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HISTORY OF
JULIUS
CAESAR

Jacob Abbott

History of Julius Caesar

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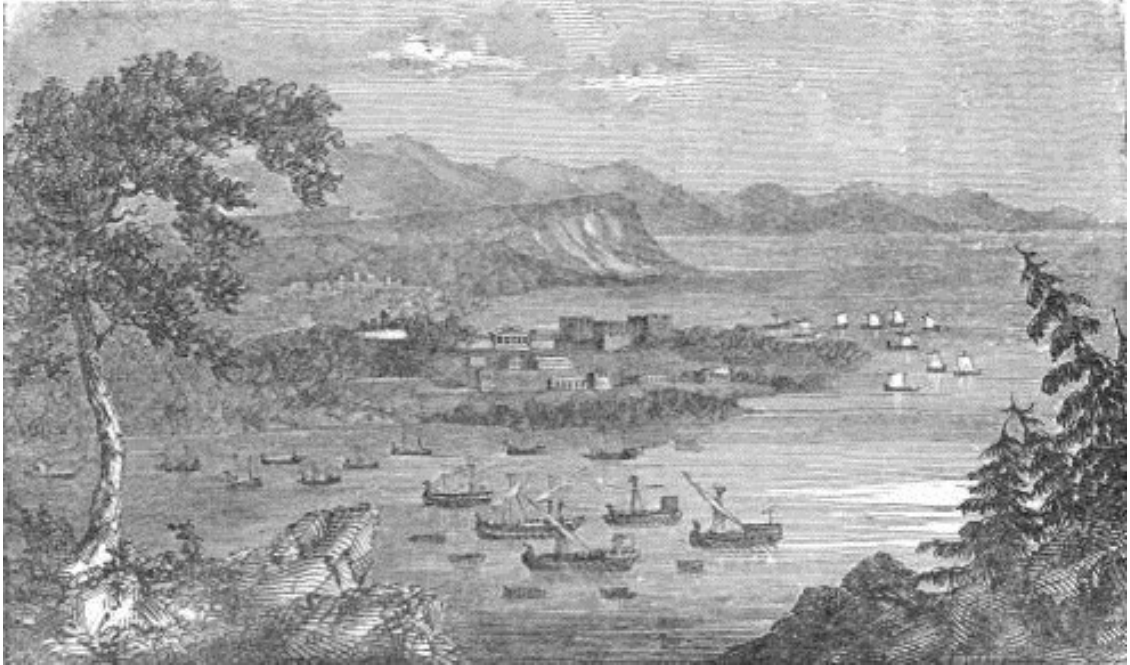
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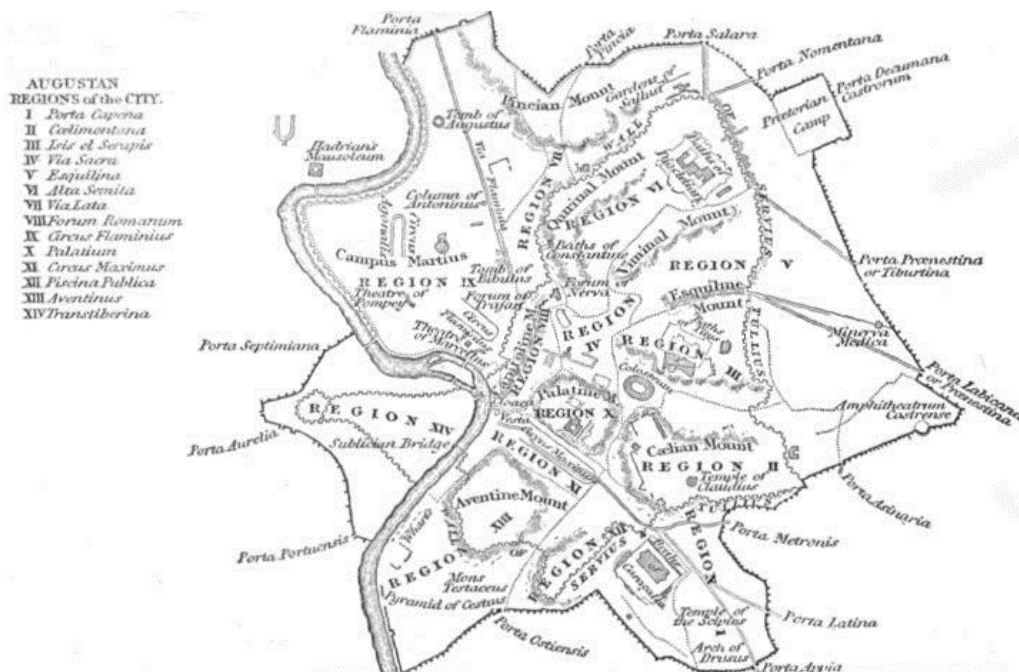
History of Julius Caesar



THE PIRATES AT ANCHOR

PREFACE

It is the object of this series of histories to present a clear, distinct, and connected narrative of the lives of those great personages who have in various ages of the world made themselves celebrated as leaders among mankind, and, by the part they have taken in the public affairs of great nations, have exerted the widest influence on the history of the human race. The end which the author has had in view is twofold: first, to communicate such information in respect to the subjects of his narratives as is important for the general reader to possess; and, secondly, to draw such moral lessons from the events described and the characters delineated as they may legitimately teach to the people of the present age. Though written in a direct and simple style, they are intended for, and addressed to, minds possessed of some considerable degree of maturity, for such minds only can fully appreciate the character and action which exhibits itself, as nearly all that is described in these volumes does, in close combination with the conduct and policy of governments, and the great events of international history.



ANCIENT ROME.

JULIUS CAESAR

CHAPTER I. MARIUS AND SYLLA

Three great European nations of antiquity.

There were three great European nations in ancient days, each of which furnished history with a hero: the Greeks, the Carthaginians, and the Romans.

Alexander.

Alexander was the hero of the Greeks. He was King of Macedon, a country lying north of Greece proper. He headed an army of his countrymen, and made an excursion for conquest and glory into Asia. He made himself master of all that quarter of the globe, and reigned over it in Babylon, till he brought himself to an early grave by the excesses into which his boundless prosperity allured him. His fame rests on his triumphant success in building up for himself so vast an empire, and the admiration which his career has always excited among mankind is heightened by the consideration of his youth, and of the noble and generous impulses which strongly marked his character.

Hannibal.

His terrible energy.

The Carthaginian hero was Hannibal. We class the Carthaginians among the European nations of antiquity; for, in respect to their origin, their civilization, and all their commercial and political relations, they belonged to the European race, though it is true that their capital was on the African side of the Mediterranean Sea. Hannibal was the great Carthaginian hero. He earned his fame by the energy and implacableness of his hate. The work of his life was to keep a vast empire in a state of continual anxiety and terror for fifty years, so that his claim to greatness and glory rests on the determination, the perseverance, and the success with which he fulfilled his function of being, while he lived, the terror of the world.

Julius Caesar.

The Roman hero was Caesar. He was born just one hundred years before the Christian era. His renown does not depend, like that of Alexander, on foreign conquests, nor, like that of Hannibal, on the terrible energy of his aggressions upon foreign foes, but upon his protracted and dreadful contests with, and ultimate triumphs over, his rivals and competitors at home. When he appeared upon the stage, the Roman empire already included nearly all of the world that was worth possessing. There were no more conquests to be made. Caesar did, indeed, enlarge, in some degree, the boundaries of the empire; but the main question in his day was, who should possess the power which preceding conquerors had acquired.

The ancient Roman empire.

The provinces.

The Roman empire, as it existed in those days, must not be conceived of by the reader as united together under one compact and consolidated government. It was, on the other hand, a vast congeries of nations, widely dissimilar in every respect from each other, speaking various languages, and having various customs and laws. They were all, however, more or less dependent upon, and connected with, the great central power. Some of these countries were provinces, and were governed by officers appointed and sent out by the authorities at Rome. These governors had to collect the taxes of their provinces, and also to preside over and direct, in many important respects, the administration

of justice. They had, accordingly, abundant opportunities to enrich themselves while thus in office, by collecting more money than they paid over to the government at home, and by taking bribes to favor the rich man's cause in court. Thus the more wealthy and prosperous provinces were objects of great competition among aspirants for office at Rome. Leading men would get these appointments, and, after remaining long enough in their provinces to acquire a fortune, would come back to Rome, and expend it in intrigues and maneuvers to obtain higher offices still.

