

**ANTHONY  
TROLLOPE**

THE LIFE OF  
CICERO,  
VOLUME II.

**Anthony Trollope**  
**The Life of Cicero. Volume II.**

*[http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio\\_book/?art=23151763](http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=23151763)*

*The Life of Cicero, Volume II.:*

*ISBN <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/28676>*

# Содержание

Chapter I	4
Chapter II	43
Chapter III	70
Chapter IV	91
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	113

# Anthony Trollope

## The Life of Cicero, Volume II

### Chapter I

#### *HIS RETURN FROM EXILE*

Cicero's life for the next two years was made conspicuous by a series of speeches which were produced by his exile and his return. These are remarkable for the praise lavished on himself, and by the violence with which he attacked his enemies. It must be owned that never was abuse more abusive, or self-praise uttered in language more laudatory.<sup>1</sup> Cicero had now done all that was useful in his public life. The great monuments of his literature are to come. None of these had as yet been written except a small portion of his letters – about a tenth – and of these he thought no more in regard to the public than do any ordinary letter-writers of to-day. Some poems had been produced, and a history of his own Consulship in Greek; but these are unknown to us. He had already become the greatest orator, perhaps, of all time – and we have many of the speeches spoken by him. Some we have – those five, namely, telling the story of Verres

---

<sup>1</sup> As I shall explain a few pages farther on, four of these speeches are supposed by late critics to be spurious.

– not intended to be spoken, but written for the occasion of the day rather than with a view to permanent literature. He had been Quæstor, Ædile, Prætor, and Consul, with singular and undeviating success. He had been honest in the exercise of public functions when to be honest was to be singular. He had bought golden opinions from all sorts of people. He had been true to his country, and useful also – a combination which it was given to no other public man of those days to achieve. Having been Prætor and Consul, he had refused the accustomed rewards, and had abstained from the provinces. His speeches, with but few exceptions, had hitherto been made in favor of honesty. They are declamations against injustice, against bribery, against cruelty, and all on behalf of decent civilized life. Had he died then, he would not have become the hero of literature, the marvel among men of letters whom the reading world admires; but he would have been a great man, and would have saved himself from the bitterness of Cæsarean tongues.

His public work was in truth done. His further service consisted of the government of Cilicia for a year – an employment that was odious to him, though his performance of it was a blessing to the province. After that there came the vain struggle with Cæsar, the attempt to make the best of Cæsar victorious, the last loud shriek on behalf of the Republic, and then all was over. The fourteen years of life which yet remained to him sufficed for erecting that literary monument of which I have spoken, but his public usefulness was done. To the reader

of his biography it will seem that these coming fourteen years will lack much of the grace which adorned the last twenty. The biographer will be driven to make excuses, which he will not do without believing in the truth of them, but doubting much whether he may beget belief in others. He thinks that he can see the man passing from one form to another – his doubting devotion to Pompey, his enforced adherence to Cæsar, his passionate opposition to Antony; but he can still see him true to his country, and ever on the alert against tyranny and on behalf of pure patriotism.

At the present we have to deal with Cicero in no vacillating spirit, but loudly exultant and loudly censorious. Within the two years following his return he made a series of speeches, in all of which we find the altered tone of his mind. There is no longer that belief in the ultimate success of justice, and ultimate triumph of the Republic, which glowed in his Verrine and Catiline orations. He is forced to descend in his aspirations. It is not whether Rome shall be free, or the bench of justice pure, but whether Cicero shall be avenged and Gabinius punished. It may have been right – it was right – that Cicero should be avenged and Gabinius punished; but it must be admitted that the subjects are less alluring.

His first oration, as generally received, was made to the Senate in honor of his return. The second was addressed to the people on the same subject. The third was spoken to the college of priests, with the view of recovering the ground on

which his house had stood, and which Clodius had attempted to alienate forever by dedicating it to a pretended religious purpose. The next, as coming on our list, though not so in time, was addressed again to the Senate concerning official reports made by the public soothsayers as interpreters of occult signs, as to whether certain portents had been sent by the gods to show that Cicero ought not to have back his house. Before this was made he had defended Sextius, who as Tribune had been peculiarly serviceable in assisting his return. This was before a bench of judges; and separated from this, though made apparently at the same time, is a violent attack upon Vatinius, one of Cæsar's creatures, who was a witness against Sextius. Then there is a seventh, regarding the disposition of the provinces among the Proprætors and Proconsuls, the object of which was to enforce the recall of Piso from Macedonia and Gabinius from Syria, and to win Cæsar's favor by showing that Cæsar should be allowed to keep the two Gauls and Illyricum. To these must be added two others, made within the same period, for Cælius and Balbus. The close friendship between Cicero and the young man Cælius was one of the singular details of the orator's life. Balbus was a Spaniard, attached to Cæsar, and remarkable as having been the first man not an Italian who achieved the honor of the Consulship.

It has been disputed whether the first four of these orations were really the work of Cicero, certain German critics and English scholars having declared them to be "parum Ciceronias"

– too little like Cicero. That is the phrase used by Nobbe, who published a valuable edition of all Cicero's works, after the text of Ernesti, in a single volume. Mr. Long, in his introduction to these orations, denounces them in language so strong as to rob them of all chance of absolute acceptance from those who know the accuracy of Mr. Long's scholarship.<sup>2</sup> There may probably have been subsequent interpolations. The first of the four, however, is so closely referred to by Cicero himself in the speech made by him two years subsequently in the defence of Plancius, that the fact of an address to the Senate in the praise of those who had assisted him in his return cannot be doubted; and we are expressly told by the orator that, because of the importance of the occasion, he had written it out before he spoke it.<sup>3</sup> As to the Latinity, it is not within my scope, nor indeed within my power, to express a confident opinion; but as to the matter of the speech, I think that Cicero, in his then frame of mind, might have uttered what is attributed to him. Having said so much, I shall best continue my narrative by dealing with the four speeches as though they were genuine.

b. c. 57, ætat. 50.

---

<sup>2</sup> See Mr. Long's introduction to these orations. "All this I admit," says Mr. Long, speaking of some possible disputant; "but he will never convince any man of sense that the first of Roman writers, a man of good understanding, and a master of eloquence, put together such tasteless, feeble, and extravagant compositions."

<sup>3</sup> Pro Cn. Plancio, ca. xxx.: "Nonne etiam illa testis est oratio quæ est a me prima habita in Senatu. \* \* \* Recitetur oratio, quæ propter rei magnitudinem dicta de scripto est."

Cicero landed at Brundisium on the 5th of August, the day on which his recall from exile had been enacted by the people, and there met his daughter Tullia, who had come to welcome him back to Italy on that her birthday. But she had come as a widow, having just lost her first husband, Piso Frugi. At this time she was not more than nineteen years old. Of Tullia's feelings we know nothing from her own expressions, as they have not reached us; but from the warmth of her father's love for her, and by the closeness of their friendship, we are led to imagine that the joy of her life depended more on him than on any of her three husbands. She did not live long with either of them, and died soon after the birth of a child, having been divorced from the third. I take it, there was much of triumph in the meeting, though Piso Frugi had died so lately.

The return of Cicero to Rome was altogether triumphant. It must be remembered that the contemporary accounts we have had of it are altogether from his own pen. They are taken chiefly from the orations I have named above, though subsequent allusions to the glory of his return to Rome are not uncommon in his works. But had his boasting not been true, the contradictions to them would have been made in such a way as to have reached our ears. Plutarch, indeed, declares that Cicero's account of the glory of his return fell short of the truth.

It may be taken for granted that with that feeble monster, the citizen populace of Rome, Cicero had again risen to a popularity equal to that which had been bestowed upon him when he had

just driven Catiline out of Rome. Of what nature were the crowds who were thus loud in the praise of their great Consul, and as loud afterward in their rejoicings at the return of the great exile, we must form our own opinion from circumstantial evidence. There was a mass of people, with keen ears taking artistic delight in eloquence and in personal graces, but determined to be idle, and to be fed as well as amused in their idleness; and there were also vast bands of men ready to fight – bands of gladiators they have been called, though it is probable that but few of them had ever been trained to the arena – whose business it was to shout as well as to fight on behalf of their patrons. We shall not be justified in supposing that those who on the two occasions named gave their sweet voices for Cicero were only the well-ordered, though idle, proportion of the people, whereas they who had voted against him in favor of Clodius had all been assassins, bullies, and swordsmen. We shall probably be nearer the mark if we imagine that the citizens generally were actuated by the prevailing feelings of their leaders at the moment, but were carried into enthusiasm when enabled, without detriment to their interests, to express their feelings for one who was in truth popular with them. When Cicero, after the death of the five conspirators, declared that the men "had lived" – "vixerunt" – his own power was sufficient to insure the people that they would be safe in praising him. When he came back to Rome, Pompey had been urgent for his return, and Cæsar had acceded to it. When the bill was passed for banishing him, the Triumvirate had been

against him, and Clodius had been able to hound on his crew. But Milo also had a crew, and Milo was Cicero's friend. As the Clodian crew helped to drive Cicero from Rome, so did Milo's crew help to bring him back again.

Cicero, on reaching Rome, went at once to the Capitol, to the temple of Jupiter, and there returned thanks for the great thing that had been done for him. He was accompanied by a vast procession who from the temple went with him to his brother's house, where he met his wife, and where he resided for a time. His own house in the close neighborhood had been destroyed. He reached Rome on the 4th of September, and on the 5th an opportunity was given to the then hero of the day for expressing his thanks to the Senate for what they had done for him. His intellect had not grown rusty in Macedonia, though he had been idle. On the 5th, Cicero spoke to the Senate; on the 6th, to the people. Before the end of the month he made a much longer speech to the priests in defence of his own property. Out of the full heart the mouth speaks, and his heart was very full of the subject.

His first object was to thank the Senate and the leading members of it for their goodness to him. The glowing language in which this is done goes against the grain with us when we read continuously the events of his life as told by himself. His last grievous words had been expressions of despair addressed to Atticus; now he breaks out into a pæan of triumph. We have to remember that eight months had intervened, and that the time

had sufficed to turn darkness into light. "If I cannot thank you as I ought, O Conscript Fathers, for the undying favors which you have conferred on me, on my brother, and my children, ascribe it, I beseech you, to the greatness of the things you have done for me, and not to the defect of my virtue." Then he praises the two Consuls, naming them, Lentulus and Metellus – Metellus, as the reader will remember, having till lately been his enemy. He lauds the Prætors and the Tribunes, two of the latter members having opposed his return; but he is loudest in praise of Pompey – that "Sampsiceramus," that "Hierosolymarius," that "Arabarches" into whose character he had seen so clearly when writing from Macedonia to Atticus – that "Cn. Pompey who, by his valor, his glory, his achievements, stands conspicuously the first of all nations, of all ages, of all history." We cannot but be angry when we read the words, though we may understand how well he understood that he was impotent to do anything for the Republic unless he could bring such a man as Pompey to act with him. We must remember, too, how impossible it was that one Roman should rise above the falsehood common to Romans. We cannot ourselves always escape even yet from the atmosphere of duplicity in which policy delights. He describes the state of Rome in his absence. "When I was gone, you" – you, the Senate – "could decree nothing for your citizens, or for your allies, or for the dependent kings. The judges could give no judgment; the people could not record their votes; the Senate availed nothing by its authority. You saw only a silent Forum, a speechless Senate-

house, a city dumb and deserted." We may suppose that Rome was what Cicero described it to be when he was in exile, and Cæsar had gone to his provinces; but its condition had been the result of the crushing tyranny of the Triumvirate rather than of Cicero's absence.

Lentulus, the present Consul, had been, he says, a second father, almost a god, to him. But he would not have needed the hand of a Consul to raise him from the ground, had he not been wounded by consular hands. Catulus, one of Rome's best citizens, had told him that though Rome had now and again suffered from a bad Consul, she had never before been afflicted by two together. While there was one Consul worthy of the name, Catulus had declared that Cicero would be safe. But there had come two, two together, whose spirits had been so narrow, so low, so depraved, so burdened with greed and ignorance, "that they had been unable to comprehend, much less to sustain the splendor of the name of Consul. Not Consuls were they, but buyers and sellers of provinces." These were Piso and Gabinius, of whom the former was now governor of Macedonia, and the latter of Syria. Cicero's scorn against these men, who as Consuls had permitted his exile, became a passion with him. His subsequent hatred of Antony was not as bitter. He had come there to thank the assembled Senators for their care of him, but he is carried off so violently by his anger that he devotes a considerable portion of his speech to these indignant utterances. The reader does not regret it. Abuse makes better reading than praise, has a

stronger vitality, and seems, alas, to come more thoroughly from the heart! Those who think that genuine invective has its charms would ill spare Piso and Gabinius.

He goes back to his eulogy, and names various Prætors and officers who have worked on his behalf. Then he declares that by the view of the present Consul, Lentulus, a decree has been passed in his favor more glorious than has been awarded to any other single Roman citizen – namely that from all Italy those who wished well to their country should be collected together for the purpose of bringing him back from his banishment – him, Cicero. There is much in this in praise of Lentulus, but more in praise of Cicero. Throughout these orations we feel that Cicero is put forward as the hero, whereas Piso and Gabinius are the demons of the piece. "What could I leave as a richer legacy to my posterity," he goes on to say, opening another clause of his speech, "than that the Senate should have decreed that the citizen who had not come forward in my defence was one regardless of the Republic." By these boastings, though he was at the moment at the top of the ladder of popularity, he was offending the self-importance of all around him. He was offending especially Pompey, with whom it was his fate to have to act.<sup>4</sup> But that was little to the offence he was giving to those who were to come many centuries after him, who would not look into the

---

<sup>4</sup> Quintilian, lib. xi., ca. 1, who as a critic worshipped Cicero, has nevertheless told us very plainly what had been up to his time the feeling of the Roman world as to Cicero's self-praise: "Reprehensus est in hac parte non mediocriter Cicero."

matter with sufficient accuracy to find that his vanity deserved forgiveness because of his humanity and desire for progress. "O Lentulus," he says, at the end of the oration, "since I am restored to the Republic, as with me the Republic is itself restored, I will slacken nothing in my efforts at liberty; but, if it may be possible, will add something to my energy." In translating a word here and there as I have done, I feel at every expression my incapacity. There is no such thing as good translation. If you wish to drink the water, with its life and vigor in it, you must go to the fountain and drink it there.

On the day following he made a similar speech to the people – if, indeed, the speech we have was from his mouth or his pen – as to which it has been remarked that in it he made no allusion to Clodius, though he was as bitter as ever against the late Consuls. From this we may gather that, though his audience was delighted to hear him, even in his self-praise, there might have been dispute had he spoken ill of one who had been popular as Tribune. His praise of Pompey was almost more fulsome than that of the day before, and the same may be said of his self-glorification. Of his brother's devotion to him he speaks in touching words, but in words which make us remember how untrue to him afterward was that very brother. There are phrases so magnificent throughout this short piece that they obtain from us, as they are read, forgiveness for the writer's faults. "Sic ulciscar facinorum singula." Let the reader of Latin turn to chapter ix. of the oration and see how the speaker declares

that he will avenge himself against the evil-doers whom he has denounced.

Cicero, though he had returned triumphant, had come back ruined in purse, except so far as he could depend on the Senate and the people for reimbursing to him the losses to which he had been subjected. The decree of the Senate had declared that his goods should be returned to him, but the validity of such a promise would depend on the value which might be put upon the goods in question. His house on the Palatine Hill had been razed to the ground; his Tusculan and Formian villas had been destroyed; his books, his pictures, his marble columns, his very trees, had been stolen; but, worst of all, an attempt had been made to deprive him forever of the choicest spot of ground in all the city, the Park Lane of Rome, by devoting the space which had belonged to him to the service of one of the gods. Clodius had caused something of a temple to Liberty to be built there, because ground so consecrated was deemed at Rome, as with us, to be devoted by consecration to the perpetual service of religion. It was with the view of contesting this point that Cicero made his next speech, *Pro Domo Sua*, for the recovery of his house, before the Bench of Priests in Rome. It was for the priests to decide this question. The Senate could decree the restitution of property generally, but it was necessary that that spot of ground should be liberated from the thralldom of sacerdotal tenure by sacerdotal interference. These priests were all men of high birth and distinction in the Republic. Nineteen among them

were "Consulares," or past-Consuls. Superstitious awe affects more lightly the consciences of priests than the hearts of those who trust the priests for their guidance. Familiarity does breed contempt. Cicero, in making this speech, probably felt that, if he could carry the people with him, the College of Priests would not hold the prey with grasping hands. The nineteen Consulares would care little for the sanctity of the ground if they could be brought to wish well to Cicero. He did his best. He wrote to Atticus concerning it a few days after the speech was made, and declared that if he had ever spoken well on any occasion he had done so then, so deep had been his grief, and so great the importance of the occasion;<sup>5</sup> and he at once informs his friend of the decision of the Bench, and of the ground on which it was based. "If he who declares that he dedicated the ground had not been appointed to that business by the people, nor had been expressly commanded by the people to do it, then that spot of ground can be restored without any breach of religion." Cicero asserts that he was at once congratulated on having gained his cause, the world knowing very well that no such authority had been conferred on Clodius. In the present mood of Rome, all the priests, with the nineteen Consulares, were no doubt willing that Cicero should have back his ground. The Senate had to interpret the decision, and on the discussion of the question among them

---

<sup>5</sup> Ad Att., lib. iv., 2. He recommends that the speech should be put into the hands of all young men, and thus gives further proof that we still here have his own words. When so much has come to us, we cannot but think that an oration so prepared would remain extant.

