

THE  
PRINCE  
OR  
THE  
DISCOURSES

MACHIAVELLI

THE PRINCE  
AND  
THE DISCOURSES  
BY  
NICCOLÒ  
MACHIAVELLI

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY MAX LERNER



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**INTRODUCTION**

by MAX LERNER

WE LIVE today in the shadow of a Florentine, the man who above all others taught the world to think in terms of cold political power. His name was Niccolò Machiavelli, and he was one of those rare intellectuals who write about politics because they have had a hand in politics and learned what it is about. His portraits show a thin-faced, pale little man, with a sharp nose, sunken cheeks, subtle lips, a discreet and enigmatic smile, and piercing black eyes that look as if they knew much more than they were willing to tell.

There is little we can say for certain about his early years. He was born in 1469, of a family that was part of the small and impoverished gentry of Florence. His father, a lawyer, tried desperately to keep his family from slipping down into the ranks of the middle class. Niccolò must have had the sort of boyhood that most children had in the homes and on the streets of Florence in the *quattrocento*. He steps onto the threshold of history in 1498, already a young man of twenty-nine, only a month after the execution of the friar-politician Savonarola, who had dominated the last decades of the dying fifteenth century in Florence. At that time Machiavelli got a minor job as secretary to the Second Chancery—an office he was to hold for fourteen years.

He was what we should call today a Braintrust and bureaucrat. He loved his job as idea-man for some of the stuffed-shirt Florentine politicians. And because he was so

good at it, the stuffed shirts came to regard him as someone on whose shoulders they could place the burden of administrative work—the man who got papers drawn up and orders sent out and correspondence carried on and records kept. In due time—since Florence like the other Italian city-states in an age of intrigue depended on skilful diplomacy for its survival—they broadened the scope of his work and sent him on diplomatic missions. In the course of a decade he visited as envoy every important city-state in Italy and several of the courts outside Italy. He sent back reports which may still be read for their tough understanding of diplomatic realities. Invariably he acquitted himself well; he met the movers and shakers of the world, and the narrow horizon of the Florentine expanded into the vistas of the European state-system.

It was thus that Machiavelli was in a position to become the first modern analyst of power. Where others looked at the figureheads, he kept his eyes glued behind the scenes. He sought the ultimate propulsion of events. He wanted to know what made things tick; he wanted to take the clock of the world to pieces to find out how it worked. He went on diplomatic missions, organized the armies of Florence, carried through successfully the long protracted siege of Pisa. Yet always he was concerned with what these experiences could teach him about the nature of power. In an age of portraiture it was natural that he too should be a painter, but his subjects never knew they were sitting for him. He studied Pope Julius II, the secular princes, the *condottieri*; above all he studied Caesar Borgia, the Duke Valentino, who came closer to embodying the naked ideal of power than any other person Machiavelli had met. There was in Machiavelli, as in Savonarola, an intense and searing flame, but it was a secular flame, and the things it fed

on were not such things as religious dreams are made of.

A man like this might have lived out his days, tasted somewhat of power, known what it was to run a state from behind the scenes as an underling, and died leaving behind him some excellent diplomatic reports, a few plays, and some polished verses in the style of the time. But Machiavelli's destiny was different. The petty dynasties and bourgeoisie merchant princes who ruled the Italian city-states played their fateful game of chessboard diplomacy all through the fifteenth century until finally in the sixteenth it led to disaster for all of them. This is not the place to review the succession of maneuvers by which France, Spain, Germany and the Papacy vied for the supremacy over Italy. When, after the League of Cambrai, a split developed between France and the Papacy, Florence stuck to its basic alliance with France. When Julius II drove the French from Italy, Florence was lost; and not even the new citizen army that Machiavelli had trained could withstand the combined force of the Pope's prestige and his Swiss mercenaries. One of the conditions of the papal peace was the restoration of the Medici in Florence. And so Machiavelli, who had always been staunchly republican and anti-Medici, found himself in 1512 at the age of forty-three a dejected liberal without a job in a world that had come tumbling down about his ears.

He tried to make his peace with the Medici, but to no avail. There was a witch-hunting atmosphere in Florence, and everyone was suspect who had ever been identified with the liberal cause. Two ardent young republican conspirators had evidently made a list of those on whom they might rely for aid, and Machiavelli's name was on the list. He was arrested, drawn by the rope, tortured. But he was plainly innocent, and finally was released. He slunk off to a

small suburban farm near Florence, and for the next fourteen years until his death his letters are full of pleas to be reinstated in the favor of the Medici and the Pope, plans to recommend himself to them, strategies by which his abilities could be brought to their attention. It is, as so many commentators have pointed out, neither a pretty nor a graceful picture. Yet we must reflect that Machiavelli out of office felt himself a vessel without use. The letters he has left us during this period, for all their bitter pride and the unbreakable gaiety of their style, show that reinstatement in office spelled for him nothing less than a return to life.

