

The Histories of Polybius  
Books Seven, Eight, and Nine  
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# The Histories of Polybius

## Book Seven

### Capua and Petelia

1. The people of Capua, in Campania, becoming wealthy through the fertility of their soil, degenerated into luxury and extravagance surpassing even the common report about Croton and Sybaris. Being then unable to support their burden of prosperity they called in Hannibal; and were accordingly treated with great severity by Rome. But the people of Petelia maintained their loyalty to Rome and held out so obstinately, when besieged by Hannibal, that after having eaten all the leather in the town, and the bark of all the trees in it, and having stood the siege for eleven months, as no one came to their relief, they surrendered with the entire approval of the Romans.... But Capua by its influence drew over the other cities to the Carthaginians.

### Hieronymus of Syracuse

2. After the plot against Hieronimus, King of Syracuse, Thraso having departed, Zoippus and Andranodorus persuaded Hieronimus to lose no time in sending ambassadors to Hannibal. He accordingly selected Polycleitus of Cyrene and Philodemus of Argos for the purpose, and sent them into Italy, with a commission to discuss the subject of an alliance with the Carthaginians; and at the same time he sent his brothers to Alexandria. Hannibal received Polycleitus and Philodemus with warmth; held out great prospects to the young king; and sent the ambassadors back without delay, accompanied by the commander of his triremes, a Carthaginian also named Hannibal, and the Syracusan Hippocrates and his younger brother Epicyles. These men had been for some time serving in Hannibal's army, being domiciled at Carthage, owing to their grandfather having been banished from Syracuse because he was believed to have assassinated Agatharchus, one of the sons of Agathocles. On the arrival of these commissioners at Syracuse, Polycleitus and his colleague reported the result of their embassy, and the Carthaginian delivered the message given by Hannibal: whereupon the king without hesitation expressed his willingness to make a treaty with the Carthaginians; and, begging the Hannibal who had come to him to go

with all speed to Carthage, promised that he also would send commissioners from his own court, to settle matters with the Carthaginians.

3. Meanwhile intelligence of this transaction had reached the Roman praetor at Lilybaeum, who immediately despatched legates to Hieronymus, to renew the treaty which had been made with his ancestors. Being thoroughly annoyed with this embassy, Hieronymus said that “He was sorry for the Romans that they had come to such utter and shameful grief<sup>1</sup> in the battles in Italy at the hands of the Carthaginians.” The legates were overpowered by the rudeness of the answer: still they proceeded to ask him, “Who said such things about them?” Whereupon the king pointed to the Carthaginian envoys who were there, and said, “You had better convict them, if they have really been telling me lies?” The Roman legates answered that it was not their habit to take the word of enemies: and advised him to do nothing in violation of the existing treaty; for that would be at once equitable and the best thing for himself. To this the king answered that he would take time to consider of it, and tell them his decision another time; but he proceeded to ask them, “How it came about that before his grandfather’s death a squadron of fifty Roman ships had sailed as far as Pachynus and then gone back again.” The fact was that a short time ago the Romans had heard that Hiero was dead; and being much alarmed lest people in Syracuse, despising the youth of the grandson whom he left, should stir up a revolution, they had made this cruise with the intention of being ready there to assist his youthful weakness, and to help in maintaining his authority; but being informed that his grandfather was still alive, they sailed back again. When the ambassadors had stated these facts, the young king answered again, “Then please to allow me too now, O Romans, to maintain my authority by ‘sailing back’ to see what I can get from Carthage.” The Roman legates perceiving the warmth with which the king was engaging in his policy, said nothing at the time; but returned and informed the praetor who had sent them of what had been said. From that time forward, therefore, the Romans kept a careful watch upon him as an enemy.

4. Hieronymus on his part selected Agatharchus, Onesimus, and Hipposthenes to send with Hannibal to Carthage, with instructions to make an alliance on the following terms: “The Carthaginians to assist him with land and sea forces, in expelling the Romans from Sicily, and then divide the island with him; so as to have the river Himera, which divides Sicily almost exactly in half, as the boundary between the two provinces.” The commissioners arrived in Carthage: and finding, on coming to a conference, that the Carthaginians were prepared to meet them in every point, they

<sup>1</sup> κακοὶ κακῶς, a phrase at once insulting and vulgar.

completed the arrangement. Meanwhile Hippocrates got the young Hieronymus entirely into his hands: and at first fired his imagination by telling him of Hannibal's marches and pitched battles in Italy; and afterwards by repeating to him that no one had a better right to the government of all Siceliots than he; in the first place as the son of Nereis daughter of Pyrrhus, the only man whom all Siceliots alike had accepted deliberately and with full assent as their leader and king; and in the second place in virtue of his grandfather Hiero's sovereign rights. At last he and his brother so won upon the young man by their conversation, that he would attend to no one else at all: partly from the natural feebleness of his character, but still more from the ambitious feelings which they had excited in him. And therefore, just when Agatharchus and his colleagues were completing the business on which they had been sent in Carthage, he sent fresh ambassadors, saying that all Sicily belonged to him; and demanding that the Carthaginians should help him to recover Sicily: while he promised that he would assist the Carthaginians in their Italian campaign. Though the Carthaginians now saw perfectly well the whole extent of the young man's fickleness and infatuation: yet thinking it to be in manifold ways to their interests not to let Sicilian affairs out of their hands, they assented to his demands; and having already prepared ships and men, they set about arranging for the transport of their forces into Sicily.

5. When they heard of this, the Romans sent legates to him again, protesting against his violation of the treaty made with his forefathers. Hieronymus thereupon summoned a meeting of his council and consulted them as to what he was to do. The native members of it kept silent, because they feared the folly of their ruler. Aristomachus of Corinth, Damippus of Sparta, Autonous of Thessaly advised that he should abide by the treaty with Rome. Andranodorus alone urged that he should not let the opportunity slip; and affirmed that the present was the only chance of establishing his rule over Sicily. After the delivery of this speech, the king asked Hippocrates and his brother what they thought, and upon their answering, "The same as Andranodorus," the deliberation was concluded in that sense. Thus, then, war with Rome had been decided upon: but while the king was anxious to be thought to have given an adroit answer to the ambassadors, he committed himself to such an utter absurdity as to make it certain that he would not only fail to conciliate the Romans, but would inevitably offend them violently. For he said that he would abide by the treaty, firstly, if the Romans would repay all the gold they had received from his grandfather Hiero; and secondly, if they would return the corn and other presents which they had received from him from the first day of their intercourse with him; and thirdly, if they would acknowledge all Sicily east of the Himera to be

Syracusan territory. At these propositions of course the ambassadors and council separated; and from that time forth Hieronymus began pushing on his preparations for war with energy: collected and armed his forces, and got ready the other necessary provisions.....

6. The city of Leontini taken as a whole faces north, and is divided in half by a valley of level ground, in which are the state buildings, the courthouses, and market-place. Along each side of this valley run hills with steep banks all the way; the flat tops of which, reached after crossing their brows, are covered with houses and temples. The city has two gates, one on the southern extremity of this valley leading to Syracuse, the other at the northern leading on to the "Leontine plains," and the arable district. Close under the westernmost of the steep cliffs runs a river called Lissus; parallel to which are built continuous rows of houses, in great numbers, close under the cliff, between which and the river runs the road I have mentioned....

7. Some of the historians who have described the fall of Hieronymus have written at great length and in terms of mysterious solemnity. They tell us of prodigies preceding his coming to the throne, and of the misfortunes of Syracuse. They describe in dramatic language the cruelty of his character and the impiety of his actions; and crown all with the sudden and terrible nature of the circumstances attending his fall. One would think from their description that neither Phalaris, nor Apollodorus, nor any other tyrant was ever fiercer than he. Yet he was a mere boy when he succeeded to power, and only lived thirteen months after. In this space of time it is possible that one or two men may have been put to the rack, or certain of his friends, or other Syracusan citizens, put to death; but it is improbable that his tyranny could have been extravagantly wicked, or his impiety outrageous. It must be confessed that he was reckless and unscrupulous in disposition; still we cannot compare him with either of the tyrants I have named. The fact is that those who write the histories of particular episodes, having undertaken limited and narrow themes, appear to me to be compelled from poverty of matter to exaggerate insignificant incidents, and to speak at inordinate length on subjects that scarcely deserve to be recorded at all. There are some, too, who fall into a similar mistake from mere want of judgment. With how much more reason might the space employed on these descriptions, — which they use merely to fill up and spin out their books, — have been devoted to Hiero and Gelo, without mentioning Hieronymus at all! It would have given greater pleasure to readers and more instruction to students.

8. For, in the first place, Hiero gained the sovereignty of Syracuse and her allies by his own unaided abilities without inheriting wealth, or reputation, or any other advantage of fortune. And, in the second place, was established king of Syracuse without putting to death, banishing, or

harassing any one of the citizens, — which is the most astonishing circumstance of all. And what is quite as surprising as the innocence of his acquisition of power is the fact that it did not change his character. For during a reign of fifty-four years he preserved peace for the country, maintained his own power free from all hostile plots, and entirely escaped the envy which generally follows greatness; for though he tried on several occasions to lay down his power, he was prevented by the common remonstrances of the citizens. And having shown himself most beneficent to the Greeks, and most anxious to earn their good opinion, he left behind him not merely a great personal reputation but also a universal feeling of goodwill towards the Syracusans. Again, though he passed his life in the midst of the greatest wealth, luxury, and abundance, he survived for more than ninety years, in full possession of his senses and with all parts of his body unimpaired which, to my mind, is a decisive proof of a well-spent life....

Gelo, his son, in a life of more than fifty years regarded it as the most honourable object of ambition to obey his father, and to regard neither wealth, nor sovereign power, nor anything else as of higher value than love and loyalty to his parents....

#### Treaty Between Hannibal and King Philip V. of Macedon

9. This is a sworn treaty made between Hannibal, Mago, Barmocarus, and such members of the Carthaginian Gerusia as were present, and all Carthaginians serving in his army, on the one part; and Xenophanes, son of Cleomachus of Athens, sent to us by King Philip, as his ambassador, on behalf of himself, the Macedonians, and their allies, on the other part.

The oath is taken in the presence of Zeus, Here, and Apollo: of the god of the Carthaginians, Hercules, and Iolaus: of Ares, Triton, Poseidon: of the gods that accompany the army, and of the sun, moon, and earth: of rivers, harbours, waters: of all the gods who rule Carthage: of all the gods who rule Macedonia and the rest of Greece: of all the gods of war that are witnesses to this oath.

Hannibal, general, and all the Carthaginian senators with him, and all Carthaginians serving in his army, subject to our mutual consent, proposes to make this sworn treaty of friendship and honourable good-will. Let us be friends, close allies, and brethren, on the conditions herein following:

(1) Let the Carthaginians, as supreme, Hannibal their chief general and those serving with him, all members of the Carthaginian dominion living under the same laws, as well as the people of Utica, and the cities and tribes subject to Carthage, and their soldiers and allies, and all cities and tribes in

Italy, Celt-land, and Liguria, with whom we have a compact of friendship, and with whomsoever in this country we may hereafter form such compact, be supported by King Philip and the Macedonians, and all other Greeks in alliance with them.

(2) On their parts also King Philip and the Macedonians, and such other Greeks as are his allies, shall be supported and protected by the Carthaginians now in this army, and by the people of Utica, and by all cities and tribes subject to Carthage, both soldiers and allies, and by all allied cities and tribes in Italy, Celt-land, and Liguria, and by all others in Italy as shall hereafter become allies of the Carthaginians.

(3) We will not make plots against, nor lie in ambush for, each other; but in all sincerity and good-will, without reserve or secret design, will be enemies to the enemies of the Carthaginians, saving and excepting those kings, cities, and ports with which we have sworn agreements and friendships.

(4) And we, too, will be enemies to the enemies of King Philip, saving and excepting those kings, cities, and tribes, with which we have sworn agreements and friendships.

(5) Ye shall be friends to us in the war in which we now are engaged against the Romans, till such time as the gods give us and you the victory: and ye shall assist us in all ways that be needful, and in whatsoever way we may mutually determine.

(6) And when the gods have given us victory in our war with the Romans and their allies, if Hannibal shall deem it right to make terms with the Romans, these terms shall include the same friendship with you, made on these conditions: (1) the Romans not to be allowed to make war on you; (2) not to have power over Corcyra, Apollonia, Epidamnum, Pharos, Dimale, Parthini, nor Atitania; (3) to restore to Demetrius of Pharos all those of his friends now in the dominion of Rome.

(7) If the Romans ever make war on you or on us we will aid each other in such war, according to the need of either.

(8) So also if any other nation whatever does so, always excepting kings, cities, and tribes, with whom we have sworn agreements and friendships.

(9) If we decide to take away from, or add to this sworn treaty, we will so take away, or add thereto, only as we both may agree....

Messene and Philip V. in B.C. 215

10. Democracy being established at Messene, and the men of rank having been banished, while those who had received allotments on their

lands obtained the chief influence in the government, those of the old citizens who remained found it very hard to put up with the equality which these men had obtained....

Gorgus of Messene, in wealth and extraction, was inferior to no one in the town; and had been a famous athlete in his time, far surpassing all rivals in that pursuit. In fact he was not behind any man of his day in physical beauty, or the general dignity of his manner of life, or the number of prizes he had won. Again, when he gave up athletics and devoted himself to politics and the service of his country, he gained no less reputation in this department than in his former pursuit. For he was removed from the Philistinism that usually characterises athletes, and was looked upon as in the highest degree an able and clear-headed politician....

11. Philip, king of the Macedonians, being desirous of seizing the acropolis of Messene, told the leaders of the city that he wished to see it and to sacrifice to Zeus, and accordingly walked up thither with his attendants and joined in the sacrifice. When, according to custom, the entrails of the slaughtered victims were brought to him, he took them in his hands, and, turning round a little to one side, held them out to Aratus and asked him "what he thought the sacrifices indicated? To quit the citadel or hold it?" Thereupon Demetrius struck in on the spur of the moment by saying, "If you have the heart of an augur, — to quit it as quick as you can: but if of a gallant and wise king, to keep it, lest if you quit it now you may never have so good an opportunity again: for it is by thus holding the two horns that you can alone keep the ox under your control." By the "two horns" he meant Ithome and the Acrocorinthus, and by the "ox" the Peloponnese. Thereupon Philip turned to Aratus and said, "And do you give the same advice?" Aratus not making any answer at once, he urged him to speak his real opinion. After some hesitation he said, "If you can get possession of this place without treachery to the Messenians, I advise you to do so; but if, by the act of occupying this citadel with a guard, you shall ruin all the citadels, and the guard wherewith the allies were protected when they came into your hands from Antigonus" (meaning by that, confidence), "consider whether it is not better to take your men away and leave the confidence there, and with it guard the Messenians, and the other allies as well." As far as his own inclination was concerned, Philip was ready enough to commit an act of treachery, as his own subsequent conduct proved: but having been sharply rebuked a little while before by the younger Aratus for his destruction of human life; and seeing that, on the present occasion, the elder spoke with boldness and authority, and begged him not to neglect his advice, he gave in from sheer shame, and taking the latter by his right hand, said, "Then let us go back the same way we came."



12. I wish here to stop in my narrative in order to speak briefly of the character of Philip, because this was the beginning of the change and deterioration in it. For I think that no more telling example can be proposed to practical statesmen who wish to correct their ideas by a study of history. For the splendour of his early career, and the brilliancy of his genius, have caused the dispositions for good and evil displayed by this king to be more conspicuous and widely known throughout Greece than is the case with any other man; as well as the contrast between the results accompanying the display of those opposite tendencies.

Now that, upon his accession to the throne, Thessaly, Macedonia, and in fact all parts of his own kingdom were more thoroughly loyal and well disposed to him, young as he was on his succeeding to the government of Macedonia, than they had ever been to any of his predecessors, may be without difficulty inferred from the following fact. Though he was with extreme frequency forced to leave Macedonia by the Aetolian and Lacedaemonian wars, not only was there no disturbance in these countries, but not a single one of the neighbouring barbarians ventured to touch Macedonia. It would be impossible, again, to speak in strong enough terms of the affection of Alexander, Chrysogonus, and his other friends towards him; or that of the Epirotes, Acarnanians, and all those on whom he had within a short time conferred great benefits. On the whole, if one may use a somewhat hyperbolical phrase, I think it has been said of Philip with very great propriety, that his beneficent policy had made him "The darling of all Greece." And it is a conspicuous and striking proof of the advantage of lofty principle and strict integrity, that the Cretans, having at length come to an understanding with each other and made a national alliance, selected Philip to arbitrate between them; and that this settlement was completed without an appeal to arms and without danger, — a thing for which it would be difficult to find a precedent in similar circumstances. From the time of his exploits at Messene all this was utterly changed. And it was natural that it should be so. For his purposes being now entirely reversed, it inevitably followed that men's opinions of him should be reversed also, as well as the success of his various undertakings. This actually was the case, as will become evident to attentive students from what I am now about to relate...

13. Aratus seeing that Philip was now openly engaging in war with Rome, and entirely changed in his policy toward his allies, with difficulty diverted him from his intention by suggesting numerous difficulties and scruples.

I wish now to remind my readers of what, in my fifth Book, I put forward merely as a promise and unsupported statement, but which has now been confirmed by facts; in order that I may not leave any proposition of

mine unproved or open to question. In the course of my history of the Aetolian war, where I had to relate the violent proceedings of Philip in destroying the colonnades and other sacred objects at Thermus; and added that, in consideration of his youth, the blame of these measures ought not to be referred to Philip so much as to his advisers; I then remarked that the life of Aratus sufficiently proved that he would not have committed such an act of wickedness, but that such principles exactly suited Demetrius of Pharos; and I promised to make this clear from what I was next to narrate. I thereby designedly postponed the demonstration of the truth of my assertion, till I had come to the period of which I have just been speaking; that, namely, in which with the presence of Demetrius, and in the absence of Aratus, who arrived a day too late, Philip made the first step in his career of crime; and, as though from the first taste of human blood and murder and treason to his allies, was changed not into a wolf from a man, as in the Arcadian fable mentioned by Plato, but from a king into a savage tyrant. But a still more decisive proof of the sentiments of these two men is furnished by the plot against the citadel of Messene, and may help us to make up our minds which of the two were responsible for the proceedings in the Aetolian war; and, when we are satisfied on that point, it will be easy to form a judgment on the differences of their principles.