Clodius endeavored to talk against time. When, however, he had spoken for three hours, he allowed himself to be coughed down. It may be seen that in some respects even Roman fortitude has been excelled in our days.

In the first portion of this speech, *Pro Domo Sua*, Cicero devotes himself to a matter which has no bearing on his house. Concomitant with Cicero's return there had come a famine in Rome. Such a calamity was of frequent occurrence, though I doubt whether their famines ever led to mortality so frightful as that which desolated Ireland just before the repeal of the Corn Laws. No records, as far as I am aware, have reached us of men perishing in the streets; but scarcity was not uncommon, and on such occasions complaints would become very loud. The feeding of the people was a matter of great difficulty, and subject to various chances. We do not at all know what was the number to be fed, including the free and the slaves, but have been led by surmises to suppose that it was under a million even in the time of Augustus. But even though the number was no more than five hundred thousand at this time, the procuring of food must have been a complicated and difficult matter. It was not produced in the country. It was imported chiefly from Sicily and Africa, and was plentiful or the reverse, not only in accordance with the seasons but as certain officers of state were diligent and honest, or fraudulent and rapacious. We know from one of the Verrine orations the nature of the laws on the subject, but cannot but marvel that, even with the

assistance of such laws, the supply could be maintained with any fair proportion to the demand. The people looked to the government for the supply, and when it fell short would make their troubles known with seditious grumblings, which would occasionally assume the guise of insurrection. At this period of Cicero's return food had become scarce and dear; and Clodius, who was now in arms against Pompey as well as against Cicero, caused it to be believed that the strangers flocking into Rome to welcome Cicero had eaten up the food which should have filled the bellies of the people. An idea farther from truth could hardly have been entertained: no chance influx of visitors on such a population could have had the supposed effect. But the idea was spread abroad, and it was necessary that something should be done to quiet the minds of the populace. Pompey had hitherto been the resource in State difficulties. Pompey had scattered the pirates, who seem, however, at this period to have been gathering head again. Pompey had conquered Mithridates. Let Pompey have a commission to find food for Rome. Pompey himself entertained the idea of a commission which should for a time give him almost unlimited power. Cæsar was increasing his legions and becoming dominant in the West. Pompey, who still thought himself the bigger man of the two, felt the necessity of some great step in rivalry of Cæsar. The proposal made on his behalf was that all the treasure belonging to the State should be placed at his disposal; that he should have an army and a fleet, and should be for five years superior in authority to every

Proconsul in his own province. This was the first great struggle made by Pompey to strangle the growing power of Cæsar. It failed altogether.<sup>6</sup> The fear of Cæsar had already become too great in the bosoms of Roman Senators to permit them to attempt to crush him in his absence. But a mitigated law was passed, enjoining Pompey to provide the food required, and conferring upon him certain powers. Cicero was nominated as his first lieutenant, and accepted the position. He never acted, however, giving it up to his brother Quintus. A speech which he made to the people on the passing of the law is not extant; but as there was hot blood about it in Rome, he took the opportunity of justifying the appointment of Pompey in the earlier portion of this oration to the priests. It must be understood that he did not lend his aid toward giving those greater powers which Pompey was anxious to obtain. His trust in Pompey had never been a perfect trust since the first days of the Triumvirate. To Cicero's thinking, both Pompey and Cæsar were conspirators against the Republic. Cæsar was the bolder, and therefore the more dangerous. It might probably come to pass that the services of Pompey would be needed for restraining Cæsar. Pompey naturally belonged to the "optimates," while Cæsar was as naturally a conspirator. But there never again could come a time in which Cicero would willingly intrust Pompey with such power as was given to him nine years before by the Lex Manilia. Nevertheless, he could still

---

<sup>6</sup> I had better, perhaps, refer my readers to book v., chap. viii., of Mommsen's History.

say grand things in praise of Pompey. "To Pompey have been intrusted wars without number, wars most dangerous to the State, wars by sea and wars by land, wars extraordinary in their nature. If there be a man who regrets that this has been done, that man must regret the victories which Rome has won." But his abuse of Clodius is infinitely stronger than his praise of Pompey. For the passages in which he alluded to the sister of Clodius I must refer the reader to the speech itself. It is impossible here to translate them or to describe them. And these words were spoken before the College of Priests, of whom nineteen were Consulares! And they were prepared with such care that Cicero specially boasted of them to Atticus, and declares that they should be put into the hands of all young orators. Montesquieu says that the Roman legislators, in establishing their religion, had no view of using it for the improvement of manners or of morals.<sup>7</sup> The nature of their rites and ceremonies gives us evidence enough that it was so. If further testimony were wanting, it might be found in this address, *Ad Pontifices*. Cicero himself was a man of singularly clean life as a Roman nobleman, but, in abusing his enemy, he was restrained by no sense of what we consider the decency of language.

He argues the question as to his house very well, as he did all questions. He tells the priests that the whole joy of his restoration must depend on their decision. Citizens who had hitherto been

---

<sup>7</sup> "Politique des Romains dans la religion;" a treatise which was read by its author to certain students at Bordeaux. It was intended as a preface to a longer work.

made subject to such penalties had been malefactors; whereas, it was acknowledged of him that he had been a benefactor to the city. Clodius had set up on the spot, not a statue of Liberty, but, as was well known to all men, the figure of a Greek prostitute. The priests had not been consulted. The people had not ratified the proposed consecration. Of the necessity of such authority he gives various examples. "And this has been done," he says, "by an impure and impious enemy of all religions – by this man among women, and woman among men – who has gone through the ceremony so hurriedly, so violently, that his mind and his tongue and his voice have been equally inconsistent with each other." "My fortune," he says, as he ends his speech, "all moderate as it is, will suffice for me. The memory of my name will be a patrimony sufficient for my children;" but if his house be so taken from him, so stolen, so falsely dedicated to religion, he cannot live without disgrace. Of course he got back his house; and with his house about £16,000 for its re-erection, and £4000 for the damage done to the Tusculan villa with £2000 for the Formian villa. With these sums he was not contented; and indeed they could hardly have represented fairly the immense injury done to him.

b. c. 56, ætat. 51.

So ended the work of the year of his return. From the following year, besides the speeches, we have twenty-six letters of which nine were written to Lentulus, the late Consul, who had now gone to Cilicia as Proconsul. Lentulus had befriended him,

and he found it necessary to show his gratitude by a continued correspondence, and by a close attendance to the interests of the absent officer. These letters are full of details of Roman politics, too intricate for such a work as this – perhaps I might almost say too uninteresting, as they refer specially to Lentulus himself. In one of them he tells his friend that he has at last been able to secure the friendship of Pompey for him. It was, after all, but a show of friendship. He has supped with Pompey, and says that when he talks to Pompey everything seems to go well: no one can be more gracious than Pompey. But when he sees the friends by whom Pompey is surrounded he knows, as all others know, that the affair is in truth going just as he would not have it.<sup>8</sup> We feel as we read these letters, in which Pompey's name is continually before us, how much Pompey prevailed by his personal appearance, by his power of saying gracious things, and then again by his power of holding his tongue. "You know the slowness of the man," he says to Lentulus, "and his silence."<sup>9</sup> A slow, cautious, hypocritical man, who knew well how to use the allurements of personal manners! These letters to Lentulus are full of flattery.

There are five letters to his brother Quintus, dealing with the politics of the time, especially with the then King of Egypt, who was to be, or was not to be, restored. From all these things, however, I endeavor to abstain as much as possible, as

---

<sup>8</sup> Ad Div., lib. i., 2.

<sup>9</sup> Ad Div., lib. i., 5: "Nosti hominis tarditatem, et taciturnitatem."

matters not peculiarly affecting the character of Cicero. He gives his brother an account of the doings in the Senate, which is interesting as showing us how that august assembly conducted itself. While Pompey was speaking with much dignity, Clodius and his supporters in vain struggled with shouts and cries to put him down. At noon Pompey sat down, and Clodius got possession of the rostra, and in the middle of a violent tumult remained on his feet for two hours. Then, on Pompey's side, the "optimates" sang indecent songs – "versus obscenissimi" – in reference to Clodius and his sister Clodia. Clodius, rising in his anger, demanded, "Who had brought the famine?" "Pompey," shouted the Clodians. "Who wanted to go to Egypt?" demanded Clodius. "Pompey," again shouted his followers. After that, at three o'clock, at a given signal, they began to spit upon their opponents. Then there was a fight, in which each party tried to drive the others out. The "optimates" were getting the best of it, when Cicero thought it as well to run off lest he should be hurt in the tumult.<sup>10</sup> What hope could there be for an oligarchy when such things occurred in the Senate? Cicero in this letter speaks complacently of resisting force by force in the city. Even Cato, the law-abiding, precise Cato, thought it necessary to fall into the fashion and go about Rome with an armed following. He bought a company of gladiators and circus-men; but was obliged to sell them, as Cicero tells his brother with glee, because he could not

---

<sup>10</sup> Ad Quintum Fratrem, lib. ii., 3.

afford to feed them.<sup>11</sup>

There are seven letters also to Atticus – always more interesting than any of the others. There is in these the most perfect good-feeling, so that we may know that the complaints made by him in his exile had had no effect of estranging his friend; and we learn from them his real, innermost thoughts, as they are not given even to his brother – as thoughts have surely seldom been confided by one man of action to another. Atticus had complained that he had not been allowed to see a certain letter which Cicero had written to Cæsar. This he had called a *παλινωδία*, or recantation, and it had been addressed to Cæsar with the view of professing a withdrawal to some extent of his opposition to the Triumvirate. It had been of sufficient moment to be talked about. Atticus had heard of it, and had complained that it had not been sent to him. Cicero puts forward his excuses, and then bursts out with the real truth:

"Why should I nibble round the unpalatable morsel which has to be swallowed?" The recantation had seemed to himself to be almost base, and he had been ashamed of it. "But," says he, "farewell to all true, upright, honest policy. You could hardly believe what treachery there is in those who ought to be our leading men, and who would be so if there was any truth in them."<sup>12</sup> He does not rely upon those who, if they were true to their party, would enable the party to stand firmly even against

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., lib. ii., 6.

<sup>12</sup> Ad Att., lib. iv., 5.

Cæsar. Therefore it becomes necessary for him to truckle to Cæsar, not for himself but for his party. Unsupported he cannot stand in open hostility to Cæsar. He truckles. He writes to Cæsar, singing Cæsar's praises. It is for the party rather than for himself, but yet he is ashamed of it.

There is a letter to Lucceius, an historian of the day then much thought of, of whom however our later world has heard nothing. Lucceius is writing chronicles of the time, and Cicero boldly demands to be praised. "Ut ornes mea postulem"<sup>13</sup>— "I ask you to praise me." But he becomes much bolder than that. "Again and again I beseech you, without any beating about the bush, to speak more highly of me than you perhaps think that I deserve, even though in doing so you abandon all the laws of history." Then he uses beautiful flattery to his correspondent. Alexander had wished to be painted only by Apelles. He desires to be praised by none but Lucceius. Lucceius, we are told, did as he was asked.

b. c. 56, ætat. 51.

I will return to the speeches of the period to which this chapter is devoted, taking that first which he made to the Senate as to the report of the soothsayers respecting certain prodigies. Readers familiar with Livy will remember how frequently, in time of disaster, the anger of Heaven was supposed to have been shown by signs and miracles, indications that the gods were displeased, and that expiations were necessary.<sup>14</sup> The superstition, as is

---

<sup>13</sup> Ad Div., lib. v., 12.

<sup>14</sup> Very early in the history of Rome it was found expedient to steal an Etruscan

the fate of all superstitions, had frequently been used for most ungodlike purposes. If a man had a political enemy, what could do him better service than to make the populace believe that a house had been crushed by a thunder-bolt, or that a woman had given birth to a pig instead of a child, because Jupiter had been offended by that enemy's devices? By using such a plea the Grecians got into Troy, together with the wooden horse, many years ago. The Scotch worshippers of the Sabbath declared the other day, when the bridge over the Tay was blown away, that the Lord had interposed to prevent travelling on Sunday!

Cicero had not been long back from his exile when the gods began to show their anger. A statue of Juno twisted itself half round; a wolf had been seen in the city; three citizens were struck with lightning; arms were heard to clang, and then wide subterranean noises. Nothing was easier than the preparation and

---

soothsayer for the reading of these riddles, which was gallantly done by a young soldier, who ran off with an old prophet in his arms (Livy, v., 15). We are naively told by the historian that the more the prodigies came the more they were believed. On a certain occasion a crowd of them was brought together: Crows built in the temple of Juno. A green tree took fire. The waters of Mantua became bloody. In one place it rained chalk in another fire. Lightning was very destructive, sinking the temple of a god or a nut-tree by the roadside indifferently. An ox spoke in Sicily. A precocious baby cried out "Io triumphe" before it was born. At Spoletum a woman became a man. An altar was seen in the heavens. A ghostly band of armed men appeared in the Janiculum (Livy, xxiv., 10). On such occasions the "aruspices" always ordered a vast slaughter of victims, and no doubt feasted as did the wicked sons of Eli. Even Horace wrote as though he believed in the anger of the gods – certainly as though he thought that public morals would be improved by renewed attention to them: *Delicta majorum immeritus lues, Romane, donec templa refeceris.* – *Od.*, lib. iii., 6.

continuing of such portents. For many years past the heavens above and the earth beneath had been put into requisition for prodigies.<sup>15</sup> The soothsayers were always well pleased to declare that there had been some neglect of the gods. It is in the nature of things that the superstitious tendencies of mankind shall fall a prey to priestcraft. The quarrels between Cicero and Clodius were as full of life as ever. In this year, Clodius being *Ædile*, there had come on debates as to a law passed by Cæsar as Consul, in opposition to Bibulus, for the distribution of lands among the citizens. There was a question as to a certain tax which was to be levied on these lands. The tax-gatherers were supported by Cicero, and denounced by Clodius. Then Clodius and his friends found out that the gods were showering their anger down upon the city because the ground on which Cicero's house had once stood was being desecrated by its re-erection. An appeal was made to the soothsayers. They reported, and Cicero rejoined. The soothsayers had of course been mysterious and doubtful. Cicero first shows that the devotion of his ground to sacred purposes had been an absurdity, and then he declares that the gods are angry, not with him but with Clodius. To say that the gods were not angry at all was more than Cicero dared. The piece, taken as a morsel of declamatory art, is full of vigor, is powerful in invective, and carries us along in full agreement with the orator; but at the conclusion we are led to wish that Cicero

---

<sup>15</sup> See the Preface by M. Guerauld to his translation of this oration, *De Aruspium Responsis*.

could have employed his intellect on higher matters.

There are, however, one or two passages which draw the reader into deep mental inquiry as to the religious feelings of the time. In one, which might have been written by Paley, Cicero declares his belief in the creative power of some god – or gods, as he calls them.<sup>16</sup> And we see also the perverse dealings of the Romans with these gods, dealings which were very troublesome – not to be got over except by stratagem. The gods were made use of by one party and the other for dishonest state purposes. When Cicero tells his hearers what the gods intended to signify by making noises in the sky, and other divine voices, we feel sure that he was either hoaxing them who heard him or saying what he knew they would not believe.

b. c. 56, ætat. 51.

Previous to the speech as to the "aruspices," he had defended Sextius – or Sestius, as he is frequently called – on a charge brought against him by Clodius in respect of violence. We at once think of the commonplace from Juvenal:

"Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes."

But Rome, without remonstrating, put up with any absurdity of that kind. Sextius and Milo and others had been joined

---

<sup>16</sup> Ca. ix.: "Who is there so mad that when he looks up to the heavens he does not acknowledge that there are gods, or dares to think that the things which he sees have sprung from chance – things so wonderful that the most intelligent among us do not understand their motions?"

together in opposing the election of Clodius as Ædile, and had probably met violence with violence. As surely as an English master of hounds has grooms and whips ready at his command, Milo had a band of bullies prepared for violence. Clodius himself had brought an action against Milo, who was defended by Pompey in person. The case against Sextius was intrusted to Albinovanus, and Hortensius undertook the defence. Sextius before had been one of the most forward in obtaining the return of Cicero, and had travelled into Gaul to see Cæsar and to procure Cæsar's assent. Cæsar had not then assented; but not the less great had been the favor conferred by Sextius on Cicero. Cicero had been grateful, but it seems that Sextius had thought not sufficiently grateful; hence there had grown up something of a quarrel. But Cicero, when he heard of the proceeding against his old friend, at once offered his assistance. For a Roman to have more than one counsel to plead for him was as common as for an Englishman. Cicero was therefore added to Hortensius, and the two great advocates of the day spoke on the same side. We are told that Hortensius managed the evidence, showing, probably, that Clodius struck the first blow. Cicero then addressed the judges with the object of gaining their favor for the accused. In this he was successful, and Sextius was acquitted. As regards Sextius and his quarrel with Clodius, the oration has but little interest for us. There is not, indeed, much about Sextius in it. It is a continuation of the pæan which Cicero was still singing as to his own return, but it is distinguished from his former

utterances by finer thought and finer language. The description of public virtue as displayed by Cato has perhaps, in regard to melody of words and grandeur of sentiment, never been beaten. I give the orator's words below in his own language, because in no other way can any idea of the sound be conveyed.<sup>17</sup> There is, too, a definition made very cleverly to suit his own point of view between the conservatives and the liberals of the day. "Optimates" is the name by which the former are known; the latter are called "Populares."<sup>18</sup>

Attached to this speech for Sextius is a declamation against Vatinius, who was one of the witnesses employed by the prosecutor. Instead of examining this witness regularly, he talked him down by a separate oration. We have no other instance of such a forensic manœuvre either in Cicero's practice or in our accounts of the doings of other Roman advocates. This has reached us as a separate oration. It is a coarse tirade of abuse against a man whom we believe to have been bad, but as to whom

---

<sup>17</sup> Ca. xxviii.: "Quæ in tempestate sæva quieta est, et lucet in tenebris, et pulsa loco manet tamen, atque hæret in patria, splendetque per se semper, neque alienis unquam sordibus obsolescit." I regard this as a perfect allocution of words in regard to the arrangement both for the ear and for the intellect.