Ironically, it was this period of his disgrace that represents the high point of his creative power. The enforced leisure compelled him to fall back on himself. Finding himself after fourteen years deprived of his job, he felt shut in like a bird in an iron cage. The result was his books—his solitary song. More and more he retreated to his study and his mind. From them came *The Prince*, the *Art of War*, *The Discourses*, the *History of Florence*; various plays, among them a first-rate comedy, *Mandragola*; poetry, stories, biographical sketches. The civil servant, the politician, the diplomat, the military organizer had become a man of letters *malgré lui*.

There remains only the final ironic act. In 1527 the papal armies were defeated and Rome was sacked by the soldiers of Charles V. At this the popular party in Florence overthrew the Medici and for a short time restored democratic government. Machiavelli had hurried back to Florence, eager to regain his post as secretary. But he never stood a real chance. *The Prince*, circulated in manuscript, had made him enemies; the small dull men who had it in their power to dispense office feared his brilliance and his wit. Mercifully Machiavelli fell sick and never learned that the final vote of the Council was overwhelmingly against him. Be-

form of notes which eventually formed themselves slowly into a vast book.

That book was not *The Prince*. There are clear indications that Machiavelli started to write what afterward became *The Discourses*, planned on a grand scale. But as he wrote in his study, things were happening in the world outside. There was a new Pope in Rome, a new regime in Italy; the Pope was carving out a new state in Italy and placing his nephew Giuliano at its head. What more natural than to wish to influence this new prince and recommend oneself to his favor? Perhaps one could once more thus have a hand in world affairs, and—who knows?—set in motion a train of forces that might arrest the decadence of the Italian communes and free Italy from the invaders. But *The Discourses* were too vast to finish quickly, and their form was far too sprawling for the purpose. And so, carving out of *The Discourses* certain sections and ideas, Machiavelli proceeded to recast them in the form of a short treatise, *De Principatibus*. Eventually he changed the title from the Latin abstract to the Italian personal, *Il Principe*. The book was written in 1513 at an almost white heat, in what was probably only a few months. Dedicated to Lorenzo de' Medici it was presented to him and by him neglected and forgotten. It was, however, circulated in manuscript during Machiavelli's lifetime, surreptitiously copied and corrupted, and achieved an underground fame. Since his death it has been one of the half dozen books that have done most to shape Western thought.

What gives *The Prince* its greatness? It is not a great formal treatise on politics. It is bare of any genuine insights into social organization as the basis of politics. It has very little passion in it—so little that, because the final chapter crackles and glows with Machiavelli's fervor for the unifica-

tion of Italy, some commentators have suggested that it is not an organic part of the book but was added as an after-thought. It has been pretty well proved, moreover, by recent scholarship that Machiavelli's little pamphlet on princes is not even original in form. It is part of a whole traditional literature on princes that stretches back to the Middle Ages. The structure of the book, its division into chapters and even some of the chapter headings follow the conventional form of what has been called the mirror-of-princes literature: the discussion of how to rule conquered territory, what advisers a prince should rely on, how he should conduct himself among the intrigues of diplomacy, whether he should depend mainly on fortified castles or entrenched camps in warfare.

But the intellectual spirit that pervades the book is quite another matter. Here we are in the presence of something little short of a revolution in political thinking. The humanists who had written books about princes had written in the idealistic and scholastic medieval tradition; they were ridden by theology and metaphysics. Machiavelli rejected metaphysics, theology, idealism. The whole drift of his work is toward a political realism, unknown to the formal writing of his time.

I say unknown to the *formal writing*. That does not mean it was unknown to his time. Machiavelli was expressing the realism that characterized the actual politics and the popular ethos of his time. Take, for example, some sentences from the famous eighteenth chapter, "In What Way Princes Must Keep Faith." The Achilles myth of the centaur, he writes, teaches us that we are "semi-animal, semi-human" and that "a prince must know how to use both natures." . . . "A prince being thus obliged to know well how to act as a beast must imitate the fox and the lion, for

we must see that Machiavelli, while he expressed the ethical consciousness of his time, was also a good deal ahead of his time in other respects. He lived in a period when economic growth had gone so far as to burst the bounds of existing political forms. What gave the city-states of Italy their Renaissance grandeur was not some mysterious flowering of the humanist spirit at the time. It was the fact that with the opening of the East by the crusades, the break-up of the manorial economy and the growth of trade and handicraft manufacture, the cities of Italy found themselves strategically placed with respect to the world trade routes. There followed what amounted to a communal revolution in Italy and a reorganization of the government of the Italian city-states under democratic and guild forms. The expansion of the economic power of these cities went on apace into the end of the fifteenth century. By the time Machiavelli came to the maturity of his powers, a sharp contraction had set in. The expansion had gone as far as the political limits of the communal organization allowed.

