by his name and power in her struggle with Lombardy. The emperor promised to come with a strong army to take part against the Visconti and to protect Florence from them, on condition that the Florentines paid him a hundred thousand ducats on his setting out, and another hundred thousand on his arrival in Italy; to which terms the Florentines agreed. But although he then received payment of the first instalment and, afterwards, on reaching Verona, of the second, he turned back from the expedition without effecting anything, alleging as his excuse that he was stopped by certain persons who had failed to fulfil their engagements. But if Florence had not been urged by passion or overcome by necessity, or had she read of and understood the ancient usages of the barbarians, she would neither on this, nor on many other occasions, have been deceived by them, seeing that these nations have always been of the same character, and have always, in all circumstances, and with all men alike, used the same methods. For in ancient times we find them behaving after the same fashion to the Etruscans, who, when overpowered by the Romans, by whom they had been repeatedly routed and put to flight, perceiving that they could not stand without help, entered into a compact with the Gauls dwelling in the parts of Italy south of the Alps, to pay them a certain sum if they would unite with them in a campaign against the Romans. But the Gauls, after taking their money, refused to arm on their behalf, alleging that they had not been paid to make war on the enemies of the Etruscans, but only to refrain from pillaging their lands. And thus the people of Etruria, through the avarice and perfidy

of the Gauls, were at once defrauded of their money and disappointed of the help which they had counted on obtaining.

From which two instances of the Etruscans in ancient times and of the Florentines in recent, we may see that barbaric races have constantly followed the same methods, and may easily draw our conclusions as to how far princes should trust them.

CHAPTER XLIV.--That where ordinary methods fail, Hardihood and Daring often succeed.

When attacked by the Romans, the Samnites as they could not without help stand against them in the field, resolved to leave garrisons in the towns of Samnium, and to pass with their main army into Etruria, that country being then at truce with Rome, and thus ascertain whether their actual presence in arms might not move the Etruscans to renew hostilities against Rome, which they had refused to renew when invited through envoys. During the negotiations which, on this occasion, passed between the two nations, the Samnites in explaining the chief causes that led them to take up arms, used the memorable words--"they had risen because peace is a heavier burthen for slaves than war for freemen" In the end, partly by their persuasions, and partly by the presence of their army, they induced the Etruscans to join forces with them.

Here we are to note that when a prince would obtain something from another, he ought, if the occasion allow, to leave him no time to deliberate, but should so contrive that the other may see the need of resolving at once; as he will, if he perceive that refusal or delay in complying with what is asked of him, will draw upon him a sudden and dangerous resentment.

This method we have seen employed with good effect in our own times by Pope Julius II. in dealing with France, and by M. de Foix, the general

of the French king, in dealing with the Marquis of Mantua. For Pope Julius desiring to expel the Bentivogli from Bologna, and thinking that for this purpose he needed the help of French troops, and to have the Venetians neutral, after sounding both and receiving from both hesitating and ambiguous answers, determined to make both fall in with his views, by giving them no time to oppose him; and so, setting forth from Rome with as strong a force as he could get together, he marched on Bologna, sending word to the Venetians that they must stand aloof, and to the King of France to send him troops. The result was that in the brief time allowed them, neither of the two powers could make up their mind to thwart him; and knowing that refusal or delay would be violently resented by the Pope, they yielded to his demands, the king sending him soldiers and the Venetians maintaining neutrality.

M. de Foix, again, being with the king's army in Bologna when word came that Brescia had risen, could not rest till he had recovered that town. But, to get there he had to choose between two routes, one long and circuitous leading through the territories of the king, the other short and direct. In taking the latter route, however, not only would he have to pass through the dominions of the Marquis of Mantua, but also to make his way into these through the lakes and marshes wherewith that country abounds, by following an embanked road, closed and guarded by the marquis with forts and other defensive works. Resolving, nevertheless, to take the shortest road at all hazards, he waited till his men were already on their march before signifying to the marquis that he desired leave to pass through his country, so that no time might be left him to

deliberate. Taken aback by the unexpected demand, the marquis gave the leave sought, which he never would have given had De Foix acted with less impetuosity. For he was in league with the Venetians and with the Pope, and had a son in the hands of the latter; all which circumstances would have afforded him fair pretexts for refusal. But carried away by the suddenness and urgency of the demand, he yielded. And in like manner the Etruscans yielded to the instances of the Samnites, the presence of whose army decided them to renew hostilities which before they had declined to renew.