<sup>18</sup> Ca. xliv.: "There have always been two kinds of men who have busied themselves in the State, and have struggled to be each the most prominent. Of these, one set have endeavored to be regarded as 'populares,' friends of the people; the other to be and to be considered as 'optimates,' the most trustworthy. They who did and said what could please the people were 'populares,' but they who so carried themselves as to satisfy every best citizen, they were 'optimates.'" Cicero, in his definition, no doubt begs the question; but to do so was his object.

we feel that we are not justified in supposing that we can get his true character here. He was a creature of Cæsar's, and Cicero was able to say words as to Vatinius which he was unwilling to speak as to Cæsar and his doings. It must be added here that two years later Cicero pleaded for this very Vatinius, at the joint request of Cæsar and Pompey, when Vatinius on leaving the Prætorship was accused of corruption.

b. c. 56, ætat. 51.

The nature of the reward to which the aspiring oligarch of Rome always turned his eyes has been sufficiently explained. He looked to be the governor of a province. At this period of which we are speaking there was no reticence in the matter. Syria, or Macedonia, or Hispania had been the prize, or Sicily, or Sardinia. It was quite understood that an aspiring oligarch went through the dust and danger and expense of political life in order that at last he might fill his coffers with provincial plunder. There were various laws as to which these governments were allotted to the plunderers. Of these we need only allude to the *Leges Sempronix*, or laws proposed b. c. 123, by Caius Sempronius Gracchus, for the distribution of those provinces which were to be enjoyed by Proconsuls. There were prætorian provinces and consular provinces, though there was no law making it sure that any province should be either consular or prætorian. But the Senate, without the interference of the people and free from the Tribunes' veto, had the selection of provinces for the Consuls; whereas, for those intended for the Prætors, the people had

the right of voting and the Tribunes of the people had a right of putting a veto on the propositions made. Now, in this year there came before the Senate a discussion as to the fate of three Proconsuls – not as to the primary allocation of provinces to them, but on the question whether they should be continued in the government which they held. Piso was in Macedonia, where he was supposed to have disgraced himself and the Empire which he served. Gabinius was in Syria, where it was acknowledged that he had done good service, though his own personal character stood very low. Cæsar was lord in the two Gauls – that is, on both sides of the Alps, in Northern Italy, and in that portion of modern France along the Mediterranean which had been already colonized – and was also governor of Illyricum. He had already made it manifest to all men that the subjugation of a new empire was his object rather than provincial plunder. Whether we love the memory of Cæsar as of a great man who showed himself fit to rule the world, or turn away from him as from one who set his iron heel on the necks of men, and by doing so retarded for centuries the liberties of mankind, we have to admit that he rose by the light of his own genius altogether above the ambition of his contemporaries. If we prefer, as I do, the humanity of Cicero, we must confess to ourselves the supremacy of Cæsar, and acknowledge ourselves to belong to the beaten cause. "*Victrix causa Deis placuit; sed victa Catoni.*" In discussing the fate of these proconsular officials we feel now the absurdity of mixing together in the same debate the name of Piso and Gabinius

with that of Cæsar. Yet such was the subject in dispute when Cicero made his speech, *De Provinciis Consularibus*, as to the adjudication of the consular provinces.

There was a strong opinion among many Senators that Cæsar should be stopped in his career. I need not here investigate the motives, either great or little, on which this opinion was founded. There was hardly a Senator among them who would not have wished Cæsar to be put down, though there were many who did not dare declare their wishes. There were reasons for peculiar jealousy on the part of the Senate. Cisalpine Gaul had been voted for him by the intervention of the people, and especially by that of the Tribune Vatinius – to Cæsar who was *Consularis*, whose reward should have been an affair solely for the Senate. Then there had arisen a demand, a most unusual demand, for the other Gaul also. The giving of two provinces to one governor was altogether contrary to the practice of the State; but so was the permanent and acknowledged continuance of a conspiracy such as the *Triumvirate* unusual. Cæsar himself was very unusual. Then the Senate, feeling that the second province would certainly be obtained, and anxious to preserve some shred of their prerogative, themselves voted the *Farther Gaul*. As it must be done, let it at any rate be said that they had done it. But as they had sent Cæsar over the Alps so they could recall him, or try to recall him. Therefore, with the question as to *Piso* and *Gabinus*, which really meant nothing, came up this also as to Cæsar, which meant a great deal.

But Cæsar had already done great things in Gaul. He had defeated the Helvetians and driven Ariovistus out of the country. He had carried eight legions among the distant Belgæ, and had conquered the Nervii. In this very year he had built a huge fleet, and had destroyed the Veneti, a seafaring people on the coast of the present Brittany. The more powerful he showed himself to be, the more difficult it was to recall him; but also the more desirable in the eyes of many. In the first portion of his speech Cicero handles Piso and Gabinius with his usual invective. There was no considerable party desirous of renewing to them their governments, but Cicero always revelled in the pleasure of abusing them. He devotes by far the longer part of his oration to the merit of Cæsar.<sup>19</sup> As for recalling him, it would be irrational. Who had counted more enemies in Rome than Marius? but did they recall Marius when he was fighting for the Republic?<sup>20</sup> Hitherto the Republic had been forced to fear the Gauls. Rome had always been on the defence against them. Now it had been brought about by Cæsar that the limits of the world were the limits of the Roman Empire.<sup>21</sup> The conquest was not yet finished, but surely it should be left to him who had begun it so well. Even though Cæsar were to demand to return himself,

---

<sup>19</sup> Mommsen, lib. v., chap. viii., in one of his notes, says that this oration as to the provinces was the very "palinodia" respecting which Cicero wrote to Atticus. The subject discussed was no doubt the same. What authority the historian has found for his statement I do not know; but no writer is generally more correct.

<sup>20</sup> De Prov. Cons., ca. viii.

<sup>21</sup> Ca. xiii.

thinking that he had done enough for his own glory, it would be for the Senators to restrain him – for the Senate to bid him finish the work that he had in hand.<sup>22</sup> As for himself, continued Cicero, if Cæsar had been his enemy, what of that? Cæsar was not his enemy now. He had told the Senate what offers of employment Cæsar had made him. If he could not forget, yet he would forgive, former injuries.<sup>23</sup>

It is important for the reading of Cicero's character that we should trace the meaning of his utterances about Cæsar from this time up to the day on which Cæsar was killed – his utterances in public, and those which are found in his letters to Atticus and his brother. That there was much of pretence – of falsehood, if a hard word be necessary to suit the severity of those who judge the man hardly – is admitted. How he praised Pompey in public, dispraising him in private, at one and the same moment, has been declared. How he applied for praise, whether deserved or not, has been shown. In excuse, not in defence, of this I allege that the Romans of the day were habitually false after this fashion. The application to Luceius proves the habitual falseness not of Cicero only, but of Luceius also; and the private words written to Atticus, in opposition to the public words with which Atticus was well acquainted, prove the falseness also of Atticus. It was Roman; it was Italian; it was cosmopolitan; it was human. I only wish that it were possible to declare that it is no longer Italian,

---

<sup>22</sup> Ca. xiv.

<sup>23</sup> Ca. xviii.

no longer cosmopolitan, no longer human. To this day it is very difficult even for an honorable man to tell the whole truth in the varying circumstances of public life. The establishment of even a theory of truth, with all the advantages which have come to us from Christianity, has been so difficult, hitherto so imperfect, that we ought, I think, to consider well the circumstances before we stigmatize Cicero as specially false. To my reading he seems to have been specially true. When Cæsar won his way up to power, Cicero was courteous to him, flattered him, and, though, never subservient, yet was anxious to comply when compliance was possible. Nevertheless, we know well that the whole scheme of Cæsar's political life was opposed to the scheme entertained by Cicero. It was Cicero's desire to maintain as much as he could of the old form of oligarchical rule under which, as a constitution, the Roman Empire had been created. It was Cæsar's intention to sweep it all away. We can see that now; but Cicero could only see it in part. To his outlook the man had some sense of order, and had all the elements of greatness. He was better, at any rate, than a Verres, a Catiline, a Clodius, a Piso, or a Gabinius. If he thought that by flattery he could bring Cæsar somewhat round, there might be conceit in his so thinking, but there could be no treachery. In doing so he did not abandon his political *beau ideal*. If better times came, or a better man, he would use them. In the mean time he could do more by managing Cæsar than by opposing him. He was far enough from succeeding in the management of Cæsar, but he did do much in keeping his

party together. It was in this spirit that he advocated before the Senate the maintenance of Cæsar's authority in the two Gauls. The Senate decreed the withdrawal of Piso and Gabinius, but decided to leave Cæsar where he was. Mommsen deals very hardly with Cicero as to this period of his life. "They used him accordingly as – what he was good for – an advocate." "Cicero himself had to thank his literary reputation for the respectful treatment which he experienced from Cæsar." The question we have to ask ourselves is whether he did his best to forward that scheme of politics which he thought to be good for the Republic. To me it seems that he did do so. He certainly did nothing with the object of filling his own pockets. I doubt whether as much can be said with perfect truth as to any other Roman of the period, unless it be Cato.

Balbus, for whom Cicero also spoke in this year, was a Spaniard of Cadiz, to whom Pompey had given the citizenship of Rome, who had become one of Cæsar's servants and friends, and whose citizenship was now disputed. Cicero pleaded in favor of the claim, and gained his cause. There were, no doubt, certain laws in accordance with which Balbus was or was not a citizen; but Cicero here says that because Balbus was a good man, therefore there should be no question as to his citizenship.<sup>24</sup> This could hardly be a good legal argument. But we are glad to have the main principles of Roman citizenship laid down for us in this oration. A man cannot belong to more than one State at a time.

---

<sup>24</sup> Pro C. Balbo, ca. vii.

A man cannot be turned out of his State against his will. A man cannot be forced to remain in his State against his will.<sup>25</sup> This Balbus was acknowledged as a Roman, rose to be one of Cæsar's leading ministers, and was elected Consul of the Empire b. c. 40. Thirty-four years afterward his nephew became Consul. Nearly three centuries after that, a. d. 237, a descendant of Balbus was chosen as Emperor, under the name of Balbinus, and is spoken of by Gibbon with eulogy.<sup>26</sup>

I know no work on Cicero written more pleasantly, or inspired by a higher spirit of justice, than that of Gaston Boissier, of the French Academy, called *Cicéron et ses Amis*. Among his chapters one is devoted to Cicero's remarkable intimacy with Cælius, which should be read by all who wish to study Cicero. We have now come to the speech which he made in this year in defence of Cælius. Cælius had entered public life very early, as the son of a rich citizen who was anxious that his heir should be enabled to shine as well by his father's wealth as by his own intellect. When he was still a boy, according to our ideas of boyhood, he was apprenticed to Cicero,<sup>27</sup> as was customary, in order that he might pick up the crumbs which fell from the great man's table. It was thus that a young man would hear what was

---

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, ca. xiii.

<sup>26</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ca. vii.

<sup>27</sup> There was no covenant, no bond of service, no master's authority, probably no discipline; but the eager pupil was taught to look upon the anxious tutor with love, respect, and faith.

best worth hearing; thus he would become acquainted with those who were best worth knowing; thus that he would learn in public life all that was best worth learning. Cælius heard all, and knew many, and learned much; but he perhaps learned too much at too early an age. He became bright and clever, but unruly and dissipated. Cicero, however, loved him well. He always liked the society of bright young men, and could forgive their morals if their wit were good. Clodius – even Clodius, young Curio, Cælius and afterward Dolabella, were companions with whom he loved to associate. When he was in Cilicia, as Proconsul, this Cælius became almost a second Atticus to him, in the writing of news from Rome.

But Cælius had become one of Clodia's many lovers, and seems for a time to have been the first favorite, to the detriment of poor Catullus. The rich father had, it seems, quarrelled with his son, and Cælius was in want of money. He borrowed it from Clodia, and then, without paying his debt, treated Clodia as she had treated Catullus. The lady tried to get her money back, and when she failed she accused her former lover of an attempt to poison her. This she did so that Cælius was tried for the offence. There were no less than four accusers, or advocates, on her behalf, of whom her brother was one. Cælius was defended by Crassus as well as by Cicero, and was acquitted. All these cases combined political views with criminal charges. Cælius was declared to have been a Catilinian conspirator. He was also accused of being in debt, of having quarrelled with his father,

of having insulted women, of having beaten a Senator, of having practised bribery, of having committed various murders, and of having perpetrated all social and political excesses to which his enemies could give a name. It was probable that his life had been very irregular, but it was not probably true that he had attempted to poison Clodia.

The speech is very well worth the trouble of reading. It is lively, bright, picturesque, and argumentative; and it tells the reader very much of the manners of Rome at the time. It has been condemned for a passage which, to my taste, is the best in the whole piece. Cicero takes upon himself to palliate the pleasures of youth, and we are told that a man so grave, so pure, so excellent in his own life, should not have condescended to utter sentiments so lax in defence of so immoral a young friend. I will endeavor to translate a portion of the passage, and I think that any ladies who may read these pages will agree with me in liking Cicero the better for what he said upon the occasion. He has been speaking of the changes which the manners of the world had undergone, not only in Rome but in Greece, since pleasure had been acknowledged even by philosophers to be necessary to life. "They who advocate one constant course of continual labor as the road to fame are left alone in their schools, deserted by their scholars. Nature herself has begotten for us allurements, seduced by which Virtue herself will occasionally become drowsy. Nature herself leads the young into slippery paths, in which not to stumble now and again is hardly possible.

Nature has produced for us a variety of pleasures, to which not only youth, but even middle-age, occasionally yields itself. If, therefore, you shall find one who can avert his eyes from all that is beautiful – who is charmed by no sweet smell, by no soft touch, by no rich flavor – who can turn a deaf ear to coaxing words – I indeed, and perhaps a few others, may think that the gods have been good to such a one; but I doubt whether the world at large will not think that the gods have made him a sorry fellow." There is very much more of it, delightfully said, and in the same spirit; but I have given enough to show the nature of the excuse for Cælius which has brought down on Cicero the wrath of the moralists.

## Chapter II

### *CICERO, ÆTAT. 52, 53, 54*

b. c. 55, ætat. 52.

I can best continue my record of Cicero's life for this and the two subsequent years by following his speeches and his letters. It was at this period the main object of his political life to reconcile the existence of a Cæsar with that of a Republic – two poles which could not by any means be brought together. Outside of his political life he carried on his profession as an advocate with all his former energy, with all his former bitterness, with all his old friendly zeal, but never, I think, with his former utility. His life with his friends and his family was prosperous; but that ambition to do some great thing for his country which might make his name more famous than that of other Romans was gradually fading, and, as it went, was leaving regrets and remorse behind which would not allow him to be a happy man. But it was now, when he had reached his fifty-second year, that he in truth began that career in literature which has made him second to no Roman in reputation. There are some early rhetorical essays, which were taken from the Greek, of doubtful authenticity; there are the few lines which are preserved of his poetry; there are the speeches which he wrote as well as spoke for the Rome of the day; and there are his letters, which up to this time had been intended

only for his correspondents. All that we have from his pen up to this time has been preserved for us by the light of those great works which he now commenced. In this year, b. c. 55, there appeared the dialogue *De Oratore*, and in the next the treatise *De Republica*. It was his failure as a politician which in truth drove Cicero to the career of literature. As I intend to add to this second volume a few chapters as to his literary productions, I will only mention the dates on which these dialogues and treatises were given to the world as I go on with my work.

In the year b. c. 55, the two of the Triumvirate who had been left in Rome, Pompey and Crassus, were elected Consuls, and provinces were decreed to each of them for five years – to Pompey the two Spains, and to Crassus that Syria which was to be so fatal to him. All this had been arranged at Lucca, in the north of Italy, whither Cæsar was able to come as being within the bounds of his province, to meet his friends from Rome – or his enemies. All aristocratic Rome went out in crowds to Lucca, so that two hundred Senators might be seen together in the streets of that provincial town. It was nevertheless near enough to Rome to permit the conqueror from Gaul to look closely into the politics of the city. By his permission, if not at his instigation, Pompey and Crassus had been chosen Consuls, and to himself was conceded the government of his own province for five further years – that is, down to year b. c. 49 inclusive. It must now at least have become evident to Cicero that Cæsar intended to rule the Empire.