If the Italian city-states had been able to adjust themselves to the needs of an expanding economy by resolving their rivalries and joining in a united political structure, Italy might have been spared the two and a half centuries of humiliation and cultural aridness which followed the fall of the communes. Elsewhere, however, in France, in England, in Spain, the expansion of political forms kept pace with the economic expansion. Machiavelli lived in what, with our historical perspective, we now say to have been the beginnings of the Western nation-state system. As we know it, he was himself only dimly aware of it. He was in no sense an articulate nationalist, and the fervor of his national feeling has probably been overestimated by commentators. But two elements were historically to enter into the composition

of the Western nation-state. One was national unity and the idea of a common tongue, common culture and common economic limits. The second was a realistic concentration of power at the center in order to break down divisive barriers. Machiavelli only dimly foresaw nationalism, but he very clearly expressed the second element—the realistic use of power from the center, the methods by which unity could be achieved.

Therein lies the importance of *The Prince* in the subsequent history of the Western world. Machiavelli wrote a grammar of power, not only for the sixteenth century, but for the ages that have followed. Read *The Prince* today and you will be struck by the detonations which its sentences set off in the corridors of our experiences with present-day rulers. Machiavelli seen only in his historical context does become intelligible; but his greatness does not emerge until we see that when he wrote his grammar of power he came close to setting down the imperatives by which men govern and are governed in political communities, whatever the epoch and whatever the governmental structure.

*The Prince* has become, for better or worse, a symbol of a whole body of literature and a whole approach to politics. Just as in literature and art we must always face, under whatever names, the polar conflict of classic and romantic, so in the history of political thinking we have always faced the polar conflict between the ethical and the ruthlessly realistic. *The Prince* is part of the world's polemical literature because it places itself squarely in the ranks of realism. It brushes aside, with an impatience in which Machiavelli scarcely cares to conceal his disdain, the tender-mindedness of reformers and idealists.

There is in all of us, along with the ethical and normative strain, a strain of hard-headedness and of the acceptance of

seem to have read it. When we talk of Machiavellianism, it is *The Prince* we have in mind. And that is perhaps as it should be. But when we talk of Machiavelli, we must have *The Discourses* in mind as well. For if we are to judge a man it is fairer to judge him by the book into which he sought to put his whole system of politics rather than by the pamphlet which he dashed off to win a friend and influence a personage.

Scholarship has not done well by *The Discourses*. The scholars pay lip service to it as the larger frame of reference within which *The Prince* can be understood. Yet having done so, they go on to talk of *The Prince*. Its structure is difficult and fragmentary. Precepts drawn from Livy form the chapter heads. There are whole sections that might easily be cut out to improve the book. A good editor today, receiving such a manuscript, would probably ask the author to cut it down to one-third and pull it together a bit. Yet once read, *The Discourses* stay in your mind as an impressive intellectual experience. And once read, whatever impression you have formed of Machiavelli through reading *The Prince* is rather drastically changed.

What was the intellectual tradition that lay back of *The Discourses*? In the case of *The Prince*, it was the mirror-of-princes medieval and humanist literature. Felix Gilbert has suggested in a recent article, and I think the suggestion is a sound one, that research into the literature of "the good state," both in Italian and in Greater European thought, might yield exciting results for an understanding of *The Discourses*.

However that may be, what are the basic ideas of *The Discourses*? I should say the following: First, the superiority of the democratic republic to every other political form; second, the ultimate reliance even of despotic and authori-

tarian regimes on mass consent; third, the primary political imperative of cohesiveness, organic unity in a state, stability and survival; fourth, the great role of leadership (what Machiavelli calls the role of the law-giver, but what we should today call leadership) in achieving this cohesiveness and survival; fifth, the imperative of military power in insuring survival and the need for putting it on a mass base (he felt that war was the health of the state); sixth, the use of a national religion for state purposes, and the choice of one not for its supernatural validity, but for its power as a myth in unifying the masses and cementing their morale (Machiavelli's count against Christianity, like that of Nietzsche after him, was that by glorifying humility and pacifism and the weaker virtues, it dulled the fighting edge of a state); seventh, the need in the conduct even of a democratic state for the will to survive, and therefore for ruthless instead of half-hearted measures when ruthless measures were necessary; eighth, the idea—later to be found in Vico and in our day in Spengler—of the cyclical rise and fall of civilizations due to decadence and corruption and the re-invigoration of the new.

This is, of course, only a sampling of the vast riches to be found in *The Discourses*. It is not a single-themed, monolithic book, such as Marx or Mill wrote. It has a catholicity and vastness of resource which will make it yield different discoveries for every reader and on every reading.

This is not the place to discuss the themes I have mentioned. I want only to say that if *The Prince* is great because of its intensity, *The Discourses* are great because of their variety; if *The Prince* is great because it is polemical, *The Discourses* are great because they have balance; and if *The Prince* is great because it gives us the grammar of power for a government, *The Discourses* are great because they give

us the philosophy of organic unity not in a government but in a state, and the conditions under which alone a culture can survive.

"The authentic interpreter of Machiavelli," Lord Acton has written in his erudite preface to Burd's great edition of *The Prince*, "is the whole of later history." In the same essay he strings out a remarkable series of quotations from the great writers and statesmen of the last three or four centuries which show the impact that Machiavelli had on the European mind. The history of that impact may be called the history of Machiavellianism.