Foreign wars.

The victorious general.

Whenever there was any foreign war to be carried on with a distant nation or tribe, there was always a great eagerness among all the military officers of the state to be appointed to the command. They each felt sure that they should conquer in the contest, and they could enrich themselves still more rapidly by the spoils of victory in war, than by extortion and bribes in the government of a province in peace. Then, besides, a victorious general coming back to Rome always found that his military renown added vastly to his influence and power in the city. He was welcomed with celebrations and triumphs; the people flocked to see him and to shout his praise. He placed his trophies of victory in the temples, and entertained the populace with games and shows, and with combats of gladiators or of wild beasts, which he had brought home with him for this purpose in the train of his army. While he was thus enjoying his triumph, his political enemies would be thrown into the back ground and into the shade; unless, indeed, some one of them might himself be earning the same honors in some other field, to come back in due time, and claim his share of power and celebrity in his turn. In this case, Rome would be sometimes distracted and rent by the conflicts and contentions of military rivals, who had acquired powers too vast for all the civil influences of the Republic to regulate or control.



ROMAN PLEBEIANS.

Military rivals.
Marius and Sylla.
The patricians and plebeians.
Civil contests.
Quarrel about the command of the army.
Sylla's violence.

There had been two such rivals just before the time of Caesar, who had filled the world with their quarrels. They were Marius and Sylla. Their very names have been, in all ages of the world, since their day, the symbols of rivalry and hate. They were the representatives respectively of the two great parties into which the Roman state, like every other community in which the population at large have any voice in governing, always has been, and probably always will be divided, the upper and the lower; or, as they were called in those days, the patrician and the plebeian. Sylla was the patrician; the higher and more aristocratic portions of the community were on his side. Marius was the favorite of the plebeian masses. In the contests, however, which they waged with each other, they did not

trust to the mere influence of votes. They relied much more upon the soldiers they could gather under their respective standards and upon their power of intimidating, by means of them, the Roman assemblies. There was a war to be waged with Mithridates, a very powerful Asiatic monarch, which promised great opportunities for acquiring fame and plunder. Sylla was appointed to the command. While he was absent, however, upon some campaign in Italy, Marius contrived to have the decision reversed, and the command transferred to him. Two officers, called tribunes, were sent to Sylla's camp to inform him of the change. Sylla killed the officers for daring to bring him such a message, and began immediately to march toward Rome. In retaliation for the murder of the tribunes, the party of Marius in the city killed some of Sylla's prominent friends there, and a general alarm spread itself throughout the population. The Senate, which was a sort of House of Lords, embodying mainly the power and influence of the patrician party, and was, of course, on Sylla's side, sent out to him, when he had arrived within a few miles of the city, urging him to come no further. He pretended to comply; he marked out the ground for a camp; but he did not, on that account, materially delay his march. The next morning he was in possession of the city. The friends of Marius attempted to resist him, by throwing stones upon his troops from the roofs of the houses. Sylla ordered every house from which these symptoms of resistance appeared to be set on fire. Thus the whole population of a vast and wealthy city were thrown into a condition of extreme danger and terror, by the conflicts of two great bands of armed men, each claiming to be their friends.

Defeat of Marius.

Marius was conquered in this struggle, and fled for his life. Many of the friends whom he left behind him were killed. The Senate were assembled, and, at Sylla's orders, a decree was passed declaring Marius a public enemy, and offering a reward to any one who would bring his head back to Rome.

His flight.

Marius fled, friendless and alone, to the southward, hunted every where by men who were eager to get the reward offered for his head. After various romantic adventures and narrow escapes, he succeeded in making his way across the Mediterranean Sea, and found at last a refuge in a hut among the ruins of Carthage. He was an old man, being now over seventy years of age.

Return of Marius.

He marches against Rome.

Of course, Sylla thought that his great rival and enemy was now finally disposed of, and he accordingly began to make preparations for his Asiatic campaign. He raised his army, built and equipped a fleet, and went away. As soon as he was gone, Marius's friends in the city began to come forth, and to take measures for reinstating themselves in power. Marius returned, too, from Africa, and soon gathered about him a large army. Being the friend, as he pretended, of the lower classes of society, he collected vast multitudes of revolted slaves, outlaws, and other desperadoes, and advanced toward Rome. He assumed, himself, the dress, and air, and savage demeanor of his followers. His countenance had been rendered haggard and cadaverous partly by the influence of exposures, hardships, and suffering upon his advanced age, and partly by the stern and moody plans and determinations of revenge which his mind was perpetually revolving. He listened to the deputations which the Roman Senate sent out to him from time to time, as he advanced toward the city, but refused to make any terms. He moved forward with all the outward deliberation and calmness suitable to his years, while all the ferocity of a tiger was burning within.

Executions by order of Marius.

As soon as he had gained possession of the city, he began his work of destruction. He first beheaded one of the consuls, and ordered his head to be set up, as a public spectacle, in the most

conspicuous place in the city. This was the beginning. All the prominent friends of Sylla, men of the highest rank and station, were then killed, wherever they could be found, without sentence, without trial, without any other accusation, even, than the military decision of Marius that they were his enemies, and must die. For those against whom he felt any special animosity, he contrived some special mode of execution. One, whose fate he wished particularly to signalize, was thrown down from the Tarpeian Rock.

The Tarpeian Rock.

The Tarpeian Rock was a precipice about fifty feet high, which is still to be seen in Rome, from which the worst of state criminals were sometimes thrown. They were taken up to the top by a stair, and were then hurled from the summit, to die miserably, writhing in agony after their fall, upon the rocks below.

The story of Tarpeia.

Subterranean passages.

The Tarpeian Rock received its name from the ancient story of Tarpeia. The tale is, that Tarpeia was a Roman girl, who lived at a time in the earliest periods of the Roman history, when the city was besieged by an army from one of the neighboring nations. Besides their shields, the story is that the soldiers had golden bracelets upon their arms. They wished Tarpeia to open the gates and let them in. She promised to do so if they would give her their bracelets; but, as she did not know the name of the shining ornaments, the language she used to designate them was, "Those things you have upon your arms." The soldiers acceded to her terms; she opened the gates, and they, instead of giving her the bracelets, threw their *shields* upon her as they passed, until the poor girl was crushed down with them and destroyed. This was near the Tarpeian Rock, which afterward took her name. The rock is now found to be perforated by a great many subterranean passages, the remains, probably, of ancient quarries. Some of these galleries are now walled up; others are open; and the people who live around the spot believe, it is said, to this day, that Tarpeia herself sits, enchanted, far in the interior of these caverns, covered with gold and jewels, but that whoever attempts to find her is fated by an irresistible destiny to lose his way, and he never returns. The last story is probably as true as the other.

Escape of Sylla's wife.

Marius continued his executions and massacres until the whole of Sylla's party had been slain or put to flight. He made every effort to discover Sylla's wife and child, with a view to destroying them also, but they could not be found. Some friends of Sylla, taking compassion on their innocence and helplessness, concealed them, and thus saved Marius from the commission of one intended crime. Marius was disappointed, too, in some other cases, where men whom he had intended to kill destroyed themselves to baffle his vengeance. One shut himself up in a room with burning charcoal, and was suffocated with the fumes. Another bled himself to death upon a public altar, calling down the judgments of the god to whom he offered this dreadful sacrifice, upon the head of the tyrant whose atrocious cruelty he was thus attempting to evade.

Illness of Marius.

Sylla outlawed.