14. For as in this instance, under the influence of Aratus, Philip refrained from actually breaking faith with the Messenians in regard to the citadel; and thus, to use a common expression, poured a little balm into the wide wound which his slaughters had caused: so in the Aetolian war, when under the influence of Demetrius, he sinned against the gods by destroying the objects consecrated to them, and against man by transgressing the laws of war; and entirely deserted his original principles, by showing himself an implacable and bitter foe to all who opposed him. The same remark applies to the Cretan business.<sup>2</sup> As long as he employed Aratus as his chief director, not only without doing injustice to a single islander, but without even causing them any vexation, he kept the whole Cretan people under control; and led all the Greeks to regard him with favour, owing to the greatness of character which he displayed. So again, when under the guidance of Demetrius, he became the cause of the misfortunes I have described to the Messenians, he at once lost the good-will of the allies and his credit with the rest of Greece. Such a decisive influence for good or evil in the security of their government has the choice by youthful sovereigns of the friends who are to surround them; though it is a subject on which by some unaccountable carelessness they take not the smallest care....

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *Aratus*, ch. 48.

The War of Antiochus with Achaeus  
(See 5, 107)

15. Round Sardis ceaseless and protracted skirmishes were taking place and fighting by night and day, both armies inventing every possible kind of plot and counterplot against each other: to describe which in detail would be as useless as it would be in the last degree wearisome. At last, when the siege had already entered upon its second year, Lagoras the Cretan came forward. He had had a considerable experience in war, and had learnt that as a rule cities fall into the hands of their enemies most easily from some neglect on the part of their inhabitants, when, trusting to the natural or artificial strength of their defences, they neglect to keep proper guard and become thoroughly careless. He had observed too, that in such fortified cities captures were effected at the points of greatest strength, which were believed to have been despaired of by the enemy. So in the present instance, when he saw that the prevailing notion of the strength of Sardis caused the whole army to despair of taking it by storm, and to believe that the one hope of getting it was by starving it out, he gave all the closer attention to the subject; and eagerly scanned every possible method of making an attempt to capture the town. Having observed therefore that a portion of the wall was unguarded, near a place called the Saw, which unites the citadel and city, he conceived the hope and idea of performing this exploit. He had discovered the carelessness of the men guarding this wall from the following circumstance. The place was extremely precipitous: and there was a deep gully below, into which dead bodies from the city, and the offal of horses and beasts of burden that died, were accustomed to be thrown; and in this place therefore there was always a great number of vultures and other birds collected. Having observed, then, that when these creatures were gorged, they always sat undisturbed upon the cliffs and the wall, he concluded that the wall must necessarily be left unguarded and deserted for the larger part of the day. Accordingly, under cover of night, he went to the spot and carefully examined the possibilities of approaching it and setting ladders; and finding that this was possible at one particular rock, he communicated the facts to the king.

16. Antiochus encouraged the attempt and urged Lagoras to carry it out. The latter promised to do his best, and desired the king to join with him Theodotus the Aetolian, and Dionysius the commander of his bodyguard, with orders to devote them to assist him in carrying out the intended enterprise. The king at once granted his request, and these officers agreed to undertake it: and having held a consultation on the whole subject, they

waited for a night on which there should be no moon just before daybreak. Such a night having arrived, on the day on which they intended to act, an hour before sunset, they selected from the whole army fifteen of the strongest and most courageous men to carry the ladders, and also to mount with them and share in the daring attempt. After these they selected thirty others, to remain in reserve at a certain distance; that, as soon as they had themselves climbed over the walls, and come to the nearest gate, the thirty might come up to it from the outside and try to knock off the hinges and fastenings, while they on the inside cut the cross bar and bolt pins.<sup>3</sup> They also selected two thousand men to follow behind the thirty, who were to rush into the town with them and seize the area of the theatre, which was a favourable position to hold against those on the citadel, as well as those in the town. To prevent suspicion of the truth getting about, owing to the picking out of the men, the king gave out that the Aetolians were about to throw themselves into the town through a certain gully, and that it was necessary, in view of that information, to take energetic measures to prevent them.

17. When Lagoras and his party had made all their preparations, as soon as the moon set, they came stealthily to the foot of the cliffs with their scaling ladders, and ensconced themselves under a certain overhanging rock. When day broke, and the picket as usual broke up from that spot; and the king in the ordinary way told off some men to take their usual posts, and led the main body on to the hippodrome and drew them up; at first no one suspected what was going on. But when two ladders were fixed, and Dionysius led the way up one, and Lagoras up the other, there was excitement and a stir throughout the camp. For while the climbing party were not visible to the people in the town, or to Achaeus in the citadel, because of the beetling brow of the rock, their bold and adventurous ascent was in full view of the camp; which accordingly was divided in feeling between astonishment at the strangeness of the spectacle, and a nervous horror of what was going to happen next, all standing dumb with exulting wonder. Observing the excitement in the camp, and wishing to divert the

<sup>3</sup> βαλανάγρας . The βαλανάγρα was a straight piece of wood with upright pins corresponding with those that fall into the bolt (the βάλανοι), and which are pushed up by it. It was thus used as a key which could be taken out and kept by the Commandant, as in Herod. 3, 155; Thucyd. 2, 4. But Polybius here seems to use it as equivalent to ba/lanos. See Aeneas Tact. 18–20, who recommends that the μόχλος should be sheeted with iron to prevent this very operation. CP. 4, 57. What he means by ζύγωμα on the outside (here translated “fastenings”) is also somewhat doubtful. From Hesychius, s. v. ἐπιξευκτήρ, it might be conjectured that chains of some kind were intended. Casaubon supposed it to be a cross bar similar to the μόχλος inside, and Schw. to represent the posts and the lintel connecting them.

attention both of his own men and of those in the city from what was going on, the king ordered an advance; and delivered an attack upon the gates on the other side of the town, called the Persian gates. Seeing from the citadel the unwonted stir in the camp, Achaeus was for some time at a loss to know what to do, being puzzled to account for it, and quite unable to see what was taking place. However he despatched a force to oppose the enemy at the gate; whose assistance was slow in arriving, because they had to descend from the citadel by a narrow and precipitous path. But Aribazus, the commandant of the town, went unsuspectingly to the gates on which he saw Antiochus advancing; and caused some of his men to mount the wall, and sent others out through the gate, with orders to hinder the approaching enemies, and come to close quarters with them.

18. Meanwhile Lagoras, Theodotus, Dionysius, and their men had climbed the rocks and had arrived at the gate nearest them; and some of them were engaged in fighting the troops sent from the citadel to oppose them, while others were cutting through the bars; and at the same time the party outside told off for that service were doing the same. The gates having thus been quickly forced open, the two thousand entered and occupied the area round the theatre. On this all the men from the walls, and from the Persian gate, to which Aribazus had already led a relieving force, rushed in hot haste to pass the word to attack the enemy within the gates. The result was that, the gate having been opened as they retreated, some of the king's army rushed in along with the retiring garrison; and, when they had thus taken possession of the gate, they were followed by an unbroken stream of their comrades; some of whom poured through the gate, while others employed themselves in bursting open other gates in the vicinity. Aribazus and all the men in the city, after a brief struggle against the enemy who had thus got within the walls, fled with all speed to the citadel. After that, Theodotus and Lagoras and their party remained on the ground near the theatre, determining with great good sense and soldier-like prudence to form a reserve until the whole operation was completed; while the main body rushed in on every side and occupied the town. And now by dint of some putting all they met to the sword, others setting fire to the houses, others devoting themselves to plunder and taking booty, the destruction and sacking of the town was completed. Thus did Antiochus become master of Sardis....

# The Histories of Polybius

## Book Eight

### The Necessity of Caution in Dealing with an Enemy

1. Tiberius a Roman Pro-consul fell into an ambushade, and, after offering with his attendants a gallant resistance to the enemy, was killed.

Now in regard to such catastrophes, whether it is right to blame or pardon the sufferers is by no means a safe matter on which to pronounce an opinion; because it has happened to several men, who have been perfectly correct in all their actions, to fall into these misfortunes, equally with those who do not scruple to transgress principles of right confirmed by the consent of mankind. We should not however idly refrain from pronouncing an opinion: but should blame or condone this or that general, after a review of the necessities of the moment and the circumstances of the case. And my observation will be rendered evident by the following instances. Archidamus, king of the Lacedaemonians, alarmed at the love of power which he observed in Cleomenes, fled from Sparta; but being not long afterwards persuaded to return, put himself in the power of the latter. The consequence was that he lost his kingdom and his life together,<sup>4</sup> and left a character not to be defended before posterity on the score of prudence; for while affairs remained in the same state, and the ambition and power of Cleomenes remained in exactly the same position, how could he expect to meet any other fate than he did, if he put himself in the hands of the very men from whom he had before barely escaped destruction by flight? Again Pelopidas of Thebes, though acquainted with the unprincipled character of the tyrant Alexander, and though he knew thoroughly well that every tyrant regards the leaders of liberty as his bitterest enemies, first took upon himself to persuade Epaminondas to stand forth as the champion of democracy, not only in Thebes, but in all Greece also; and then, being in Thessaly in arms, for the express purpose of destroying the absolute rule of Alexander, he yet twice ventured to undertake a mission to him. The consequence was that he fell into the hands of his enemies, did great damage to Thebes, and ruined the reputation he had acquired before; and all by putting a rash and ill advised confidence in the very last person in whom he ought to have done

<sup>4</sup> See 5, 37. According to Phylarchus the murder of Archidamus was against the wish of Cleomenes. Plut. *Cleom.* 5.

so. Very similar to these cases is that of the Roman Consul Gnaeus Cornelius who fell in the Sicilian war by imprudently putting himself in the power of the enemy. And many parallel cases might be quoted.

2. The conclusion, then, is that those who put themselves in the power of the enemy from want of proper precaution deserve blame; but those who use every practicable precaution not so: for to trust absolutely no one is to make all action impossible; but reasonable action, taken after receiving adequate security, cannot be censured. Adequate securities are oaths, children, wives, and, strongest of all, a blameless past. To be betrayed and entrapped by such a security as any of these is a slur, not on the deceived, but on the deceiver. The first object then should be to seek such securities as it is impossible for the recipient of the confidence to evade; but since such are rare, the next best thing will be to take every reasonable precaution one's self: and then, if we meet with any disaster, we shall at least be acquitted of wrong conduct by the lookers on. And this has been the case with many before now: of which the most conspicuous example, and the one nearest to the times on which we are engaged, will be the fate of Achaeus. He omitted no possible precaution for securing his safety, but thought of everything that it was possible for human ingenuity to conceive: and yet he fell into the power of his enemies. In this instance his misfortune procured the pity and pardon of the outside world for the victim, and nothing but disparagement and loathing for the successful perpetrators....

3. It appears to me not to be alien to my general purpose, and the plan which I originally laid down, to recall the attention of my readers to the magnitude of the events, and the persistency of purpose displayed by the two States of Rome and Carthage. For who could think it otherwise than remarkable that these two powers, while engaged in so serious a war for the possession of Italy, and one no less serious for that of Iberia; and being still both of them equally balanced between uncertain hopes, and fears for the future of these wars, and confronted at the very time with battles equally formidable to either, should yet not be content with their existing undertakings: but should raise another controversy as to the possession of Sardinia and Sicily; and not content with merely hoping for all these things, should grasp at them with all the resources of their wealth and warlike forces? Indeed the more we examine into details the greater becomes our astonishment. The Romans had two complete armies under the two Consuls on active service in Italy; two in Iberia in which Gnaeus Cornelius commanded the land, Publius Cornelius the naval forces; and naturally the same was the case with the Carthaginians. But besides this, a Roman fleet was anchored off Greece, watching it and the movements of Philip, of which first Marcus Valerius, and afterward Publius Sulpicius was in command.

Along with all these undertakings Appius with a hundred quinqueremes, and Marcus Claudius with an army, were threatening Sicily; while Hamilcar was doing the same on the side of the Carthaginians.

4. By means of these facts I presume that what I more than once asserted at the beginning of my work is now shown by actual experience to deserve unmixed credit. I mean my assertion, that it is impossible for historians of particular places to get a view of universal history. For how is it possible for a man who has only read a separate history of Sicilian or Spanish affairs to understand and grasp the greatness of the events? Or, what is still more important, in what manner and under what form of polity fortune brought to pass that most surprising of all revolutions that have happened in our time, I mean the reduction of all known parts of the world under one rule and governance, a thing unprecedented in the history of mankind. In what manner the Romans took Syracuse or Iberia may be possibly learned to a certain extent by means of such particular histories; but how they arrived at universal supremacy, and what opposition their grand designs met with in particular places, or what on the other hand contributed to their success, and at what epochs, this it is difficult to take in without the aid of universal history. Nor, again, is it easy to appreciate the greatness of their achievements except by the latter method. For the fact of the Romans having sought to gain Iberia, or at another time Sicily; or having gone on a campaign with military and naval forces, told by itself, would not be anything very wonderful. But if we learn that these were all done at once, and that many more undertakings were in course of accomplishment at the same time, — all at the cost of one government and commonwealth; and if we see what dangers and wars in their own territory were, at the very time, encumbering the men who had all these things on hand: thus, and only thus, will the astonishing nature of the events fully dawn upon us, and obtain the attention which they deserve. So much for those who suppose that by studying an episode they have become acquainted with universal history....

#### The Siege of Syracuse

*Hieronymus succeeded his grandfather, Hiero, in B.C. 216, and was assassinated in Leontini thirteen months afterwards, in B.C. 215. His death, however, did not bring more peaceful relations between Syracuse and Rome, but only gave the Syracusans more able leaders (Livy, 24, 21). After the slaughter of Themistius and Andramodorus, who had been elected on the board of Generals, and the cruel murder of all the royal family, Epicycles and Hippocrates, Syracusans by descent, but born and brought up at Carthage, and who had been sent to Syracuse on a special mission by*



*Hannibal, — were elected into the vacant places in the board of Generals. They became the leading spirits in the Syracusan government, and for a time kept up an appearance of wishing to come to terms with Rome; and legates were actually sent to Marcellus, at Morgantia (near Catana). But when the Carthaginian fleet arrived at Pachynus, Hippocrates and Epicydes threw off their mask, and declared that the other magistrates were betraying the town to the Romans. This accusation was rendered more specious by the appearance of Appius with a Roman fleet at the mouth of the harbour. A rush was made to the shore by the inhabitants to prevent the Romans landing; and the tumult was with difficulty composed by the wisdom of one of the magistrates, Apollonides, who persuaded the people to vote for the peace with Rome (B.C. 215. Livy, 24, 21–28). But Hippocrates and Epicydes determined not to acknowledge the peace: they therefore provoked the Romans by plundering in or near the Roman pale,<sup>5</sup> and then took refuge in Leontini. Marcellus complained at Syracuse, but was told that Leontini was not within Syracusan jurisdiction. Marcellus, therefore, took Leontini, Hippocrates and Epicydes managed to escape, and by a mixture of force and fraud contrived soon afterwards to force their way into Syracuse, seize and put to death most of the generals, and induce the excited mob, whom they had inspired with the utmost dread of being betrayed to Rome, to elect them sole generals (Livy, 24, 29–32). The Romans at once ordered Syracuse to be besieged, giving out that they were coming not to wage war with the inhabitants, but to deliver them.*

5. When Epicydes and Hippocrates had occupied Syracuse, and had alienated the rest of the citizens with themselves from the friendship of Rome, the Romans who had already been informed of the murder of Hieronymus, tyrant of Syracuse, appointed Appius Claudius as Pro-praetor to command a land force, while Marcus Claudius Marcellus commanded the fleet. These officers took up a position not far from Syracuse, and determined to assault the town from the land at Hexapylus, and by sea at what was called Stoa Scytice in Achradina, where the wall has its foundation close down to the sea. Having prepared their wicker pent-houses, and darts, and other siege material, they felt confident that, with so many hands employed, they would in five days get their works in such an advanced state as to give them the advantage over the enemy. But in this they did not take into account the abilities of Archimedes; nor calculate on the truth that, in certain circumstances, the genius of one man is more effective than any

<sup>5</sup> To which proceedings may be referred a sentence of Polybius preserved by Suidas, s.v. διεσκευασμένην — “They send out certain Cretans, as though on a raid, giving them a sham despatch to carry.” See Livy, 24, 30–31.

numbers whatever.<sup>6</sup> However they now learnt it by experience. The city was strong from the fact of its encircling wall lying along a chain of hills with overhanging brows, the ascent of which was no easy task, even with no one to hinder it, except at certain definite points. Taking advantage of this, Archimedes had constructed such defences both in the town, and at the places where an attack might be made by sea, that the garrison would have everything at hand which they might require at any moment, and be ready to meet without delay whatever the enemy might attempt against them.

6. The attack was begun by Appius bringing his penthouses, and scaling ladders, and attempting to fix the latter against that part of the wall which abuts on Hexapylus towards the east. At the same time Marcus Claudius Marcellus with sixty quinqueremes was making a descent upon Achradina. Each of these vessels were full of men armed with bows and slings and javelins, with which to dislodge those who fought on the battlements. As well as these vessels he had eight quinqueremes in pairs. Each pair had had their oars removed, one on the larboard and the other on the starboard side, and then had been lashed together on the sides thus left bare. On these double vessels, rowed by the outer oars of each of the pair, they brought up under the walls some engines called "Sambucae," the construction of which was as follows:-A ladder was made four feet broad, and of a height to reach the top of the wall from the place where its foot had to rest; each side of the ladder was protected by a railing, and a covering or pent-house was added overhead. It was then placed so that its foot rested across the sides of the lashed-together vessels, which touched each other with its other extremity protruding a considerable way beyond the prows. On the tops of the masts pulleys were fixed with ropes: and when the engines were about to be used, men standing on the sterns of the vessels drew the ropes tied to the head of the ladder, while others standing on the prows assisted the raising of the machine and kept it steady with long poles. Having then brought the ships close in shore by using the outer oars of both vessels they tried to let the machine down upon the wall. At the head of the ladder was fixed a wooden stage secured on three sides by wicker-shields, upon which stood four men who fought and struggled with those who tried to prevent the Sambuca from being made to rest on the battlements. But when they have fixed it and so got above the level of the top of the wall, the four men unfasten the wicker-shields from either side of the stage, and walk out upon the battlements or towers as the case may be; they are followed by their comrades coming up by the Sambuca, since the ladder's foot is safely secured with ropes and stands upon both the ships. This construction has got the name of

<sup>6</sup> Cp. 1, 35.

“Sambuca,” or “Harp,” for the natural reason, that when it is raised the combination of the ship and ladder has very much the appearance of such an instrument.