It is clear that one element in the denunciation of Machiavellianism was the use of that symbol as a weapon of the Counter-Reformation. Machiavelli was utterly secular in his thinking. And when the Church, in assuming the aggressive against the religious reformers, sought something that could be set up as a secular devil-symbol in contrast to the ethical teachings of religion, it easily found what it sought in Machiavelli's writings. At the same time also the same symbol could serve to brand with infamy the methods that were being used to set up and consolidate the new nation-states of Europe, the power of whose sovereigns was one of the great threats to church power. And so the Church statesmen who had at first accepted *The Prince*, then ignored it, finally decided to attack it. Under Leo, Clement, Paul III, it was tolerated. But under Paul IV, in 1557, a generation after the Florentine's death, Machiavelli was put on the Index. What is somewhat ironic about this is that the Church princes, like the secular princes, were among the principal followers of Machiavelli's precepts. As Lord Acton points out, the arguments used to excuse the mas-

to crush China, when Italy pounces on Abyssinia, Germany on Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, both on Spain, Russia on Finland, when England gambles for its imperial position with the destinies of small nations, we cry "Machiavelli."

To be sure, Machiavelli's role is not wholly innocent. His grammar of power brought a whole new world to consciousness. With one of Molière's characters, the princes of Europe became aware that all their lives they had been talking prose. And the awareness led them to perfect their prose. Frederick, Richelieu, Napoleon, Bismarck, Clemenceau, Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler have gone to school to Machiavelli. But by bringing the world to this awareness Machiavelli did what every creative figure does. We might as well blame Shakespeare because, by creating Hamlet, he has intensified the agony of the indecisive and divided liberal.

Machiavelli has also been accused, and it is true, of being the father of the martial spirit, of propaganda techniques and of the totalitarian spirit. But here again he anticipated things latent in the very texture of society and the state. A reading of *The Discourses* should show that his thinking fathomed many movements, democratic as well as dictatorial. The common meaning he has for democrats and dictators alike is that, whatever your ends, you must be clear-eyed and unsentimental in pursuit of them and you must rest your power ultimately on a cohesive principle.

May I venture a guess as to the reason why we still shudder slightly at Machiavelli's name? It is not only the tradition I have described. It is our recognition that the realities he described *are* realities; that men, whether in politics, in business or in private life, do *not* act according to their professions of virtue; that leaders in every field seek power ruthlessly and hold on to it tenaciously; that the masses who

YAN TO KNOW WHETHER THY PRINCE IS OF THOSE WHO SHOW NOT  
THEIR OWN STRENGTH OR WHETHER HE IS OF THOSE WHO HIDE IT.  
WHICH MACHIAVELLI CALLS THE LATTER. I DESIRE TO  
KNOW WHETHER THY PRINCE IS OF THOSE WHO HIDE IT.  
WHICH MACHIAVELLI CALLS THE LATTER.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

TO

LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT

SON OF PIERO DI MEDICI

IT IS customary for those who wish to gain the favour of a prince to endeavour to do so by offering him gifts of those things which they hold most precious, or in which they know him to take especial delight. In this way princes are often presented with horses, arms, cloth of gold, gems, and such-like ornaments worthy of their grandeur. In my desire, however, to offer to Your Highness some humble testimony of my devotion, I have been unable to find among my possessions anything which I hold so dear or esteem so highly as that knowledge of the deeds of great men which I have acquired through a long experience of modern events and a constant study of the past.

With the utmost diligence I have long pondered and scrutinised the actions of the great, and now I offer the results to Your Highness within the compass of a small volume: and although I deem this work unworthy of Your Highness's acceptance, yet my confidence in your humanity assures me that you will receive it with favour, knowing that it is not in my power to offer you a greater gift than that of enabling you to understand in a very short time all those things which I have learnt at the cost of privation and danger in the course of many years. I have not sought to adorn

*varita? or  
varietà?*

my work with long phrases or high-sounding words or any of those superficial attractions and ornaments with which many writers seek to embellish their material, as I desire no honour for my work but such as the novelty and gravity of its subject may justly deserve. Nor will it, I trust, be deemed presumptuous on the part of a man of humble and obscure condition to attempt to discuss and direct the government of princes; for in the same way that landscape painters station themselves in the valleys in order to draw mountains or high ground, and ascend an eminence in order to get a good view of the plains, so it is necessary to be a prince to know thoroughly the nature of the people, and one of the populace to know the nature of princes.

May I trust, therefore, that Your Highness will accept this little gift in the spirit in which it is offered; and if Your Highness will deign to peruse it, you will recognise in it my ardent desire that you may attain to that grandeur which fortune and your own merits presage for you.

And should Your Highness gaze down from the summit of your lofty position towards this humble spot, you will recognise the great and unmerited sufferings inflicted on me by a cruel fate.