By the time that Marius had got fairly established in his new position, and was completely master of Rome, and the city had begun to recover a little from the shock and consternation produced by his executions, he fell sick. He was attacked with an acute disease of great violence. The attack was perhaps produced, and was certainly aggravated by, the great mental excitements through which he had passed during his exile, and in the entire change of fortune which had attended his return. From being a wretched fugitive, hiding for his life among gloomy and desolate ruins, he found himself suddenly transferred to the mastery of the world. His mind was excited, too, in respect to Sylla, whom

he had not yet reached or subdued, but who was still prosecuting his war against Mithridates. Marius had had him pronounced by the Senate an enemy to his country, and was meditating plans to reach him in his distant province, considering his triumph incomplete as long as his great rival was at liberty and alive. The sickness cut short these plans, but it only inflamed to double violence the excitement and the agitations which attended them.

Marius delirious.

Death of Marius.

As the dying tyrant tossed restlessly upon his bed, it was plain that the delirious ravings which he began soon to utter were excited by the same sentiments of insatiable ambition and ferocious hate whose calmer dictates he had obeyed when well. He imagined that he had succeeded in supplanting Sylla in his command, and that he was himself in Asia at the head of his armies. Impressed with this idea, he stared wildly around; he called aloud the name of Mithridates; he shouted orders to imaginary troops; he struggled to break away from the restraints which the attendants about his bedside imposed, to attack the phantom foes which haunted him in his dreams. This continued for several days, and when at last nature was exhausted by the violence of these paroxysms of phrensy, the vital powers which had been for seventy long years spending their strength in deeds of selfishness, cruelty, and hatred, found their work done, and sunk to revive no more.

Return of Sylla.

Marius's son.

Proscriptions and massacres of Sylla.

Marius left a son, of the same name with himself, who attempted to retain his father's power; but Sylla, having brought his war with Mithridates to a conclusion, was now on his return from Asia, and it was very evident that a terrible conflict was about to ensue. Sylla advanced triumphantly through the country, while Marius the younger and his partisans concentrated their forces about the city, and prepared for defense. The people of the city were divided, the aristocratic faction adhering to the cause of Sylla, while the democratic influences sided with Marius. Political parties rise and fall, in almost all ages of the world, in alternate fluctuations, like those of the tides. The faction of Marius had been for some time in the ascendancy, and it was now its turn to fall. Sylla found, therefore, as he advanced, every thing favorable to the restoration of his own party to power. He destroyed the armies which came out to oppose him. He shut up the young Marius in a city not far from Rome, where he had endeavored to find shelter and protection, and then advanced himself and took possession of the city. There he caused to be enacted again the horrid scenes of massacre and murder which Marius had perpetrated before, going, however, as much beyond the example which he followed as men usually do in the commission of crime. He gave out lists of the names of men whom he wished to have destroyed, and these unhappy victims of his revenge were to be hunted out by bands of reckless soldiers, in their dwellings, or in the places of public resort in the city, and dispatched by the sword wherever they could be found. The scenes which these deeds created in a vast and populous city can scarcely be conceived of by those who have never witnessed the horrors produced by the massacres of civil war. Sylla himself went through with this work in the most cool and unconcerned manner, as if he were performing the most ordinary duties of an officer of state. He called the Senate together one day, and, while he was addressing them, the attention of the Assembly was suddenly distracted by the noise of outcries and screams in the neighboring streets from those who were suffering military execution there. The senators started with horror at the sound. Sylla, with an air of great composure and unconcern, directed the members to listen to him, and to pay no attention to what was passing elsewhere. The sounds that they heard were, he said, only some correction which was bestowed by his orders on certain disturbers of the public peace.

Executions.

Extent of Sylla's proscriptions.

Man's nature.

Sylla's orders for the execution of those who had taken an active part against him were not confined to Rome. They went to the neighboring cities and to distant provinces, carrying terror and distress every where. Still, dreadful as these evils were, it is possible for us, in the conceptions which we form, to overrate the extent of them. In reading the history of the Roman empire during the civil wars of Marius and Sylla, one might easily imagine that the whole population of the country was organized into the two contending armies, and were employed wholly in the work of fighting with and massacring each other. But nothing like this can be true. It is obviously but a small part, after all, of an extended community that can be ever actively and personally engaged in these deeds of violence and blood. Man is not naturally a ferocious wild beast. On the contrary, he loves, ordinarily, to live in peace and quietness, to till his lands and tend his flocks, and to enjoy the blessings of peace and repose. It is comparatively but a small number in any age of the world, and in any nation, whose passions of ambition, hatred, or revenge become so strong as that they love bloodshed and war. But these few, when they once get weapons into their hands, trample recklessly and mercilessly upon the rest. One ferocious human tiger, with a spear or a bayonet to brandish, will tyrannize as he pleases over a hundred quiet men, who are armed only with shepherds' crooks, and whose only desire is to live in peace with their wives and their children.

Husbandmen.

How the Roman edifices were built.

Standing armies.

Thus, while Marius and Sylla, with some hundred thousand armed and reckless followers, were carrying terror and dismay wherever they went, there were many millions of herdsmen and husbandmen in the Roman world who were dwelling in all the peace and quietness they could command, improving with their peaceful industry every acre where corn would ripen or grass grow. It was by taxing and plundering the proceeds of this industry that the generals and soldiers, the consuls and praetors, and proconsuls and proprætors, filled their treasuries, and fed their troops, and paid the artisans for fabricating their arms. With these avails they built the magnificent edifices of Rome, and adorned its environs with sumptuous villas. As they had the power and the arms in their hands, the peaceful and the industrious had no alternative but to submit. They went on as well as they could with their labors, bearing patiently every interruption, returning again to till their fields after the desolating march of the army had passed away, and repairing the injuries of violence, and the losses sustained by plunder, without useless repining. They looked upon an armed government as a necessary and inevitable affliction of humanity, and submitted to its destructive violence as they would submit to an earthquake or a pestilence. The tillers of the soil manage better in this country at the present day. They have the power in their own hands, and they watch very narrowly to prevent the organization of such hordes of armed desperadoes as have held the peaceful inhabitants of Europe in terror from the earliest periods down to the present day.

Julius Caesar.

Sylla's animosity against him.

Caesar refuses to repudiate his wife.

His flight.

When Sylla returned to Rome, and took possession of the supreme power there, in looking over the lists of public men, there was one whom he did not know, at first what to do with. It was the young Julius Caesar, the subject of this history. Caesar was, by birth, patrician, having descended from a long line of noble ancestors. There had been, before his day, a great many Caesars who had held the highest offices of the state, and many of them had been celebrated in history. He naturally, therefore,

belonged to Sylla's side, as Sylla was the representative of the patrician interest. But then Caesar had personally been inclined toward the party of Marius. The elder Marius had married his aunt, and, besides, Caesar himself had married the daughter of Cinna, who had been the most efficient and powerful of Marius's coadjutors and friends. Caesar was at this time a very young man, and he was of an ardent and reckless character, though he had, thus far, taken no active part in public affairs. Sylla overlooked him for a time, but at length was about to put his name on the list of the proscribed. Some of the nobles, who were friends both of Sylla and of Caesar too, interceded for the young man; Sylla yielded to their request, or, rather, suspended his decision, and sent orders to Caesar to repudiate his wife, the daughter of Cinna. Her name was Cornelia. Caesar absolutely refused to repudiate his wife. He was influenced in this decision partly by affection for Cornelia, and partly by a sort of stern and indomitable insubmissiveness, which formed, from his earliest years, a prominent trait in his character, and which led him, during all his life, to brave every possible danger rather than allow himself to be controlled. Caesar knew very well that, when this his refusal should be reported to Sylla, the next order would be for his destruction. He accordingly fled. Sylla deprived him of his titles and offices, confiscated his wife's fortune and his own patrimonial estate, and put his name upon the list of the public enemies. Thus Caesar became a fugitive and an exile. The adventures which befell him in his wanderings will be described in the following chapter.

Sylla made dictator.

He resigns his power.