Though we already have Cicero's letters arranged for us in a chronological sequence which may be held to be fairly correct for biographical purposes, still there is much doubt remaining as to the exact periods at which many of them were written. Abeken, the German biographer, says that this year, b. c. 55, produced twelve letters. In the French edition of Cicero's works published by Panckoucke thirty-five are allotted to it. Mr. Watson, in his selected letters, has not taken one from the year in question. Mr. Tyrrell, who has been my Mentor hitherto in regard to the correspondence, has not, unfortunately, published the result of his labors beyond the year 53 b. c. at the time of my present writing. Some of those who have dealt with Cicero's life and works, and have illustrated them by his letters, have added something to the existing confusion by assuming an accuracy of knowledge in this respect which has not existed. We have no right to quarrel with them for having done so; certainly not with Middleton, as in his time such accuracy was less valued by readers than it is now; and we have the advantage of much light which, though still imperfect, is very bright in comparison with that enjoyed by him. A study of the letters, however, in the sequence now given to them affords an accurate picture of Cicero's mind during the years between the period of his return from exile b. c. 57 and Milo's trial b. c. 52, although the reader may occasionally be misled as to the date of this or the other letter.

With the dates of his speeches, at any rate with the year in

which they were made, we are better acquainted. They are of course much fewer in number, and are easily traced by the known historical circumstances of the time. b. c. 55, he made that attack upon his old enemy, the late Consul Piso, which is perhaps the most egregious piece of abuse extant in any language. Even of this we do not know the precise date, but we may be sure that it was spoken early in the year, because Cicero alludes in it to Pompey's great games which were in preparation, and which were exhibited when Pompey's new theatre was opened in May.<sup>28</sup> Plutarch tells us that they did not take place till the beginning of the following year.<sup>29</sup> Piso on his return from Macedonia attacked Cicero in the Senate in answer to all the hard things that had already been said of him, and Cicero, as Middleton says, "made a reply to him on the spot in an invective speech, the severest, perhaps, that ever was spoken by any man, on the person, the parts, the whole life and conduct of Piso, which as long as the Roman name subsists must deliver down a most detestable character of him to all posterity."

We are here asked to imagine that this attack was delivered

---

<sup>28</sup> In Pisonem, xxvii. Even in Cicero's words as used here there is a touch of irony, though we cannot but imagine that at this time he was anxious to stand well with Pompey. "There are coming on the games, the most costly and the most magnificent ever known in the memory of man; such as there never were before, and, as far as I can see, never will be again." "Show yourself there if you dare!" – he goes on to say, addressing the wretched Piso.

<sup>29</sup> Plutarch's Life of Pompey: "Crassus upon the expiration of his Consulship repaired to his province. Pompey, remaining in Rome, opened his theatre." But Plutarch, no doubt, was wrong.

on the spur of the moment in answer to Piso's attack. I cannot believe that it should have been so, however great may have been the orator's power over thoughts and words. We have had in our own days wonderful instances of ready and indignant reply made instantaneously, but none in which the angry eloquence has risen to such a power as is here displayed. We cannot but suppose that had human intellect ever been perfect enough for such an exertion, it would have soared high enough also to have abstained from it. It may have been that Cicero knew well enough beforehand what the day was about to produce, so as to have prepared his reply. It may well have been that he himself undertook the polishing of his speech before it was given to the public in the words which we now read. We may, I think, take it for granted that Piso did make an attack upon him, and that Cicero answered him at once with words which crushed him, and which are not unfairly represented by those which have come down to us.

The imaginative reader will lose himself in wonder as he pictures to himself the figure of the pretentious Proconsul, with his assumption of confidence, as he was undergoing the castigation which this great master of obloquy was inflicting upon him, and the figure of the tall, lean orator, with his long neck and keen eyes, with his arms trained to assist his voice, managing his purple bordered toga with a perfect grace, throwing all his heart into his impassioned words as they fell into the ears of the Senators around him without the loss of a syllable. This

Lucius Calpurnius Piso Cæsonius had come from one of the highest families in Rome, and had possessed interest enough to be elected Consul for the year in which Cicero was sent into banishment.<sup>30</sup> He was closely connected with that Piso Frugi to whom Cicero's daughter had been married; and Cicero, when he was threatened by the faction of Clodius – a faction which he did not then believe to be supported by the Triumvirate – had thought that he was made safe, at any rate, from cruel results by consular friendship and consular protection. Piso Cæsonius had failed him altogether, saying, in answer to Cicero's appeal, that the times were of such a nature that every one must look to himself. The nature of Cicero's rage may be easily conceived. An attempt to describe it has already been made. It was not till after his Consulate that he was ever waked to real anger, and the one object whom he most entirely hated with his whole soul was Lucius Piso.

By the strength of Cicero's eloquence this man has occupied an immortality of meanness. We cannot but believe that he must have in some sort deserved it, or the justice of the world would have vindicated his character. It should, however, be told of him that three years afterward he was chosen Censor, together with Appius Claudius. But it must also be told that, as far as we can judge, both these men were unworthy of the honor. They

---

<sup>30</sup> We may imagine what was the standing of the family from the address which Horace made to certain members of it in the time of Augustus. "Credite Pisones," *De Arte Poetica*. The Pisones so addressed were the grandsons of Cicero's victim.

were the last two Censors elected in Rome before the days of the Empire. It is impossible not to believe that Piso was vile, but impossible also to believe that he was as vile as Cicero represented him. Cæsar was at this time his son-in-law, as he was father to Calphurnia, with whom Shakspeare has made us familiar. I do not know that Cæsar took in bad part the hard things that were said of his father-in-law.

The first part of the speech is lost. The first words we know because they have been quoted by Quintilian, "Oh ye gods immortal, what day is this which has shone upon me at last?"<sup>31</sup> We may imagine from this that Cicero intended it to be understood that he exulted in the coming of his revenge. The following is a fair translation of the opening passage of what remains to us: "Beast that you are, do you not see, do you not perceive, how odious to the men around you is that face of yours?" Then with rapid words he heaps upon the unfortunate man accusations of personal incompetencies. Nobody complains, says Cicero, that that fellow of yesterday, Gabinius, should have been made Consul: we have not been deceived in him. "But your eyes and eyebrows, your forehead, that face of yours, which should be the dumb index of the mind within, have deceived those who have not known you. Few of us only have been aware of your infamous vices, the sloth of your

---

<sup>31</sup> Quin., ix., 4: "Pro dii immortales, quis hic illuxit dies!" The critic quotes it as being vicious in sound, and running into metre, which was considered a great fault in Roman prose, as it is also in English. Our ears, however, are hardly fine enough to catch the iambic twang of which Quintilian complains.

intellect, your dulness, your inability to speak. When was your voice heard in the Forum? when has your counsel been put to the proof? when did you do any service either in peace or war? You have crept into your high place by the mistakes of men, by the regard to the dirty images of your ancestors, to whom you have no resemblance except in their present grimy color. And shall he boast to me," says the orator, turning from Piso to the audience around, "that he has gone on without a check from one step in the magistracy to another? That is a boast for me to make, for me – "homini novo" – a man without ancestors, on whom the Roman people has showered all its honors. You were made Ædile, you say; the Roman people choose a Piso for their Ædile – not this man from any regard for himself, but because he is a Piso. The Prætorship was conferred not on you but on your ancestors who were known and who were dead! Of you, who are alive no one has known anything. But me – !" Then he continues the contrast between himself and Piso; for the speech is as full of his own merits as of the other man's abominations

So the oration goes on to the end. He asserts, addressing himself to Piso, that if he saw him and Gabinius crucified together, he did not know whether he would be most delighted by the punishment inflicted on their bodies or by the ruin of their reputation. He declares that he has prayed for all evil on Piso and Gabinius, and that the gods have heard him, but it has not been for death, or sickness, or for torment, that he had prayed, but for such evils as have in truth come upon them. Two Consuls

sent with large armies into two of the grandest provinces have returned with disgrace. That one – meaning Piso – has not dared even to send home an account of his doings; and the other – Gabinius – has not had his words credited by the Senate, nor any of his requests granted! He, Cicero, had hardly dared to hope for all this, but the gods had done it for him! The most absurd passage is that in which he tells Piso that, having lost his army – which he had done – he had brought back nothing in safety but that "old impudent face of his."<sup>32</sup> Altogether it is a tirade of abuse very inferior to Cicero's dignity. Le Clerc, the French critic and editor, speaks the truth when he says, "Il faut avouer qu'il manque surtout de modération, et que la gravité d'un orateur consulaire y fait trop souvent place à l'emportement d'un ennemi." It is, however, full of life, and amusing as an expression of honest hatred. The reader when reading it will of course remember that Roman manners allowed a mode of expression among the upper classes which is altogether denied to those among us who hope to be regarded as gentlemen.

The games in Pompey's theatre, to the preparation of which Cicero alludes in his speech against Piso, are described by him with his usual vivacity and humor in a letter written immediately after them to his friend Marius. Pompey's games, with which he celebrated his second Consulship, seem to have been divided between the magnificent theatre which he had just built – fragments of which still remain to us – and the "circus maximus."

---

<sup>32</sup> Ca. xviii., xx., xxii.

This letter from Cicero is very interesting, as showing the estimation in which these games were held, or were supposed to be held, by a Roman man of letters, and as giving us some description of what was done on the occasion. Marius had not come to Rome to see them, and Cicero writes as though his friend had despised them. Cicero himself, having been in Rome, had of course witnessed them. To have been in Rome and not to have seen them would have been quite out of the question. Not to come to Rome from a distance was an eccentricity. He congratulated Marius for not having come, whether it was that he was ill, or that the whole thing was too despicable: "You in the early morning have been looking out upon your view over the bay while we have been staring at puppets half asleep. Most costly games, but I should say – judging of you by myself – that they would have been quite revolting to you. Poor Æsopus was there acting, but so unfitted by age that all his friends could not but wish that he had desisted. Why should I tell you of it all? The very costliness of the affair took away all the pleasure. Six hundred mules on the stage in the acting of Clytemnestra, or three thousand golden goblets in The Trojan Horse – what delight could they give you? If your slave Protogenes was reading to you something – so that it were not one of my speeches – you were better off at any rate than we. There were two marvellous slaughterings of beasts which lasted for five days. Nobody denies but that they were very grand. But what pleasure can there be to a

man of letters<sup>33</sup> when some weak human creature is destroyed by a sturdy beast, or when some lonely animal is pierced through by a hunting-spear. The last day was the day of elephants, in which there could be no delight except to the vulgar crowd. You could not but pity them, feeling that the poor brutes had something in common with humanity." In these combats were killed twenty elephants and two hundred lions. The bad taste and systematical corruption of Rome had reached its acme when this theatre was opened and these games displayed by Pompey.

He tells Atticus,<sup>34</sup> in a letter written about this time, that he is obliged to write to him by the hand of a secretary; from which we gather that such had not been, at any rate, his practice. He is every day in the Forum, making speeches; and he had already composed the dialogues *De Oratore*, and had sent them to Lentulus. Though he was no longer in office, his time seems to have been as fully occupied as when he was Prætor or Consul.

We have records of at least a dozen speeches, made b. c. 55 and b. c. 54, between that against Piso and the next that is extant, which was delivered in defence of Plancius. He defended Cispus, but Cispus was convicted. He defended Caninius Gallus, of whom we may presume that he was condemned

---

<sup>33</sup> "Quæ potest homini esse politico delectatio," *Ad Div.*, vii., 1. These words have in subsequent years been employed as an argument against all out-of-door sports, with disregard of the fact that they were used by Cicero as to an amusement in which the spectators were merely looking on, taking no active part in deeds either of danger or of skill. —*Fortnightly Review*, October, 1869, The Morality of Field Sports.

<sup>34</sup> *Ad Att.*, lib. iv., 16.

and exiled, because Cicero found him at Athens on his way to Cilicia, Athens being the place to which exiled Roman oligarchs generally betook themselves.<sup>35</sup> In this letter to his young friend Cælius he speaks of the pleasure he had in meeting with Caninius at Athens; but in the letter to Marius which I have quoted he complains of the necessity which has befallen him of defending the man. The heat of the summer of this year he passed in the country, but on his return to the city in November he found Crassus defending his old enemy Gabinius. Gabinius had crept back from his province into the city, and had been received with universal scorn and a shower of accusations. Cicero at first neither accused nor defended him, but, having been called on as a witness, seems to have been unable to refrain from something of the severity with which he had treated Piso. There was at any rate a passage of arms in which Gabinius called him a banished criminal.<sup>36</sup> The Senate then rose as one body to do honor to their late exile. He was, however, afterward driven by the expostulations of Pompey to defend the man. At his first trial Gabinius was acquitted, but was convicted and banished when Cicero defended him. Cicero suffered very greatly in the constraint thus put upon him by Pompey, and refused Pompey till Cæsar's request was added. We can imagine that nothing was

---

<sup>35</sup> Ad Div., ii., 8.

<sup>36</sup> See the letter, Ad Quin. Frat., lib. iii., 2: "Homo undique actus, et quam a me maxime vulneraretur, non tulit, et me trementi voce exulem appellavit." The whole scene is described.

more bitter to him than the obligation thus forced upon him. We have nothing of the speech left, but can hardly believe that it was eloquent. From this, however, there rose a reconciliation between Crassus and Cicero, both Cæsar and Pompey having found it to their interest to interfere. As a result of this, early in the next year Cicero defended Crassus in the Senate, when an attempt was made to rob the late Consul of his coveted mission to Syria. Of what he did in this respect he boasts in a letter to Crassus,<sup>37</sup> which, regarded from our point of view, would no doubt be looked upon as base. He despised Crassus, and here takes credit for all the fine things he had said of him; but we have no right to think that Cicero could have been altogether unlike a Roman. He speaks also in the Senate on behalf of the people of Tenedos, who had brought their immunities and privileges into question by some supposed want of faith. All we know of this speech is that it was spoken in vain. He pleaded against an Asiatic king, Antiochus of Comagene, who was befriended by Pompey, but Cicero seems to have laughed him out of some of his petty possessions.<sup>38</sup> He spoke for the inhabitants of Reate on some question of water-privilege against the Interamnates. Interamna we now know as Terne, where a modern Pope made a lovely water-fall, and at the same time rectified the water-privileges of the surrounding district. Cicero went down to its pleasant Tempe,

---

<sup>37</sup> Ad Fam., v., 8.

<sup>38</sup> Ad Quin. Frat., ii., 12.

as he calls it, and stayed there awhile with one Axius.<sup>39</sup> He returned thence to Rome to undertake some case for Fonteius, and attended the games which Milo was giving, Milo having been elected *Ædile*. Here we have a morsel of dramatic criticism on Antiphon the actor and Arbuscula the actress, which reminds one of Pepys. Then he defended Messius, then Drusus, then Scaurus. He mentions all these cases in the same letter, but so slightly that we cannot trouble ourselves with their details. We only feel that he was kept as busy as a London barrister in full practice. He also defended Vatinius – that Vatinius with whose iniquities he had been so indignant at the trial of Sextius. He defended him twice at the instigation of Cæsar; and he does not seem to have suffered in doing so, as he had certainly done when called upon to stand up and plead for his late consular enemy, Gabinius. Valerius Maximus, a dull author, often quoted but seldom read, whose task it was to give instances of all the virtues and vices produced by mankind, refers to these pleadings for Gabinius and Vatinius as instances of an almost divine forgiveness of injury.<sup>40</sup> I think we must seek for the good, if good is to be discovered in the proceeding, in the presumed strength which might be added to the Republic by friendly relations between himself and Cæsar.

b. c. 54, ætat. 53.

In the spring of the year we find Cicero writing to Cæsar in apparently great intimacy. He recommends to Cæsar his young

---

<sup>39</sup> Ad Att., iv., 15.

<sup>40</sup> Val. Max., lib. iv., ca. ii., 4.

friend Trebatius, a lawyer, who was going to Gaul in search of his fortune, and in doing so he refers to a joking promise from Cæsar that he would make another friend, whom he had recommended, King of Gaul; or, if not that, foreman at least to Lepta, his head of the mechanics. Lepta was an officer in trust under Cæsar, with whose name we become familiar in Cicero's correspondence, though I do not remember that Cæsar ever mentions him. "Send me some one else that I may show my friendship," Cæsar had said, knowing well that Cicero was worth any price of the kind. Cicero declares to Cæsar that on hearing this he held up his hands in grateful surprise, and on this account he had sent Trebatius. "Mi Cæsar," he says, writing with all affection; and then he praises Trebatius, assuring Cæsar that he does not recommend the young man loosely, as he had some other young men who were worthless – such as Milo, for instance. This results in much good done to Trebatius, though the young man at first does not like the service with the army. He is a lawyer, and finds the work in Gaul very rough. Cicero, who is anxious on his behalf, laughs at him and bids him take the good things that come in his way. In subsequent years Trebatius was made known to the world as the legal pundit whom Horace pretends to consult as to the libellous nature of his satires.<sup>41</sup>

In September of this year Cicero pleaded in court for

---

<sup>41</sup> Horace, Sat., lib. ii., 1:Hor. "Trebati, Quid faciam præscribe." – Treb. "Quiescas." – Hor. "Ne faciam, inquis, Omnino versus?" – Treb. "Aio." – Hor. "Peream male si non Optimum erat." Trebatius became a noted jurisconsult in the time of Augustus, and wrote treatises.

his friend Cn. Plancius, against whom there was brought an accusation that, in canvassing and obtaining the office of Ædile, he had been guilty of bribery. In all these accusations, which come before us as having been either promoted or opposed by Cicero, there is not one in which the reader sympathizes more strongly with the person accused than in this. Plancius had shown Cicero during his banishment the affection of a brother, or almost of a son. Plancius had taken him in and provided for him in Macedonia, when to do so was illegal. Cicero now took great delight in returning the favor. The reader of this oration cannot learn from it that Plancius had in truth done anything illegal. The complaint really made against him was that he, filling the comparatively humble position of a knight, had ventured to become the opposing candidate of such a gallant young aristocrat as M. Juventius Laterensis, who was beaten at this election, and now brought this action in revenge. There is no tearing of any enemy to tatters in this oration, but there is much pathos, and, as was usual with Cicero at this period of his life, an inordinate amount of self-praise. There are many details as to the way in which the tribes voted at elections, which the patient and curious student will find instructive, but which will probably be caviare to all who are not patient and curious students. There are a few passages of peculiar force. Addressing himself to the rival of Plancius, he tells Laterensis that, even though the people might have judged badly in selecting Plancius, it was not the less his

duty to accept the judgment of the people.<sup>42</sup> Say that the people ought not to have done so; but it should have been sufficient for him that they had done so. Then he laughs with a beautiful irony at the pretensions of the accuser. "Let us suppose that it was so," he says.<sup>43</sup> "Let no one whose family has not soared above prætorian honors contest any place with one of consular family. Let no mere knight stand against one with prætorian relations." In such a case there would be no need of the people to vote at all. Farther on he gives his own views as to the honors of the State in language that is very grand. "It has," he says, "been my first endeavor to deserve the high rank of the State; my second, to have been thought to deserve it. The rank itself has been but the third object of my desires."<sup>44</sup> Plancius was acquitted – it seems to us quite as a matter of course.