## Chapter I

### THE VARIOUS KINDS OF GOVERNMENT

#### AND THE WAYS BY WHICH THEY ARE ESTABLISHED

ALL states and dominions which hold or have held sway over mankind are either republics or monarchies. Monarchies are either hereditary in which the rulers have been for many years of the same family, or else they are of recent

parts of "new" monarchies - *Monarchs*  
the are *Slavians* as e.g. here. - *These*  
*foreign*

## THE PRINCE

foundation. The newly founded ones are either entirely new, as was Milan to Francesco Sforza, or else they are, as it were, new members grafted on to the hereditary possessions of the prince that annexes them, as is the kingdom of Naples to the King of Spain. The dominions thus acquired have either been previously accustomed to the rule of another prince, or else have been free states, and they are annexed either by force of arms of the prince himself, or of others, or else fall to him by good fortune or special ability.

## Chapter II

### OF HEREDITARY MONARCHIES

I WILL not here speak of republics, having already treated of them fully in another place. I will deal only with monarchies, and will discuss how the various kinds described above can be governed and maintained. In the first place, the difficulty of maintaining hereditary states accustomed to a reigning family is far less than in new monarchies; for it is sufficient not to transgress ancestral usages, and to adapt one's self to unforeseen circumstances; in this way such a prince, if of ordinary assiduity, will always be able to maintain his position, unless some very exceptional and excessive force deprives him of it; and even if he be thus deprived, on the slightest mischance happening to the new occupier, he will be able to regain it.

We have in Italy the example of the Duke of Ferrara, who was able to withstand the assaults of the Venetians in 1484 and of Pope Julius in 1510, for no other reason than because of the antiquity of his family in that dominion. In as much as the legitimate prince has less cause and less necessity to

give offence, it is only natural that he should be more loved; and, if no extraordinary vices make him hated, it is only reasonable for his subjects to be naturally attached to him, the memories and causes of innovations being forgotten in the long period over which his rule has extended; whereas one change always leaves the way prepared for the introduction of another.

### Chapter III OF MIXED MONARCHIES

But it is in the new monarchy that difficulties really exist. First, if it is not entirely new, but a member as it were of a mixed state, its disorders spring at first from a natural difficulty which exists in all new dominions, because men change masters willingly, hoping to better themselves; and this belief makes them take arms against their rulers, in which they are deceived, as experience later proves that they have gone from bad to worse. This is the result of another very natural cause, which is the inevitable harm inflicted on those over whom the prince obtains dominion, both by his soldiers and by an infinite number of other injuries caused by his occupation.

Thus you find enemies in all those whom you have injured by occupying that dominion, and you cannot maintain the friendship of those who have helped you to obtain this possession, as you will not be able to fulfil their expectations, nor can you use strong measures with them, being under an obligation to them; for which reason, however strong your armies may be, you will always need the favour of the inhabitants to take possession of a province. It was

from these causes that Louis XII of France, though able to occupy Milan without trouble, immediately lost it, and the forces of Ludovico alone were sufficient to take it from him the first time, for the inhabitants who had willingly opened their gates to him, finding themselves deluded in the hopes they had cherished and not obtaining those benefits they had anticipated, could not bear the vexatious rule of their new prince.

It is indeed true that, after reconquering rebel territories they are not so easily lost again, for the ruler is now, by the fact of the rebellion, less averse to secure his position by punishing offenders, unmasking suspects, and strengthening himself in weak places. So that although the mere appearance of such a person as Duke Ludovico on the frontier was sufficient to cause France to lose Milan the first time, to make her lose her grip of it the second time was only possible when all the world was against her, and after her armies had been defeated and driven out of Italy; which was the result of the causes above mentioned. Nevertheless it was taken from her both the first and the second time. The general causes of the first loss have been already discussed; it remains now to be seen what were the causes of the second loss and by what means France could have avoided it, or what measures might have been taken by another ruler in that position which were not taken by the King of France. Be it observed, therefore, that those states which on annexation are united to a previously existing state may or may not be of the same nationality and language. If they are, it is very easy to hold them, especially if they are not accustomed to freedom; and to possess them securely it suffices that the family of the princes which formerly governed them be extinct. For the rest, their old condition not being disturbed, and there being no dissimilarity of customs, the people settle

down quietly under their new rulers, as is seen in the case of Burgundy, Brittany, Gascony, and Normandy, which have been so long united to France; and although there may be some slight differences of language, the customs of the people are nevertheless similar, and they can get along well together. Whoever obtains possession of such territories and wishes to retain them must bear in mind two things: the one, that the blood of their old rulers be extinct; the other, to make no alteration either in their laws or in their taxes; in this way they will in a very short space of time become united with their old possessions and form one state.

But when dominions are acquired in a province differing in language, laws, and customs, the difficulties to be overcome are great, and it requires good fortune as well as great industry to retain them; one of the best and most certain means of doing so would be for the new ruler to take up his residence there. This would render possession more secure and durable, and it is what the Turk has done in Greece. In spite of all the other measures taken by him to hold that state, it would not have been possible to retain it had he not gone to live there. Being on the spot, disorders can be seen as they arise and can quickly be remedied, but living at a distance, they are only heard of when they get beyond remedy. Besides which, the province is not despoiled by your officials, the subjects being able to obtain satisfaction by direct recourse to their prince; and wishing to be loyal they have more reason to love him, and should they be otherwise inclined they will have greater cause to fear him. Any external Power who wishes to assail that state will be less disposed to do so; so that as long as he resides there he will be very hard to dispossess.