Sylla was now in the possession of absolute power. He was master of Rome, and of all the countries over which Rome held sway. Still he was nominally not a magistrate, but only a general returning victoriously from his Asiatic campaign, and putting to death, somewhat irregularly, it is true, by a sort of martial law persons whom he found, as he said, disturbing the public peace. After having thus effectually disposed of the power of his enemies, he laid aside, ostensibly, the government of the sword, and submitted himself and his future measures to the control of law. He placed himself ostensibly at the disposition of the city. They chose him dictator, which was investing him with absolute and unlimited power. He remained on this, the highest pinnacle of worldly ambition, a short time, and then resigned his power, and devoted the remainder of his days to literary pursuits and pleasures. Monster as he was in the cruelties which he inflicted upon his political foes, he was intellectually of a refined and cultivated mind, and felt an ardent interest in the promotion of literature and the arts.

Opinion of mankind in regard to Marius and Sylla.

The quarrel between Marius and Sylla, in respect to every thing which can make such a contest great, stands in the estimation of mankind as the greatest personal quarrel which the history of the world has ever recorded. Its origin was in the simple personal rivalry of two ambitious men. It involved, in its consequences, the peace and happiness of the world. In their reckless struggles, the fierce combatants trampled on every thing that came in their way, and destroyed mercilessly, each in his turn, all that opposed them. Mankind have always execrated their crimes, but have never ceased to admire the frightful and almost superhuman energy with which they committed them.

CHAPTER II. CAESAR'S EARLY YEARS

Caesar's resolution.

Caesar does not seem to have been much disheartened and depressed by his misfortunes. He possessed in his early life more than the usual share of buoyancy and light-heartedness of youth, and he went away from Rome to enter, perhaps, upon years of exile and wandering, with a determination to face boldly and to brave the evils and dangers which surrounded him, and not to succumb to them.

His person and character.

Sometimes they who become great in their maturer years are thoughtful, grave, and sedate when young. It was not so, however, with Caesar. He was of a very gay and lively disposition. He was tall and handsome in his person, fascinating in his manners, and fond of society, as people always are who know or who suppose that they shine in it. He had seemed, in a word, during his residence at Rome, wholly intent upon the pleasures of a gay and joyous life, and upon the personal observation which his rank, his wealth, his agreeable manners and his position in society secured for him. In fact, they who observed and studied his character in these early years, thought that, although his situation was very favorable for acquiring power and renown, he would never feel any strong degree of ambition to avail himself of its advantages. He was too much interested, they thought, in personal pleasures ever to become great, either as a military commander or a statesman.

Sylla's estimation of Caesar.

Caesar's friends intercede for him.

Sylla, however, thought differently. He had penetration enough to perceive, beneath all the gayety and love of pleasure which characterized Caesar's youthful life, the germs of a sterner and more aspiring spirit, which, he was very sorry to see, was likely to expend its future energies in hostility to him. By refusing to submit to Sylla's commands, Caesar had, in effect, thrown himself entirely upon the other party, and would be, of course, in future identified with them. Sylla consequently looked upon him now as a confirmed and settled enemy. Some friends of Caesar among the patrician families interceded in his behalf with Sylla again, after he had fled from Rome. They wished Sylla to pardon him, saying that he was a mere boy and could do him no harm. Sylla shook his head, saying that, young as he was, he saw in him indications of a future power which he thought was more to be dreaded than that of many Mariuses.

Caesar's studies.

His ambition to be an orator.

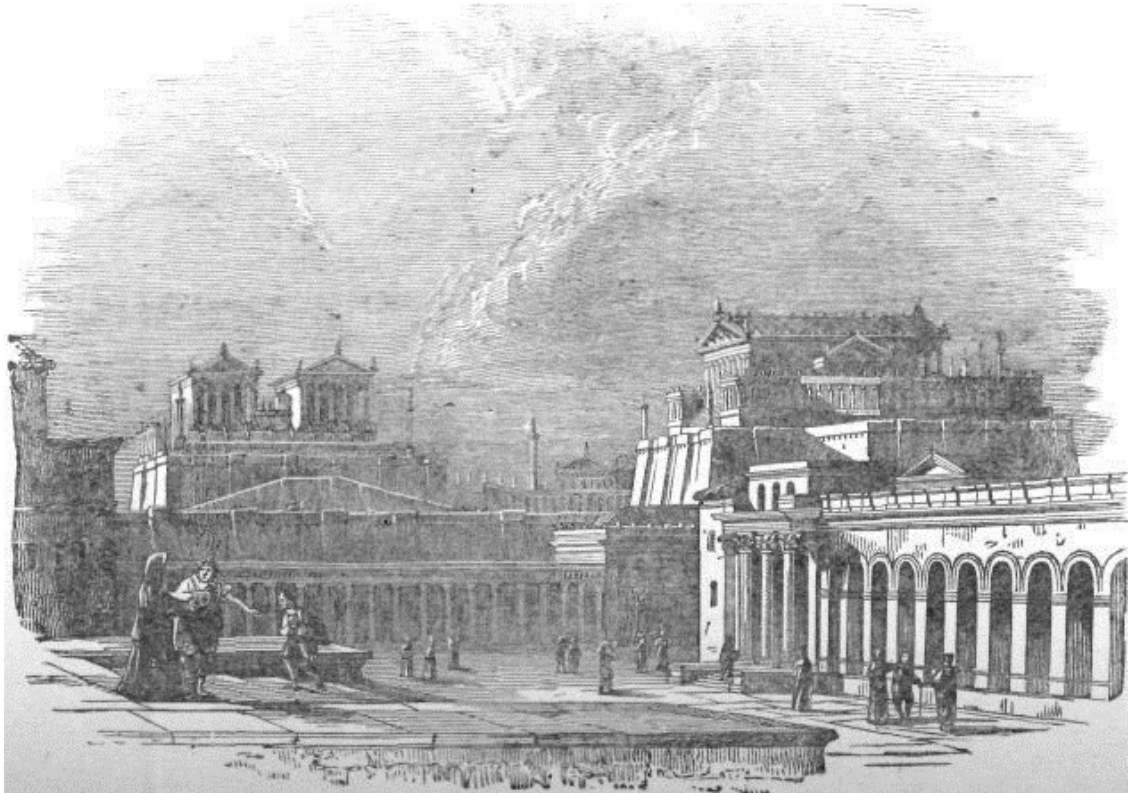
One reason which led Sylla to form this opinion of Caesar was, that the young nobleman, with all his love of gayety and pleasure, had not neglected his studies, but had taken great pains to perfect himself in such intellectual pursuits as ambitious men who looked forward to political influence and ascendancy were accustomed to prosecute in those days. He had studied the Greek language, and read the works of Greek historians; and he attended lectures on philosophy and rhetoric, and was obviously interested deeply in acquiring power as a public speaker. To write and speak well gave a public man great influence in those days. Many of the measures of the government were determined by the action of great assemblies of the free citizens, which action was itself, in a great measure, controlled by the harangues of orators who had such powers of voice and such qualities of mind as enabled them to gain the attention and sway the opinions of large bodies of men.

The Forum.

Its porticoes and statues.

Attractions of the Forum.

It must not be supposed, however, that this popular power was shared by all the inhabitants of the city. At one time, when the population of the city was about three millions the number of free citizens was only three hundred thousand. The rest were laborers, artisans, and slaves, who had no voice in public affairs. The free citizens held very frequent public assemblies. There were various squares and open spaces in the city where such assemblies were convened, and where courts of justice were held. The Roman name for such a square was *forum*. There was one which was distinguished above all the rest, and was called emphatically The Forum. It was a magnificent square, surrounded by splendid edifices, and ornamented by sculptures and statues without number. There were ranges of porticoes along the sides, where the people were sheltered from the weather when necessary, though it is seldom that there is any necessity for shelter under an Italian sky. In this area and under these porticoes the people held their assemblies, and here courts of justice were accustomed to sit. The Forum was ornamented continually with new monuments, temples, statues, and columns by successful generals returning in triumph from foreign campaigns, and by proconsuls and praetors coming back enriched from their provinces, until it was fairly choked up with its architectural magnificence, and it had at last to be partially cleared again, as one would thin out too dense a forest, in order to make room for the assemblies which it was its main function to contain.



A ROMAN FORUM.

Harangues and political discussions.