7. With such contrivances and preparations were the Romans intending to assault the towers. But Archimedes had constructed catapults to suit every range; and as the ships sailing up were still at a considerable distance, he so wounded the enemy with stones and darts, from the tighter wound and longer engines, as to harass and perplex them to the last degree; and when these began to carry over their heads, he used smaller engines graduated according to the range required from time to time, and by this means caused so much confusion among them as to altogether check their advance and attack; and finally Marcellus was reduced in despair to bringing up his ships under cover of night. But when they had come close to land, and so too near to be hit by the catapults, they found that Archimedes had prepared another contrivance against the soldiers who fought from the decks. He had pierced the wall as high as a man’s stature with numerous loop-holes, which, on the outside, were about as big as the palm of the hand. Inside the wall he stationed archers and cross-bows, or scorpions,<sup>7</sup> and by the volleys discharged through these he made the marines useless. By these means he not only baffled the enemy, whether at a distance or close at hand, but also killed the greater number of them. As often, too, as they tried to work their Sambucaae, he had engines ready all along the walls, not visible at other times, but which suddenly reared themselves above the wall from inside, when the moment for their use had come, and stretched their beams far over the battlements, some of them carrying stones weighing as much as ten talents, and others great masses of lead. So whenever the Sambucaae were approaching, these beams swung round on their pivot the required distance, and by means of a rope running through a pulley dropped the stone upon the Sambucaae, with the result that it not only smashed the machine itself to pieces, but put the ship also and all on board into the most serious danger.

8. Other machines which he invented were directed against storming parties, who, advancing under the protection of penthouses, were secured by them from being hurt by missiles shot through the walls. Against these he either shot stones big enough to drive the marines from the prow; or let down an iron hand swung on a chain, by which the man who guided the crane, having fastened on some part of the prow where he could get a hold, pressed down the lever of the machine inside the wall; and when he had thus

<sup>7</sup> σκοπίδια, mentioned among a number of similar engines in I Macc. 6, 51. Plutarch calls them σκοπίοι, and explains that they only carried a short distance, but, being concealed, gave wounds at close quarters; hence, doubtless, their name.

lifted the prow and made the vessel rest upright on its stern, he fastened the lever of his machine so that it could not be moved; and then suddenly slackened the hand and chain by means of a rope and pulley. The result was that many of the vessels heeled over and fell on their sides: some completely capsized; while the greater number, by their prows coming down suddenly from a height, dipped low in the sea, shipped a great quantity of water, and became a scene of the utmost confusion. Though reduced almost to despair by these baffling inventions of Archimedes, and though he saw that all his attempts were repulsed by the garrison with mockery on their part and loss to himself, Marcellus could not yet refrain from making a joke at his own expense, saying that "Archimedes was using his ships to ladle out the seawater, but that his 'harps' not having been invited to the party were buffeted and turned out with disgrace." Such was the end of the attempt at storming Syracuse by sea.

9. Nor was Appius Claudius more successful. He, too, was compelled by similar difficulties to desist from the attempt; for while his men were still at a considerable distance from the wall, they began falling by the stones and shots from the engines and catapults. The volleys of missiles, indeed, were extraordinarily rapid and sharp, for their construction had been provided for by all the liberality of a Hiero, and had been planned and engineered by the skill of an Archimedes. Moreover, when they did at length get near the walls, they were prevented from making an assault by the unceasing fire through the loop-holes, which I mentioned before; or if they tried to carry the place under cover of pent-houses, they were killed by the stones and beams let down upon their heads. The garrison also did them no little damage with those hands at the end of their engines; for they used to lift the men, armour, and all, into the air, and then throw them down. At last Appius retired into the camp, and summoning the Tribunes to a council of war, decided to try every possible means of taking Syracuse except a storm. And this decision they carried out; for during the eight months of siege which followed, though there was no stratagem or measure of daring which they did not attempt, they never again ventured to attempt a storm. So true it is that one man and one intellect, properly qualified for the particular undertaking, is a host in itself and of extraordinary efficacy. In this instance, at any rate, we find the Romans confident that their forces by land and sea would enable them to become masters of the town, if only one old man could be got rid of; while as long as he remained there, they did not venture even to think of making the attempt, at least by any method which made it possible for Archimedes to oppose them. They believed, however, that their best chance of reducing the garrison was by a failure of provisions sufficient for so large a number as were within the town; they therefore relied upon

this hope, and with their ships tried to cut off their supplies by sea, and with their army by land. But desiring that the time during which they were blockading Syracuse should not be entirely wasted, but that some addition should be made to their power in other parts of the country, the two commanders separated and divided the troops between them: Appius Claudius keeping two-thirds and continuing the blockade, while Marcus Marcellus with the remaining third went to attack the cities that sided with the Carthaginians....

10. Upon arriving in Messenia Philip began devastating the country, like an open enemy, with more passion than reason; for while pursuing this continuous course of injurious actions, he expected, it appears to me, that the sufferers would feel no anger or hatred towards him. I was induced to speak of these proceedings in somewhat full detail in the present as well as in the last book, not alone by the same motives as those which I have assigned for other parts of my work, but also by the fact that of our historians, some have entirely omitted this Messenian episode; while others from love or fear of kings have maintained that, so far from the outrages committed by Philip in defiance of religion and law upon the Messenians being a subject of blame, his actions were on the contrary matters for praise and gratulation. But it is not only in regard to the Messenians that we may notice the historians of Philip acting thus; they have done much the same in other cases also. And the result is that their compositions have the appearance of a panegyric rather than of a history. I however hold that an historian ought neither to blame or praise kings untruly, as has often been done; but to make what we say consistent with what has been written before, and tally with the characters of the several persons in question. But it may be urged perhaps that this is easy to say, but very difficult to carry out; because situations and circumstances are so many and various, to which men have to give way in the course of their life, and which prevent them from speaking out their real opinions. This may excuse some, but not others.

11. I do not know any one who deserves more blame in this particular than Theopompus. In the beginning of his history of Philip he said that what chiefly induced him to undertake it was the fact that Europe had never produced such a man as Philip son of Amyntas; and then immediately afterwards, both in his preface and in the whole course of his history, he represents this king as so madly addicted to women, that he did all that in him lay to ruin his own family by this inordinate passion; as having behaved with the grossest unfairness and perfidy to his friends and allies; as having enslaved and treacherously seized a vast number of towns by force or fraud; and as having been besides so violently addicted to strong drink, that he was often seen by his friends drunk in open day. But if any one will take the

trouble to read the opening passage of his forty ninth book, he would be indeed astonished at this writer's extravagance. Besides his other strange statements he has ventured to write as follows—for I here subjoin his actual words: — "If there was any one in all Greece, or among the Barbarians, whose character was lascivious and shameless, he was invariably attracted to Philip's court in Macedonia and got the title of 'the king's companion.' For it was Philip's constant habit to reject those who lived respectably and were careful of their property; but to honour and promote those who were extravagant, and passed their lives in drinking and dicing. His influence accordingly tended not only to confirm them in these vices, but to make them proficient in every kind of rascality and lewdness. What vice or infamy did they not possess? What was there virtuous or of good report that they did not lack? Some of them, men as they were, were ever clean shaven and smooth-skinned; and even bearded men did not shrink from mutual defilement. They took about with them two or three slaves of their lust, while submitting to the same shameful service themselves. The men whom they called companions deserved a grosser name, and the title of soldier was but a cover to mercenary vice; for, though bloodthirsty by nature, they were lascivious by habit. In a word, to make a long story short, especially as I have such a mass of matter to deal with, I believe that the so called 'friends' and 'companions' of Philip were more bestial in nature and character than the Centaurs who lived on Pelion, or the Laestrygones who inhabited the Leontine plain, or in fact any other monsters whatever."<sup>8</sup>

12. Who would not disapprove of such bitterness and intemperance of language in an historian? It is not only because his words contradict his opening statement that he deserves stricture; but also because he has libelled the king and his friends; and still more because his falsehood is expressed in disgusting and unbecoming words. If he had been speaking of Sardanapalus, or one of his associates, he could hardly have ventured to use such foul language; and what that monarch's principles and debauchery were in his lifetime we gather from the inscription on his tomb, which runs thus:

"The joys I had from love or wine  
Or dainty meats — those now are mine."

But when speaking of Philip and his friends, a man ought to be on his guard, not so much of accusing them of effeminacy and want of courage, or still more of shameless immorality, but on the contrary lest he should prove

<sup>8</sup> See also Athenaeus, 4, 166–167. Theopompus of Chius was a contemporary of Philip II. and Alexander, having been born about B.C. 376–372.

unequal to express their praises in a manner worthy of their manliness, indefatigable energy, and the general virtue of their character. It is notorious that by their energy and boldness they raised the Macedonian Empire from a most insignificant monarchy to the first rank in reputation and extent. And, putting aside the achievements of Philip, what was accomplished by them after his death, under the rule of Alexander, has secured for them a reputation for valour with posterity universally acknowledged. For although a large share of the credit must perhaps be given to Alexander, as the presiding genius of the whole, though so young a man; yet no less is due to his coadjutors and friends, who won many wonderful victories over the enemy; endured numerous desperate labours, dangers and sufferings; and, though put into possession of the most ample wealth, and the most abundant means of gratifying all their desires, never lost their bodily vigour by these means, or contracted tastes for violence or debauchery. On the contrary, all those who were associated with Philip, and afterwards with Alexander, became truly royal in greatness of soul, temperance of life, and courage. Nor is it necessary to mention any names: but after Alexander's death, in their mutual rivalries for the possession of various parts of nearly all the world, they filled a very large number of histories with the record of their glorious deeds. We may admit then that the bitter invective of the historian Timaeus against Agathocles, despot of Sicily, though it seems unmeasured, has yet some reason in it, — for it is directed against a personal enemy, a bad man, and a tyrant; but that of Theopompus is too scurrilous to be taken seriously.

13. For, after premising that he is going to write about a king most richly endowed by nature with virtue, he has raked up against him every shameful and atrocious charge that he could find. There are therefore but two alternatives: either this writer in the preface to his work has shown himself a liar and a flatterer; or in the body of that history a fool and utter simpleton, if he imagined that by senseless and improper invective he would either increase his own credit, or gain great acceptance for his laudatory expressions about Philip.

But the fact is that the general plan of this writer is one also which can meet with no one's approval. For having undertaken to write a Greek History from the point at which Thucydides left off, when he got near the period of the battle of Leuctra, and the most splendid exploits of the Greeks, he threw aside Greece and its achievements in the middle of his story, and, changing his purpose, undertook to write the history of Philip. And yet it would have been far more telling and fair to have included the actions of Philip in the general history of Greece, than the history of Greece in that of Philip. For one cannot conceive any one, who had been preoccupied by the study of a royal government, hesitating, if he got the power and opportunity,

to transfer his attention to the great name and splendid personality of a nation like Greece; but no one in his senses, after beginning with the latter, would have exchanged it for the showy biography of a tyrant. Now what could it have been that compelled Theopompus to overlook such inconsistencies? Nothing surely but this, that whereas the aim of his original history was honour, that of his history of Philip was expediency. As to this deviation from the right path however, which made him change the theme of his history, he might perhaps have had something to say, if any one had questioned him about it; but as to his abominable language about the king's friends, I do not think that he could have said a word of defence, but must have owned to a serious breach of propriety....

14. Though regarding the Messenians as open enemies, Philip was unable to inflict serious damage upon them, in spite of his setting to work to devastate their territory; but he was guilty of abominable conduct of the worst description to men who had been his most intimate friends. For on the elder Aratus showing disapproval of his proceedings at Messene, he caused him not long afterwards to be made away with by poison, through the agency of Taurion who had charge of his interests in the Peloponnese. The crime was not known at the time by other people; for the drug was not one of those which kill on the spot, but was a slow poison producing a morbid state of the body. Aratus himself however was fully aware of the cause of his illness; and showed that he was so by the following circumstance. Though he kept the secret from the rest of the world, he did not conceal it from one of his servants named Cepholon, with whom he was on terms of great affection. This man waited on him during his illness with great assiduity, and having one day pointed out some spittle on the wall which was stained with blood, Aratus remarked, "That is the reward I have got for my friendship to Philip." Such a grand and noble thing is disinterested virtue, that the sufferer was more ashamed, than the inflicter of the injury, of having it known, that, after so many splendid services performed in the interests of Philip, he had got such a return as that for his loyalty.<sup>9</sup>

In consequence of having been so often elected Strategus of the Achaean league, and of having performed so many splendid services for that people, Aratus after his death met with the honours he deserved, both in his own native city and from the league as a body. They voted him sacrifices and the honours of heroship, and in a word every thing calculated to

<sup>9</sup> The accusation of administering slow poisons is a very common one, as readers of mediæval history know. But the ignorance of the conditions of health was too great to allow us to accept them without question. It is doubtful whether drugs, acting in this particular way, were known to the ancients; and certainly spitting blood would be no conclusive evidence of the presence of poison. See Creighton's *History of the Papacy*, vol. iv. Append.



perpetuate his memory; so that, if the departed have any consciousness, it is but reasonable to think that he feels pleasure at the gratitude of the Achaeans, and at the thought of the hardships and dangers he endured in his life....

#### Philip Takes Lissus in Illyria, B.C. 213

15. Philip had long had his thoughts fixed upon Lissus and its citadel; and, being anxious to become master of those places, he started with his army, and after two days' march got through the pass and pitched his camp on the bank of the river Ardaxanus, not far from the town. He found on surveying the place that the fortifications of Lissus, both on the side of the sea and of the land, were exceedingly strong both by nature and art; and that the citadel, which was near it, from its extraordinary height and its other sources of strength, looked more than any one could hope to carry by storm. He therefore gave up all hope of the latter, but did not entirely despair of taking the town. He observed that there was a space between Lissus and the foot of the Acrolissus which was fairly well suited for making an attempt upon the town. He conceived the idea therefore of bringing on a skirmish in this space, and then employing a stratagem suited to the circumstances of the case. Having given his men a day for rest; and having in the course of it addressed them in suitable words of exhortation; he hid the greater and most effective part of his light-armed troops during the night in some woody gulleys, close to this space on the land side; and next morning marched to the other side of the town next the sea, with his peltasts and the rest of his light-armed. Having thus marched round the town, and arrived at this spot, he made a show of intending to assault it at that point. Now as Philip's advent had been no secret, a large body of men from the surrounding country of Illyria had flocked into Lissus; but feeling confidence in the strength of the citadel, they had assigned a very moderate number of men to garrison it.

16. As soon therefore as the Macedonians approached, they began pouring out of the town, confident in their numbers and in the strength of the places. The king stationed his peltasts on the level ground, and ordered the light-armed troops to advance towards the hills and energetically engage the enemy. These orders being obeyed, the fight remained doubtful for a time; but presently Philip's men yielded to the inequality of the ground, and the superior number of the enemy, and gave way. Upon their retreating within the ranks of the peltasts, the sallying party advanced with feelings of contempt, and having descended to the same level as the peltasts joined battle with them. But the garrison of the citadel seeing Philip moving his divisions one after the other slowly to the rear, and believing that he was

abandoning the field, allowed themselves to be insensibly decoyed out, in their confidence in the strength of their fortifications; and thus, leaving the citadel by degrees, kept pouring down by bye-ways into the lower plain, under the belief that they would have an opportunity of getting booty and completing the enemy's discomfiture. Meanwhile the division, which had been lying concealed on the side of the mainland, rose without being observed, and advanced at a rapid pace. At their approach the peltasts also wheeled round and charged the enemy. On this the troops from Lissus were thrown into confusion, and, after a stragglng retreat, got safely back into the town; while the garrison which had abandoned the citadel got cut off from it by the rising of the troops which had been lying in ambush. The result accordingly was that what seemed hopeless, namely the capture of the citadel, was effected at once and without any fighting; while Lissus did not fall until next day, and then only after desperate struggles, the Macedonians assaulting with vigour and even terrific fury. Thus Philip having, beyond all expectation, made himself master of these places, reduced by this exploit all the neighbouring populations to obedience; so much so that the greater number of the Illyrians voluntarily surrendered their cities to his protection; for it had come to be believed that, after the storming of such strongholds as these, no fortification and no provision for security could be of any avail against the might of Philip.

The Capture of Achaeus at Sardis  
(See 7, 15-18)

17. Bolis was by birth a Cretan, who had long enjoyed the honours of high military rank at King Ptolemy's court, and the reputation of being second to none in natural ability, adventurous daring, and experience in war. By repeated arguments Sosibius secured this man's fidelity; and when he felt sure of his zeal and affection he communicated the business in hand to him. He told him that he could not do the king a more acceptable service at the present crisis than by contriving some way of saving Achaeus. At the moment Bolis listened, and retired without saying more than that he would consider the suggestion. But after two or three days' reflection, he came to Sosibius and said that he would undertake the business; remarking that, having spent some considerable time at Sardis, he knew its topography, and that Cambylus, the commander of the Cretan contingent of the army of Antiochus, was not only a fellow citizen of his but a kinsmen and friend. It chanced moreover that Cambylus and his men had in charge one of the outposts on the rear of the acropolis, where the nature of the ground did not admit of siege-works, but was guarded by the permanent cantonment of

troops under Cambylus. Sosibius caught at the suggestion, convinced that, if Achaeus could be saved at all from his dangerous situation, it could be better accomplished by the agency of Bolis than of any one else; and, this conviction being backed by great zeal on the part of Bolis, the undertaking was pushed on with despatch. Sosibius at once supplied the money necessary for the attempt, and promised a large sum besides in case of its success; at the same time raising the hopes of Bolis to the utmost by dilating upon the favours he might look for from the king, as well as from the rescued prince himself.

Full of eagerness therefore for success, Bolis set sail without delay, taking with him a letter in cipher and other credentials addressed to Nicomachus at Rhodes, who was believed to entertain a fatherly affection and devotion for Achaeus, and also to Melancomas at Ephesus; for these were the men formerly employed by Achaeus in his negotiations with Ptolemy, and in all other foreign affairs.