The other and better remedy is to plant colonies in one or two of those places which form as it were the keys of the

land, for it is necessary either to do this or to maintain a large force of armed men. The colonies will cost the prince little; with little or no expense on his part, he can send and maintain them; he only injures those whose lands and houses are taken to give to the new inhabitants, and these form but a small proportion of the state, and those who are injured, remaining poor and scattered, can never do any harm to him, and all the others are, on the one hand, not injured and therefore easily pacified; and, on the other, are fearful of offending lest they should be treated like those who have been dispossessed. To conclude, these colonies cost nothing, are more faithful, and give less offence; and the injured parties being poor and scattered are unable to do mischief, as I have shown. For it must be noted, that men must either be caressed or else annihilated; they will revenge themselves for small injuries, but cannot do so for great ones; the injury therefore that we do to a man must be such that we need not fear his vengeance. But by maintaining a garrison instead of colonists, one will spend much more, and consume all the revenues of that state in guarding it, so that the acquisition will result in a loss, besides giving much greater offence, since it injures every one in that state with the quartering of the army on it; which being an inconvenience felt by all, every one becomes an enemy, and these are enemies which can do mischief, as, though beaten, they remain in their own homes. In every way, therefore, a garrison is as useless as colonies are useful.

Further, the ruler of a foreign province as described, should make himself the leader and defender of his less powerful neighbours, and endeavour to weaken the stronger ones, and take care that they are not invaded by some foreigner not less powerful than himself. And it will be always the case that he will be invited to intervene at the request of

those who are discontented either through ambition or fear, as was seen when the Ætolians invited the Romans into Greece; and in whatever province they entered, it was always at the request of the inhabitants. And the rule is that when a powerful foreigner enters a province, all the less powerful inhabitants become his adherents, moved by the envy they bear to those ruling over them; so much so that with regard to these minor potentates he has no trouble whatever in winning them over, for they willingly join forces with the state that he has acquired. He has merely to be careful that they do not assume too much power and authority, and he can easily with his own forces and their favour put down those that are powerful and remain in everything arbiter of that province. And he who does not govern well in this way will soon lose what he has acquired, and while he holds it will meet with infinite difficulty and trouble.

The Romans in the provinces they took, always followed this policy; they established colonies, inveigled the less powerful without increasing their strength, put down the most powerful and did not allow foreign rulers to obtain influence in them. I will adduce the province of Greece as a sole example. They made friends with the Achæans and the Ætolians, the kingdom of Macedonia was cast down, and Antiochus driven out, nor did they allow the merits of the Achæans or the Ætolians to gain them any increase of territory, nor did the persuasions of Philip induce them to befriend him without reducing his influence, nor could the power of Antiochus make them consent to allow him to hold any state in that province.

For the Romans did in these cases what all wise princes should do, who consider not only present but also future discords and diligently guard against them; for being fore-

seen they can easily be remedied, but if one waits till they are at hand, the medicine is no longer in time as the malady has become incurable; it happening with this as with those hectic fevers, as doctors say, which at their beginning are easy to cure but difficult to recognise, but in course of time when they have not at first been recognised and treated, become easy to recognise and difficult to cure. Thus it happens in matters of state; for knowing afar off (which it is only given to a prudent man to do) the evils that are brewing, they are easily cured. But when, for want of such knowledge, they are allowed to grow so that every one can recognise them, there is no longer any remedy to be found. Therefore, the Romans, observing disorders while yet remote, were always able to find a remedy, and never allowed them to increase in order to avoid a war; for they knew that war is not to be avoided, and can be deferred only to the advantage of the other side; they therefore declared war against Philip and Antiochus in Greece, so as not to have to fight them in Italy, though they might at the time have avoided either; this they did not choose to do, never caring to do that which is now every day to be heard in the mouths of our wise men, namely to enjoy the advantages of delay, but preferring to trust their own virtue and prudence; for time brings with it all things, and may produce indifferently either good or evil.

But let us return to France and examine whether she did any of these things; and I will speak not of Charles, but of Louis as the one whose proceedings can be better seen, as he held possession in Italy for a longer time; you will then see that he did the opposite of all those things which must be done to keep possession of a foreign state. King Louis was called into Italy by the ambition of the Venetians, who wished by his coming to gain half of Lombardy. I will not

he was forced to come to Italy. And not content with having increased the power of the Church and lost his friends, he now coveting the kingdom of Naples, divided it with the king of Spain; and where he alone was the arbiter of Italy, he now brought in a companion, so that the ambitious of that province who were dissatisfied with him might have some one else to appeal to; and where he might have left in that kingdom a king tributary to himself, he dispossessed him in order to bring in another who was capable of driving him out.