The people of Rome had, of course, no printed books, and yet they were mentally cultivated and refined, and were qualified for a very high appreciation of intellectual pursuits and pleasures. In the absence, therefore, of all facilities for private reading, the Forum became the great central point of attraction. The same kind of interest which, in our day, finds its gratification in reading volumes of printed history quietly at home, or in silently perusing the columns of newspapers and magazines in libraries and reading-rooms, where a whisper is seldom heard, in Caesar's day brought every body to the Forum, to listen to historical harangues, or political discussions, or forensic arguments in the midst

of noisy crowds. Here all tidings centered; here all questions were discussed and all great elections held. Here were waged those ceaseless conflicts of ambition and struggles of power on which the fate of nations, and sometimes the welfare of almost half mankind depended. Of course, every ambitious man who aspired to an ascendancy over his fellow-men, wished to make his voice heard in the Forum. To calm the boisterous tumult there, and to hold, as some of the Roman orators could do, the vast assemblies in silent and breathless attention, was a power as delightful in its exercise as it was glorious in its fame. Caesar had felt this ambition, and had devoted himself very earnestly to the study of oratory.

Apollonius.

Caesar studies under him.

His teacher was Apollonius, a philosopher and rhetorician from Rhodes. Rhodes is a Grecian island, near the southwestern coast of Asia Minor. Apollonius was a teacher of great celebrity, and Caesar became a very able writer and speaker under his instructions. His time and attention were, in fact, strangely divided between the highest and noblest intellectual avocations, and the lowest sensual pleasures of a gay and dissipated life. The coming of Sylla had, however, interrupted all; and, after receiving the dictator's command to give up his wife and abandon the Marian faction, and determining to disobey it, he fled suddenly from Rome, as was stated at the close of the last chapter, at midnight, and in disguise.

Caesar's wanderings.

He is seized by a centurion.

He was sick, too, at the time, with an intermittent fever. The paroxysm returned once in three or four days, leaving him in tolerable health during the interval. He went first into the country of the Sabines, northeast of Rome, where he wandered up and down, exposed continually to great dangers from those who knew that he was an object of the great dictator's displeasure, and who were sure of favor and of a reward if they could carry his head to Sylla. He had to change his quarters every day, and to resort to every possible mode of concealment. He was, however, at last discovered, and seized by a centurion. A centurion was a commander of a hundred men; his rank and his position therefore, corresponded somewhat with those of a *captain* in a modern army. Caesar was not much disturbed at this accident. He offered the centurion a bribe sufficient to induce him to give up his prisoner, and so escaped.

Caesar in Asia Minor.

He joins the court of Nicomedes.

The two ancient historians, whose records contain nearly all the particulars of the early life of Caesar which are now known, give somewhat contradictory accounts of the adventures which befell him during his subsequent wanderings. They relate, in general, the same incidents, but in such different connections, that the precise chronological order of the events which occurred can not now be ascertained. At all events, Caesar, finding that he was no longer safe in the vicinity of Rome, moved gradually to the eastward, attended by a few followers, until he reached the sea, and there he embarked on board a ship to leave his native land altogether. After various adventures and wanderings, he found himself at length in Asia Minor, and he made his way at last to the kingdom of Bithynia, on the northern shore. The name of the king of Bithynia was Nicomedes. Caesar joined himself to Nicomedes's court, and entered into his service. In the mean time, Sylla had ceased to pursue him, and ultimately granted him a pardon, but whether before or after this time is not now to be ascertained. At all events, Caesar became interested in the scenes and enjoyments of Nicomedes's court, and allowed the time to pass away without forming any plans for returning to Rome.

Cilicia.

Character of its inhabitants.

On the opposite side of Asia Minor, that is, on the southern shore, there was a wild and mountainous region called Cilicia. The great chain of mountains called Taurus approaches here very near to the sea, and the steep conformations of the land, which, in the interior, produce lofty ranges and summits, and dark valleys and ravines, form, along the line of the shore, capes and promontories, bounded by precipitous sides, and with deep bays and harbors between them. The people of Cilicia were accordingly half sailors, half mountaineers. They built swift galleys, and made excursions in great force over the Mediterranean Sea for conquest and plunder. They would capture single ships, and sometimes even whole fleets of merchantmen. They were even strong enough on many occasions to land and take possession of a harbor and a town, and hold it, often, for a considerable time, against all the efforts of the neighboring powers to dislodge them. In case, however, their enemies became at any time too strong for them, they would retreat to their harbors, which were so defended by the fortresses which guarded them, and by the desperate bravery of the garrisons, that the pursuers generally did not dare to attempt to force their way in; and if, in any case, a town or a port was taken, the indomitable savages would continue their retreat to the fastnesses of the mountains, where it was utterly useless to attempt to follow them.

The Cilicians wanting in poets and historians.
Robbers and pirates.

But with all their prowess and skill as naval combatants, and their hardihood as mountaineers, the Cilicians lacked one thing which is very essential in every nation to an honorable military fame. They had no poets or historians of their own, so that the story of their deeds had to be told to posterity by their enemies. If they had been able to narrate their own exploits, they would have figured, perhaps, upon the page of history as a small but brave and efficient maritime power, pursuing for many years a glorious career of conquest, and acquiring imperishable renown by their enterprise and success. As it was, the Romans, their enemies, described their deeds and gave them their designation. They called them robbers and pirates; and robbers and pirates they must forever remain.

Depredations of the Cilicians.

And it is, in fact, very likely true that the Cilician commanders did not pursue their conquests and commit their depredations on the rights and the property of others in quite so systematic and methodical a manner as some other conquering states have done. They probably seized private property a little more unceremoniously than is customary; though all belligerent nations, even in these Christian ages of the world, feel at liberty to seize and confiscate private property when they find it afloat at sea, while, by a strange inconsistency, they respect it on the land. The Cilician pirates considered themselves at war with all mankind, and, whatever merchandise they found passing from port to port along the shores of the Mediterranean, they considered lawful spoil. They intercepted the corn which was going from Sicily to Rome, and filled their own granaries with it. They got rich merchandise from the ships of Alexandria, which brought, sometimes, gold, and gems, and costly fabrics from the East; and they obtained, often, large sums of money by seizing men of distinction and wealth, who were continually passing to and fro between Italy and Greece, and holding them for a ransom. They were particularly pleased to get possession in this way of Roman generals and officers of state, who were going out to take the command of armies, or who were returning from their provinces with the wealth which they had accumulated there.

Expeditions sent against them.
Boldness and courage of the Cilicians.

Many expeditions were fitted out and many naval commanders were commissioned to suppress and subdue these common enemies of mankind, as the Romans called them. At one time, while a distinguished general, named Antonius, was in pursuit of them at the head of a fleet, a

party of the pirates made a descent upon the Italian coast, south of Rome, at Nicenum, where the ancient patrimonial mansion of this very Antonius was situated, and took away several members of his family as captives, and so compelled him to ransom them by paying a very large sum of money. The pirates grew bolder and bolder in proportion to their success. They finally almost stopped all intercourse between Italy and Greece, neither the merchants daring to expose their merchandise, nor the passengers their persons to such dangers. They then approached nearer and nearer to Rome, and at last actually entered the Tiber, and surprised and carried off a Roman fleet which was anchored there. Caesar himself fell into the hands of these pirates at some time during the period of his wanderings.

They capture Caesar.

The pirates captured the ship in which he was sailing near Pharmacusa, a small island in the northeastern part of the Aegean Sea. He was not at this time in the destitute condition in which he had found himself on leaving Rome, but was traveling with attendants suitable to his rank, and in such a style and manner as at once made it evident to the pirates that he was a man of distinction. They accordingly held him for ransom, and, in the mean time, until he could take measures for raising the money, they kept him a prisoner on board the vessel which had captured him.

Caesar's air of superiority.

His ransom.