18. Bolis went to Rhodes, and thence to Ephesus; communicated his purpose to Nicomachus and Melancomas; and found them ready to do what they were asked. He then despatched one of his staff, named Arianus, to Cambylus, with a message to the effect that he had been sent from Alexandria on a recruiting tour, and that he wished for an interview with Cambylus on some matters of importance; he thought it therefore necessary to have a time and place arranged for them to meet without the privity of a third person. Arianus quickly obtained an interview with Cambylus and delivered his message; nor was the latter at all unwilling to listen to the proposal. Having appointed a day, and a place known to both himself and Bolis, at which he would be after nightfall, he dismissed Arianus. Now Bolis had all the subtlety of a Cretan, and he accordingly weighed carefully in his own mind every possible line of action, and patiently examined every idea which presented itself to him. Finally he met Cambylus according to the arrangement made with Arianus, and delivered his letter. This was now made the subject of discussion between them in a truly Cretan spirit. They never took into consideration the means of saving the person in danger, or their obligations of honour to those who had entrusted them with the undertaking, but confined their discussions entirely to the question of their own safety and their own advantage. As they were both Cretans they were not long in coming to an unanimous agreement: which was, first of all, to divide the ten talents supplied by Sosibius between themselves in equal shares; and, secondly, to discover the whole affair to Antiochus, and to offer with his support to put Achaeus into his hands, on condition of receiving a sum of money and promises for the future, on a scale commensurate with the greatness of the undertaking. Having settled upon this plan of action:

Cambylus undertook the negotiation with Antiochus, while to Bolis was assigned the duty of sending Arianus within the next few days to Achaeus, bearing letters in cipher from Nicomachus and Melancomas: he bade Cambylus however take upon himself to consider how Arianus was to make his way into the acropolis and return with safety. "If," said Bolis, "Achaeus consents to make the attempt, and sends an answer to Nicomachus and Melancomas, I will be ready to act and will communicate with you." Having thus arranged the parts which each was to take in the plot, they separated and set about their several tasks.

19. At the first opportunity Cambylus laid the proposal before the king. It was as acceptable to Antiochus as it was unexpected: in the first flush of his exultation he promised everything they asked; but presently feeling some distrust, he questioned Cambylus on every detail of their plan, and their means of carrying it out. Being eventually satisfied on these points, and believing that the undertaking was under the special favour of Providence, he repeatedly begged and prayed Cambylus to bring it to a conclusion. Bolis was equally successful with Nicomachus and Melancomas. They entertained no doubt of his sincerity, and joined him in the composition of letters to Achaeus, — composed in a cipher which they had been accustomed to use, — to prevent any one who got hold of the letter from making out its contents, exhorting him to trust Bolis and Cambylus. So Arianus, having by the aid of Cambylus made his way into the acropolis, delivered the letters to Achaeus; and having had personal acquaintance with the whole business from its commencement, he was able to give an account of every detail when questioned and cross-questioned again and again by Achaeus about Sosibius and Bolis, about Nicomachus and Melancomas, and most particularly about the part which Cambylus was taking in the affair. He could of course stand this cross-examination with some air of sincerity and candour, because, in point of fact, he was not acquainted with the most important part of the plan which Cambylus and Bolis had adopted. Achaeus was convinced by the answers returned by Arianus, and still more by the cipher of Nicomachus and Melancomas; gave his answer; and sent Arianus back with it without delay. This kind of communication was repeated more than once: and at last Achaeus entrusted himself without reserve to Nicomachus, there being absolutely no other hope of saving himself left remaining, and bade him send Bolis with Arianus on a certain moonless night, promising to place himself in their hands. The idea of Achaeus was, first of all, to escape his immediate danger; and then by a circuitous route to make his way into Syria. For he entertained very great hopes that, if he appeared suddenly and unexpectedly to the Syrians, while Antiochus was still lingering about

Sardis, he would be able to stir up a great movement, and meet with a cordial reception from the people of Antioch, Coele-Syria, and Phoenicia.

With such expectations and calculations Achaeus was waiting for the appearance of Bolis.

20. Meanwhile Arianus had reached Melancomas, who, on reading the letter which he brought, immediately despatched Bolis with many words of exhortation and great promises of profit if he succeeded in his enterprise. Bolis sent Arianus in advance to signify his arrival to Cambylus, and went after nightfall to their usual place of meeting. There they spent a whole day together settling every detail of their plan of operations; and having done this they went into the camp under cover of night. The arrangement made between them was this. If it turned out that Achaeus came from the acropolis alone with Bolis and Arianus, or with only one attendant, he would give them no cause for anxiety at all, but would be easily captured by the ambuscade set for him. If, on the other hand, he should be accompanied by a considerable number, the business would be one of some difficulty to those on whose good faith he relied; especially as they were anxious to capture him alive, that being what would most gratify Antiochus. In that case, therefore, Arianus, while conducting Achaeus, was to go in front, because he knew the path by which he had on several occasions effected his entrance and return; Bolis was to bring up the rear, in order that, when they arrived at the spot where Cambylus was to have his ambuscade ready, he might lay hold on Achaeus, and prevent his getting away through wooded ground, in the confusion and darkness of the night, or throwing himself in his terror from some precipice; thus they would secure that he fell, as they intended, into his enemies' hands alive.

These arrangements having been agreed upon, Bolis was taken by Cambylus on the very night of his arrival, without any one else, and introduced to Antiochus. The king was alone and received them graciously; he pledged himself to the performance of his promises, and urged them both again and again not to postpone any longer the performance of their purpose. Thereupon they returned for the present to their own camp; but towards morning Bolis, accompanied by Arianus, ascended to the acropolis, and entered it before daybreak

21. Achaeus received them with warmth and cordiality, and questioned Bolis at great length on every detail. From the expression of his face, and his conversation, he judged Bolis to be a man of a character weighty enough for so serious an undertaking; but while at one time he exulted in the prospect of his release, at another, he grew painfully excited, and was torn with an agony of anxiety at the gravity of the issues at stake. But no one had a clearer head or greater experience in affairs than he; and in spite of the good opinion he

had formed of him, he still determined that his safety should not depend entirely on the good faith of Bolis. He accordingly told him that it was impossible for him to leave the acropolis at the moment: but that he would send some two or three of his friends with him, and by the time that they had joined Melancomas he would be prepared to depart. So Achaeus did all he could for his security; but he did not know that he was trying to do what the proverb declares to be impossible — out-cretan a Cretan. For there was no trick likely to be tried that Bolis had not anticipated. However when the night came, in which Achaeus said that he would send his friends with them, he sent on Arianus and Bolis to the entrance of the acropolis, with instructions to wait there until those who were to go with them arrived. They did as he bade them. Achaeus then, at the very moment of his departure, communicated his plan to his wife Laodice; and she was so terrified at his sudden resolve, that he had to spend some time in entreating her to be calm, in soothing her feelings, and encouraging her by pointing out the hopes which he entertained. This done he started with four companions, whom he dressed in ordinary clothes, while he himself put on a mean and common dress and disguised his rank as much as possible. He selected one of his four companions to be always prepared to answer anything said by Arianus, and to ask any necessary question of him, and bade him say that the other four did not speak Greek.

22. The five then joined Arianus, and they all started together on their journey. Arianus went in front, as being acquainted with the way; while Bolis took up his position behind in accordance with the original plan, puzzled and annoyed at the way things were turning out. For, Cretan as he was, and ready to suspect every one he came near, he yet could not make out which of the five was Achaeus, or whether he was there at all. But the path was for the most part precipitous and difficult, and in some places there were abrupt descents which were slippery and dangerous; and whenever they came to one of these, some of the four gave Achaeus a hand down, and the others caught him at the bottom, for they could not entirely conceal their habitual respect for him; and Bolis was quick to detect, by observing this, which of them was Achaeus. When therefore they arrived at the spot at which it had been arranged that Cambylus was to be, Bolis gave the signal by a whistle, and the men sprang from their places of concealment and seized the other four, while Bolis himself caught hold of Achaeus, at the same time grasping his mantle, as his hands were inside it; for he was afraid that having a sword concealed about his person he would attempt to kill himself when he understood what was happening. Being thus quickly surrounded on every side, Achaeus fell into the hands of his enemies, and along with his four friends was taken straight off to Antiochus.

The king was in his tent in a state of extreme anxiety awaiting the result. He had dismissed his usual court, and, with the exception of two or three of the bodyguard, was alone and sleepless. But when Cambylus and his men entered, and placed Achaeus in chains on the ground, he fell into a state of speechless astonishment: and for a considerable time could not utter a word, and finally overcome by a feeling of pity burst into tears; caused, I have no doubt, by this exhibition of the capriciousness of Fortune, which defies precaution and calculation alike. For here was Achaeus, a son of Andromachus, the brother of Seleucus's queen Laodice, and married to Laodice, a daughter of King Mithridates, and who had made himself master of all Asia this side of Taurus, and who at that very moment was believed by his own army, as well as by that of his enemy, to be safely ensconced in the strongest position in the world, — sitting chained upon the ground, in the hands of his enemies, before a single person knew of it except those who had effected the capture.

23. And, indeed, when at daybreak the king's friends assembled as usual at his tent, and saw this strange spectacle, they too felt emotions very like those of the king; while extreme astonishment made them almost disbelieve the evidence of their senses. However the council met, and a long debate ensued as to what punishment they were to inflict upon Achaeus. Finally, it was resolved that his extremities should be cut off, his head severed from his body and sewn up in the skin of an ass, and his body impaled. When this sentence had been carried out, and the army learnt what had happened, there was such excitement in the ranks and such a rush of the soldiers to the spectacle, that Laodice on the acropolis, who alone knew that her husband had left it, guessed what had happened from the commotion and stir in the camp. And before long a herald arrived, told Laodice what had happened to Achaeus, and ordered her to resign the command and quit the acropolis. At first any answer was prevented by an outburst of sorrow and overpowering lamentation on the part of the occupants of the acropolis; not so much from affection towards Achaeus, as from the suddenness and utter unexpectedness of the catastrophe. But this was succeeded by a feeling of hesitation and dismay; and Antiochus, having got rid of Achaeus, never ceased putting pressure on the garrison of the acropolis, feeling confident that a means of taking it would be put into his hands by those who occupied it, and most probably by the rank and file of the garrison. And this is just what did finally happen: for the soldiers split up into factions, one joining Ariobazus, the other Laodice. This produced mutual distrust, and before long both parties surrendered themselves and the acropolis. Thus Achaeus, in spite of having taken every reasonable precaution, lost his life by the perfidy of those in whom he trusted. His fate may teach posterity two useful lessons,

not to put faith in any one lightly; and not to be over-confident in the hour of prosperity, knowing that, in human affairs, there is no accident which we may not expect....

#### The Gallic King, Cauarus

24. Cauarus, king of the Gauls in Thrace, was of a truly royal and high-minded disposition, and gave the merchants sailing into the Pontus great protection, and rendered the Byzantines important services in their wars with the Thracians and Bithynians....

This king, so excellent in other respects, was corrupted by a flatterer named Sostratus, who was a Chalchedonian by birth....

#### Antiochus the Great at Armosata

25. In the reign of Xerxes, prince of the city of Armosata, situated on the "Fair Plain," between the Tigris and Euphrates, King Antiochus encamped under its walls and prepared to attack it. When he saw the king's forces, Xerxes at first conveyed himself away; but feeling afterwards that, if his palace were seized by his enemies, his whole kingdom would be overthrown, he changed his mind, and sent a message to Antiochus declaring his wish for a conference. The most loyal of the friends of Antiochus were against letting the young prince go when they once got him into their hands, and advised Antiochus to take possession of the town, and hand over the principality to Mithridates, his own sister's son. The king, however, would not listen to any of these suggestions; but sent for the young prince and accommodated their differences, forgiving him the larger part of the money which he allowed to be owing from his father under the head of tribute, and accepting a present payment from him of three hundred talents, a thousand horses, and a thousand mules with their trappings. He then settled the government of the city, and gave the prince his sister Antiochis as a wife. By these proceedings, in which he was thought to have acted with true royal magnanimity, he won the affection and support of all the inhabitants of that part of the country.

#### The Hannibalian War — Tarentum

26. It was in the wantonness of excessive prosperity that the Tarentines invited Pyrrhus of Epirus; for democratic liberty that has enjoyed a long and unchecked career comes naturally to experience a satiety of its blessings, and then it looks out for a master; and when it has got one, it is not long before it



hates him, because it is seen that the change is for the worse. This is just what happened to the Tarentines on that occasion....

On this news being brought to Tarentum and Thurii there was great popular indignation....

The conspirators left the town at first under the pretext of a foray, and got near Hannibal's camp before daybreak. Then, while the rest crouched down on a certain wooded spot by the side of the road, Philemenus and Nikon went up to the camp. They were seized by the sentries and taken off to Hannibal, without saying a word as to where they came from or who they were, but simply stating that they wished for an interview with the general. Being taken without delay to Hannibal they said that they wished to speak with him privately. He assented with the utmost readiness; whereupon they explained to him their own position and that of their native city, charging the Romans with many various acts of oppression, that they might not seem to be entering on their present undertaking without good reason. For the present Hannibal dismissed them with thanks and a cordial acceptance of their proposed movement, and charging them to come back very soon and have another interview with him. "This time," he added, "when you get at a sufficient distance from the camp, take possession of the first cattle you find being driven out to pasture in the early morning, and go off boldly with them and their herdsmen; for I will take care that you are unmolested." His object in doing this was to give himself time to inquire into the tale of the young men; and also to confirm their credit with their fellow-citizens, by making it appear that their expedition had really been for the purpose of foraging. Nikon and his companions did as they were bidden, and left Hannibal in great exultation at having at last got an opportunity of completing his enterprise: while they themselves were made all the more eager to carry out their plot by having been able to accomplish their interview with Hannibal without danger, and by having found him warmly disposed to their undertaking, and by having besides gained the confidence of their own people by the considerable amount of booty which they had brought home. This they partly sold and partly used in splendid entertainments, and thus not only were believed in by the Tarentines, but excited a considerable number to emulate their exploit.

27. On their next expedition, which they conducted in the same way as the first, they interchanged pledges of fidelity with Hannibal on the following conditions: "He was to set the Tarentines free; and the Carthaginians were neither to exact tribute of any sort from them, nor impose any burden upon them; but the houses and lodgings occupied by Romans should, on their taking possession of the town, be given up to the Carthaginians to plunder." They also arranged on a watch-word at which the

sentries were to admit them without delay into the camp whenever they came. After making these arrangements, they got the opportunity of often having interviews with Hannibal: sometimes pretending to be going out of the town on a foray, and sometimes on a hunting expedition. Everything having thus been put in train, the greater part of the conspirators waited for the proper occasions for acting, while they assigned to Philemenus the part of leader of their hunting excursions; for, owing to his excessive taste for that amusement, he had the reputation of thinking hunting the most important thing in life. Accordingly they left it to him, first to win the favour of Gaius Livius the commander of the town by presents of game, and then that of the guards of the gate tower which protected what were called the Temenid gates. Philemenus undertook the task: and partly by what he caught himself, and partly with what Hannibal supplied, always managed to bring in some game; which he divided between Livius and the guards of the gate, to induce them to be always ready to open the wicket to him. For he generally went and returned from his expeditions after nightfall, under the pretext of being afraid of the enemy, but really with a view of preparing for the plot. When Philemenus then had managed to make it a regular arranged thing with the picket at the gate, that the guards should have no hesitation; but that, whenever he came under the wall and whistled, they should open the wicket to him; he waited for a day on which the Roman commander of the town was engaged to be present at a large party, meeting early in the Musaeum, which is near the agora, and agreed with Hannibal to carry out their plot on that day.

28. For some time before this, Hannibal had given out that he was ill, to prevent the Romans wondering when they were told of his staying so long on the same ground; and he now made a greater pretence than ever of ill-health, and remained encamped three days march from Tarentum. But when the time was come, he got ready the most conspicuous for their speed and daring in his cavalry and infantry, to the number of about ten thousand, and gave orders that they should take provisions for four days. He started just before daybreak, and marched at full speed; having told off eighty Numidian horsemen to keep thirty stades ahead, and to scour the country on both sides of the road; so that no one might get a sight of the main body, but might either be taken prisoners by this advanced guard, or, if he escaped, might carry a report of it into the city as if it were merely a raid of Numidian horsemen. When the Numidians were about a hundred and twenty stades from the town, Hannibal halted his men for supper by the side of a river flowing through a deep gully, and offering excellent cover; and having summoned his officers, did not indeed tell them outright what the service was on which they were going, but simply exhorted them, first to show

themselves brave men, as the prize awaiting them was the greatest they had ever had; and, secondly, that each should keep the men of his own company well together, and rebuke sharply all who left their own division on any pretext whatever; and, thirdly, to attend strictly to orders, and not attempt anything on their own account outside them. Dismissing the officers with these words, he got his troops on the march just after dark, being very anxious to reach the wall about midnight; having Philemenus to act as guide, and having got ready for him a wild-boar to enable him to sustain the part which he was to perform.

29. About sunset news was brought to Gaius Livius, who had been with his friends in the Musaeum since early in the day, just when the drinking was at its height, that the Numidians were scouring the country. He therefore took measures for that and nothing more, calling some of his officers and bidding them take half the cavalry, and sally out to stop the progress of the enemy, who were devastating the country: but this only made him still more unsuspecting of the whole extent of the movement. Nicon, Tragiscus, and their confederates collected together at nightfall in the town and waited for the return of Livius and his friends. As these last rose from table somewhat early, because the banquet had begun before the usual time, the greater number of the conspirators retired to a certain spot and there remained; but some of the younger men went to meet Gaius, imitating by their disorderly procession and mutual jests a company returning from a carouse. As Livius and his company were even more flustered with drink, as soon as they met laughter and joking were readily excited on both sides. Finally, they turned and conducted Gaius to his house; where he went to bed full of wine, as might be expected after a party beginning so early in the day, without any anxiety or trouble in his thoughts, but full of cheerfulness and idle content. Then Nicon and Tragiscus rejoined their companions, and, dividing themselves into three companies, took up their positions at the most favourable points in the marketplace, to keep themselves fully acquainted with everything reported from outside the walls, or that happened within the city itself. They posted some also close to the house of Livius: being well aware that, if any suspicion of what was coming arose, it would be to him that the news would be first brought, and that from him every measure taken would originate. So when the noise of the returning guests, and every disturbance of the sort, had subsided, and the great bulk of the citizens was asleep; and now the night was advancing, and nothing had happened to dash their hopes, they collected together and proceeded to perform their part of the undertaking.

30. The arrangements between these young men and Hannibal were these. Hannibal was to arrive at the town by the inland road and on the

eastern side near the Temenid gates; and when there, was to light a fire on the tomb, which some called the tomb of Hyacinthus, and others of Apollo: Tragiscus and his confederates, when they saw this, were to light an answering fire from within the walls. This done, Hannibal was to put out his fire and advance slowly towards the gate. In pursuance of these arrangements, the young men marched through the inhabited part of the town and came to the tombs. For the eastern quarter of Tarentum is full of monuments, because those who die there are to this day all buried within the walls, in obedience to an ancient oracle. For it is said that the god delivered this answer to the Tarentines, "That it were better and more profitable for them if they made their dwelling with the majority"; and they thought therefore that they would be living in accordance with the oracle if they kept the departed within the walls. That is why to this day they bury inside the gates.