CHAPTER XLV.--Whether in battle it is better to await and repel the Enemy's attack, or to anticipate it by an impetuous onset.

Decius and Fabius, the Roman consuls, were each of them in command of a separate army, one directed against the Samnites, the other against the Etruscans: and as both delivered battle, we have to pronounce, in respect of the two engagements, which commander followed the better method. Decius attacked his enemy at once with the utmost fury and with his whole strength. Fabius was content, at first, merely to maintain his ground; for judging that more was to be gained by a later attack, he reserved his forces for a final effort, when the ardour of the enemy had cooled and his energy spent itself. The event showed Fabius to be more successful in his tactics than Decius, who being exhausted by his first onset, and seeing his ranks begin to waver, to secure by death the glory he could no longer hope from victory, followed the example set him by his father, and sacrificed himself to save the Roman legions. Word whereof being brought to Fabius, he, to gain, while he yet lived, as much honour as the other had earned by his death, pushed forward all the troops he had reserved for his final effort, and so obtained an unexampled victory. Whence we see that of the two methods, that of Fabius was the safer and the more deserving our imitation.

CHAPTER XLVI.--How the Characteristics of Families come to be perpetuated.

Manners and institutions differing in different cities, seem here to produce a harder and there a softer race; and a like difference may also be discerned in the character of different families in the same city. And while this holds good of all cities, we have many instances of it in reading the history of Rome. For we find the Manlii always stern and stubborn; the Valerii kindly and courteous; the Claudii haughty and ambitious; and many families besides similarly distinguished from one another by their peculiar qualities.

These qualities we cannot refer wholly to the blood, for that must change as a result of repeated intermarriages, but must ascribe rather to the different training and education given in different families. For much turns on whether a child of tender years hears a thing well or ill spoken of, since this must needs make an impression on him whereby his whole conduct in after life will be influenced. Were it otherwise we should not have found the whole family of the Claudii moved by the desires and stirred by the passions which Titus Livius notes in many of them, and more especially in one holding the office of censor, who, when his colleague laid down his magistracy, as the law prescribed, at the end of eighteen months, would not resign, maintaining that he was entitled to hold the office for five years in accordance with the original law by which the censorship was regulated. And although his refusal gave occasion to much controversy, and bred great tumult and

disturbance, no means could be found to depose him from his office, which he persisted in retaining in opposition to the will of the entire commons and a majority of the senate. And any who shall read the speech made against him by Publius Sempronius, tribune of the people, will find therein all the Claudian insolence exposed, and will recognize the docility and good temper shown by the body of the citizens in respecting the laws and institutions of their country.

CHAPTER XLVII.--That love of his Country should lead a good Citizen to forget private Wrongs.

While commanding as consul against the Samnites, Manlius was wounded in a skirmish. His army being thereby endangered, the senate judged it expedient to send Papirius Cursor as dictator to supply his place. But as it was necessary that the dictator should be nominated by Fabius, the other consul, who was with the army in Etruria, and as a doubt was felt that he might refuse to nominate Papirius, who was his enemy, the senate sent two messengers to entreat him to lay aside private animosity, and make the nomination which the public interest required. Moved by love of his country Fabius did as he was asked, although by his silence, and by many other signs, he gave it to be known that compliance was distasteful. From his conduct at this juncture all who would be thought good citizens should take example.

CHAPTER XLVIII.--That on finding an Enemy make what seems a grave blunder, we should suspect some fraud to lurk behind.

The consul having gone to Rome to perform certain ceremonial rites, and Fulvius being left in charge of the Roman army in Etruria, the Etruscans, to see whether they could not circumvent the new commander, planting an ambush not far from the Roman camp, sent forward soldiers disguised as shepherds driving large flocks of sheep so as to pass in sight of the Roman army. These pretended shepherds coming close to the wall of his camp, Fulvius, marvelling at what appeared to him unaccountable audacity, hit upon a device whereby the artifice of the Etruscans was detected and their design defeated.