In this situation, Caesar, though entirely in the power and at the mercy of his lawless captors, assumed such an air of superiority and command in all his intercourse with them as at first awakened their astonishment, then excited their admiration, and ended in almost subjecting them to his will. He asked them what they demanded for his ransom. They said twenty talents, which was quite a large amount, a talent itself being a considerable sum of money. Caesar laughed at this demand, and told them it was plain that they did not know who he was. He would give them *fifty* talents. He then sent away his attendants to the shore, with orders to proceed to certain cities where he was known, in order to procure the money, retaining only a physician and two servants for himself. While his messengers were gone, he remained on board the ship of his captors, assuming in every respect the air and manner of their master. When he wished to sleep, if they made a noise which disturbed him, he sent them orders to be still. He joined them in their sports and diversions on the deck, surpassing them in their feats, and taking the direction of every thing as if he were their acknowledged leader. He wrote orations and verses which he read to them, and if his wild auditors did not appear to appreciate the literary excellence of his compositions, he told them that they were stupid fools without any taste, adding, by way of apology, that nothing better could be expected of such barbarians.

The pirates asked him one day what he should do to them if he should ever, at any future time, take them prisoners. Caesar said that he would crucify every one of them.

Caesar at liberty.

He captures the pirates in his turn.

The ransom money at length arrived. Caesar paid it to the pirates, and they, faithful to their covenant, sent him in a boat to the land. He was put ashore on the coast of Asia Minor. He proceeded immediately to Miletus, the nearest port, equipped a small fleet there, and put to sea. He sailed at once to the roadstead where the pirates had been lying, and found them still at anchor there, in perfect security.¹ He attacked them, seized their ships, recovered his ransom money, and took the men all prisoners. He conveyed his captives to the land, and there fulfilled his threat that he would crucify them by cutting their throats and nailing their dead bodies to crosses which his men erected for the purpose along the shore.

¹ See [Frontispiece](#).

Caesar at Rhodes.

During his absence from Rome Caesar went to Rhodes, where his former preceptor resided, and he continued to pursue there for some time his former studies. He looked forward still to appearing one day in the Roman Forum. In fact, he began to receive messages from his friends at home that they thought it would be safe for him to return. Sylla had gradually withdrawn from power, and finally had died. The aristocratical party were indeed still in the ascendancy, but the party of Marius had begun to recover a little from the total overthrow with which Sylla's return, and his terrible military vengeance, had overwhelmed them. Caesar himself, therefore, they thought, might, with prudent management, be safe in returning to Rome.

He returns to Rome.

Caesar impeaches Dolabella.

Excitement in consequence.

He returned, but not to be prudent or cautious; there was no element of prudence or caution in his character. As soon as he arrived, he openly espoused the popular party. His first public act was to arraign the governor of the great province of Macedonia, through which he had passed on his way to Bithynia. It was a consul whom he thus impeached, and a strong partisan of Sylla's. His name was Dolabella. The people were astonished at his daring in thus raising the standard of resistance to Sylla's power, indirectly, it is true, but none the less really on that account. When the trial came on, and Caesar appeared at the Forum, he gained great applause by the vigor and force of his oratory. There was, of course, a very strong and general interest felt in the case; the people all seeming to understand that, in this attack on Dolabella, Caesar was appearing as their champion, and their hopes were revived at having at last found a leader capable of succeeding Marius, and building up their cause again. Dolabella was ably defended by orators on the other side, and was, of course, acquitted, for the power of Sylla's party was still supreme. All Rome, however, was aroused and excited by the boldness of Caesar's attack, and by the extraordinary ability which he evinced in his mode of conducting it. He became, in fact, at once one of the most conspicuous and prominent men in the city.

Caesar's increasing power.

Encouraged by his success, and the applauses which he received, and feeling every day a greater and greater consciousness of power, he began to assume more and more openly the character of the leader of the popular party. He devoted himself to public speaking in the Forum, both before popular assemblies and in the courts of justice, where he was employed a great deal as an advocate to defend those who were accused of political crimes. The people, considering him as their rising champion, were predisposed to regard every thing that he did with favor, and there was really a great intellectual power displayed in his orations and harangues. He acquired, in a word, great celebrity by his boldness and energy, and his boldness and energy were themselves increased in their turn as he felt the strength of his position increase with his growing celebrity.

Death of Marius's wife.

Caesar's panegyric on Marius's wife.

Its success.

At length the wife of Marius, who was Caesar's aunt, died. She had lived in obscurity since her husband's proscription and death, his party having been put down so effectually that it was dangerous to appear to be her friend. Caesar, however, made preparations for a magnificent funeral for her. There was a place in the Forum, a sort of pulpit, where public orators were accustomed to stand in addressing the assembly on great occasions. This pulpit was adorned with the brazen beaks of ships which had been taken by the Romans in former wars. The name of such a beak was *rostrum*; in the plural, *rostra*. The pulpit was itself, therefore, called the *Rostra*, that is, The Beaks; and the people

were addressed from it on great public occasions.² Caesar pronounced a splendid panegyric upon the wife of Marius, at this her funeral, from the Rostra, in the presence of a vast concourse of spectators, and he had the boldness to bring out and display to the people certain household images of Marius, which had been concealed from view ever since his death. Producing them again on such an occasion was annulling, so far as a public orator could do it, the sentence of condemnation which Sylla and the patrician party had pronounced against him, and bringing him forward again as entitled to public admiration and applause. The patrician partisans who were present attempted to rebuke this bold maneuver with expressions of disapprobation, but these expressions were drowned in the loud and long-continued bursts of applause with which the great mass of the assembled multitude hailed and sanctioned it. The experiment was very bold and very hazardous, but it was triumphantly successful.

Caesar's oration on his wife.

Alarm of the patricians.

A short time after this Caesar had another opportunity for delivering a funeral oration; it was in the case of his own wife, the daughter of Cinna, who had been the colleague and coadjutor of Marius during the days of his power. It was not usual to pronounce such panegyrics upon Roman ladies unless they had attained to an advanced age. Caesar, however, was disposed to make the case of his own wife an exception to the ordinary rule. He saw in the occasion an opportunity to give a new impulse to the popular cause, and to make further progress in gaining the popular favor. The experiment was successful in this instance too. The people were pleased at the apparent affection which his action evinced; and as Cornelia was the daughter of Cinna, he had opportunity, under pretext of praising the birth and parentage of the deceased, to laud the men whom Sylla's party had outlawed and destroyed. In a word, the patrician party saw with anxiety and dread that Caesar was rapidly consolidating and organizing, and bringing back to its pristine strength and vigor, a party whose restoration to power would of course involve their own political, and perhaps personal ruin.

Caesar in office.

Shows and entertainments.

Caesar began soon to receive appointments to public office, and thus rapidly increased his influence and power. Public officers and candidates for office were accustomed in those days to expend great sums of money in shows and spectacles to amuse the people. Caesar went beyond all limits in these expenditures. He brought gladiators from distant provinces, and trained them at great expense, to fight in the enormous amphitheaters of the city, in the midst of vast assemblies of men. Wild beasts were procured also from the forests of Africa, and brought over in great numbers, under his direction, that the people might be entertained by their combats with captives taken in war, who were reserved for this dreadful fate. Caesar gave, also, splendid entertainments, of the most luxurious and costly character, and he mingled with his guests at these entertainments, and with the people at large on other occasions, in so complaisant and courteous a manner as to gain universal favor.

Caesar's extravagances.

His embarrassments.

He soon, by these means, not only exhausted all his own pecuniary resources, but plunged himself enormously into debt. It was not difficult for such a man in those days to procure an almost unlimited credit for such purposes as these, for every one knew that, if he finally succeeded in placing himself, by means of the popularity thus acquired, in stations of power, he could soon indemnify himself and all others who had aided him. The peaceful merchants, and artisans, and husbandmen of the distant provinces over which he expected to rule, would yield the revenues necessary to fill the treasuries thus exhausted. Still, Caesar's expenditures were so lavish, and the debts he incurred

² In modern books this pulpit is sometimes called the Rostrum, using the word in the singular.

were so enormous, that those who had not the most unbounded confidence in his capacity and his powers believed him irretrievably ruined.

The particulars, however, of these difficulties, and the manner in which Caesar contrived to extricate himself from them, will be more fully detailed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III. ADVANCEMENT TO THE CONSULSHIP

Caesar's rise to power.