The young men, then, having gone as far as the tomb of Pythionicus, waited to see what would happen. Presently Hannibal arrived and did as arranged: whereupon Nicon and Tragiscus with renewed courage displayed their beacon also; and, as soon as they saw the fire of the Carthaginians being put out, they ran to the gates as fast as they could go, wishing to get the picket at the gate tower killed before the Carthaginians arrived; as it had been agreed that they should advance leisurely and at a foot's pace. Everything went smoothly: the guards were overpowered; and while some of the young men were engaged in killing them, others were cutting the bolts. The gates having been quickly thrown open, Hannibal arrived at the right moment, having so timed his march that he never had to stop on the way to the town at all.

31. Having thus effected their intended entrance, without danger or any disturbance whatever, and thinking that the most important part of their undertaking was accomplished, the Carthaginians now began advancing boldly along the street leading up from what is called the Batheia or Deep Road. They left the cavalry however outside the walls, numbering as many as two thousand, intending them to act as a reserve both in case of any appearance of the enemy from without, and of any of those unforeseen casualties which do occur in such operations. But when they had come to the immediate neighbourhood of the market-place, they halted, and waited to see how the attempt of Philemenus would turn out: being anxious as to the success of this part of their plan as well as the other. For at the same moment that he lighted his fire, and was on the point of starting for the gates, Hannibal had despatched Philemenus also, with his boar on a litter, and a thousand Libyans, to the next gate; wishing, in accordance with his original design, not to depend solely on one chance, but to have several. When

Philemenus, then, arrived at the wall and gave his customary signal by whistling, the sentry immediately appeared coming down to open the wicket; and when Philemenus told him from outside to open quickly because they had a great weight to carry, as they were bringing a wild boar, he made haste to open the wicket, expecting that some of the game which Philemenus was conveying would come his way, as he had always had a share of what was brought in.

Thereupon Philemenus himself, being at the head of the litter, entered first; and with him another dressed like a shepherd, as though he were one of the country folk of those parts; and after him two others besides who were carrying the dead beast behind. But when the four had got inside the wicket, they struck and killed the man who opened it, as he was unsuspectingly examining and feeling the boar, and then let the men who were just behind them, and were in advance of the main body of Libyan horsemen, to the number of thirty, leisurely and quietly through. This having been accomplished without a hitch, some set about cutting the bolts, others were engaged in killing the picket on duty at the gate, and others in giving the signal to the Libyans still outside to come in. These having also effected their entrance in safety, they began making their way towards the market-place according to the arrangement. As soon as he was joined by this division also, in great delight at the successful progress of the operation, Hannibal proceeded to carry out the next step.

32. He told off two thousand of his Celts: and, having divided them into three companies, he assigned two of the young men who had managed the plot to each company; and sent with them also certain of his own officers, with orders to close up the several most convenient streets that led to the market-place. And when he had done this, he bade the young men of the town pick out and save those of their fellow-citizens whom they might chance to meet, by shouting out before they came up with them, "That Tarentines should remain where they were, as they were in no danger"; but he ordered both Carthaginian and Celtic officers to kill all the Romans they met.

So these companies separated and proceeded to carry out their orders. But when the entrance of the enemy became known to the Tarentines, the city began to be full of shouting and extraordinary confusion. As for Gaius, when the enemy's entrance was announced to him, being fully aware that his drunkenness had incapacitated him, he rushed straight out of the house with his servants, and having come to the gate leading to the harbour, and the sentinel having opened the wicket for him, he got through that way; and having seized one of the boats lying at anchor there, went on board it with his servants and arrived safely at the citadel. Meanwhile Philemenus had

provided himself with some Roman bugles, and some men who were able to blow them, from being used to do so; and they stood in the theatre and sounded a call to arms. The Romans promptly rallying in arms, as was their custom at this sound, and directing their steps towards the citadel, everything happened exactly as the Carthaginians intended; for as the Roman soldiers came into the streets, without any order and in scattered groups, some of them came upon the Carthaginians and others upon the Celts; and by their being in this way put to the sword in detail, a very considerable number of them perished.

But when day began to break, the Tarentines kept quietly in their houses, not yet being able to comprehend what was happening. For thanks to the bugle, and the absence of all outrage or plundering in the town, they thought that the movement arose from the Romans themselves. But the sight of many of the latter lying killed in the streets, and the spectacle of some Gauls openly stripping the Roman corpses, suggested a suspicion of the presence of the Carthaginians.

33. Presently when Hannibal had marched his forces into the market-place, and the Romans had retired into the citadel, as having been previously secured by them with a garrison, and it had become broad daylight, the Carthaginian general caused a proclamation to be made to the Tarentines to assemble in full number in the market-place; while the young conspirators went meanwhile round the town talking loudly about liberty, and bidding everybody not to be afraid, for the Carthaginians had come to save them. Such of the Tarentines as held to their loyalty to Rome, upon learning the state of the case, went off to the citadel; but the rest came to the meeting, in obedience to the proclamation, without their arms: and to them Hannibal addressed a cordial speech. The Tarentines heartily cheered everything he said from joy at their unexpected safety; and he dismissed the crowd with an injunction to each man, to go with all speed to his own house, and write over the door, "A Tarentine's"; but if any one wrote the same word on a house where a Roman was living, he declared the penalty to be death. He then personally told off the best men he had for the service, and sent them to plunder the houses of the Romans; giving them as their instructions to consider all houses which had no inscription as belonging to the enemy: the rest of his men he kept drawn up as a reserve.

34. A vast quantity of miscellaneous property having been got together by this plundering, and a booty fully answering the expectations of the Carthaginians, they bivouacked for that night under arms. But the next day, after consulting with the Tarentines, Hannibal decided to cut off the city from the citadel by a wall, that the Tarentines might not any longer be under continual alarm from the Romans in possession of the citadel. His first

measure was to throw up a palisade, parallel to the wall of the citadel and to the trench in front of it. But as he very well knew that the enemy would not allow this tamely, but would make a demonstration of their power in that direction, he got ready for the work a number of his best hands, thinking that the first thing necessary was to overawe the Romans and give confidence to the Tarentines. But as soon as the first palisade was begun, the Romans began a bold and determined attack; whereupon Hannibal, offering just enough resistance to induce the rest to come out, as soon as the greater part of them had crossed the trench, gave the word of command to his men and charged the enemy. A desperate struggle ensued; for the fight took place in a narrow space surrounded by walls; but at last the Romans were forced to turn and fly. Many of them fell in the actual fighting, but the larger number were forced over the edge of the trench and were killed by the fall over its steep bank.

35. For the present Hannibal, after completing the palisade unmolested, was content to remain quiet, as his plan had succeeded to his wish — for he had shut in the enemy and compelled them to remain inside their wall, in terror for the safety of the citadel as well as for their own; while he had raised the courage of the citizens of Tarentum to such an extent, that they now imagined themselves to be a match for the Romans, even without the Carthaginians. A little later he made at a short distance from the palisade, in the direction of the town, a trench parallel to the palisade and the wall of the citadel; and the earth dug out from it having been piled up on the other side along the edge nearest the town, he erected another palisade on the top, thus making a fortification no less secure than the wall itself. Once more, at a moderate distance, nearer the city, he commenced building a wall, starting from the street called Soteira up to that called Batheia; so that, even without a garrison, the Tarentines were adequately protected by the mere constructions themselves. Then leaving a sufficient garrison, and enough cavalry to serve on outpost duty for the protection of the wall, he encamped along the bank of the river which is called by some the Galaesus, but by most people the Eurotas, after the river which flows past Sparta. The Tarentines have many such derived names, both in town and country, from the acknowledged fact of their being a colony from Sparta and connected by blood with the Lacedaemonians. As the wall quickly approached completion, owing to the activity and zeal of the Tarentines, and the vigorous co-operation of the Carthaginians, Hannibal next conceived the idea of taking the citadel also.

36. But when he had already completed the preparation of the necessary engines for the assault, the Romans received some slight encouragement on a reinforcement throwing itself into the citadel by sea from Metapontium;

and consequently they sallied out by night and attacked the works, and destroyed all Hannibal's apparatus and engines. After this Hannibal abandoned the idea of a storm: but as the new wall was now completed, he summoned a meeting of the Tarentines and pointed out to them that the most imperative necessity, in view of the present state of things, was to get command of the sea. For as the citadel commanded the entrance to the harbour, the Tarentines could not use their ships nor sail out of it; while the Romans could get supplies conveyed to them by sea without danger: and as long as that was the case, it was impossible that the city should have any security for its freedom. Hannibal saw this clearly, and explained to the Tarentines that, if the enemy on the citadel were deprived of hope of succour by sea, they would at once give way, and abandon it of their own accord, without attempting to defend the place. The Tarentines were fully convinced by his words: but how it was to be brought about in the present state of affairs they could form no idea, unless a fleet should appear from Carthage; which at that time of the year was impossible. They therefore said that they could not understand what Hannibal was aiming at in these remarks to them. When he replied that it was plain that, even without the Carthaginians, they were all but in command of the sea, they were still more puzzled, and could not guess his meaning. The truth was that Hannibal had noticed that the broad street, which was at once within the wall separating the town from the citadel, and led from the harbour into the open sea, was well suited for the purpose; and he had conceived the idea of dragging the ships out of the harbour to the sea on the southern side of the town. Upon his disclosing his idea to the Tarentines, they not only expressed their agreement with the proposal, but the greatest admiration for himself; and made up their minds that there was nothing which his acuteness and daring could not accomplish. Trucks on wheels were quickly constructed: and it was scarcely sooner said than done, owing to the zeal of the people and the numbers who helped to work at it. In this way the Tarentines dragged their ships across into the open sea, and were enabled without danger to themselves to blockade the Romans on the citadel, having deprived them of their supplies from without. But Hannibal himself, leaving a garrison for the city, started with his army, and returned in a three days' march to his original camp; and there remained without further movements for the rest of the winter....

Fall of Syracuse, B.C. 212

37. He counted the layers; for as the tower had been built of regular layers of stone, it was very easy to reckon the height of the battlements from the ground....



Some days afterwards on information being given by a deserter that the Syracusans had been engaged in a public sacrifice to Artemis for the last three days; and that they were using very scanty food in the festival though plenty of wine, both Epicydes and certain Syracusans having given a large supply; Marcus Marcellus selected a part of the wall somewhat lower than the rest, and thinking it probable that the men were drunk, owing to the license of the hour, and the short supply of food with their wine, he determined to attempt an escalade. Two ladders of the proper height for the wall having been quickly made, he pressed on the undertaking. He spoke openly to those who were fit to make the ascent and to face the first and most conspicuous risk, holding out to them brilliant prospects of reward. He also picked out some men to give them necessary help and bring ladders, without telling them anything except to bid them be ready to obey orders. His directions having been accurately obeyed, at the proper time in the night he put the first men in motion, sending with them the men with the ladders together with a maniple and a tribune, and having first reminded them of the rewards awaiting them if they behaved with gallantry. After this he got his whole force ready to start; and despatching the vanguard by maniples at intervals, when a thousand had been massed in this way, after a short pause, he marched himself with the main body. The men carrying the ladders having succeeded in safely placing them against the wall, those who had been told off to make the ascent mounted at once without hesitation. Having accomplished this without being observed, and having got a firm footing on the top of the wall, the rest began to mount by the ladders also, not in any fixed order, but as best they could. At first as they made their way upon the wall they found no one to oppose them, for the guards of the several towers, owing to it being a time of public sacrifice, were either still drinking or were gone to sleep again in a state of drunkenness. Consequently of the first and second companies of guards, which they came upon, they killed the greater number before they knew that they were being attacked. And when they came near Hexapyli, they descended from the wall, and forced open the first postern they came to which was let into the wall, through which they admitted the general and the rest of the army. This is the way in which the Romans took Syracuse....

None of the citizens knew what was happening because of the distance; for the town is a very large one....

But the Romans were rendered very confident by their conquest of Epipolae....

38. He gave orders that the infantry should take the beasts of burden along with the baggage tied upon them from the rear and range them in front

of themselves. This produced a defence of greater security than any palisade.<sup>10</sup> ...

So entirely unable are the majority of mankind to submit to that lightest of all burdens-silence....

Anything in the future seems preferable to what exists in the present....

<sup>10</sup> This fragment is supposed, by comparison with Livy, 25, 36, to belong to the account of the fall of Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio in Spain, B.C. 212.

# The Histories of Polybius

## Book Nine

### Extract from the Preface

1. Such are the most conspicuous transactions of this Olympiad, that is, of the four years which an Olympiad must be reckoned to contain; and I shall endeavour to include the history of them in two books.

I am quite aware that my history has an element of austerity in it, and is adapted to, and will be approved by, only one class of readers, owing to the uniformity of its plan. Nearly all other historians, or at any rate most, attract a variety of readers by entering upon all the various branches of history. The curious reader is attracted by the genealogical style; the antiquarian by the discussion of colonisations, origins of cities, and ties of blood, such as is found in Ephorus; the student of politics by the story of tribes, cities, and dynasties. It is to this last branch of the subject that I have had a single eye, and have devoted my whole work; and accordingly have, as I said before, accommodated all my plans to one particular class of narrative. The result is that I have made my work by no means attractive reading to the majority. Why I thus neglected other departments of history, and deliberately resolved to confine myself to chronicling actions, I have already stated at length; however, there is no reason why I should not briefly remind my readers of it again in this place, for the sake of impressing it upon them.

2. Seeing that many writers have discussed in many varieties of style the question of genealogies, myths, and colonisations, as well as of the foundations of cities and the consanguinity of peoples, there was nothing left for a writer at this date but to copy the words of others and claim them as his own, — than which nothing could be more dishonourable; or, if he did not choose to do that, to absolutely waste his labour, being obliged to acknowledge that he is composing a history and bestowing thought on what has already been sufficiently set forth and transmitted to posterity by his predecessors. For these and sundry other reasons I abandoned such themes as these, and determined on writing a history of actions: first, because they are continually new and require a new narrative, — as of course one generation cannot give us the history of the next; and secondly, because such a narrative is of all others the most instructive. This it has always been: but it is eminently so now, because the arts and sciences have made such an advance in our day, that students are able to arrange every event as it

happens according to fixed rules, as it were, of scientific classification. Therefore, as I did not aim so much at giving pleasure to my readers, as at profiting those who apply to such studies, I omitted all other themes and devoted myself wholly to this. But on these points, those who give a careful attention to my narrative will be the best witnesses to the truth of what I say....

### The Hannibalian War

*In the previous year (212 B.C.) Syracuse had fallen: the two Scipios had been conquered and killed in Spain: the siege-works had been constructed round Capua, at the very time of the fall of Syracuse, ie. in the autumn, Hannibal being engaged in fruitless attempts upon the citadel of Tarentum. See Livy, 25, 22.*

3. Entirely surrounding the position of Appius Claudius, Hannibal at first skirmished, and tried all he could to tempt him to come out and give him battle. But as no one attended to him, his attack became very like an attempt to storm the camp; for his cavalry charged in their squadrons, and with loud cries hurled their javelins inside the entrenchments, and the infantry attacked in their regular companies, and tried to pull down the palisading round the camp. But not even so could he move the Romans from their purpose: they employed their light-armed troops to repulse those who were actually attacking the palisade, but protecting themselves with their heavy shields against the javelins of the enemy, they remained drawn up near their standards without moving. Discomfited at being neither able to throw himself into Capua, nor induce the Romans to leave their camp, Hannibal retired to consult as to what was best to be done.

It is no wonder, in my opinion, that the Carthaginians were puzzled. I think any one who heard the facts would be the same. For who would not have received with incredulity the statement that the Romans, after losing so many battles to the Carthaginians, and though they did not venture to meet them on the field, could not nevertheless be induced to give up the contest or abandon the command of the country? Up to this time, moreover, they had contented themselves with hovering in his neighbourhood, keeping along the skirts of the mountains; but now they had taken up a position on the plains, and those the fairest in all Italy, and were besieging the strongest city in it; and that with an enemy attacking them, whom they could not endure even the thought of meeting face to face: while the Carthaginians, who beyond all dispute had won the battles, were sometimes in as great difficulties as the losers. I think the reason of the strategy adopted by the two sides respectively was, that they both had seen that Hannibal's cavalry was the

main cause of the Carthaginian victory and Roman defeat. Accordingly the plan of the losers after the battles, of following their enemies at a distance, was the natural one to adopt; for the country through which they went was such that the enemy's cavalry would be unable to do them any damage. Similarly what now happened at Capua to either side was natural and inevitable.

4. For the Roman army did not venture to come out and give battle, from fear of the enemy's horse, but remained resolutely within their entrenchment; well knowing that the cavalry, by which they had been worsted in the battles, could not hurt them there. While the Carthaginians, again, naturally could not remain any longer encamped with their cavalry, because all the pastures in the surrounding country had been utterly destroyed by the Romans with that very view; and it was impossible for animals to come from such a distance, carrying on their backs hay and barley for so large a body of cavalry, and so many beasts of burden; nor again did they venture, when encamped without their cavalry, to attack an enemy protected by a palisade and fosse, with whom a contest, even without these advantages in their favour, was likely to be a doubtful one if they had not got their cavalry. Besides this they were much alarmed about the new Consuls, lest they should come and encamp against them, and reduce them to serious straits by cutting off their supplies of provisions.

These considerations convinced Hannibal that it was impossible to raise the siege by an open attack, and he therefore changed his tactics. He imagined that if by a secret march he could suddenly appear in the neighbourhood of Rome, he might by the alarm which he would inspire in the inhabitants by his unexpected movement, perhaps do something worth while against the city itself; or, if he could not do that, would at least force Appius either to raise the siege of Capua, in order to hasten to the relief of his native town, or to divide the Roman forces; which would then be easier for him to conquer in detail.

5. With this purpose in his mind he sent a letter-carrier into Capua. This he did by persuading one of his Libyans to desert to the Roman camp, and thence to Capua. He took this trouble to secure the safe delivery of his letter, because he was very much afraid that the Capuans, if they saw him departing, would consider that he despaired of them, and would therefore give up hope and surrender to the Romans. He wrote therefore an explanation of his design, and sent the Libyan the day after, in order that the Capuans, being acquainted with the purpose of his departure, might go on courageously sustaining the siege.