The desire to acquire possessions is a very natural and ordinary thing, and when those men do it who can do so successfully, they are always praised and not blamed, but when they cannot and yet want to do so at all costs, they make a mistake deserving of great blame. If France, therefore, with her own forces could have taken Naples, she ought to have done so; if she could not, she ought not to have shared it. And if the partition of Lombardy with the Venetians is to be excused, as having been the means of allowing the French king to set foot in Italy, this other partition deserves blame, not having the excuse of necessity.

Louis had thus made these five mistakes: he had crushed the smaller Powers, increased the power in Italy of one potente, brought into the land a very powerful foreigner, he had not come to live there himself, nor had he established any colonies. Still these mistakes, if he had lived, might not have injured him, had he not made the sixth, that of taking the state from the Venetians; for, if he had not strengthened the Church and brought the Spaniards into Italy, it would have been right and necessary to humble them; having once taken those measures, he ought never to have consented to their ruin; because, had the Venetians been strong, it would have kept the others from making attempts on Lombardy.

partly because the Venetians would not have consented to any measures by which they did not get it for themselves, and partly because the others would not have wanted to take it from France to give it to Venice, and would not have had the courage to attack both.

If any one urges that King Louis yielded Romagna to Alexander and the Kingdom of Naples to Spain in order to avoid war, I reply, with the reasons already given, that one ought never to allow a disorder to take place in order to avoid war, for war is not thereby avoided, but only deferred to your disadvantage. And if others allege the promise given by the king to the pope to undertake that enterprise for him, in return for the dissolution of his marriage and for the cardinalship of Rohan, I reply with what I shall say later on about the faith of princes and how it is to be observed. Thus King Louis lost Lombardy through not observing any of those conditions which have been observed by others who have taken provinces and wished to retain them. Nor is this any miracle, but very reasonable and natural. I spoke of this matter with Cardinal Rohan at Nantes when Valentine, as Cesare Borgia, son of Pope Alexander, was commonly called, was occupying the Romagna, for on Cardinal Rohan saying to me that the Italians did not understand war, I replied that the French did not understand politics, for if they did they would never allow the Church to become so great. And experience shows us that the greatness in Italy of the Church and also of Spain have been caused by France, and her ruin has proceeded from them. From which may be drawn a general rule, which never or very rarely fails, that whoever is the cause of another becoming powerful, is ruined himself; for that power is produced by him either through craft or force; and both of these are suspected by the one who has been raised to power.

## Chapter IV

WHY THE KINGDOM OF DARIUS, OCCUPIED BY ALEXANDER, DID NOT REBEL AGAINST THE SUCCESSORS OF THE LATTER AFTER HIS DEATH

CONSIDERING the difficulties there are in holding a newly acquired state, some may wonder how it came to pass that Alexander the Great became master of Asia in a few years, and had hardly occupied it when he died, from which it might be supposed that the whole state would have rebelled. However, his successors maintained themselves in possession, and had no further difficulties in doing so than those which arose among themselves from their own ambitions.

I reply that the kingdoms known to history have been governed in two ways: either by a prince and his servants, who, as ministers by his grace and permission, assist in governing the realm; or by a prince and by barons, who hold their positions not by favour of the ruler but by antiquity of blood. Such barons have states and subjects of their own, who recognise them as their lords, and are naturally attached to them. In those states which are governed by a prince and his servants, the prince possesses more authority, because there is no one in the state regarded as a superior other than himself, and if others are obeyed it is merely as ministers and officials of the prince, and no one regards them with any special affection.

Examples of these two kinds of government in our own time are those of the Turk and the King of France. All the Turkish monarchy is governed by one ruler, the others are his servants, and dividing his kingdom into "sangiacates,"

he sends to them various administrators, and changes or recalls them at his pleasure. But the King of France is surrounded by a large number of ancient nobles, recognised as such by their subjects, and loved by them; they have their prerogatives, of which the king cannot deprive them without danger to himself. Whoever now considers these two states will see that it would be difficult to acquire the state of the Turk; but having conquered it, it would be very easy to hold it. In many respects, on the other hand, it would be easier to conquer the kingdom of France, but there would be great difficulty in holding it.

The causes of the difficulty of occupying the Turkish kingdom are, that the invader could not be invited by princes of that kingdom, nor hope to facilitate his enterprise by the rebellion of those near the ruler's person, as will be evident from reasons given above. Because, being all slaves, and dependent, it will be more difficult to corrupt them, and even if they were corrupted, little effect could be hoped for, as they would not be able to carry the people with them for the reasons mentioned. Therefore, whoever assaults the Turk must be prepared to meet his united forces, and must rely more on his own strength than on the disorders of others; but having once conquered him, and beaten him in battle so that he can no longer raise armies, nothing else is to be feared except the family of the prince, and if this be extinguished, there is no longer any one to be feared, others having no credit with the people; and as the victor before the victory could place no hope in them, so he need not fear them afterwards.