In this perhaps the most difficult period of his existence, when the organized conspiracy of the day had not as yet overturned the landmarks of the constitution, he wrote a long letter to his friend Lentulus,<sup>45</sup> him who had been prominent as Consul in rescuing him from his exile, and who was now Proconsul in Cilicia. Lentulus had probably taxed him, after some friendly fashion, with going over from the "optimates" or Senatorial party

---

<sup>42</sup> Ca. iv.: "Male judicavit populus. At judicavit. Non debuit, at potuit."

<sup>43</sup> Ca. vi.: "Servare necesse est gradus. Cedat consulari generi prætorium, nec contendat cum prætorio equester locus."

<sup>44</sup> Ca. xix.

<sup>45</sup> Ad Fam., i., 9.

to that of the conspirators Pompey, Cæsar, and Crassus. He had been called a deserter for having passed in his earlier years from the popular party to that of the Senate, and now the leading optimates were doubtful of him – whether he was not showing himself too well inclined to do the bidding of the democratic leaders. The one accusation has been as unfair as the other. In this letter he reminds Lentulus that a captain in making a port cannot always sail thither in a straight line, but must tack and haul and use a slant of wind as he can get it. Cicero was always struggling to make way against a head-wind, and was running hither and thither in his attempt, in a manner most perplexing to those who were looking on without knowing the nature of the winds; but his port was always there, clearly visible to him, if he could only reach it. That port was the Old Republic, with its well-worn and once successful institutions. It was not to be "fetched." The winds had become too perverse, and the entrance had become choked with sand. But he did his best to fetch it; and, though he was driven hither and thither in his endeavors, it should be remembered that to lookers-on such must ever be the appearance of those who are forced to tack about in search of their port.

I have before me Mr. Forsyth's elaborate and very accurate account of this letter. "Now, however," says the biographer, "the future lay dark before him; and not the most sagacious politician at Rome could have divined the series of events – blundering weakness on the one side and unscrupulous ambition on the other

– which led to the Dictatorship of Cæsar and the overthrow of the constitution." Nothing can be more true. Cicero was probably the most sagacious politician in Rome; and he, though he did understand much of the weakness – and, it should be added, of the greed – of his own party, did not foresee the point which Cæsar was destined to reach, and which was now probably fixed before Cæsar's own eyes. But I cannot agree with Mr. Forsyth in the result at which he had arrived when he quoted a passage from one of the notes affixed by Melmoth to his translation of this letter: "It was fear alone that determined his resolution; and having once already suffered in the cause of liberty, he did not find himself to be disposed to be twice its martyr." I should not have thought these words worthy of refutation had they not been backed by Mr. Forsyth. How did Cicero show his fear? Had he feared – as indeed there was cause enough, when it was difficult for a leading man to keep his throat uncut amid the violence of the times, or a house over his head – might he not have made himself safe by accepting Cæsar's offers? A Proconsul out of Rome was safe enough, but he would not be a Proconsul out of Rome till he could avoid it no longer. When the day of danger came, he joined Pompey's army against Cæsar, doubting, not for his life but for his character, as to what might be the best for the Republic. He did not fear when Cæsar was dead and only Antony remained. When the hour came in which his throat had to be cut, he did not fear. When a man has shown such a power of action in the face of danger as Cicero displayed at forty-four in

his Consulship, and again at sixty-four in his prolonged struggle with Antony, it is contrary to nature that he should have been a coward at fifty-four.

And all the evidence of the period is opposed to this theory of cowardice. There was nothing special for him to fear when Cæsar was in Gaul, and Crassus about to start for Syria, and Pompey for his provinces. Such was the condition of Rome, social and political, that all was uncertain and all was dangerous. But men had become used to danger, and were anxious only, in the general scramble, to get what plunder might be going. Unlimited plunder was at Cicero's command – provinces, magistracies, abnormal lieutenancies – but he took nothing. He even told his friend in joke that he would have liked to be an augur, and the critics have thereupon concluded that he was ready to sell his country for a trifle. But he took nothing when all others were helping themselves.

The letter to Lentulus is well worth studying, if only as evidence of the thoughtfulness with which he weighed every point affecting his own character. He did wish to stand well with the "optimates," of whom Lentulus was one. He did wish to stand well with Cæsar, and with Pompey, who at this time was Cæsar's jackal. He did find the difficulty of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. He must have surely learned at last to hate all compromise. But he had fallen on hard times, and the task before him was impossible. If, however, his hands were clean when those of others were dirty, and his motives patriotic while

those of others were selfish, so much ought to be said for him.

In the same year he defended Rabirius Postumus, and in doing so carried on the purpose which he had been instigated to undertake by Cæsar in defending Gabinius. This Rabirius was the nephew of him whom ten years before Cicero had defended when accused of having killed Saturninus. He was a knight, and, as was customary with the Equites, had long been engaged in the pursuit of trade, making money by lending money, and such like. He had, it seems, been a successful man, but, in an evil time for himself, had come across King Ptolemy Auletes when there was a question of restoring that wretched sovereign to the throne of Egypt. As Cicero was not himself much exercised in this matter, I have not referred to the king and his affairs, wishing as far as possible to avoid questions which concern the history of Rome rather than the life of Cicero; but the affairs of this banished king continually come up in the records of this time. Pompey had befriended Auletes, and Gabinius, when Proconsul in Syria, had succeeded in restoring the king to his throne – no doubt in obedience to Pompey, though not in obedience to the Senate. Auletes, when in Rome, had required large sums of money – suppliant kings when in the city needed money to buy venal Senators – and Rabirius had supplied him. The profits to be made from suppliant kings when in want of money were generally very great, but this king seems so have got hold of all the money which Rabirius possessed, so that the knight-banker found himself obliged to become one of the king's suite when

the king went back to take possession of his kingdom. In no other way could he hang on to the vast debt that was owing to him. In Egypt he found himself compelled to undergo various indignities. He became no better than a head-servant among the king's servants. One of the charges brought against him was that he, a Roman knight, had allowed himself to be clothed in the half-feminine garb of an Oriental attendant upon a king. It was also brought against him as part of the accusation that he had bribed, or had endeavored to bribe, a certain Senator. The crime nominally laid to the charge of Rabirius was "de repetundis" – for extorting money in the position of a magistrate. The money alluded to had been, in truth, extorted by Gabinius from Ptolemy Auletes as the price paid for his restoration, and had come in great part probably from out of the pocket of Rabirius himself. Gabinius had been condemned, and ordered to repay the money. He had none to repay, and the claim, by some clause in the law to that effect was transferred to Rabirius as his agent. Rabirius was accused as though he had extorted the money – which he had in fact lost, but the spirit of the accusation lay in the idea that he, a Roman knight, had basely subjected himself to an Egyptian king. That Rabirius had been base and sordid there can be no doubt. That he was ruined by his transaction with Auletes is equally certain. It is supposed that he was convicted. He was afterward employed by Cæsar, who, when in power, may have recalled him from banishment. There are many passages in the oration to which I would fain refer the reader had I space to do

so. I will name only one in which Cicero endeavors to ingratiate himself with his audience by referring to the old established Roman hatred of kings: "Who is there among us who, though he may not have tried them himself, does not know the ways of kings? 'Listen to me here!' 'Obey my word at once!' 'Speak a word more than you are told, and you'll see what you'll get!' 'Do that a second time, and you die!' We should read of such things and look at them from a distance, not only for our pleasure, but that we may know of what we have to be aware, and what we ought to avoid."<sup>46</sup>

There is a letter written in this year to Curio, another young friend such as Cælius, of whom I have spoken. Curio also was clever, dissipated, extravagant, and unscrupulous. But at this period of his life he was attached to Cicero, who was not indifferent to the services which might accrue to him from friends who might be violent and unscrupulous on the right side.

b. c. 53, ætat. 54.

This letter was written to secure Curio's services for another friend not quite so young, but equally attached, and perhaps of all the Romans of the time the most unscrupulous and the most violent. This friend was Milo, who was about to stand for the Consulship of the following year. Curio was on his road from Asia Minor, where he had been Quæstor, and is invited by Cicero in language peculiarly pressing to be the leader of Milo's party

---

<sup>46</sup> Ca. xi.

on the occasion.<sup>47</sup> We cannot but imagine that the winds which Curio was called upon to govern were the tornadoes and squalls which were to be made to rage in the streets of Rome to the great discomfiture of Milo's enemies during his canvass. To such a state had Rome come, that for the first six months of this year there were no Consuls, an election being found to be impossible. Milo had been the great opponent of Clodius in the city rows which had taken place previous to the exile of Cicero. The two men are called by Mommsen the Achilles and the Hector of the streets.<sup>48</sup> Cicero was of course on Milo's side, as Milo was an enemy to Clodius. In this matter his feeling was so strong that he declares to Curio that he does not think that the welfare and fortunes of one man were ever so dear to another as now were those of Milo to him. Milo's success is the only object of interest he has in the world. This is interesting to us now as a prelude to the great trial which was to take place in the next year, when Milo, instead of being elected Consul, was convicted of murder.

In the two previous years Cæsar had made two invasions into Britain, in the latter of which Quintus Cicero had accompanied him. Cicero in various letters alludes to this undertaking, but barely gives it the importance which we, as Britons, think should have been attached to so tremendous an enterprise. There might

---

<sup>47</sup> Ad Fam., lib. ii., 6: "Dux nobis et auctor opus est et eorum ventorum quos proposui moderator quidem et quasi gubernator."

<sup>48</sup> Mommsen, book v., chap. viii. According to the historian, Clodius was the Achilles, and Milo the Hector. In this quarrel Hector killed Achilles.

perhaps be some danger, he thought, in crossing the seas, and encountering the rocky shores of the island, but there was nothing to be got worth the getting. He tells Atticus that he can hardly expect any slaves skilled either in music or letters,<sup>49</sup> and he suggests to Trebatius that, as he will certainly find neither gold nor slaves, he had better put himself into a British chariot and come back in it as soon as possible.<sup>50</sup> In this year Cæsar reduced the remaining tribes of Gaul, and crossed the Rhine a second time. It was his sixth year in Gaul, and men had learned to know what was his nature. Cicero had discovered his greatness, as also Pompey must have done, to his great dismay; and he had himself discovered what he was himself; but two accidents occurred in this year which were perhaps as important in Roman history as the continuance of Cæsar's success. Julia, Cæsar's daughter and Pompey's wife, died in childbed. She seems to have been loved by all, and had been idolized from the time of the marriage by her uxorious husband, who was more than twenty-four years her senior. She certainly had been a strong bond of union between Cæsar and Pompey; so much so that we are surprised that such a feeling should have been so powerful among the Romans of the time. "Concordiæ pignus," a "pledge of friendship," she is called by Paterculus, who tells us in the same sentence that the Triumvirate had no other bond to hold it together.<sup>51</sup> Whether the

---

<sup>49</sup> Ad Att., lib. iv., 16.

<sup>50</sup> Ad Fam., lib. vii., 7.

<sup>51</sup> Vell. Pat., ii., 47.

friendship might have remained valid had Julia lived we cannot say; but she died, and the two friends became enemies. From the moment of Julia's death there was no Triumvirate.

The other accident was equally fatal to the bond of union which had bound the three men together. Late in the year, after his Consulship, b. c. 54, Crassus had gone to his Syrian government with the double intention of increasing his wealth and rivalling the military glories of Cæsar and Pompey. In the following year he became an easy victim to Eastern deceit, and was destroyed by the Parthians, with his son and the greater part of the Roman army which had been intrusted to him.<sup>52</sup> We are told that Crassus at last destroyed himself. I doubt, however, whether there was enough of patriotism alive among Romans at the time to create the feeling which so great a loss and so great a shame should have occasioned. As far as we can learn, the destruction of Crassus and his legions did not occasion so much thought in Rome as the breaking up of the Triumvirate.

Cicero's daughter Tullia was now a second time without a husband. She was the widow of her first husband Piso; had then, b. c. 56, married Crassipes, and had been divorced. Of him we have heard nothing, except that he was divorced. A doubt has been thrown on the fact whether she was in truth ever married

---

<sup>52</sup> We remember the scorn with which Horace has treated the Roman soldier whom he supposes to have consented to accept both his life and a spouse from the Parthian conqueror: *Milesne Crassi conjugē barbarā Turpis maritus vixit?* – Ode iii., 5. It has been calculated that of 40,000 legionaries half were killed, 10,000 returned to Syria, and that 10,000 settled themselves in the country we now know as Merv.

to Crassipes. We learn from letters, both to his brother and to Atticus, that Cicero was contented with the match, when it was made, and did his best to give the lady a rich dowry.<sup>53</sup>

In this year Cicero was elected into the College of Augurs, to fill the vacancy made by the death of young Crassus, who had been killed with his father in Parthia. The reader will remember that he had in a joking manner expressed a desire for the office. He now obtained it without any difficulty, and certainly without any sacrifice of his principle. It had formerly been the privilege of the augurs to fill up the vacancies in their own college, but the right had been transferred to the people. It was now conferred upon Cicero without serious opposition.

---

<sup>53</sup> Ad Quin. Frat., lib. ii., 4, and Ad Att., lib. iv., 5.

# Chapter III

## *MILIO*

b. c. 52, ætat. 55.

The preceding year came to an end without any consular election. It was for the election expected to have taken place that the services of Curio had been so ardently bespoken by Cicero on behalf of Milo. In order to impede the election Clodius accused Milo of being in debt, and Cicero defended him. What was the nature of the accusation we do not exactly know. "An inquiry into Milo's debts!" Such was the name given to the pleadings as found with the fragments which have come to us.<sup>54</sup> In these, which are short and not specially interesting, there is hardly a word as to Milo's debts; but much abuse of Clodius, with some praise of Cicero himself, and some praise also of Pompey, who was so soon to take up arms against Cicero, not metaphorically, but in grim reality of sword and buckler, in this matter of his further defence of Milo. We cannot believe that Milo's debts stood in the way of his election, but we know that at last he was not elected. Early in the year Clodius was killed, and then, at the suggestion of Bibulus – whom the reader will remember as the colleague of Cæsar in the Consulship when Cæsar reduced his colleague to ridiculous impotence by his violence – Pompey was elected

---

<sup>54</sup> "Interrogatio de ære alieno Milonis."

as sole Consul, an honor which befell no other Roman.<sup>55</sup> The condition of Rome must have been very low when such a one as Bibulus thought that no order was possible except by putting absolute power into the hands of him who had so lately been the partner of Cæsar in the conspiracy which had not even yet been altogether brought to an end. That Bibulus acted under constraint is no doubt true. It would be of little matter now from what cause he acted, were it not that his having taken a part in this utter disruption of the Roman form of government is one proof the more that there was no longer any hope for the Republic.

But the story of the killing of Clodius must be told at some length, because it affords the best-drawn picture that we can get of the sort of violence with which Roman affairs had to be managed; and also because it gave rise to one of the choicest morsels of forensic eloquence that have ever been prepared by the intellect and skill of an advocate. It is well known that the speech to which I refer was not spoken, and could not have been spoken, in the form in which it has reached us. We do not know what part of it was spoken and what was omitted; but we do know that the *Pro Milone* exists for us, and that it lives among the glories of language as a published oration. I find, on looking through the *Institutio Oratoria* of Quintilian, that in his estimation the *Pro Milone* was the first in favor of all our author's orations – "*facile princeps*," if we may collect the critic's ideas on the subject from the number of references made and examples

---

<sup>55</sup> Livy, *Epitome*, 107: "*Absens et solus quod nulli alii umquam contigit.*"

taken. Quintilian's work consists of lessons on oratory, which he supports by quotations from the great orators, both Greek and Latin, with whose speeches he has made himself familiar. Cicero was to him the chief of orators; so much so that we may almost say that Quintilian's *Institutio* is rather a lecture in honor of Cicero than a general lesson. With the Roman school-master's method of teaching for the benefit of the Roman youth of the day we have no concern at present, but we can gather from the references made by him the estimation in which various orations were held by others, as well as by him, in his day. The *Pro Cluentio*, which is twice as long as the *Pro Milone*, and which has never, I think, been a favorite with modern readers, is quoted very frequently by Quintilian. It is the second in the list. Quintilian makes eighteen references to it; but the *Pro Milone* is brought to the reader's notice thirty-seven times. Quintilian was certainly a good critic; and he understood how to recommend himself to his own followers by quoting excellences which had already been acknowledged as the best which Roman literature had afforded.