When the news had arrived at Rome that Hannibal had encamped over against their lines, and was actually besieging their forces, there was a

universal excitement and terror, from a feeling that the result of the impending battle would decide the whole war. Consequently, with one heart and soul, the citizens had all devoted themselves to sending out reinforcements and making preparations for this struggle. On their part, the Capuans were encouraged by the receipt of Hannibal's letter, and by thus learning the object of the Carthaginian movement, to stand by their determination, and to await the issue of this new hope. At the end of the fifth day, therefore, after his arrival on the ground, Hannibal ordered his men to take their supper as usual, and leave their watch-fires burning; and started with such secrecy, that none of the enemy knew what was happening. He took the road through Samnium, and marched at a great pace and without stopping, his skirmishers always keeping before him to reconnoitre and occupy all the posts along the route: and while those in Rome had their thoughts still wholly occupied with Capua and the campaign there, he crossed the Anio without being observed; and having arrived at a distance of not more than forty stades from Rome, there pitched his camp.

6. On this being known at Rome, the utmost confusion and terror prevailed among the inhabitants, this movement of Hannibal's being as unexpected as it was sudden; for he had never been so close to the city before. At the same time their alarm was increased by the idea at once occurring to them, that he would not have ventured so near, if it were not that the armies at Capua were destroyed. Accordingly, the men at once went to line the walls, and the points of vantage in the defences of the town; while the women went round to the temples of the gods and implored their protection, sweeping the pavements of the temples with their hair: for this is their customary way of behaving when any serious danger comes upon their country. But just as Hannibal had encamped, and was intending to attempt the city itself next day, an extraordinary coincidence occurred which proved fortunate for the preservation of Rome.

For Gnaeus Fulvius and Publius Sulpicius, having already enrolled one consular army, had bound the men with the usual oath to appear at Rome armed on that very day; and were also engaged on that day in drawing out the lists and testing the men for the other army:<sup>11</sup> whereby it so happened that a large number of men had been collected in Rome spontaneously in the very nick of time. These troops the Consuls boldly led outside the walls, and, entrenching themselves there, checked Hannibal's intended movement. For the Carthaginians were at first eager to advance, and were not altogether without hope that they would be able to take Rome itself by assault. But

<sup>11</sup> Or "legion," according to others. But as both Consuls are engaged in the business, it seems reasonable to refer it to the two consular armies of two legions each.

when they saw the enemy drawn up in order, and learnt before long from a prisoner what had happened, they abandoned the idea of attacking the city, and began devastating the country-side instead, and setting fire to the houses. In these first raids they collected an innumerable amount of booty, for the field of plunder upon which they were entered was one into which no one had ever expected an enemy to set foot.

7. But presently, when the Consuls ventured to encamp within ten stades of him, Hannibal broke up his quarters before daylight. He did so for three reasons:-first, because he had collected an enormous booty; secondly, because he had given up all hope of taking Rome; and lastly, because he reckoned that the time had now come at which he expected, according to his original idea, that Appius would have learnt the danger threatening Rome, and would have raised the siege of Capua and come with his whole force to the relief of the city; or at any rate would hurry up with the greater part, leaving a detachment to carry on the siege. Publius had caused the bridges over the Anio to be broken down, and thus compelled Hannibal to get his army across by a ford; and he now attacked the Carthaginians as they were engaged in making the passage of the stream and caused them great distress. They were not able however to strike an important blow, owing to the number of Hannibal's cavalry, and the activity of the Numidians in every part of the field. But before retiring to their camp they wrested the greater part of the booty from them, and killed about three hundred men; and then, being convinced that the Carthaginians were beating a hasty retreat in a panic, they followed in their rear, keeping along the line of hills. At first Hannibal continued to march at a rapid pace, being anxious to meet the force which he expected; but at the end of the fifth day, being informed that Appius had not left the siege of Capua, he halted; and waiting for the enemy to come up, made an attack upon his camp before daylight, killed a large number of them, and drove the rest out of their camp. But when day broke, and he saw the Romans in a strong position upon a steep hill, to which they had retired, he decided not to continue his attack upon them; but marching through Daunia and Bruttium he appeared at Rhegium, so unexpectedly, that he was within an ace of capturing the city, and did cut off all who were out in the country; and during this excursion captured a very large number of the Rhegini.

8. It seems to me that the courage and determination both of the Carthaginians and Romans at this crisis were truly remarkable; and merit quite as much admiration as the conduct of Epaminondas, which I will describe here for the sake of pointing the comparison.

He reached Tegea with the allies, and when he saw that the Lacedaemonians with their own forces in full were come to Mantinea, and

that their allies had mustered together in the same city, with the intention of offering the Thebans battle; having given orders to his men to get their supper early, he led his army out immediately after nightfall, on the pretext of being anxious to seize certain posts with a view to the coming battle. But having impressed this idea upon the common soldiers, he led them along the road to Lacedaemon itself; and having arrived at the city about the third hour of his march, contrary to all expectation, and finding Sparta destitute of defenders, he forced his way right up to the market-place, and occupied the quarters of the town which slope down to the river. Then however a contretemps occurred: a deserter made his way into Mantinea and told Agesilaus what was going on. Assistance accordingly arrived just as the city was on the point of being taken; and Epaminondas was disappointed of his hope. But having caused his men to get their breakfast along the bank of the Eurotas, and recovered them from their fatigue, he started to march back again by the same road, calculating that, as the Lacedaemonians and their allies had come to the relief of Sparta, Mantinea would in its turn be left undefended: which turned out to be the case. So he exhorted the Thebans to exert themselves; and, after a rapid night march, arrived at Mantinea about mid-day, finding it entirely destitute of defenders.

But the Athenians, who were at that time zealously supporting the Lacedaemonians in their contest with the Thebans, had arrived in virtue of their treaty of alliance; and just as the Theban vanguard reached the temple of Poseidon, seven stades from the town, it happened that the Athenians showed themselves, by design, as if on the brow of the hill overhanging Mantinea. And when they saw them, the Mantineans who had been left behind at last ventured to man the wall and resist the attack of the Thebans. Therefore historians are justified in speaking with some dissatisfaction of these events,<sup>12</sup> when they say that the leader did everything which a good general could, but that, while conquering his enemies, Epaminondas was conquered by Fortune.

9. Much the same remark applies to Hannibal. For who can refrain from regarding with respect and admiration a general capable of doing what he did? First he attempted by harassing the enemy with skirmishing attacks to raise the siege: having failed in this he made direct for Rome itself: baffled once more by a turn of fortune entirely independent of human calculation, he

<sup>12</sup> That is "blaming Fortune or Providence." Schw. quotes Xenophon Hellen. 7, 5, 12, ἔξῃστι μὲν τὸ θεῖον αἰτιώσθαι.



kept his pursuers in play,<sup>13</sup> and waited till the moment was ripe to see whether the besiegers of Capua stirred: and finally, without relaxing in his determination, swept down upon his enemies to their destruction, and all but depopulated Rhegium. One would be inclined however to judge the Romans to be superior to the Lacedaemonians at this crisis. For the Lacedaemonians rushed off en masse at the first message and relieved Sparta, but, as far as they were concerned, lost Mantinea. The Romans guarded their own city without breaking up the siege of Capua: on the contrary, they remained unshaken and firm in their purpose, and in fact from that time pressed the Capuans with renewed spirit.

I have not said this for the sake of making a panegyric on either the Romans or Carthaginians, whose great qualities I have already remarked upon more than once: but for the sake of those who are in office among the one or the other people, or who are in future times to direct the affairs of any state whatever; that by the memory, or actual contemplation, of exploits such as these they may be inspired with emulation. For in an adventurous and hazardous policy it often turns out that audacity was the truest safety and the finest sagacity;<sup>14</sup> and success or failure does not affect the credit and excellence of the original design, so long as the measures taken are the result of deliberate thought....

#### Tarentum

When the Romans were besieging Tarentum, Bomilcar the admiral of the Carthaginian fleet came to its relief with a very large force; and being unable to afford efficient aid to those in the town, owing to the strict blockade maintained by the Romans, without meaning to do so he used up more than he brought; and so after having been constrained by entreaties and large promises to come, he was afterwards forced at the earnest supplication of the people to depart.

<sup>13</sup> συμπέμψαι, a difficult word. See Strachan-Davidson's note. It seems to me to be opposed to φηγεῖν or some such idea. Hannibal was not in flight, but kept the enemy with him, as it were, in a kind of procession, until the moment for striking.

<sup>14</sup> There is some word wanting in the text here which has been variously supplied. I have ventured to conjecture τὰ γὰρ δοκοῦντα παράβολον κ. τ. λ., and to translate accordingly: for it is the boldness and apparent rashness of Hannibal's movement that Polybius seems to wish to commend.

## The Spoils of Syracuse

10. A city is not really adorned by what is brought from without, but by the virtue of its own inhabitants....

The Romans, then, decided to transfer these things to their own city and to leave nothing behind. Whether they were right in doing so, and consulted their true interests or the reverse, is a matter admitting of much discussion; but I think the balance of argument is in favour of believing it to have been wrong then, and wrong now. If such had been the works by which they had exalted their country, it is clear that there would have been some reason in transferring thither the things by which they had become great. But the fact was that, while leading lives of the greatest simplicity themselves, as far as possible removed from the luxury and extravagance which these things imply, they yet conquered the men who had always possessed them in the greatest abundance and of the finest quality. Could there have been a greater mistake than theirs? Surely it would be an incontestable error for a people to abandon the habits of the conquerors and adopt those of the conquered; and at the same time involve itself in that jealousy which is the most dangerous concomitant of excessive prosperity. For the looker-on never congratulates those who take what belongs to others, without a feeling of jealousy mingling with his pity for the losers. But suppose such prosperity to go on increasing, and a people to accumulate into its own hands all the possessions of the rest of the world, and moreover to invite in a way the plundered to share in the spectacle they present, in that case surely the mischief is doubled. For it is no longer a case of the spectators pitying their neighbours, but themselves, as they recall the ruin of their own country. Such a sight produces an outburst, not of jealousy merely, but of rage against the victors. For the reminder of their own disaster serves to enhance their hatred of the authors of it. To sweep the gold and silver, however, into their own coffers was perhaps reasonable; for it was impossible for them to aim at universal empire without crippling the means of the rest of the world, and securing the same kind of resources for themselves. But they might have left in their original sites things that had nothing to do with material wealth; and thus at the same time have avoided exciting jealousy, and raised the reputation of their country: adorning it, not with pictures and statues, but with dignity of character and greatness of soul. I have spoken thus much as a warning to those who take upon themselves to rule over others, that they may not imagine that, when they pillage cities, the misfortunes of others are an honour to their own country. The Romans, however, when they transferred these things to Rome, used such of them as belonged to individuals to

increase the splendour of private establishments, and such as belonged to the state to adorn the city....

### Spain

1. The leaders of the Carthaginians, though they had conquered their enemies, could not control themselves: and having made up their minds that they had put an end to the Roman war, they began quarrelling with each other, finding continual subjects of dispute through the innate covetousness and ambition of the Phoenician character; among whom Hasdrubal, son of Gesco, pushed his authority to such a pitch of iniquity as to demand a large sum of money from Andobales, the most faithful of all their Iberian friends, who had some time before lost his chieftainship for the sake of the Carthaginians, and had but recently recovered it through his loyalty to them. When Andobales, trusting to his long fidelity to Carthage, refused this demand, Hasdrubal got up a false charge against him and compelled him to give up his daughters as hostages....

### On the Art of Commanding Armies

12. The chances and accidents that attend military expeditions require great circumspection; and it is possible to provide for all of them with precision, provided that a man gives his mind to the conduct of his plan of campaign. Now that fewer operations in war are carried out openly and by mere force, than by stratagem and the skilful use of opportunity, any one that chooses may readily learn from the history of the past. And again that operations depending on the choice of opportunity oftener fail than succeed is easily proved from experience. Nor can there be any doubt that the greater part of such failures are due to the folly or carelessness of the leaders. It is time therefore to inquire into the rules of this art of strategy.

Such things as occur in campaigns without having been calculated upon in any way we must not speak of as operations, but as accidents or casualties. It is the conduct of a campaign in accordance with an exact plan that I am to set forth: omitting all such things as do not fall under a scientific rule, and have no fixed design.

13. Every operation requires a time fixed for its commencement, a period and place for its execution, secrecy, definite signals, persons by whom and with whom it is to be executed, and a settled plan for conducting it. It is evident that the man who has rightly provided for each of these details will not fail in the ultimate result, while he who has neglected any single one of them will fail in the whole. Such is the order of nature, that one

insignificant circumstance will suffice for failure, while for success rigid perfection of every detail is barely enough.

Leaders then should neglect no single point in conducting such expeditions.

Now the head and front of such precautions is silence; and not to allow either joy at the appearance of an unexpected hope, or fear, or familiarity, or natural affection, to induce a man to communicate his plans to any one unconcerned, but to impart it to those and those alone without whom it is impossible to complete his plan; and not even to them a moment sooner than necessary, but only when the exigencies of the particular service make it inevitable. It is necessary, moreover, not only to be silent with the tongue, but much more so in the mind. For it has happened to many generals before now, while preserving an inviolable silence, to betray their thoughts either by the expression of their countenances or by their actions.

The second requisite is to know accurately the conditions under which marches by day or night may be performed, and the distances to which they can extend; and not only marches on land, but also voyages by sea.

The third and most important is to have some knowledge of the seasons, and to be able to adapt the design to them.

Nor again is the selection of the ground for the operation to be regarded as unimportant, since it often happens that it is this which makes what seems impossible possible, and what seemed possible impossible.

Finally there must be no neglect of the subject of signals and counter signals; and the choice of persons by whom and with whom the operation is to be carried out.

14. Of these points some are learnt by experience, some from history, and others by the study of scientific strategy. It is a most excellent thing too that the general should have a personal knowledge both of the roads, and the locality which he has to reach, and its natural features; as well as of the persons by whom and with whom he is to act. If that is not possible, the next best thing is that he should make careful inquiries and not trust just any one: and men who undertake to act as guides to such places should always deposit security with those whom they are conducting.

These, and other points like them, it is perhaps possible that leaders may learn sufficiently from the mere study of strategy, whether practical or in books. But scientific investigation requires scientific processes and demonstrations, especially in astronomy and geometry; the working out of which is not much to our present point, though their results are important, and may contribute largely to the success of such undertakings.

The most important operation in astronomy is the calculation of the lengths of the days and nights. If these had been uniform it would not have

been a matter requiring any study, but the knowledge would have been common to all the world: since however they not only differ with each other but also with themselves, it is plainly necessary to be acquainted with the increase and diminution of both the one and the other. How can a man calculate a march, and the distance practicable in a day or in a night, if he is unacquainted with the variation of these periods of time? In fact nothing can be done up to time without this knowledge, — it is inevitable otherwise that a man should be sometimes too late and sometimes too soon. And these operations are the only ones in which being too soon is a worse fault than being too late. For the general who overstays the proper hour of action only misses his chance, since he can find out that he has done so before he arrives, and so get off safely: but he that anticipates the hour is detected when he comes up; and so not only misses his immediate aim, but runs a risk of ruining himself altogether.

15. In all human undertakings opportuneness is the most important thing, but especially in operations of war. Therefore a general must have at his fingers' ends the season of the summer and winter solstice, the equinoxes, and the periods between them in which the days and nights increase and diminish. For it is by this knowledge alone that he can compute the distance that can be done whether by sea or land. Again, he must necessarily understand the subdivisions both of the day and the night, in order to know at what hour to order the reveille, or the march out; for the end cannot be attained unless the beginning be rightly taken. As for the periods of the day, they may be observed by the shadows or by the sun's course, and the quarter of the heaven in which it has arrived, but it is difficult to do the same for the night, unless a man is familiar with the phenomenon of the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and their law and order: and this is easy to those who have studied astronomy. For since, though the nights are unequal in length, at least six of the signs of the Zodiac are nevertheless above the horizon every night, it is plain that in the same portions of every night equal portions of the twelve signs of the Zodiac rise. Now as it is known what portion of the sphere is occupied by the sun during the day, it is evident that when he has set the arc subtended by the diameter of his arc must rise. Therefore the length of the night is exactly commensurate with the portion of the Zodiac which appears above the horizon after sunset. And, given that we know the number and size of the signs of the Zodiac, the corresponding divisions of the night are also known. If however the nights be cloudy, the moon must be watched, since owing to its size its light as a general rule is always visible, at whatsoever point in the heaven it may be. The hour may be guessed sometimes by observing the time and place of its rising, or again of its setting, if you only have sufficient

acquaintance with this phenomenon to be familiar with the daily variation of its rising. And the law which it too follows admits of being easily observed; for its revolution is limited by the period of one month, which serves as a model to which all subsequent revolutions conform.

16. And here one may mention with admiration that Homer represents Ulysses, that truest type of a leader of men, taking observations of the stars, not only to direct his voyages, but his operations on land also. For such accidents as baffle expectation, and are incapable of being accurately reckoned upon, are quite sufficient to bring us to great and frequent distress, for instance, downpours of rain and rise of torrents, excessive frosts and snows, misty and cloudy weather, and other things like these;-but if we also neglect to provide for those which can be foreseen, is it not likely that we shall have ourselves to thank for frequent failures? None of these means then must be neglected, if we wish to avoid those errors into which many others are said to have fallen, as well as the particular generals whom I am about to mention by way of examples.

17. When Aratus, the Strategus of the Achaean league, attempted to take Cynaetha by treachery, he arranged a day with those in the town who were co-operating with him, on which he was to arrive on the banks of the river which flows past Cynaetha, and to remain there quietly with his forces: while the party inside the town about midday, when they got an opportunity, were to send out one of their men quietly, wrapped in a cloak, and order him to take his stand upon a tomb agreed upon in front of the city; the rest were to attack the officers who were accustomed to guard the gate while taking their siesta. This being done, the Achaeans were to rise from their ambush and to make all haste to occupy the gate. These arrangements made, and the time having come, Aratus arrived; and having concealed himself down by the river, waited there for the signal. But about an hour before noon, a man, whose profession it was to keep a fine kind of sheep near the town, wishing to ask some business question of the shepherd, came out of the gate with his cloak on, and standing upon the same tomb looked round to find the shepherd. Whereupon Aratus, thinking that the signal had been given, hurried with all his men as fast as he could towards the gate. But the gate being hurriedly closed by the guard, owing to no preparations having yet been made by the party in the town, the result was that Aratus not only failed in his attempt but was the cause of the worst misfortunes to his partisans. For being thus detected they were dragged forward and put to death. What is one to say was the cause of this catastrophe? Surely that the general arranged only for a single signal, and being then quite young had no experience of the accuracy secured by double signals and counter-signals. On so small a point in war does the success or failure of an operation turn.