Here it seems proper to note that the captain of an army ought not to build on what seems a manifest blunder on the part of an enemy; for as men are unlikely to act with conspicuous want of caution, it will commonly be found that this blunder is cover to a fraud. And yet, so blinded are men's minds by their eagerness for victory, that they look only to what appears on the surface.

After defeating the Romans on the Allia, the Gauls, hastening on to Rome, found the gates of the city left open and unguarded. But fearing some stratagem, and being unable to believe that the Romans could be so foolish and cowardly as to abandon their city, they waited during the whole of that day and the following night outside the gates, without daring to enter. In the year 1508, when the Florentines Avere engaged in

besieging Pisa, Alfonso del Mutolo, a citizen of that town, happening to be taken prisoner, was released on his promise to procure the surrender to the Florentines of one of the gates of the city. Afterwards, on pretence of arranging for the execution of this surrender, he came repeatedly to confer with those whom the Florentine commissaries had deputed to treat with him, coming not secretly but openly, and accompanied by other citizens of Pisa, whom he caused to stand aside while he conversed with the Florentines. From all which circumstances his duplicity might have been suspected, since, had he meant to do as he had engaged, it was most unlikely that he should be negotiating so openly. But the desire to recover possession of Pisa so blinded the Florentines that they allowed themselves to be conducted under his guidance to the Lucca Gate, where, through his treachery, but to their own disgrace, they lost a large number of their men and officers.

CHAPTER XLIX.--That a Commonwealth to preserve its Freedom has constant need of new Ordinances. Of the services in respect of which Quintius Fabius received the surname of Maximus.

It must happen, as I have already said, in every great city, that disorders needing the care of the physician continually spring up; and the graver these disorders are, the greater will be the skill needed for their treatment. And if ever in any city, most assuredly in Rome, we see these disorders assume strange and unexpected shapes. As when it appeared that all the Roman wives had conspired to murder their husbands, many of them being found to have actually administered poison, and many others to have drugs in readiness for the purpose.

Of like nature was the conspiracy of the Bacchanals, discovered at the time of the Macedonian war, wherein many thousands, both men and women, were implicated, and which, had it not been found out, or had the Romans not been accustomed to deal with large bodies of offenders, must have proved perilous for their city. And, indeed, if the greatness of the Roman Republic were not declared by countless other signs, as well as by the manner in which it caused its laws to be observed, it might be seen in the character of the punishments which it inflicted against wrong-doers. For in vindicating justice, it would not scruple or hesitate to put a whole legion to death, to depopulate an entire city, or send eight or ten thousand men at a time into banishment, subject to the most stringent conditions, which had to be observed, not by one of these exiles only, but by all. As in the case of those soldiers who

fought unsuccessfully at Cannæ, who were banished to Sicily, subject to the condition that they should not harbour in towns, and should all eat standing.

But the most formidable of all their punishments was that whereby one man out of every ten in an entire army was chosen by lot to be put to death. For correcting a great body of men no more effectual means could be devised; because, when a multitude have offended and the ringleaders are not known, all cannot be punished, their number being too great; while to punish some only, and leave the rest unpunished, were unjust to those punished and an encouragement to those passed over to offend again. But where you put to death a tenth chosen by lot, where all equally deserve death, he who is punished will blame his unlucky fortune, while he who escapes will be afraid that another time the lot may be his, and for that reason will be careful how he repeats his offence. The poisoners and the Bacchanals, therefore, were punished as their crimes deserved.

Although disorders like these occasion mischievous results in a commonwealth, still they are not fatal, since almost always there is time to correct them. But no time is given in the case of disorders in the State itself, which unless they be treated by some wise citizen, will always bring a city to destruction. From the readiness wherewith the Romans conferred the right of citizenship on foreigners, there came to be so many new citizens in Rome, and possessed of so large a share of the suffrage, that the government itself began to alter, forsaking those

courses which it was accustomed to follow, and growing estranged from the men to whom it had before looked for guidance. Which being observed by Quintius Fabius when censor, he caused all those new citizens to be classed in four Tribes, that being reduced within this narrow limit they might not have it in their power to corrupt the entire State.
And this was a wisely contrived measure, for, without introducing any violent change, it supplied a convenient remedy, and one so acceptable to the republic as to gain for Fabius the well-deserved name of Maximus.

THE END.