Those who have gone before me in writing the life of Cicero have, in telling their story as to Milo, very properly gone to Asconius for their details. As I must do so too, I shall probably not diverge far from them. Asconius wrote as early as in the reign of Claudius, and had in his possession the annals of the time which have not come to us. Among other writings he could refer to those books of Livy which have since been lost. He seems to

have done his work as commentator with no glow of affection and with no touch of animosity, either on one side or on the other. There can be no reason for doubting the impartiality of Asconius as to Milo's trial, and every reason for trusting his knowledge of the facts.

b. c. 52, ætat. 55.

When the year began, no Consuls had been chosen, and an interrex became necessary – one interrex after another – to make the election of Consuls possible in accordance with the forms of the constitution. These men remained in office each for five days, and it was customary that an election which had been delayed should be completed within the days of the second or third interrex. There were three candidates, Milo, Hypsæus, and Q. Metellus Scipio, by all of whom bribery and violence were used with open and unblushing profligacy. Cicero was wedded to Milo's cause, as we have seen from his letter to Curio, but it does not appear that he himself took any active part in the canvass. The duties to be done required rather the services of a Curio. Pompey, on the other hand, was nearly as warmly engaged in favor of Hypsæus and Scipio, though in the turn which affairs took he seems to have been willing enough to accept the office himself when it came in his way. Milo and Clodius had often fought in the streets of Rome, each ruffian attended by a band of armed combatants, so that in audacity, as Asconius says, they were equal.

On the 20th of January Milo was returning to Rome from

Lanuvium, where he had been engaged, as chief magistrate of the town, in nominating a friend for the municipality. He was in a carriage with his wife Fausta, and with a friend, and was followed, as was his wont, by a large band of armed men, among whom were two noted gladiators, Eudamus and Birria. At Bovillæ, near the temple of the Bona Dea, his cortege was met by Clodius on horseback, who had with him some friends, and thirty slaves armed with swords. Milo's attendants were nearly ten times as numerous. It is not supposed by Asconius that either of the two men expected the meeting, which may be presumed to have been fortuitous. Milo and Clodius passed each other without words or blows – scowling, no doubt; but the two gladiators who were at the end of the file of Milo's men began to quarrel with certain of the followers of Clodius. Clodius interfered, and was stabbed in the shoulder by Birria; then he was carried to a neighboring tavern while the fight was in progress. Milo, having heard that his enemy was there concealed – thinking that he would be greatly relieved in his career by the death of such a foe, and that the risk should be run though the consequences might be grave – caused Clodius to be dragged out from the tavern and slaughtered. On what grounds Asconius has attributed these probable thoughts to Milo we do not know. That the order was given the jury believed, or at any rate affected to believe.

Up to this moment Milo was no more guilty than Clodius, and neither of them, probably, guilty of more than their usual violence. Partisans on the two sides endeavored to show that each

had prepared an ambush for the other, but there is no evidence that it was so. There is no evidence existing now as to this dragging out of Clodius that he might be murdered; but we know what was the general opinion of Rome at the time and we may conclude that it was right. The order probably was given by Milo – as it would have been given by Clodius in similar circumstances – at the spur of the moment, when Milo allowed his passion to get the better of his judgment.

The thirty servants of Clodius were either killed or had run away and hidden themselves, when a certain Senator, S. Tedi-  
us, coming that way, found the dead body on the road, and carrying it into the city on a litter deposited it in the dead man's house. Before nightfall the death of Clodius was known through the city, and the body was surrounded by a crowd of citizens of the lower order and of slaves. With them was Fulvia, the widow, exposing the dead man's wounds and exciting the people to sympathy. On the morrow there was an increased crowd, among whom were Senators and Tribunes, and the body was carried out into the Forum, and the people were harangued by the Tribunes as to the horror of the deed that had been done. From thence the body was borne into the neighboring Senate-house<sup>56</sup> by the crowd, under the leading of Sextus Clodius, a cousin of the dead man. Here it was burnt with a great fire fed with the desks and benches, and even with the books and archives which were stored there. Not only was the Senate-house destroyed by the flames, but a temple

---

<sup>56</sup> The Curia Hostilia, in which the Senate sat frequently, though by no means always.

also that was close to it. Milo's house was attacked, and was defended by arms. We are made to understand that all Rome was in a state of violence and anarchy. The Consuls' fasces had been put away in one of the temples – that of Venus Libitina: these the people seized and carried to the house of Pompey, declaring that he should be Dictator, and he alone Consul, mingling anarchy with a marvellous reverence for legal forms.

But there arose in the city a feeling of great anger at the burning of the Senate-house, which for a while seemed to extinguish the sympathy for Clodius, so that Milo, who was supposed to have taken himself off, came back to Rome and renewed his canvass, distributing bribes to all the citizens – "millia assuum" – perhaps something over ten pounds to every man. Both he and Cælius harangued the people, and declared that Clodius had begun the fray. But no Consuls could be elected while the city was in such a state, and Pompey, having been desired to protect the Republic in the usual form, collected troops from all Italy. Preparations were made for trying Milo, and the friends of each party demanded that the slaves of the other party should be put to the torture and examined as witnesses; but every possible impediment and legal quibble was used by the advocates on either side. Hortensius, who was engaged for Milo, declared that Milo's slaves had all been made free men and could not be touched. Stories were told backward and forward of the cruelty and violence on each side. Milo made an offer to Pompey to abandon his canvass in favor of Hypsæus, if Pompey

would accept this as a compromise. Pompey answered, with the assumed dignity that was common to him, that he was not the Roman people, and that it was not for him to interfere.

It was then that Pompey was created sole Consul at the instigation of Bibulus. He immediately caused a new law to be passed for the management of the trial which was coming on, and when he was opposed in this by Cælius, declared that if necessary he would carry his purpose by force of arms. Pretending to be afraid of Milo's violence, he remained at home, and on one occasion dismissed the Senate. Afterward, when Milo entered the Senate, he was accused by a Senator present of having come thither with arms hidden beneath his toga; whereupon he lifted his toga and showed that there were none. Asconius tells us that upon this Cicero declared that all the other charges made against the accused were equally false. This is the first word of Cicero's known to us in the matter.

Two or three men declared that because they had been present at the death of Clodius they had been kidnapped and kept close prisoners by Milo; and the story, whether true or false, did Milo much harm. It seems that Milo became again very odious to the people, and that their hatred was for the time extended to Cicero as Milo's friend and proposed advocate. Pompey seems to have shared the feeling, and to have declared that violence was contemplated against himself. "But such was Cicero's constancy," says Asconius, "that neither the alienation of the people nor the suspicions of Pompey, no fear of what

might befall himself at the trial, no dread of the arms which were used openly against Milo, could hinder him from going on with the defence, although it was within his power to avoid the quarrel with the people and to renew his friendship for Pompey by abstaining from it." Domitius Ænobarbus was chosen as President, and the others elected as judges were, we are told, equally good men. Milo was accused both of violence and bribery, but was able to arrange that the former case should be tried first. The method of the trial is explained. Fifty-one judges or jurymen were at last chosen. Schola was the first witness examined, and he exaggerated as best he could the horror of the murder. When Marcellus, as advocate for Milo, began to examine Schola, the people were so violent that the President was forced to protect Marcellus by taking him within the barrier of the judges' seats. Milo also was obliged to demand protection within the court. Pompey, then sitting at the Treasury, and frightened by the clamor, declared that he himself would come down with troops on the next day. After the hearing of the evidence the Tribune Munatius Plancus harangued the people, and begged them to come in great numbers on the morrow so that Milo might not be allowed to escape. On the following day, which was the 11th of April, all the taverns were shut. Pompey filled the Forum and every approach to it with his soldiers. He himself remained seated at the Treasury as before, surrounded by a picked body of men. At the trial on this day, when three of the advocates against Milo had spoken – Appius, Marc Antony, and

Valerius Nepos – Cicero stood up to defend the criminal. Brutus had prepared an oration declaring that the killing of Clodius was in itself a good deed, and praiseworthy on behalf of the Republic; but to this speech Cicero refused his consent, arguing that a man could not legally be killed simply because his death was to be desired, and Brutus's speech was not spoken. Witnesses had declared that Milo had lain in wait for Clodius. This Cicero alleged to be false, contending that Clodius had lain in wait for Milo, and he endeavored to make this point and no other. "But it is proved," says Asconius, "that neither of the men had any design of violence on that day; that they met by chance, and that the killing of Clodius had come from the quarrelling of the slaves. It was well known that each had often threatened the death of the other. Milo's slaves had no doubt been much more numerous than those of Clodius when the meeting took place; but those of Clodius had been very much better prepared for fighting. When Cicero began to address the judges, the partisans of Clodius could not be induced to abstain from riot even by fear of the soldiery; so that he was unable to speak with his accustomed firmness."

Such is the account as given by Asconius, who goes on to tell us that out of the fifty-one judges thirty-eight condemned Milo and only thirteen were for acquitting him. Milo, therefore, was condemned, and had to retire at once into exile at Marseilles.

It seems to have been acknowledged by the judges that Clodius had not been wounded at first by any connivance on

the part of Milo; but they thought that Milo did direct that Clodius should be killed during the fight which the slaves had commenced among themselves. As far as we can take any interest in the matter we must suppose that it was so; but we are forced to agree with Brutus that the killing of Clodius was in itself a good deed done – and we have to acknowledge at the same time that the killing of Milo would have been as good. Though we may doubt as to the manner in which Clodius was killed, there are points in the matter as to which we may be quite assured. Milo was condemned, not for killing Clodius, but because he was opposed at the moment to the line of politics which Pompey thought would be most conducive to his own interests. Milo was condemned, and the death of the wretched Clodius avenged, because Pompey had desired Hypsæus to be Consul and Milo had dared to stand in his way. An audience was refused to Cicero, not from any sympathy with Clodius, but because it suited Pompey that Milo should be condemned. Could Cicero have spoken the words which afterward were published, the jury might have hesitated and the criminal might have been acquitted. Cæsar was absent, and Pompey found himself again lifted into supreme power – for a moment. Though no one in Rome had insulted Pompey as Clodius had done, though no one had so fought for Pompey as Cicero had done, still it suited Pompey to avenge Clodius and to punish Cicero for having taken Milo's part in regard to the consulship. Milo, after his condemnation for the death of Clodius, was condemned in three subsequent trials,

one following the other almost instantly, for bribery, for secret conspiracy, and again for violence in the city. He was absent, but there was no difficulty in obtaining his conviction. When he was gone one Saufeius, a friend of his, who had been with him during the tumult, was put upon his trial for his share in the death of Clodius. He at any rate was known to have been guilty in the matter. He had been leader of the party who attacked the tavern, had killed the tavern-keeper, and had dragged out Clodius to execution. But Saufeius was twice acquitted. Had there been any hope of law-abiding tranquillity in Rome, it might have been well that Clodius should be killed and Milo banished. As it was, neither the death of the one nor the banishment of the other could avail anything. The pity of it was – the pity – that such a one as Cicero, a man with such intellect, such ambition, such sympathies, and such patriotism, should have been brought to fight on such an arena.

b. c. 52, ætat. 55.

We have in this story a graphic and most astounding picture of the Rome of the day. No Consuls had been or could be elected, and the system by which "interreges" had been enabled to superintend the election of their successors in lieu of the Consuls of the expiring year had broken down. Pompey had been made sole Consul in an informal manner, and had taken upon himself all the authority of a Dictator in levying troops. Power in Rome seems at the moment to have been shared between him and bands of gladiators, but he too had succeeded in arming himself,

and as the Clodian faction was on his side, he was for a while supreme. For law by this time he could have but little reverence, having been partner with Cæsar in the so-called Triumvirate for the last eight years. But yet he had no aptitude for throwing the law altogether on one side, and making such a coup-de-main as was now and again within his power. Beyond Pompey there was at this time no power in Rome, except that of the gladiators, and the owners of the gladiators, who were each intent on making plunder out of the Empire. There were certain men, such as were Bibulus and Cato, who considered themselves to be "optimates" – leading citizens who believed in the Republic, and were no doubt anxious to maintain the established order of things – as we may imagine the dukes and earls are anxious in these days of ours. But they were impotent and bad men of business, and as a body were too closely wedded to their "fish ponds" – by which Cicero means their general luxuries and extravagances. In the bosoms of these men there was no doubt an eager desire to perpetuate a Republic which had done so much for them, and a courage sufficient for the doing of some great deed, if the great deed would come in their way. They went to Pharsalia, and Cato marched across the deserts of Libya. They slew Cæsar, and did some gallant fighting afterward; but they were like a rope of sand, and had among them no fitting leader and no high purpose.

Outside of these was Cicero, who certainly was not a fitting leader when fighting was necessary, and who as to politics in general was fitted rather by noble aspirations than supported by

fixed purposes. We are driven to wonder that there should have been, at such a period and among such a people, aspirations so noble joined with so much vanity of expression. Among Romans he stands the highest, because of all Romans he was the least Roman. He had begun with high resolves, and had acted up to them. Among all the Quæstors, Ædiles, Prætors, and Consuls Rome had known, none had been better, none honester, none more patriotic. There had come up suddenly in those days a man imbued with the unwonted idea that it behoved him to do his duty to the State according to the best of his lights – no Cincinnatus, no Decius, no Camillus, no Scipio, no pretentious follower of those half-mythic heroes, no demigod struggling to walk across the stage of life enveloped in his toga and resolved to impose on all eyes by the assumption of a divine dignity, but one who at every turn was conscious of his human duty, and anxious to do it to the best of his human ability. He did it; and we have to acknowledge that the conceit of doing it overpowered him. He mistook the feeling of people around him, thinking that they too would be carried away by their admiration of his conduct. Up to the day on which he descended from his Consul's seat duty was paramount with him. Then gradually there came upon him the conviction that duty, though it had been paramount with him, did not weigh so very much with others. He had been lavish in his worship of Pompey, thinking that Pompey, whom he had believed in his youth to be the best of citizens, would of all men be the truest to the Republic.

Pompey had deceived him, but he could not suddenly give up his idol. Gradually we see that there fell upon him a dread that the great Roman Republic was not the perfect institution which he had fancied. In his early days Chrysogonus had been base, and Verres, and Oppianicus, and Catiline; but still, to his idea, the body of the Roman Republic had been sound. But when he had gone out from his Consulship, with resolves strung too high that he would remain at Rome, despising provinces and plunder, and be as it were a special providence to the Republic, gradually he fell from his high purpose, finding that there were no Romans such as he had conceived them to be. Then he fell away and became the man who could condescend to waste his unequalled intellect in attacking Piso, in praising himself, and in defending Milo. The glory of his active life was over when his Consulship was done – the glory was over, with the exception of that to come from his final struggle with Antony – but the work by which his immortality was to be achieved was yet before him. I think that after defending Milo he must have acknowledged to himself that all partisan fighting in Rome was mean, ignoble, and hollow. With the Senate-house and its archives burnt as a funeral pile for Clodius, and the Forum in which he had to plead lined with soldiers who stopped him by their clang of arms instead of protecting him in his speech, it must have been acknowledged by Cicero that the old Republic was dead, past all hope of resurrection. He had said so often to Atticus; but men say words in the despondency of the moment which they do not

wish to have accepted as their established conviction. In such humor Cicero had written to his friend; but now it must have occurred to him that his petulant expressions were becoming only too true. When instigating Curio to canvass for Milo, and defending Milo as though it had been a good thing for a Roman nobleman to travel in the neighborhood of the city with an army at his heels, he must have ceased to believe even in himself as a Roman statesman.

In the oration which we possess – which we must teach ourselves to regard as altogether different from that which Cicero had been able to pronounce among Pompey's soldiers and the Clodian rabble – the reader is astonished by the magnificence of the language in which a case so bad in itself could be enveloped, and is made to feel that had he been on the jury, and had such an address been made to him, he would certainly have voted for an acquittal. The guilt or innocence of Milo as to the murder really turned on the point whether he did or did not direct that Clodius should be dragged out of the tavern and slain; but here in this oration three points are put forward, in each of which it was within the scope of the orator to make the jury believe that Clodius had in truth prepared an ambushade, that Clodius was of all Romans the worst, and that Milo was loyal and true, and, in spite of a certain fierceness of disposition, a good citizen at heart. We agree with Milo, who declared, when banished, that he would never have been able to enjoy the fish of Marseilles had Cicero spoken in the Forum the speech which he afterward

composed.