18. Again the Spartan Cleomenes, when proposing to take Megalopolis by a stratagem, arranged with the guards of that part of the wall near what is called the Cavern to come out with all their men in the third watch, the hour at which his partisans were on duty on the wall; but not having taken into consideration the fact that at the time of the rising of the Pleiads the nights are very short, he started his army from Sparta about sunset. The result was that he was not able to get there in time, but being overtaken by daybreak, made a rash and ill-considered attempt to carry the town, and was repulsed with considerable loss and the danger of a complete overthrow. Now if he had, in accordance with his arrangement, hit the proper time, and led in his men while his partisans were in command of the entrance, he would not have failed in his attempt.

Similarly, once more, King Philip, as I have already stated, when carrying on an intrigue in the city of Meliteia, made a mistake in two ways. The ladders which he brought were too short for their purpose, and he mistook the time. For having arranged to arrive about midnight, when every one was fast asleep, he started from Larissa and arrived in the territory of Meliteia too early, and was neither able to halt, for fear of his arrival being announced in the city, nor to get back again without being discovered. Being compelled therefore to continue his advance, he arrived at the city while the inhabitants were still awake. Consequently he could neither carry the wall by an escalade, because of the insufficient length of the ladders; nor enter by the gate, because it was too early for his partisans inside to help him. Finally, he did nothing but irritate the people of the town; and, after losing a considerable number of his own men, retired unsuccessful and covered with disgrace; having only given a warning to the rest of the world to distrust him and be on their guard against him.

19. Again Nicias, the general of the Athenians, had it in his power to have saved the army besieging Syracuse, and had selected the proper time of the night for escaping the observation of the enemy, and retiring to a place of safety. And then because the moon was eclipsed, regarding it superstitiously as of evil portent, he stopped the army from starting. Thanks to this it came about that, when he started the next day, the enemy had obtained information of his intention, and army and generals alike fell into the hands of the Syracusans. Yet if he had asked about this from men acquainted with such phenomena, he might not only have avoided missing his opportunity for such an absurd reason, but have also used the occurrence for his own benefit owing to the ignorance of the enemy. For the ignorance of their neighbours contributes more than anything else to the success of the instructed.

Such then are examples of the necessity of studying celestial phenomena. But as for securing the proper length of scaling ladders, the

following is the method of making the calculation. Suppose the height of the wall to be given by one of the conspirators within, the measurement required for the ladders is evident; for example, if the height of the wall is ten feet or any other unit, the ladders must be full twelve; and the interval between the wall and the foot of the ladder must be half the length of the ladder, that the ladders may not break under the weight of those mounting if they are set farther away, nor be too steep to be safe if set nearer the perpendicular. But supposing it not to be possible to measure or get near the wall: the height of any object which rises perpendicularly on its base can be taken by those who choose to study mathematics.

20. Once more, therefore, those who wish to succeed in military projects and operations must have studied geometry, not with professional completeness, but far enough to have a comprehension of proportion and equations. For it is not only in such cases that these are necessary, but also for raising the scale of the divisions of a camp. For sometimes the problem is to change the entire form of the camp, and yet to keep the same proportion between all the parts included: at other times to keep the same shape in the parts, and to increase or diminish the whole area on which the camp stands, adding or subtracting from all proportionally. On which point I have already spoken in more elaborate detail in my Notes on Military Tactics. For I do not think that any one will reasonably object to me that I add a great burden to strategy, in urging on those who endeavour to acquire it the study of astronomy and geometry: for, while rather rejecting all that is superfluous in these studies, and brought in for show and talk, as well as all idea of enjoining their prosecution beyond the point of practical utility, I am most earnest and eager for so much as is barely necessary. For it would be strange if those who aim at the sciences of dancing and flute-playing should study the preparatory sciences of rhythms and music, (and the like might be said of the pursuits of the palaestra), from the belief that the final attainment of each of these sciences requires the assistance of the latter; while the students of strategy are to feel aggrieved if they find that they require subsidiary sciences up to a certain point. That would mean that men practising common and inferior arts are more diligent and energetic than those who resolve to excel in the best and most dignified subject; which no man of sense would admit....

#### The Computation of the Size of Cities

21. Most people calculate the area merely from the length of the circumference [of towns or camps]. Accordingly, when one says that the city of Megalopolis has a circuit of fifty stades, and that of Sparta forty-eight, but



that Sparta is twice the size of Megalopolis, they look upon the assertion as incredible. And if one, by way of increasing the difficulty, were to say that a city or camp may have a circuit of forty stades and yet be double the size of one having a perimeter of a hundred, the statement would utterly puzzle them. The reason of this is that we do not remember the lessons in geometry taught us at school. I was led to make these remarks because it is not only common people, but actually some statesmen and military commanders, who have puzzled themselves sometimes by wondering whether it were possible that Sparta should be bigger, and that too by a great deal, than Megalopolis, while having a shorter circuit; and at other times by trying to conjecture the number of men by considering the mere length of a camp's circuit. A similar mistake is also made in pronouncing as to the number of the inhabitants of cities. For most people imagine that cities in which the ground is broken and hilly contain more houses than a flat site. But the fact is not so; because houses are built at right angles not to sloping foundations but to the plains below, upon which the hills themselves are excrescences. And this admits of a proof within the intelligence of a child. For if one would imagine houses on slopes to be raised until they were of the same height; it is evident that the plane of the roofs of the houses thus united will be equal and parallel to the plane underlying the hills and foundations.

So much for those who aspire to be leaders and statesmen and are yet ignorant and puzzled about such facts as these....

Those who do not enter upon undertakings with good will and zeal cannot be expected to give real help when the time comes to act....

The Hannibalian War, B.C. 211

Such being the position of the Romans and Carthaginians, Fortune continually oscillating between the two, we may say with the poet

“Pain hard by joy possessed the souls of each.”<sup>15</sup>

There is profound truth in the observation which I have often made, that it is impossible to grasp or get a complete view of the fairest of all subjects of contemplation, the tendency of history as a whole, from writers of partial histories.

The Character of Hannibal

<sup>15</sup> Cp. Homer, *Odyss.* 19, 471.

22. Of all that befell the Romans and Carthaginians, good or bad, the cause was one man and one mind, — Hannibal. For it is notorious that he managed the Italian campaigns in person, and the Spanish by the agency of the elder of his brothers, Hasdrubal, and subsequently by that of Mago, the leaders who killed the two Roman generals in Spain about the same time. Again, he conducted the Sicilian campaign at first through Hippocrates and afterwards through Myttonus<sup>16</sup> the Libyan. So also in Greece and Illyria: and, by brandishing before their faces the dangers arising from these latter places, he was enabled to distract the attention of the Romans, thanks to his understanding with Philip. So great and wonderful is the influence of a Man, and a mind duly fitted by original constitution for any undertaking within the reach of human powers.

But since the position of affairs has brought us to an inquiry into the genius of Hannibal, the occasion seems to me to demand that I should explain in regard to him the peculiarities of his character which have been especially the subject of controversy. Some regard him as having been extraordinarily cruel, some exceedingly grasping of money. But to speak the truth of him, or of any person engaged in public affairs, is not easy. Some maintain that men's real natures are brought out by their circumstances, and that they are detected when in office, or as some say when in misfortunes, though they have up to that time completely maintained their secrecy. I, on the contrary, do not regard this as a sound dictum. For I think that men in these circumstances are compelled, not only occasionally but frequently, either by the suggestions of friends or the complexity of affairs, to speak and act contrary to their real principles.

23. And there are many proofs of this to be found in past history if any one will give the necessary attention. Is it not universally stated by the historians that Agathocles, tyrant of Sicily, after having the reputation of extreme cruelty in his original measures for the establishment of his dynasty, when he had once become convinced that his power over the Siceliot was firmly established, is considered to have become the most humane and mild of rulers? Again, was not Cleomenes of Sparta a most excellent king, a most cruel tyrant, and then again as a private individual most obliging and benevolent? And yet it is not reasonable to suppose the most opposite dispositions to exist in the same nature. They are compelled to change with the changes of circumstances: and so some rulers often display to the world a disposition as opposite as possible to their true nature. Therefore the natures of men not only are not brought out by such things, but on the contrary are rather obscured. The same effect is produced also not only in

<sup>16</sup> Livy, 40, calls him Mutines.

commanders, despots, and kings, but in states also, by the suggestions of friends. For instance, you will find the Athenians responsible for very few tyrannical acts, and of many kindly and noble ones, while Aristides and Pericles were at the head of the state: but quite the reverse when Cleon and Chares were so. And when the Lacedaemonians were supreme in Greece, all the measures taken by King Cleombrotus were conceived in the interests of their allies, but those by Agesilaus not so. The characters of states therefore vary with the variations of their leaders. King Philip again, when Taurion and Demetrius were acting with him, was most impious in his conduct, but when Aratus or Chrysogonus, most humane.

24. The case of Hannibal seems to me to be on a par with these. His circumstances were so extraordinary and shifting, his closest friends so widely different, that it is exceedingly difficult to estimate his character from his proceedings in Italy. What those circumstances suggested to him may easily be understood from what I have already said, and what is immediately to follow; but it is not right to omit the suggestions made by his friends either, especially as this matter may be rendered sufficiently clear by one instance of the advice offered him. At the time that Hannibal was meditating the march from Iberia to Italy with his army, he was confronted with the extreme difficulty of providing food and securing provisions, both because the journey was thought to be of insuperable length, and because the barbarians that lived in the intervening country were so numerous and savage. It appears that at that time this difficulty frequently came on for discussion at the council; and that one of his friends, called Hannibal Monomachus, gave it as his opinion that there was one and only one way by which it was possible to get as far as Italy. Upon Hannibal bidding him speak out, he said that they must teach the army to eat human flesh, and make them accustomed to it. Hannibal could say nothing against the boldness and effectiveness of the idea, but was unable to persuade himself or his friends to entertain it. It is this man's acts in Italy that they say were attributed to Hannibal, to maintain the accusation of cruelty, as well as such as were the result of circumstances.

25. Fond of money indeed he does seem to have been to a conspicuous degree, and to have had a friend of the same character Mago, who commanded in Bruttium. That account I got from the Carthaginians themselves; for natives know best not only which way the wind lies, as the proverb has it, but the characters also of their fellow-countrymen. But I heard a still more detailed story from Massanissa, who maintained the charge of money-loving against all Carthaginians generally, but especially against Hannibal and Mago called the Samnite. Among other stories, he told me that these two men had arranged a most generous subdivision of

operations between each other from their earliest youth; and though they had each taken a very large number of cities in Iberia and Italy by force or fraud, they had never taken part in the same operation together; but had always schemed against each other, more than against the enemy, in order to prevent the one being with the other at the taking of a city: that they might neither quarrel in consequence of things of this sort, nor have to divide the profit on the ground of their equality of rank.

26. The influence of friends then, and still more that of circumstances, in doing violence to and changing the natural character of Hannibal, is shown by what I have narrated and will be shown by what I have to narrate. For as soon as Capua fell into the hands of the Romans the other cities naturally became restless, and began to look round for opportunities and pretexts for revolting back again to Rome. It was then that Hannibal seems to have been at his lowest point of distress and despair. For neither was he able to keep a watch upon all the cities so widely removed from each other, — while he remained entrenched at one spot, and the enemy were manoeuvring against him with several armies, nor could he divide his force into many parts; for he would have put an easy victory into the hands of the enemy by becoming inferior to them in numbers, and finding it impossible to be personally present at all points. Wherefore he was obliged to completely abandon some of the cities, and to draw his garrisons from others: being afraid lest, in the course of the revolutions which might occur, he should lose his own soldiers as well. Some cities again he made up his mind to treat with treacherous violence, removing their inhabitants to other cities, and giving their property up to plunder; in consequence of which many were enraged with him, and accused him of impiety or cruelty. For the fact was that these movements were accompanied by robberies of money, murders, and violence, on various pretexts at the hands of the outgoing or incoming soldiers in the cities, because they always supposed that the inhabitants that were left behind were on the verge of turning over to the enemy. It is, therefore, very difficult to express an opinion on the natural character of Hannibal, owing to the influence exercised on it by the counsel of friends and the force of circumstances. The prevailing notion about him, however, at Carthage was that he was greedy of money, at Rome that he was cruel.<sup>17</sup> ...

<sup>17</sup> See 3, 86, note. Cp. Cicero *de Am.* § 8, cum duobus ducibus de imperio in Italia decertatum est, Pyrrho et Annibale. Ab altero propter probitatem ejus non nimis alienos animos habemus; alterum propter crudelitatem semper haec civitas oderit.

## Agrigentum

27. The city of Agrigentum is not only superior to most cities in the particulars I have mentioned, but above all in beauty and elaborate ornamentation. It stands within eighteen stades of the sea, so that it participates in every advantage from that quarter; while its circuit of fortification is particularly strong both by nature and art. For its wall is placed on a rock, steep and precipitous, on one side naturally; on the other made so artificially. And it is enclosed by rivers: for along the south side runs the river of the same name as the town, and along the west and south-west side the river called Hypsas. The citadel overlooks the city exactly at the south-east, girt on the outside by an impassable ravine, and on the inside with only one approach from the town. On the top of it is a temple of Athene and of Zeus Atabyrius as at Rhodes: for as Agrigentum was founded by the Rhodians, it is natural that this deity should have the same appellation as at Rhodes. The city is sumptuously adorned in other respects also with temples and colonnades. The temple of Zeus Olympius is still unfinished, but in its plan and dimensions it seems to be inferior to no temple whatever in all Greece.

Marcus Valerius persuaded these refugees, on giving them a pledge for the security of their lives, to leave Sicily and go to Italy, on condition that they should receive pay from the people of Rhegium for plundering Bruttium, and retain all booty obtained from hostile territory.

## Greece

*Speech of Chlaeneas, the Aetolian, at Sparta. In the autumn of B.C. 211 the Consul-designate, M. Valerius Laevinus, induced the Aetolians, Scopas being their Strategus, to form an alliance with them against Philip. The treaty, as finally concluded, embraced also the Eleans, Lacedaemonians, King Attalus of Pergamum, the Thracian King Pleuratus, and the Illyrian Scerdilaidas. A mission was sent from Aetolia to persuade the Lacedaemonians to join. See Livy, 26, 24.*

“That the Macedonian supremacy, men of Sparta, was the beginning of slavery to the Greeks, I am persuaded that no one will venture to deny; and you may satisfy yourselves by looking at it thus. There was a league of Greeks living in the parts towards Thrace who were colonists from Athens and Chalcis, of which the most conspicuous and powerful was the city of Olynthus. Having enslaved and made an example of this town, Philip not only became master of the Thraceward cities, but reduced Thessaly also to his authority by the terror which he had thus set up. Not long after this he

conquered the Athenians in a pitched battle, and used his success with magnanimity, not from any wish to benefit the Athenians—far from it, but in order that his favourable treatment of them might induce the other states to submit to him voluntarily. The reputation of your city was still such that it seemed likely, that, if a proper opportunity arose, it would recover its supremacy in Greece. Accordingly, without waiting for any but the slightest pretext, Philip came with his army and cut down everything standing in your fields, and destroyed the houses with fire. And at last, after destroying towns and open country alike, he assigned part of your territory to the Argives, part to Tegea and Megalopolis, and part to the Messenians: determined to benefit every people in spite of all justice, on the sole condition of their injuring you. Alexander succeeded Philip on the throne, and how he destroyed Thebes, because he thought that it contained a spark of Hellenic life, however small, you all I think know well.

29. “And why need I speak in detail of how the successors of this king have treated the Greeks? For surely there is no man living, so uninterested in public affairs, as not to have heard how Antipater in his victory at Lamia treated the unhappy Athenians, as well as the other Greeks; and how he went so far in violence and brutality as to institute man-hunters, and send them to the various cities to catch all who had ever spoken against, or in any way annoyed, the royal family of Macedonia: of whom some were dragged by force from the temples, and others from the very altars, and put to death with torture, and others who escaped were forced to leave Greece entirely; nor had they any refuge save the Aetolian nation alone. For the Aetolians were the only people in Greece who withstood Antipater in behalf of those unjustly defrauded of safety to their lives: they alone faced the invasion of Brennus and his barbarian army: and they alone came to your aid when called upon, with a determination to assist you in regaining your ancestral supremacy in Greece.<sup>18</sup> Who again is ignorant of the deeds of Cassander, Demetrius, and Antigonus Gonatas? For owing to their recency the knowledge of them still remains distinct. Some of them by introducing garrisons, and others by implanting despots in the cities, effectually secured that every state should share the infamous brand of slavery. But passing by all these I will now come to the last Antigonus,<sup>19</sup> lest any of you, viewing his policy unsuspectingly, should consider that you are under an obligation to the Macedonians. For it was with no purpose of saving the Achaeans that he undertook the war against you, nor from any dislike of the tyranny of

<sup>18</sup> The paragraph “For the Aetolians . . . in Greece,” follows “the Messenians” in ch. 30, in the Greek texts. But it is evidently out of place there, and falls naturally into this position.

<sup>19</sup> Antigonus Doson.

Cleomenes inducing him to free the Lacedaemonians. If any man among you holds this opinion, he must be simple indeed. No! It was because he saw that his own power would not be secure if you got the rule of the Peloponnese; and because he saw that Cleomenes was of a nature well calculated to secure this object, and that fortune was splendidly seconding your efforts, that he came in a tumult of fear and jealousy, not to help Peloponnesians, but to destroy your hopes and abase your power. Therefore you do not owe the Macedonians so much gratitude for not destroying your city when they had taken it, as hostility and hatred, for having more than once already stood in your way, when you were strong enough to grasp the supremacy of Greece.

30. "Again, what need to speak more on the wickedness of Philip? For of his impiety towards the gods his outrages on the temples at Thermus are a sufficient proof; and of his cruelty towards man, his perfidy and treachery to the Messenians.

"So much for the past. But as to the present resolution before you, it is in a way necessary to draft it, and vote on it, as though you were deciding on war, and yet in real truth not to regard it as a war. For it is impossible for the Achaeans, beaten as they are, to damage your territory: but I imagine that they will be only too thankful to heaven if they can but protect their own, when they find themselves surrounded by war with Eleans and Messenians as allied to us, and with ourselves at the same time. And Philip, I am persuaded, will soon desist from his attack, when involved in a war by land with Aetolians, and by sea with Rome and King Attalus. The future may be easily conjectured from the past. For if he always failed to subdue Aetolians when they were his only enemies, can we conceive that he will be able to support the war if all these combine?