From this time, which was about sixty-seven years before the birth of Christ, Caesar remained for nine years generally at Rome, engaged there in a constant struggle for power. He was successful in these efforts, rising all the time from one position of influence and honor to another, until he became altogether the most prominent and powerful man in the city. A great many incidents are recorded, as attending these contests, which illustrate in a very striking manner the strange mixture of rude violence and legal formality by which Rome was in those days governed.

Government of Rome.

Bribery and corruption.

Public amusements.

Many of the most important offices of the state depended upon the votes of the people; and as the people had very little opportunity to become acquainted with the real merits of the case in respect to questions of government, they gave their votes very much according to the personal popularity of the candidate. Public men had very little moral principle in those days, and they would accordingly resort to any means whatever to procure this personal popularity. They who wanted office were accustomed to bribe influential men among the people to support them, sometimes by promising them subordinate offices, and sometimes by the direct donation of sums of money; and they would try to please the mass of the people, who were too numerous to be paid with offices or with gold, by shows and spectacles, and entertainments of every kind which they would provide for their amusement.

This practice seems to us very absurd; and we wonder that the Roman people should tolerate it, since it is evident that the means for defraying these expenses must come, ultimately, in some way or other, from them. And yet, absurd as it seems, this sort of policy is not wholly disused even in our day. The operas and the theaters, and other similar establishments in France, are sustained, in part, by the government; and the liberality and efficiency with which this is done, forms, in some degree, the basis of the popularity of each succeeding administration. The plan is better systematized and regulated in our day, but it is, in its nature, substantially the same.

Amusements for the people.

In fact, furnishing amusements for the people, and also providing supplies for their wants, as well as affording them protection, were considered the legitimate objects of government in those days. It is very different at the present time, and especially in this country. The whole community are now united in the desire to confine the functions of government within the narrowest possible limits, such as to include only the preservation of public order and public safety. The people prefer to supply their own wants and to provide their own enjoyments, rather than to invest government with the power to do it for them, knowing very well that, on the latter plan, the burdens they will have to bear, though concealed for a time, must be doubled in the end.

Provided by the government.

How the people were supported.

Agrarian laws.

It must not be forgotten, however, that there were some reasons in the days of the Romans for providing public amusements for the people on an extended scale which do not exist now. They had very few facilities then for the private and separate enjoyments of home, so that they were much more inclined than the people of this country are now to seek pleasure abroad and in public. The climate, too, mild and genial nearly all the year, favored this. Then they were not interested, as men

are now, in the pursuits and avocations of private industry. The people of Rome were not a community of merchants, manufacturers, and citizens, enriching themselves, and adding to the comforts and enjoyments of the rest of mankind by the products of their labor. They were supported, in a great measure, by the proceeds of the tribute of foreign provinces, and by the plunder taken by the generals in the name of the state in foreign wars. From the same source, too—foreign conquest—captives were brought home, to be trained as gladiators to amuse them with their combats, and statues and paintings to ornament the public buildings of the city. In the same manner, large quantities of corn, which had been taken in the provinces, were often distributed at Rome. And sometimes even land itself, in large tracts, which had been confiscated by the state, or otherwise taken from the original possessors, was divided among the people. The laws enacted from time to time for this purpose were called Agrarian laws; and the phrase afterward passed into a sort of proverb, inasmuch as plans proposed in modern times for conciliating the favor of the populace by sharing among them property belonging to the state or to the rich, are designated by the name of *Agrarianism*.

Government of Rome.
Its foreign policy.

Thus Rome was a city supported, in a great measure, by the fruits of its conquests, that is, in a certain sense, by plunder. It was a vast community most efficiently and admirably organized for this purpose; and yet it would not be perfectly just to designate the people simply as a band of robbers. They rendered, in some sense, an equivalent for what they took, in establishing and enforcing a certain organization of society throughout the world, and in preserving a sort of public order and peace. They built cities, they constructed aqueducts and roads; they formed harbors, and protected them by piers and by castles; they protected commerce, and cultivated the arts, and encouraged literature, and enforced a general quiet and peace among mankind, allowing of no violence or war except what they themselves created. Thus they *governed* the world, and they felt, as all governors of mankind always do, fully entitled to supply themselves with the comforts and conveniences of life, in consideration of the service which they thus rendered.

Caesar's policy.

Of course, it was to be expected that they would sometimes quarrel among themselves about the spoils. Ambitious men were always arising, eager to obtain opportunities to make fresh conquests, and to bring home new supplies, and those who were most successful in making the results of their conquests available in adding to the wealth and to the public enjoyments of the city, would, of course, be most popular with the voters. Hence extortion in the provinces, and the most profuse and lavish expenditure in the city, became the policy which every great man must pursue to rise to power.

His success.

Caesar entered into this policy with his whole soul, founding all his hopes of success upon the favor of the populace. Of course, he had many rivals and opponents among the patrician ranks, and in the Senate, and they often impeded and thwarted his plans and measures for a time, though he always triumphed in the end.

He is made quaestor.
Caesar leaves Spain.
His project.

One of the first offices of importance to which he attained was that of *quaestor*, as it was called, which office called him away from Rome into the province of Spain, making him the second in command there. The officer first in command in the province was, in this instance, a praetor. During his absence in Spain, Caesar replenished in some degree his exhausted finances, but he soon became very much discontented with so subordinate a position. His discontent was greatly increased

by his coming unexpectedly, one day, at a city then called Hades—the present Cadiz—upon a statue of Alexander, which adorned one of the public edifices there. Alexander died when he was only about thirty years of age, having before that period made himself master of the world. Caesar was himself now about thirty-five years of age, and it made him very sad to reflect that, though he had lived five years longer than Alexander, he had yet accomplished so little. He was thus far only the second in a province, while he burned with an insatiable ambition to be the first in Rome. The reflection made him so uneasy that he left his post before his time expired, and went back to Rome, forming, on the way, desperate projects for getting power there.

Caesar accused of treason.

His rivals and enemies accused him of various schemes, more or less violent and treasonable in their nature, but how justly it is not now possible to ascertain. They alleged that one of his plans was to join some of the neighboring colonies, whose inhabitants wished to be admitted to the freedom of the city, and, making common cause with them, to raise an armed force and take possession of Rome. It was said that, to prevent the accomplishment of this design, an army which they had raised for the purpose of an expedition against the Cilician pirates was detained from its march, and that Caesar, seeing that the government were on their guard against him, abandoned the plan.

They also charged him with having formed, after this, a plan within the city for assassinating the senators in the senate house, and then usurping, with his fellow-conspirators, the supreme power. Crassus, who was a man of vast wealth and a great friend of Caesar's, was associated with him in this plot, and was to have been made dictator if it had succeeded. But, notwithstanding the brilliant prize with which Caesar attempted to allure Crassus to the enterprise, his courage failed him when the time for action arrived. Courage and enterprise, in fact, ought not to be expected of the rich; they are the virtues of poverty.

He is made aedile.

Gladiatorial shows.

Caesar's increasing popularity.

Though the Senate were thus jealous and suspicious of Caesar, and were charging him continually with these criminal designs, the people were on his side; and the more he was hated by the great, the more strongly he became intrenched in the popular favor. They chose him *aedile*. The aedile had the charge of the public edifices of the city, and of the games spectacles, and shows which were exhibited in them. Caesar entered with great zeal into the discharge of the duties of this office. He made arrangements for the entertainment of the people on the most magnificent scale, and made great additions and improvements to the public buildings, constructing porticoes and piazzas around the areas where his gladiatorial shows and the combats with wild beasts were to be exhibited. He provided gladiators in such numbers, and organized and arranged them in such a manner, ostensibly for their training, that his enemies among the nobility pretended to believe that he was intending to use them as an armed force against the government of the city. They accordingly made laws limiting and restricting the number of the gladiators to be employed. Caesar then exhibited his shows on the reduced scale which the new laws required, taking care that the people should understand to whom the responsibility for this reduction in the scale of their pleasures belonged. They, of course, murmured against the Senate, and Caesar stood higher in their favor than ever.

Caesar thwarted.

His resentment.

The statutes of Marius restored.

Rage of the patricians.

He was getting, however, by these means, very deeply involved in debt; and, in order partly to retrieve his fortunes in this respect, he made an attempt to have Egypt assigned to him as a province.