"I would not remind you," he says, "of Milo's Tribuneship, nor of all his service to the State, unless I could make plain to you as daylight the ambush which on that day was laid for him by his enemy. I will not pray you to forgive a crime simply because Milo has been a good citizen; nor, because the death of Clodius has been a blessing to us all, will I therefore ask you to regard it as a deed worthy of praise. But if the fact of the ambush be absolutely made evident, then I beseech you at any rate to grant that a man may lawfully defend himself from the arrogance and from the arms of his enemies."<sup>57</sup> From this may be seen the nature of the arguments used. For the language the reader must turn to the original. That it will be worth his while to do so he has the evidence of all critics – especially that of Milo when he was eating sardines in his exile, and of Quintilian when he was preparing his lessons on rhetoric. It seems that Cicero had been twitted with using something of a dominating tyranny in the Senate – which would hardly have been true, as the prevailing influence of the moment was that of Pompey – but he throws aside the insinuation very grandly. "Call it tyranny if you please – if you think it that, rather than some little authority which has grown from my services to the State, or some favor among good men because of my rank. Call it what you will, while I am able to use it for the defence of the good against the violence of the

---

<sup>57</sup> Ca. ii.

evil-minded."<sup>58</sup> Then he describes the fashion in which these two men travelled on the occasion – the fashion of travelling as it suited him to describe it. "If you did not hear the details of the story, but could see simply a picture of all that occurred, would it not appear which of them had planned the attack, which of them was ignorant of all evil? One of them was seated in his carriage, clad in his cloak, and with his wife beside him. His garments, his clients, his companions all show how little prepared he was for fighting. Then, as to the other, why was he leaving his country-house so suddenly? Why should he do this so late in the evening? Why did he travel so slowly at this time of the year? He was going, he says, to Pompey's villa. Not that he might see Pompey, because he knew that Pompey was at Alsium. Did he want to see the villa? He had been there a thousand times. Why all this delay, and turning backward and forward? Because he would not leave the spot till Milo had come up. And now compare this ruffian's mode of travelling with that of Milo. It has been the constant custom with Clodius to have his wife with him, but now she was not there. He has always been in a carriage, but now he was on horseback. His young Greek sybarites have ever been with him, even when he went as far as Tuscany; on this occasion there were no such trifles in his company. Milo, with whom such companions were not usual, had his wife's singing-boys with him and a bevy of female slaves. Clodius, who usually never moved without a crowd of prostitutes at his heels, now had

---

<sup>58</sup> Ca. v.

no one with him but men picked for this work in hand."<sup>59</sup> What a picture we have here of the manner in which noble Romans were wont to move about the city and the suburbs! We may imagine that the singing-boys of Milo's wife were quite as bad as the Greek attendants in whom Clodius usually rejoiced. Then he asks a question as to Pompey full of beautiful irony. If Pompey could bring back Clodius from the dead – Pompey, who is so fond of him; Pompey, who is so powerful, so fortunate, so capable of all things; Pompey, who would be so glad to do it because of his love for the man – do you not know that on behalf of the Republic he would leave him down among the ghosts where he is?<sup>60</sup> There is a delightful touch of satire in this when we remember how odious Clodius had been to Pompey in days not long gone by, and how insolent.

The oration is ended by histrionic effects in language which would have been marvellous had they ever been spoken, but which seem to be incredible to us when we know that they were arranged for publication when the affair was over. "O me wretched! O me unhappy!"<sup>61</sup> But these attempts at translation are all vain. The student who wishes to understand what may be the effect of Latin words thrown into this choicest form should

---

<sup>59</sup> Ca. xx., xxi.

<sup>60</sup> Ca. xxix.

<sup>61</sup> Ca. xxxvii.: "O me miserum! O me infelicem! revocare tu me in patriam, Milo, potuisti per hos. Ego te in patria per eosdem retinere non potero!" "By the aid of such citizens as these," he says, pointing to the judges' bench, "you were able to restore me to my country. Shall I not by the same aid restore you to yours?"

read the Milo.

We have very few letters from Cicero in this year – four only, I think, and they are of no special moment. In one of them he recommends Avianus to Titus Titius, a lieutenant then serving under Pompey.<sup>62</sup> In this he is very anxious to induce Titius to let Avianus know all the good things that Cicero had said of him. In our times we sometimes send our letters of introduction open by the hands of the person introduced, so that he may himself read his own praise; but the Romans did not scruple to ask that this favor might be done for them. "Do me this favor, Titius, of being kind to Avianus; but do me also the greater favor of letting Avianus know that I have asked you." What Cicero did to Titius other noble Romans did in their communications with their friends in the provinces. In another letter to Marius he expresses his great joy at the condemnation of that Munatius Plancus who had been Tribune when Clodius was killed. Plancus had harangued the people, exciting them against Milo and against Cicero, and had led to the burning of the Senate-house and of the temple next door. For this Plancus could not be accused during his year of office, but he had been put upon his trial when that year was over. Pompey had done his best to save him, but in vain; and Cicero rejoices not only that the Tribune who had opposed him should be punished, but that Pompey should have been beaten, which he attributes altogether to the favor shown

---

<sup>62</sup> Ad Fam., lib. xiii., 75.

toward himself by the jury.<sup>63</sup> He is aroused to true exultation that there should have been men on the bench who, having been chosen by Pompey in order that they might acquit this man, had dared to condemn him. Cicero had himself spoken against Plancus on the occasion. Sextus Clodius, who had been foremost among the rioters, was also condemned.

b. c. 52, ætat. 55.

This was the year in which Cæsar was so nearly conquered by the Gauls at Gergovia, and in which Vercingetorix, having shut himself up in Alesia, was overcome at last by the cruel strategy of the Romans. The brave Gaul, who had done his best to defend his country and had carried himself to the last with a fine gallantry, was kept by his conqueror six years in chains and then strangled amid the glories of that conqueror's triumph, a signal instance of the mercy which has been attributed to Cæsar as his special virtue. In this year, too, Cicero's dialogues with Atticus, *De Legibus*, were written. He seems to have disturbed his labors in the Forum with no other work.

---

<sup>63</sup> *Ad Fam.*, lib. vii., 2: "In primisque me delectavit tantum studium bonorum in me exstitisse contra incredibilem contentionem clarissimi et potentissimi viri."

## Chapter IV

### *CILICIA*

b. c. 51, ætat. 56.

We cannot but think that at this time the return of Cæsar was greatly feared at Rome by the party in the State to which Cicero belonged; and this party must now be understood as including Pompey. Pompey had been nominally Proconsul in Spain since the year of his second Consulship, conjointly with Crassus, b. c. 55, but had remained in Rome and had taken upon himself the management of Roman affairs, considering himself to be the master of the irregular powers which the Triumvirate had created; and of this party was also Cicero, with Cato, Bibulus, Brutus, and all those who were proud to call themselves "optimates." They were now presumed to be desirous to maintain the old republican form of government, and were anxious with more or less sincerity according to the character of the men. Cato and Brutus were thoroughly in earnest, not seeing, however, that the old form might be utterly devoid of the old spirit. Pompey was disposed to take the same direction, thinking that all must be well in Rome as long as he was possessed of high office, grand names, and the appanages of Dictatorship. Cicero, too, was anxious, loyally anxious, but anxious without confidence. Something might perhaps be saved if these optimates could be

aroused to some idea of their duty by the exercise of eloquence such as his own.

I will quote a few words from Mr. Froude's *Cæsar*: "If *Cæsar* came to Rome as Consul, the Senate knew too well what it might expect;" and then he adds, "*Cicero* had for some time seen what was coming."<sup>64</sup> As to these assertions I quite agree with Mr. Froude; but I think that he has read wrongly both the history of the time and the character of the man when he goes on to state that "*Cicero* preferred characteristically to be out of the way at the moment when he expected that the storm should break, and had accepted the government of *Cilicia* and *Cyprus*." All the known details of *Cicero*'s life up to the period of his government of *Cilicia*, during his government, and after his return from that province, prove that he was characteristically wedded to a life in Rome. This he declared by his distaste to that employment and his impatience of return while he was absent. Nothing, I should say, could be more certain than that he went to *Cilicia* in obedience to new legal enactments which he could not avoid, but which, as they acted upon himself, were odious to him. Mr. Froude tells us that he held the government but for two years.<sup>65</sup> The period of these provincial governments had of late much varied. The acknowledged legal duration was for one year. They had been stretched by the governing party to three, as in the case of *Verres* in *Sicily*; to five, as with *Pompey* for his *Spanish*

---

<sup>64</sup> *Cæsar*, a Sketch, p. 336.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 341.

government; to ten for Cæsar in Gaul. This had been done with the view of increasing the opportunities for plunder and power, but had been efficacious of good in enabling governors to carry out work for which one year would not have sufficed. It may be a question whether Cicero as Proconsul in Cilicia deserved blame for curtailing the period of his services to the Empire, or praise for abstaining from plunder and power; but the fact is that he remained in his province not two years but exactly one;<sup>66</sup> and that he escaped from it with all the alacrity which we may presume to be expected by a prisoner when the bars of his jail have been opened for him. Whether we blame him or praise him, we can hardly refrain from feeling that his impatience was grotesque. There certainly was no desire on Cicero's part either to go to Cilicia or to remain there, and of all his feelings that which prompted him never to be far absent from Rome was the most characteristic of the man.

Among various laws which Pompey had caused to be passed in the previous year, b. c. 52, and which had been enacted with views personal to himself and his own political views, had been one "de jure magistratum" – as to the way in which the magistrates of the Empire should be selected. Among other clauses it contained one which declared that no Prætor and no Consul should succeed to a province till he had been five years

---

<sup>66</sup> He reached Laodicea, an inland town, on July 31st, b. c. 51, and embarked, as far as we can tell, at Sida on August 3d, b. c. 50. It may be doubted whether any Roman governor got to the end of his year's government with greater despatch.

out of office. It would be useless here to point out how absolutely subversive of the old system of the Republic this new law would have been, had the new law and the old system attempted to live together. The Proprætor would have been forced to abandon his aspirations either for the province or for the Consulship, and no consular governor would have been eligible for a province till after his fiftieth year. But at this time Pompey was both consul and governor, and Cæsar was governor for ten years with special exemption from another clause in the law which would otherwise have forbidden him to stand again for the Consulship during his absence.<sup>67</sup> The law was wanted probably only for the moment; but it had the effect of forcing Cicero out of Rome. As there would naturally come from it a dearth of candidates for the provinces it was further decreed by the Senate that the ex-Prætors and ex-Consuls who had not yet served as governors should now go forth and undertake the duties of government. In compliance with this order, and probably as a specially intended consequence of it, Cicero was compelled to go to Cilicia. Mr. Froude has said that "he preferred characteristically to be out of the way." I have here given what I think to be the more probable cause of his undertaking the government of Cilicia.

b. c. 51, ætat. 56.

In April of this year Cicero before he started wrote the first of

---

<sup>67</sup> No exemption was made for Cæsar in Pompey's law as it originally stood; and after the law had been inscribed as usual on a bronze tablet it was altered at Pompey's order, so as to give Cæsar the privilege. Pompey pleaded forgetfulness, but the change was probably forced upon him by Cæsar's influence. — Suetonius, J. Cæsar, xxviii.

a series of letters which he addressed to Appius Claudius, who was his predecessor in the province. This Appius was the brother of the Publius Clodius whom we have known for the last two or three years as Cicero's pest and persecutor; but he addresses Appius as though they were dear friends: "Since it has come to pass, in opposition to all my wishes and to my expectations, that I must take in hand the government of a province, I have this one consolation in my various troubles – that no better friend to yourself than I am could follow you, and that I could take up the government from the hands of none more disposed to make the business pleasant to me than you will be."<sup>68</sup> And then he goes on: "You perceive that, in accordance with the decree of the Senate, the province has to be occupied." His next letter on the subject was written to Atticus while he was still in Italy, but when he had started on his journey. "In your farewell to me," he says, "I have seen the nature of your love to me. I know well what is my own for you. It must, then, be your peculiar care to see lest by any new arrangement this parting of ours should be prolonged beyond one year."<sup>69</sup> Then he goes on to tell the story of a scene that had occurred at Arcanum, a house belonging to his brother Quintus, at which he had stopped on the road for a family farewell. Pomponia was there, the wife of Quintus and the sister to Atticus. There were a few words between the husband and the wife as to the giving of the invitation for the occasion,

---

<sup>68</sup> Ad Div., lib. iii., 2.

<sup>69</sup> Ad Att., lib. v., 1.

in which the lady behaved with much Christian perversity of temper. "Alas," says Quintus to his brother, "you see what it is that I have to suffer every day!" Knowing as we all do how great were the powers of the Roman paterfamilias, and how little woman's rights had been ventilated in those days, we should have thought that an ex-Prætor might have managed his home more comfortably; but ladies, no doubt, have had the capacity to make themselves disagreeable in all ages.

I doubt whether we have any testimony whatever as to Cicero's provincial government, except that which comes from himself and which is confined to the letters written by him at the time.<sup>70</sup> Nevertheless, we have a clear record of his doings, so full and satisfactory are the letters which he then wrote. The truth of his account of himself has never been questioned. He draws a picture of his own integrity, his own humanity, and his own power of administration which is the more astonishing, because we cannot but compare it with the pictures which we have from the same hand of the rapacity, the cruelty, and the tyranny of other governors. We have gone on learning from his speeches and his letters that these were habitual plunderers, tyrants, and malefactors, till we are taught to acknowledge that, in the low condition to which Roman nature had fallen, it was useless to

---

<sup>70</sup> Abeken points out to us, in dealing with the year in which Cicero's government came to an end, b. c. 50, that Cato's letters to Cicero (*Ad Fam.*, lib. xv., 5) bear irrefutable testimony as to the real greatness of Cicero. See the translation edited by Merivale, p. 235. This applies to his conduct in Cilicia, and may thus be taken as evidence outside his own, though addressed to himself.

expect any other conduct from a Roman governor; and then he gives us the account of how a man did govern, when, as by a miracle, a governor had been found honest, clear-headed, sympathetic, and benevolent. That man was himself; and he gives this account of himself, as it were, without a blush! He tells the story of himself, not as though it was remarkable! That other governors should grind the bones of their subjects to make bread of them, and draw the blood from their veins for drink; but that Cicero should not condescend to take even the normal tribute when willingly offered, seems to Cicero to have been only what the world had a right to expect from him! A wonderful testimony is this as to the man's character; but surely the universal belief in his own account of his own governorship is more wonderful. "The conduct of Cicero in his command was meritorious," says De Quincey. "His short career as Proconsul in Cilicia had procured for him well-merited honor," says Dean Merivale.<sup>71</sup> "He had managed his province well; no one ever suspected Cicero of being corrupt or unjust," says Mr. Froude, who had, however, said (some pages before) that Cicero was "thinking as usual of himself first, and his duty afterward."<sup>72</sup> Dio Cassius, who is never tired of telling disagreeable stories of Cicero's life, says not a word of his Cilician government, from which we may, at any rate, argue that no stories detrimental to Cicero as a Proconsul had come in the way of Dio Cassius. I

---

<sup>71</sup> The Roman Triumvirate, p. 107.

<sup>72</sup> Cæsar, a Sketch, pp. 170, 341.

have confirmed what I have said as to this episode in Cicero's life by the corroborating testimony of writers who have not been generally favorable in their views of his character. Nevertheless, we have no testimony but his own as to what Cicero did in Cilicia.<sup>73</sup>

It has never occurred to any reader of Cicero's letters to doubt a line in which he has spoken directly of his own conduct. His letters have often been used against himself, but in a different manner. He has been judged to give true testimony against himself, but not false testimony in his own favor. His own record has been taken sometimes as meaning what it has not meant – and sometimes as implying much more than the writer intended. A word which has required for its elucidation an insight into the humor of the man has been read amiss, or some trembling admissions to a friend of shortcoming in the purpose of the moment has been presumed to refer to a continuity of weakness. He has been injured, not by having his own words as to himself discredited, but by having them too well credited where they have been misunderstood. It is at any rate the fact that his own account of his own proconsular doings has been accepted in full, and that the present reader may be encouraged to believe what extracts I may give to him by the fact that all other readers before him have believed them.

From his villa at Cumæ on his journey he wrote to Atticus in high spirits. Hortensius had been to see him – his old rival, his

---

<sup>73</sup> Professor Mommsen says no word of Cicero's government in Cilicia.

old predecessor in the glory of the Forum – Hortensius, whom he was fated never to see again. His only request to Hortensius had been that he should assist in taking care that he, Cicero, should not be required to stay above one year in his province. Atticus is to help him also; and another friend, Furnius, who may probably be the Tribune for the next year, has been canvassed for the same object. In a further letter from Beneventum he alludes to a third marriage for his daughter Tullia, but seems to be aware that, as he is leaving Italy, he cannot interfere in that matter himself. He writes again from Venusia, saying that he purports to see Pompey at Tarentum before he starts, and gives special instructions to Atticus as to the payment of a debt which is due by him to Cæsar. He has borrowed money of Cæsar, and is specially anxious that the debt should be settled. In another letter from Tarentum he presses the same matter. He is anxious to be relieved from the obligation.<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup> I cannot but refer to Mommsen's account of this transaction, book v., chap. viii.: "Golden fetters were also laid upon him," Cicero. "Amid the serious embarrassments of his finances the loans of Cæsar free of interest \* \* \* were in a high degree welcome to him; and many an immortal oration for the Senate was nipped in the bud by the thought that the agent of Cæsar might present a bill to him after the close of the sitting." There are many assertions here for which I have looked in vain for the authority. I do not know that Cicero's finances were seriously embarrassed at the time. The evidence goes rather to show that they were not so. Had he ever taken more than one loan from Cæsar? I find nothing as to any question of interest; but I imagine that Cæsar treated Cicero as Cicero afterward treated Pompey when he lent him money. We do not know whether even Crassus charged Cæsar interest. We may presume that a loan is always made welcome, or the money would not be borrowed, but the "high degree of welcome," as applied to this especial loan, ought to have some special justification. As

From Athens he wrote again to his friend a letter which is chiefly remarkable as telling us something of the quarrel between Marcus Claudius Marcellus, who was one of the Consuls for the year, and Cæsar, who was still absent in Gaul. This Marcellus, and others of his family who succeeded him in his office, were hotly opposed to Cæsar, belonging to that party of the State to which Cicero was attached, and to which Pompey was returning.<sup>75</sup> It seems to have been the desire of the Consul not only to injure but to insult Cæsar. He had endeavored to get a decree of the Senate for recalling Cæsar at once, but had succeeded only in having his proposition postponed for consideration in the following year – when Cæsar would naturally return. But to show how little was his regard to Cæsar, he caused to be flogged in Rome a citizen from one of those towns of Cisalpine Gaul to which Cæsar had assumed to give the privilege of Roman citizenship. The man was present as a delegate from

---

to Cicero's anxiety in borrowing the money I know nothing, but he was very anxious to pay it. The borrowing and the lending of money between Roman noblemen was very common. No one had ever borrowed so freely as Cæsar had done. Cicero was a lender and a borrower, but I think that he was never seriously embarrassed. What oration was nipped in the bud by fear of his creditor? He had lately spoken twice for Saufeius, once against S. Clodius, and against Plancus – in each case opposing the view of Cæsar, as far as Cæsar had views on the matter. The sum borrowed on this occasion was 800,000 sesterces – between £6000 and £7000. A small additional sum of £100 is mentioned in one of the letters to Atticus, lib. v., 5., which is, however, spoken of by Cicero as forming one whole with the other. I can hardly think that Mommsen had this in view when he spoke of loans in the plural number.