31. "I have said thus much with the deliberate purpose of showing you that you are not hampered by previous engagements, but are entirely free in your deliberations as to which you ought to join Aetolians or Macedonians. If you are under an earlier engagement, and have already made up your minds on these points, what room is there for further argument? For if you had made the alliance now existing between yourselves and us, previous to the good services done you by Antigonus, there might perhaps have been some reason for questioning whether it were right to neglect an old treaty in gratitude for recent favours. But since it was subsequent to this much vaunted freedom and security given you by Antigonus, and with which they are perpetually taunting you, that, after deliberation and frequent consideration as to which of the two you ought to join, you decided to combine with us Aetolians; and have actually exchanged pledges of fidelity with us, and have fought by our side in the late war against Macedonia, how can any one entertain a doubt on the subject any longer? For the obligations

of kindness between you and Antigonus and Philip were cancelled then. It now remains for you to point out some subsequent wrong done you by Aetolians, or subsequent favour by Macedonians: or if neither of these exist, on what grounds are you now, at the instance of the very men to whom you justly refused to listen formerly, when no obligation existed, about to undo treaties and oaths — the strongest bonds of fidelity existing among mankind.”

Such was the conclusion of what was considered a very cogent speech by Chlaeneas.

32. After him the ambassador of the Acarnanians, Lyciscus, came forward: and at first he paused, seeing the multitude talking to each other about the last speech; but when at last silence was obtained, he began his speech as follows:

“I and my colleagues, men of Sparta, have been sent to you by the common league of the Acarnanians; and as we have always shared in the same prospects as the Macedonians, we consider that this mission also is common to us and them. For just as on the field of war, owing to the superiority and magnitude of the Macedonian force, our safety is involved in their valour; so, in the controversies of diplomacy, our interests are inseparable from the rights of the Macedonians. Now Chlaeneas in the peroration of his address gave a summary of the obligations existing between the Aetolians and yourselves. For he said, ‘If subsequent to your making the alliance with them any fresh injury or offence had been committed by Aetolians, or any kindness done by Macedonians, the present proposal ought properly to be discussed as a fresh start; but that if, nothing of the sort having taken place, we believe that by quoting the services of Antigonus, and your former decrees, we shall be able to annul existing oaths and treaties, we are the greatest simpletons in the world.’ To this I reply by acknowledging that I must indeed be the most foolish of men, and that the arguments I am about to put forward are indeed futile, if, as he maintains, nothing fresh has happened, and Greek affairs are in precisely the same position as before. But if exactly the reverse be the case, as I shall clearly prove in the course of my speech, — then I imagine that I shall be shown to give you some salutary advice, and Chlaeneas to be quite in the wrong. We are come, then, expressly because we are convinced that it is needful for us to speak on this very point: namely, to point out to you that it is at once your duty and your interest, after hearing of the evils threatening Greece, to adopt if possible a policy excellent and worthy of yourselves by uniting your prospects with ours; or if that cannot be, at least to abstain from this movement for the present.



33. “But since the last speaker has ventured to go back to ancient times for his denunciations of the Macedonian royal family, I feel it incumbent on me also to say a few words first on these points, to remove the misconception of those who have been carried away by his words.

“Chlaeneas said, then, that Philip son of Amyntas became master of Thessaly by the ruin of Olynthus. But I conceive that not only the Thessalians, but the other Greeks also, were preserved by Philip’s means. For at the time when Onomarchus and Philomelus, in defiance of religion and law, seized Delphi and made themselves masters of the treasury of the god, who is there among you who does not know that they collected such a mighty force as no Greek dared any longer face? Nay, along with this violation of religion, they were within an ace of becoming lords of all Greece also. At that crisis Philip volunteered his assistance; destroyed the tyrants, secured the temple, and became the author of freedom to the Greeks, as is testified even to posterity by the facts. For Philip was unanimously elected general-in-chief by land and sea, not, as my opponent ventured to assert, as one who had wronged Thessaly; but on the ground of his being a benefactor of Greece: an honour which no one had previously obtained. ‘Ay, but,’ he says, ‘Philip came with an armed force into Laconia.’ Yes, but it was not of his own choice, as you know: he reluctantly consented to do so, after repeated invitations and appeals by the Peloponnesians, under the name of their friend and ally. And when he did come, pray observe, Chlaeneas, how he behaved. Though he could have availed himself of the wishes of the neighbouring states for the destruction of these men’s territory and the humiliation of their city, and have won much gratitude too by his act, he by no means lent himself to such a policy; but, by striking terror into the one and the other alike, he compelled both parties to accommodate their differences in a congress, to the common benefit of all: not putting himself forward as arbitrator of the points in dispute, but appointing a joint board of arbitration selected from all Greece. Is that a proceeding which deserves to be held up to reproach and execration?

34. “Again, you bitterly denounced Alexander, because, when he believed himself to be wronged, he punished Thebes: but of his having exacted vengeance of the Persians for their outrages on all the Greeks you made no mention at all; nor of his having released us all in common from heavy miseries, by enslaving the barbarians, and depriving them of the supplies which they used for the ruin of the Greeks, — sometimes pitting the Athenians against the ancestors of these gentlemen here, at another the Thebans; nor finally of his having subjected Asia to the Greeks.

“As for Alexander’s successors how had you the audacity to mention them? They were indeed, according to the circumstances of the time, on

many occasions the authors of good to some and of harm to others: for which perhaps others might be allowed to bear them a grudge. But to you Aetolians it is in no circumstance open to do so, you who have never been the authors of anything good to any one, but of mischief to many and on many occasions

Who was it that called in Antigonos son of Demetrius to the partition of the Achaean league? Who was it that made a sworn treaty with Alexander of Epirus for the enslaving and dismembering of Acarnania? Was it not you? What nation ever sent out military commanders duly accredited of the sort that you have? Men that ventured to do violence to the sanctity of asylum itself! Timaeus violated the sanctuary of Poseidon on Taenarum, and of Artemis at Lusi. Pharylus and Polycritus plundered, the former the sacred enclosure of Here in Argos, the latter that of Poseidon at Mantinea. What again about Lattabus and Nicostratus? Did not they make a treacherous attack on the assembly of the Pan-Boeotians in time of peace, committing outrages worthy of Scythians and Gauls? You will find no such crimes as these committed by the Diadochi.

35. "Not being able to say anything in defence of any of these acts, you talk pompously about your having resisted the invasion of Delphi by the barbarians, and allege that for this Greece ought to be grateful to you. But if for this one service some gratitude is owing to the Aetolians; what high honour do the Macedonians deserve, who throughout nearly their whole lives are ceaselessly engaged in a struggle with the barbarians for the safety of the Greeks? For that Greece would have been continually involved in great dangers, if we had not had the Macedonians and the ambition of their kings as a barrier, who is ignorant? And there is a very striking proof of this. For no sooner had the Gauls conceived a contempt for the Macedonians, by their victory over Ptolemy Ceraunus, than, thinking the rest of no account, Brennus promptly marched into the middle of Greece. And this would often have happened if the Macedonians had not been on our frontiers.

"However, though I have much that I could say on the past, I think this is enough. Of all the actions of Philip, they have selected his destruction of the temple, to fasten the charge of impiety upon him. They did not add a word about their own outrage and crime, which they perpetrated in regard to the temples in Dium, and Dodona, and the sacred enclosures of the gods. The speaker should have mentioned this first. But anything you Aetolians have suffered you recount to these gentlemen with exaggeration: but the things you have inflicted unprovoked, though many times as numerous as the others, you pass over in silence; because you know full well that everybody lays the blame of acts of injustice and mischief on those who give the provocation by unjust actions themselves.

36. “Of Antigonus I will only make mention so far, as to avoid appearing to despise what was done, or to treat as unimportant so great an undertaking. For my part I think that history does not contain the record of a more admirable service than that which Antigonus performed for you: indeed it appears to me to be unsurpassable. And the following facts will show this. Antigonus went to war with you and conquered you in a pitched battle. By force of arms he became master of your territory and city at once. He might have exercised all the rights of war upon you: but he was so far from inflicting any hardships upon you, that, besides other benefits, he expelled your tyrant and restored your laws and ancestral constitution. In return for which, in the national assemblies, calling the Greeks to witness your words, you proclaimed Antigonus your benefactor and preserver.

“What then ought to have been your policy? I will speak what I really think, gentlemen of Sparta: and you will I am sure bear with me. For I shall do this now from no wish to go out of my way to bring railing accusations against you, but under the pressure of circumstances, and for the common good. What then am I to say? This: that both in the late war you ought to have allied yourselves not with Aetolians but with Macedonians; and now again, in answer to these invitations, you ought to join Philip rather than the former people. But, it may be objected, you will be breaking a treaty. Which will be the graver breach of right on your part, — to neglect a private arrangement made with Aetolians, or one that has been inscribed on a column and solemnly consecrated in the sight of all Greece? On what ground are you so careful of breaking faith with this people, from whom you have never received any favour, while you pay no heed to Philip and the Macedonians, to whom you owe even the very power of deliberating to-day? Do you regard it as a duty to keep faith with friends? Yet it is not so much a point of conscience to confirm written pledges of faith, as it is a violation of conscience to go to war with those who preserved you: and this is what, in the present instance, the Aetolians are come to demand of you.

37. “Let it, however, be granted that what I have now said may in the eyes of severe critics be regarded as beside the subject. I will now return to the main point at issue, as they state it. It was this: ‘If the circumstances are the same now as at the time when you made alliance with the Aetolians, then your policy ought to remain on the same lines.’ That was their first proposition. ‘But if they have been entirely changed, then it is fair that you should now deliberate on the demands made to you as on a matter entirely new and unprejudiced.’ I ask you therefore, Cleonicus and Chlaeneas, who were your allies on the former occasion when you invited this people to join you? Were they not all the Greeks? But with whom are you now united, or to what kind of federation are you now inviting this people? Is it not to one

with the foreigner? A mighty similarity exists, no doubt, in your minds, and no diversity at all! Then you were contending for glory and supremacy with Achaeans and Macedonians, men of kindred blood with yourselves, and with Philip their leader; now a war of slavery is threatening Greece against men of another race, whom you think to bring against Philip, but have really unconsciously brought against yourselves and all Greece. For just as men in the stress of war, by introducing into their cities garrisons superior in strength to their own forces, while successfully repelling all danger from the enemy, put themselves at the mercy of their friends, — just so are the Aetolians acting in the present case. For in their desire to conquer Philip and humble Macedonia, they have unconsciously brought such a mighty cloud from the west, as for the present perhaps will overshadow Macedonia first, but which in the sequel will be the origin of heavy evils to all Greece.

38. “All Greeks indeed have need to be on the alert for the crisis which is coming on: but Lacedaemonians above all. For why was it, do you suppose, men of Sparta, that your ancestors when Xerxes sent an ambassador to your town demanding earth and water, thrust the man into a well, and, throwing earth upon him, bade him take back word to Xerxes that he had got from the Lacedaemonians what he had demanded from them, — earth and water? Why was it again, do you suppose, that Leonidas and his men started forth to a voluntary and certain death? Was it not that they might have the glory of being the forlorn hope, not only of their own freedom, but of that of all Greece also? And it would indeed be a worthy action for descendants of such heroes as these to make a league with the barbarians now, and to serve with them; and to war against Epirotes, Achaeans, Acarnanians, Boeotians, Thessalians, and in fact against nearly every Greek state except Aetolians! To these last it is habitual to act thus: and to regard nothing as disgraceful, so long only as it is accompanied by an opportunity of plunder. It is not so, however, with you. And what must we expect these people to do, now that they have obtained the support of the Roman alliance? For when they obtained an accession of strength and support from the Illyrians, they at once set about acts of piracy at sea, and treacherously seized Pylus; while by land they stormed the city of Cleitor, and sold the Cynethans into slavery. Once before they made a treaty with Antigonos, as I said just now, for the destruction of the Achaean and Acarnanian races; and now they have done the same with Rome for the destruction of all Greece.

39. “With a knowledge of such transactions before his eyes who could help suspecting an attack from Rome, and feeling abhorrence at the abandoned conduct of the Aetolians in daring to make such a treaty? They have already wrested Oeniadae and Nesus from the Acarnanians, and recently seized the city of the unfortunate Anticyreans, whom, in

conjunction with the Romans, they have sold into slavery.<sup>020</sup> Their children and women are led off by the Romans to suffer all the miseries which those must expect who fall into the hands of aliens; while the houses of the unhappy inhabitants are allotted among the Aetolians. Surely a noble alliance this to join deliberately! Especially for Lacedaemonians: who, after conquering the barbarians, decreed that the Thebans, for being the only Greeks that resolved to remain neutral during the Persian invasion, should pay a tenth of their goods to the gods.

“The honourable course then, men of Sparta, and the one becoming your character, is to remember from what ancestors you are sprung; to be on your guard against an attack from Rome; to suspect the treachery of the Aetolians. Above all to recall the services of Antigonus: and so once more show your loathing for dishonest men; and, rejecting the friendship of the Aetolians, unite your hopes for the future with those of Achaia and Macedonia. If, however, any of your own influential citizens are intriguing against this policy, then at least remain neutral, and do not take part in the iniquities of these Aetolians....”

*In the autumn of B.C. 211, Philip being in Thrace, Scopas made a levy of Aetolians to invade Acarnania. The Acarnanians sent their wives, children, and old men to Epirus, while the rest of them bound themselves by a solemn execration never to rejoin their friends except as conquerors of the invading Aetolians. Livy, 26, 25.*

40. When the Acarnanians heard of the intended invasion of the Aetolians, in a tumult of despair and fury they adopted a measure of almost frantic violence...

If any one of them survived the battle and fled from the danger, they begged that no one should receive him in any city or give him a light for a fire. And this they enjoined on all with a solemn execration, and especially on the Epirotes, to the end that they should offer none of those who fled an asylum in their territory....

*When Philip was informed of the invasion he advanced promptly to the relief of Acarnania; hearing of which the Aetolians returned home. Livy, l.c.*

Zeal on the part of friends, if shown in time, is of great service; but if it is dilatory and late, it renders the assistance nugatory, — supposing, of

<sup>20</sup> B.C. 211. See Livy, 26, 24–26.

course, that they wish to keep the terms of their alliance, not merely on paper, but by actual deeds.<sup>21</sup> ...

#### Investment of Echinus by Philip

41. Having determined to make his approach upon the town at the two towers, he erected opposite to them diggers' sheds and rams; and opposite the space between the towers he erected a covered way between the rams, parallel to the wall. And when the plan was complete, the appearance of the works was very like the style of the wall. For the super-structures on the pent houses had the appearance and style of towers, owing to the placing of the wattles side by side; and the space; 28, between looked like a wall, because the row of wattles at the top of the covered way were divided into battlements by the fashion in which they were woven. In the lowest division of these besieging towers the diggers employed in levelling inequalities, to allow the stands of the battering-rams to be brought up, kept throwing on earth, and the ram was propelled forward: in the second story were water vessels and other appliances for quenching fires, and along with them the catapults: and on the third a considerable body of men were placed to fight with all who tried to damage the rams; and they were on a level with the city towers. From the covered way between the besieging towers a double trench was to be dug towards the wall, between the city towers.

There were also three batteries for stone-throwing machines, one of which carried stones of a talent weight, and the other two half that weight. From the camp to the pent-houses and diggers' sheds underground tunnels had been constructed, to prevent men, going to the works from the camp or returning from the works, being wounded in any way by missiles from the town. These works were completed in a very few days, because the district round produced what was wanted for this service in abundance. For Echinus is situated on the Melian Gulf, facing south, exactly opposite the territory of Thronium, and enjoys a soil rich in every kind of produce; thanks to which circumstance Philip had no scarcity of anything he required for his purpose. Accordingly, as I said, as soon as the works were completed, they begun at once pushing the trenches and the siege machinery towards the walls...

42. While Philip was investing Echinus, and had secured his position excellently on the side of the town, and had strengthened the outer line of his camp with a trench and wall, Publius Sulpicius, the Roman pro-consul, and

<sup>21</sup> On the margin of one MS. is written "For such is the characteristic always maintained by the Athenian State." But its relevancy is not very apparent; and at any rate it seems more likely to be a comment of the Epitomator, than a sentence from Polybius.

Dorimachus, Strategus of the Aetolians,<sup>22</sup> arrived in person, — Publius with a fleet, and Dorimachus with an army of infantry and cavalry, — and assaulted Philip's entrenchment. Their repulse led to greater exertions on Philip's part in his attack upon the Echinaeans, who in despair surrendered to him. For Dorimachus was not able to reduce Philip by cutting off his supplies, as he got them by sea...

When Aegina was taken by the Romans, such of the inhabitants as had not escaped crowded together at the ships, and begged the pro-consul to allow them to send ambassadors to cities of their kinsmen to obtain ransom. Publius at first returned a harsh answer, saying, that "When they were their own masters was the time that they ought to have sent ambassadors to their betters to ask for mercy, not now when they were slaves. A little while ago they had not thought an ambassador from him worthy of even a word; now that they were captives they expected to be allowed to send ambassadors to their kinsfolk: was that not sheer folly?" So at the time he dismissed those who came to him with these words. But next morning he called all the captives together and said that, as to the Aeginetans, he owed them no favour; but for the sake of the rest of the Greeks he would allow them to send ambassadors to get ransom, since that was the custom of their country....

#### Asia

43. The Euphrates rises in Armenia and flows through Syria and the country beyond to Babylonia. It seems to discharge itself into the Red Sea; but in point of fact it does not do so: for its waters are dissipated among the ditches dug across the fields before it reaches the sea. Accordingly the nature of this river is the reverse of that of others. For in other rivers the volume of water is increased in proportion to the greater distance traversed, and they are at their highest in winter and lowest in midsummer; but this river is fullest of water at the rising of the dog-star, and has the largest volume of water in Syria, which continually decreases as it advances. The reason of this is that the increase is not caused by the collection of winter rains, but by the melting of the snows; and its decrease by the diversion of its stream into the land, and its subdivision for the purposes of irrigation. It was this which on this occasion made the transport of the army slow, because as the boats were heavily laden, and the stream very low, the forces of the current did exceedingly little to help them down....

<sup>22</sup> Scopas (B.C. 211–210) must have gone out of office, i.e. it was after autumn of 210 B.C.

#### Embassy from Rome to Ptolemy

44. The Romans sent ambassadors to Ptolemy, wishing to be supplied with corn, as they were suffering from a great scarcity of it at home; and, moreover, when all Italy had been laid waste by the enemy's troops up to the gates of Rome, and when all supplies from abroad were stopped by the fact that war was raging, and armies encamped, in all parts of the world except in Egypt. In fact the scarcity at Rome had come to such a pitch, that a Sicilian medimnus was sold for fifteen drachmae.<sup>23</sup> But in spite of this distress the Romans did not relax in their attention to the war.

<sup>23</sup> That is, 10s. 3 and 3/4 d. for about a bushel and a half. See on 2, 15.