Egypt was then an immensely rich and fertile country. It had, however, never been a Roman province. It was an independent kingdom, in alliance with the Romans, and Caesar's proposal that it should be assigned to him as a province appeared very extraordinary. His pretext was, that the people of Egypt had recently deposed and expelled their king, and that, consequently, the Romans might properly take possession of it. The Senate, however, resisted this plan, either from jealousy of Caesar or from a sense of justice to Egypt; and, after a violent contest, Caesar found himself compelled to give up the design. He felt, however, a strong degree of resentment against the patrician party who had thus thwarted his designs. Accordingly, in order to avenge himself upon them, he one night replaced certain statues and trophies of Marius in the Capitol, which had been taken down by order of Sylla when he returned to power. Marius, as will be recollected, had been the great champion of the popular party, and the enemy of the patricians; and, at the time of his down-fall, all the memorials of his power and greatness had been every where removed from Rome, and among them these statues and trophies, which had been erected in the Capitol in commemoration of some former victories, and had remained there until Sylla's triumph, when they were taken down and destroyed. Caesar now ordered new ones to be made, far more magnificent than before. They were made secretly, and put up in the night. His office as aedile gave him the necessary authority. The next morning, when the people saw these splendid monuments of their great favorite restored, the whole city was animated with excitement and joy. The patricians, on the other hand, were filled with vexation and rage. "Here is a single officer," said they, "who is attempting to restore, by his individual authority, what has been formally abolished by a decree of the Senate. He is trying to see how much we will bear. If he finds that we will submit to this, he will attempt bolder measures still." They accordingly commenced a movement to have the statues and trophies taken down again, but the people rallied in vast numbers in defense of them. They made the Capitol ring with their shouts of applause; and the Senate, finding their power insufficient to cope with so great a force, gave up the point, and Caesar gained the day.

The Good Goddess.

Caesar had married another wife after the death of Cornelia. Her name was Pompeia. He divorced Pompeia about this time, under very extraordinary circumstances. Among the other strange religious ceremonies and celebrations which were observed in those days, was one called the celebration of the mysteries of the Good Goddess. This celebration was held by females alone, every thing masculine being most carefully excluded. Even the pictures of men, if there were any upon the walls of the house where the assembly was held, were covered. The persons engaged spent the night together in music and dancing and various secret ceremonies, half pleasure, half worship, according to the ideas and customs of the time.

Clodius.

Caesar divorces his wife.

The mysteries of the Good Goddess were to be celebrated one night at Caesar's house, he himself having, of course, withdrawn. In the middle of the night, the whole company in one of the apartments were thrown into consternation at finding that one of their number was a man. He had a smooth and youthful-looking face, and was very perfectly disguised in the dress of a female. He proved to be a certain Clodius, a very base and dissolute young man, though of great wealth and high connections. He had been admitted by a female slave of Pompeia's, whom he had succeeded in bribing. It was suspected that it was with Pompeia's concurrence. At any rate, Caesar immediately divorced his wife. The Senate ordered an inquiry into the affair, and, after the other members of the household had given their testimony, Caesar himself was called upon, but he had nothing to say. He knew nothing about it. They asked him, then, why he had divorced Pompeia, unless he had some evidence for believing her guilty. He replied, that a wife of Caesar must not only be without crime, but without suspicion.

Quarrel of Clodius and Milo.
Violence of the time.

Clodius was a very desperate and lawless character, and his subsequent history shows, in a striking point of view, the degree of violence and disorder which reigned in those times. He became involved in a bitter contention with another citizen whose name was Milo, and each, gaining as many adherents as he could, at length drew almost the whole city into their quarrel. Whenever they went out, they were attended with armed bands, which were continually in danger of coming into collision. The collision at last came, quite a battle was fought, and Clodius was killed. This made the difficulty worse than it was before. Parties were formed, and violent disputes arose on the question of bringing Milo to trial for the alleged murder. He was brought to trial at last, but so great was the public excitement, that the consuls for the time surrounded and filled the whole Forum with armed men while the trial was proceeding, to ensure the safety of the court.

Conspiracy of Catiline.
Warm debate in the Senate.
Caesar in danger of violence.

In fact, violence mingled itself continually, in those times, with almost all public proceedings, whenever any special combination of circumstances occurred to awaken unusual excitement. At one time, when Caesar was in office, a very dangerous conspiracy was brought to light, which was headed by the notorious Catiline. It was directed chiefly against the Senate and the higher departments of the government; it contemplated, in fact, their utter destruction, and the establishment of an entirely new government on the ruins of the existing constitution. Caesar was himself accused of a participation in this plot. When it was discovered, Catiline himself fled; some of the other conspirators were, however, arrested, and there was a long and very excited debate in the Senate on the question of their punishment. Some were for death. Caesar, however, very earnestly opposed this plan, recommending, instead, the confiscation of the estates of the conspirators, and their imprisonment in some of the distant cities of Italy. The dispute grew very warm, Caesar urging his point with great perseverance and determination, and with a degree of violence which threatened seriously to obstruct the proceedings, when a body of armed men, a sort of guard of honor stationed there, gathered around him, and threatened him with their swords. Quite a scene of disorder and terror ensued. Some of the senators arose hastily and fled from the vicinity of Caesar's seat to avoid the danger. Others, more courageous, or more devoted in their attachment to him, gathered around him to protect him, as far as they could, by interposing their bodies between his person and the weapons of his assailants. Caesar soon left the Senate, and for a long time would return to it no more.

Caesar's struggle for the office of pontifex maximus.

Although Caesar was all this time, on the whole, rising in influence and power, there were still fluctuations in his fortune, and the tide sometimes, for a short period, went strongly against him. He was at one time, when greatly involved in debt, and embarrassed in all his affairs, a candidate for a very high office, that of Pontifex Maximus, or sovereign pontiff. The office of the pontifex was originally that of building and keeping custody of the bridges of the city, the name being derived from the Latin word *pons*, which signifies bridge. To this, however, had afterward been added the care of the temples, and finally the regulation and control of the ceremonies of religion, so that it came in the end to be an office of the highest dignity and honor. Caesar made the most desperate efforts to secure his election, resorting to such measures, expending such sums, and involving himself in debt to such an extreme, that, if he failed, he would be irretrievably ruined. His mother, sympathizing with him in his anxiety, kissed him when he went away from the house on the morning of the election, and bade him farewell with tears. He told her that he should come home that night the pontiff, or he should never come home at all. He succeeded in gaining the election.

He is deposed.
Caesar's forbearance.
He is restored to office.

At one time Caesar was actually deposed from a high office which he held, by a decree of the Senate. He determined to disregard this decree, and go on in the discharge of his office as usual. But the Senate, whose ascendancy was now, for some reason, once more established, prepared to prevent him by force of arms. Caesar, finding that he was not sustained, gave up the contest, put off his robes of office, and went home. Two days afterward a reaction occurred. A mass of the populace came together to his house, and offered their assistance to restore his rights and vindicate his honor. Caesar, however, contrary to what every one would have expected of him, exerted his influence to calm and quiet the mob, and then sent them away, remaining himself in private as before. The Senate had been alarmed at the first outbreak of the tumult, and a meeting had been suddenly convened to consider what measures to adopt in such a crisis. When, however, they found that Caesar had himself interposed, and by his own personal influence had saved the city from the danger which threatened it, they were so strongly impressed with a sense of his forbearance and generosity, that they sent for him to come to the senate house, and, after formally expressing their thanks, they canceled their former vote, and restored him to his office again. This change in the action of the Senate does not, however, necessarily indicate so great a change of individual sentiment as one might at first imagine. There was, undoubtedly, a large minority who were averse to his being deposed in the first instance but, being outvoted, the decree of deposition was passed. Others were, perhaps, more or less doubtful. Caesar's generous forbearance in refusing the offered aid of the populace carried over a number of these sufficient to shift the majority, and thus the action of the body was reversed. It is in this way that the sudden and apparently total changes in the action of deliberative assemblies which often take place, and which would otherwise, in some cases, be almost incredible, are to be explained.

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