<sup>75</sup> M. C. Marcellus was Consul b. c. 51; his brother, C. Claudius Marcellus, was Consul b. c. 50, another C. Claudius Marcellus, a cousin, in b. c. 49.

his town, Novocomum<sup>76</sup>— the present Como — in furtherance of the colony's claims, and the Consul had the man flogged to show thereby that he was not a Roman. Marcellus was punished for his insolence by banishment, inflicted by Cæsar when Cæsar was powerful. We shall learn before long how Cicero made an oration in his favor; but, in the letter written from Athens, he blames Marcellus much for flogging the man.<sup>77</sup> "Fight in my behalf," he says, in the course of this letter; "for if my government be prolonged, I shall fail and become mean." The idea of absence from Rome is intolerable to him. From Athens also he wrote to his young friend Cælius, from whom he had requested information as to what was going on in Rome. But Cælius has to be again instructed as to the nature of the subjects which are to be regarded as interesting. "What! — do you think that I have asked you to send me stories of gladiators, law-court adjournments, and the pilferings of Christus — trash that no one would think of mentioning to me if I were in Rome?"<sup>78</sup> But he does not finish his letter to Cælius without begging Cælius to assist in bringing about his speedy recall. Cælius troubles

---

<sup>76</sup> Mommsen calls him a "respected Senator." M. De Guerle, in his preface to the oration *Pro Marcello*, claims for him the position of a delegate. He was probably both — though we may doubt whether he was "respected" after his flogging.

<sup>77</sup> *Ad Att.*, lib. v., 11: "Marcellus foede in Comensi;" and he goes on to say that even if the man had been no magistrate, and therefore not entitled to full Roman treatment, yet he was a Transalpine, and therefore not subject to the scourge. See Mr. Watson's note in his *Select Letters*.

<sup>78</sup> *Ad Div.*, lib. ii., 8.

him much afterward by renewed requests for Cilician panthers wanted for Ædilian shows. Cicero becomes very sea-sick on his journey, and then reaches Ephesus, in Asia Minor, dating his arrival there on the five hundred and sixtieth day from the battle of Bovilla, showing how much the contest as to Milo still clung to his thoughts.<sup>79</sup> Ephesus was not in his province, but at Ephesus all the magistrates came out to do him honor, as though he had come among them as their governor. "Now has arrived," he says, "the time to justify all those declarations which I have made as to my own conduct; but I trust I can practise the lessons which I have learned from you." Atticus, in his full admiration of his friend's character, had doubtless said much to encourage and to instigate the virtue which it was Cicero's purpose to employ. We have none of the words ever written by Atticus to Cicero, but we have light enough to show us that the one friend was keenly alive to the honor of the other, and thoroughly appreciated its beauty. "Do not let me be more than a year away," he exclaims; "do not let even another month be added."<sup>80</sup> Then there is a letter from Cælius praying for panthers.<sup>81</sup> In passing through the province of Asia to his own province, he declares that the people everywhere receive him well. "My coming," he says, "has cost no man a shilling."<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup> Ad Att., lib. v., 13.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.: "Quæso ut simus annui; ne intercaletur quidem." It might be that an intercalary month should be added, and cause delay.

<sup>81</sup> Ad Div., lib. viii., 2: "Ut tibi curæ sit quod ad pantheras attinet."

<sup>82</sup> Ad Att., lib. v., 14.

His whole staff has now joined him except one Tullius, whom he speaks of as a friend of Atticus, but afterward tells us he had come to him from Titinius. Then he again enjoins Atticus to have that money paid to Cæsar. From Tralles, still in the province of Asia, he writes to Appius, the outgoing governor, a letter full of courtesies, and expressing an anxious desire for a meeting. He had offered before to go by any route which might suit Appius, but Appius, as appears afterward, was anxious for anything rather than to encounter the new governor within the province he was leaving.<sup>83</sup>

On 31st July he reached Laodicea, within his own boundaries, having started on his journey on 10th May, and found all people glad to see him; but the little details of his office harass him sadly. "The action of my mind, which you know so well, cannot find space enough. All work worthy of my industry is at an end. I have to preside at Laodicea while some Plotius is giving judgment at Rome. \* \* \* And then am I not regretting at every moment the life of Rome – the Forum, the city itself, my own house? Am I not always regretting you? I will endeavor to bear it for a year; but if it be prolonged, then it will be all over with me. \* \* \* You ask me how I am getting on. I am spending a fortune in carrying out this grand advice of yours. I like it hugely; but when the time comes for paying you your debts I shall have to renew the bill. \* \* \* To make me do such work as this is putting a saddle upon a cow" – cutting a block with a razor, as we should say – "clearly

---

<sup>83</sup> Ad Div., lib. iii., 5.

I am not made for it; but I will bear it, so that it be only for one year."<sup>84</sup>

From Laodicea, a town in Phrygia, he went west to Synnada. His province, known as Cilicia, contained the districts named on the map of Asia Minor as Phrygia, Pisidia, Pamphylia, part of Cappadocia, Cilicia, and the island of Cyprus. He soon found that his predecessors had ruined the people. "Know that I have come into a province utterly and forever destroyed," he says to Atticus.<sup>85</sup> "We hear only of taxes that cannot be paid, of men's chattels sold on all sides, of the groans from the cities, of lamentations, of horrors such as some wild beast might have produced rather than a human being. There is no room for question. Every man is tired of his life; and yet some relief is given now, because of me, and by my officers, and by my lieutenants. No expense is imposed on any one. We do not take even the hay which is allowed by the Julian law – not even the wood. Four beds to lie on is all we accept, and a roof over our heads. In many places not even that, for we live in our tents. Enormous crowds therefore come to us, and return, as it were, to life through the justice and moderation of your Cicero. Appius, when he knew that I was come, ran away to Tarsus, the farthest point of the province." What a picture we have here of the state of a Roman dependency under a normal Roman governor, and of the good which a man could do who was able to abstain from

---

<sup>84</sup> Ad Att., lib. v., 15.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 16.

plunder! In his next letter his pride expresses itself so loudly that we have to remember that this man, after all, is writing only his own secret thoughts to his bosom friend. "If I can get away from this quickly, the honors which will accrue to me from my justice will be all the greater, as happened to Scævola, who was governor in Asia only for nine months."<sup>86</sup> Then again he declares how Appius had escaped into the farthest corner of the province – to Tarsus – when he knew that Cicero was coming.

He writes again to Appius, complaining. "When I compare my conduct to yours," he says, "I own that I much prefer my own."<sup>87</sup> He had taken every pains to meet Appius in a manner convenient to him, but had been deceived on every side. Appius had, in a way unusual among Roman governors, carried on his authority in remote parts of the province, although he had known of his successor's arrival. Cicero assures him that he is quite indifferent to this. If Appius will relieve him of one month's labor out of the twelve he will be delighted. But why has Appius taken away three of the fullest cohorts, seeing that in the entire province the number of soldiers left has been so small? But he assures Appius that, as he makes his journey, neither good nor bad shall hear evil spoken by him of his predecessor. "But as for you, you seem to have given to the dishonest reasons for thinking badly of me." Then he describes the exact course he means to take in his further journey, thus giving Appius full facility for avoiding him.

---

<sup>86</sup> Ad Att., lib. v., 17.

<sup>87</sup> Ad Div., lib. iii., 6.

From Cybistra, in Cappadocia, he writes official letters to Caius Marcellus, who had been just chosen Consul, the brother of Marcus the existing Consul; to an older Caius Marcellus, who was their father, a colleague of his own in the College of Augurs, and to Marcus the existing Consul, with his congratulations, also to Æmilius Paulus, who had also been elected Consul for the next year. He writes, also, a despatch to the Consuls, to the Prætors, to the Tribunes, and to the Senate, giving them a statement as to affairs in the province. These are interesting, rather as showing the way in which these things were done, than by their own details. When he reaches Cilicia proper he writes them another despatch, telling them that the Parthians had come across the Euphrates. He writes as Wellington may have done from Torres Vedras. He bids them look after the safety of their Eastern dominions. Though they are too late in doing this, yet better now than never.<sup>88</sup> "You know," he says, "with what sort of an army you have supported me here; and you know also that I have undertaken this duty not in blind folly, but because in respect for the Republic I have not liked to refuse. \* \* \* As for our allies here in the province, because our rule here has been so severe and injurious, they are either too weak to help us, or so embittered against us that we dare not trust them."

Then there is a long letter to Appius,<sup>89</sup> respecting the embassy which was to be sent from the province to Rome, to carry the

---

<sup>88</sup> Ad Div., lib. xv., 1.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., iii., 8.

praises of the departing governor and declare his excellence as a Proconsul! This was quite the usual thing to do! The worse the governor the more necessary the embassy; and such was the terror inspired even by a departing Roman, and such the servility of the allies – even of those who were about to escape from him – that these embassies were a matter of course. There had been a Sicilian embassy to praise Verres. Appius had complained as though Cicero had impeded this legation by restricting the amount to be allowed for its expenses. He rebukes Appius for bringing the charge against him.

The series of letters written this year by Cælius to Cicero is very interesting as giving us a specimen of continued correspondence other than Ciceronian. We have among the eight hundred and eighty-five letters ten or twelve from Brutus, if those attributed to him were really written by him; ten or twelve from Decimus Brutus, and an equal number from Plancus; but these were written in the stirring moments of the last struggle, and are official or military rather than familiar. We have a few from Quintus, but not of special interest unless we are to consider that treatise on the duties of a candidate as a letter. But these from Cælius to his older friend are genuine and natural as those from Cicero himself. There are seventeen. They are scattered over three or four years, but most of them refer to the period of Cicero's provincial government.

The marvel to me is that Cælius should have adopted a style so near akin to that of his master in literature. Scholars who have

studied the words can probably tell us of deficiencies in language; but the easy, graphic tone is to my ear Ciceronian. Tiro, who was slave, secretary, freedman, and then literary executor, may have had the handling of these letters, and have done something toward producing their literary excellence. The subjects selected were not always good, and must occasionally have produced in Cicero's own mind a repetition of the reprimand which he once expressed as to the gladiatorial shows and law-court adjournments; but Cælius does communicate much of the political news from Rome. In one letter, written in October of this year, he declares what the Senate has decreed as to the recall of Cæsar from Gaul, and gives the words of the enactments made, with the names subscribed to them of the promoters – and also the names of the Tribunes who had endeavored to oppose them.<sup>90</sup> The purport of these decrees I have mentioned before. The object was to recall Cæsar, and the effect was to postpone any such recall till it would mean nothing; but Cælius specially declares that the intention of recalling Cæsar was agreeable to Pompey, whereby we may know that the pact of the Triumvirate was already at an end. In another letter he speaks of the coming of the Parthians, and of Cicero's inability to fight with them because of the inadequate number of soldiers intrusted to him. Had there been a real Roman army, then Cælius would have been afraid, he says, for his friend's life. As it is, he fears only for his reputation, lest men should speak ill of him for not fighting, when to fight

---

<sup>90</sup> Ad Div., lib. viii., 8.

was beyond his power.<sup>91</sup> The language here is so pretty that I am tempted to think that Tiro must have had a hand in it. At Rome, we must remember, the tidings as to Crassus were as yet uncertain. We cannot, however, doubt that Cælius was in truth attached to Cicero.

But Cicero was forced to fight, not altogether unwillingly – not with the Parthians, but with tribes which were revolting from Roman authority because of the Parthian success. "It has turned out as you wished it," he says to Cælius – "a job just sufficient to give me a small coronet of laurel." Hearing that men had risen in the Taurus range of mountains, which divided his province from that of Syria, in which Bibulus was now governor, he had taken such an army as he was able to collect to the Amanus, a mountain belonging to that range, and was now writing from his camp at Pindenissum, a place beyond his own province. Joking at his own soldiering, he tells Cælius that he had astonished those around him by his prowess. "Is this he whom we used to know in the city? Is this our talkative Senator? You can understand the things they said."<sup>92</sup> \* \* \* When I got to the Amanus I was glad enough to find our friend Cassius had beaten back the real Parthians from Antioch." But Cicero claims to have done some gallant things: "I have harassed those men of Amanus who are always troubling us. Many I have killed; some I have taken; the rest are dispersed. I came suddenly upon their strongholds, and

---

<sup>91</sup> Ad Div., lib. viii., 10.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., ii., 10.

have got possession of them. I was called 'Imperator' at the river Issus." It is hardly necessary to explain, yet once again, that this title belonged properly to no commander till it had been accorded to him by his own soldiers on the field of battle.<sup>93</sup> He reminds Cælius that it was on the Issus that Alexander had conquered Darius. Then he had sat down before Pindenissum with all the machinery of a siege – with the turrets, covered ways, and ramparts. He had not as yet quite taken the town. When he had done so, he would send home his official account of it all; but the Parthians may yet come, and there may be danger. "Therefore, O my Rufus" – he was Cælius Rufus – "see that I am not left here, lest, as you suspect, things should go badly with me." There is a mixture in all this of earnestness and of drollery, of boasting and of laughing at what he was doing, which is inimitable in its reality. His next letter is to his other young friend, Curio, who has just been elected Tribune. He gives much advice to Curio, who certainly always needed it.<sup>94</sup> He carries on the joke when he tells Atticus that the "people of Pindenissum have surrendered." "Who the mischief are these Pindenissians? you will say. I have not even heard the name before. What would

---

<sup>93</sup> This mode of greeting a victorious general had no doubt become absurd in the time of Cicero, when any body of soldiers would be only too willing to curry favor with the officer over them by this acclamation. Cicero ridicules this; but is at the same time open to the seduction – as a man with us will laugh at the Sir Johns and Sir Thomases who are seated around him, but still, when his time comes, will be pleased that his wife shall be called "My Lady" like the rest of them.

<sup>94</sup> Ad Div., lib. ii., 7.

you have? I cannot make an Ætolia out of Cilicia. With such an army as this do you expect me to do things like a Macedonicus?<sup>95</sup>  
\* \* \* I had my camp on the Issus, where Alexander had his – a better soldier no doubt than you or I. I really have made a name for myself in Syria. Then up comes Bibulus, determined to be as good as I am; but he loses his whole cohort." The failure made by Bibulus at soldiering is quite as much to him as his own success. Then he goes back to Laodicea, leaving the army in winter-quarters, under the command of his brother Quintus.

But his heart is truly in other matters, and he bursts out, in the same letter, with enthusiastic praise of the line of conduct which Atticus has laid down for him: "But that which is more to me than anything is that I should live so that even that fellow Cato cannot find fault with me. May I die, if it could be done better. Nor do I take praise for it as though I was doing something distasteful; I never was so happy as in practising this moderation. The thing itself is better to me even than the reputation of it. What would you have me say? It was worth my while to be enabled thus to try myself, so that I might know myself as to what I could do."

Then there is a long letter to Cato in which he repeats the story of his grand doings at Pindenissum. The reader will be sure that a letter to Cato cannot be sincere and pleasant as are those to Atticus and Cælius. "If there be one man far removed from the vulgar love of praise, it is I," he says to Cato.<sup>96</sup> He tells Cato that

---

<sup>95</sup> Ad Att., lib. v., 2.

<sup>96</sup> Ad Div., lib. xv., 4.

they two are alike in all things. They two only have succeeded in carrying the true ancient philosophy into the practice of the Forum. Never surely were two men more unlike than the stiff-necked Cato and the versatile Cicero.

b. c. 50, ætat. 57.

Lucius Æmilius Paullus and C. Clodius Marcellus were Consuls for the next year. Cicero writes to both of them with tenders of friendship; but from both of them he asks that they should take care to have a decree of the Senate passed praising his doings in Cilicia.<sup>97</sup> With us, too, a returning governor is anxious enough for a good word from the Prime-minister; but he does not ask for it so openly. The next letter from Cælius tells him that Appius has been accused as to malpractices in his government, and that Pompey is in favor of Appius. Curio has gone over to Cæsar. But the important subject is the last handled: "It will be mean in you if I should have no Greek panthers."<sup>98</sup>

---

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., xv., 10, and lib. xv., 13: "Ut quam honorificentissimum senatus consultum de meis rebus gestis faciendum cures."

<sup>98</sup> Ad Div., lib. viii., 6.

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.