The contrary is the case in kingdoms governed like that of France, because it is easy to enter them by winning over some baron of the kingdom, there being always malcontents, and those desiring innovations. These can, for the reasons

stated, open the way to you and facilitate victory; but afterwards, if you wish to keep possession, infinite difficulties arise, both from those who have aided you and from those you have oppressed. Nor is it sufficient to suppress the family of the prince, for there remain those nobles who will take the lead in new revolutions, and being neither able to content them nor exterminate them, you will lose the state whenever an occasion arises.

Now if you will consider what was the nature of the government of Darius you will find it similar to the kingdom of the Turk, and therefore Alexander had first to overthrow it completely and invade the territory, after which victory, Darius being dead, the state remained secure to Alexander, for the reasons discussed above. And his successors, had they remained united, might have enjoyed it in peace, nor did any tumults arise in the kingdom except those fomented by themselves. But it is impossible to possess with such ease countries constituted like France. Hence arose the frequent rebellions of Spain, France, and Greece against the Romans, owing to the numerous principalities which existed in those states; for, as long as the memory of these lasted, the Romans were always uncertain of their conquest; but when the memory of these principalities had been extinguished and with the power and duration of the empire, they became unchallenged masters. When the Romans fell out amongst themselves, any one of them could count on the support of that part of the province where he had established authority. The Romans alone were recognised as rulers there after the extinction of the old line of princes. Considering these things, therefore, let no one be surprised at the facility with which Alexander was able to hold Asia, and at the difficulties that others have had in holding conquered territories, like Pyrrhus and many others; as this was not caused by

the greater or lesser ability of the conqueror, but depended on the dissimilarity of the conditions.

### Chapter V

#### THE WAY TO GOVERN CITIES OR DOMINIONS THAT, PREVIOUS TO BEING OCCUPIED, LIVED UNDER THEIR OWN LAWS

WHEN those states which have been acquired are accustomed to live at liberty under their own laws, there are three ways of holding them. The first is to despoil them; the second is to go and live there in person; the third is to allow them to live under their own laws, taking tribute of them, and creating within the country a government composed of a few who will keep it friendly to you. Because this government, being created by the prince, knows that it cannot exist without his friendship and protection, and will do all it can to keep them. What is more, a city used to liberty can be more easily held by means of its citizens than in any other way, if you wish to preserve it.

There is the example of the Spartans and the Romans. The Spartans held Athens and Thebes by creating within them a government of a few; nevertheless they lost them. The Romans, in order to hold Capua, Carthage, and Numantia, ravaged them, but did not lose them. They wanted to hold Greece in almost the same way as the Spartans held it, leaving it free and under its own laws, but they did not succeed; so that they were compelled to lay waste many cities in that province in order to keep it, because in truth there is no sure method of holding them except by despoiling them. And whoever becomes the ruler of a free city and does not destroy it, can expect to be destroyed by it, for it

*State: administrative*

*The great force of liberty.*

can always find a motive for rebellion in the name of liberty and of its ancient usages, which are forgotten neither by lapse of time nor by benefits received; and whatever one does or provides, so long as the inhabitants are not separated or dispersed, they do not forget that name and those usages, but appeal to them at once in every emergency, as did Pisa after being so many years held in servitude by the Florentines. But when cities or provinces have been accustomed to live under a prince, and the family of that prince is extinguished, being on the one hand used to obey, and on the other not having their old prince, they cannot unite in choosing one from among themselves, and they do not know how to live in freedom, so that they are slower to take arms, and a prince can win them over with greater facility and establish himself securely. But in republics there is greater life, greater hatred, and more desire for vengeance; they do not and cannot cast aside the memory of their ancient liberty, so that the surest way is either to lay them waste or reside in them.

#### Chapter VI — cf. 183 (1, 24)

#### OF NEW DOMINIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACQUIRED BY ONE'S OWN ARMS AND ABILITY

LET no one marvel if in speaking of new dominions both as to prince and state, I bring forward very exalted instances, for men walk almost always in the paths trodden by others, proceeding in their actions by imitation. Not being always able to follow others exactly, nor attain to the excellence of those he imitates, a prudent man should always follow in the path trodden by great men and imi-

*Pride & want of prudence*

tate those who are most excellent, so that if he does not attain to their greatness, at any rate he will get some tinge of it. He will do as prudent archers, who when the place they wish to hit is too far off, knowing how far their bow will carry, aim at a spot much higher than the one they wish to hit, not in order to reach this height with their arrow, but by help of this high aim to hit the spot they wish to.

I say then that in new dominions, where there is a new prince, it is more or less easy to hold them according to the greater or lesser ability of him who acquires them. And as the fact of a private individual becoming a prince presupposes either great ability or good fortune, it would appear that either of these things would in part mitigate many difficulties. Nevertheless those who have been less beholden to good fortune have maintained themselves best. The matter is also facilitated by the prince being obliged to reside personally in his territory, having no others. But to come to those who have become princes through their own merits and not by fortune, I regard as the greatest, Moses, Cyrus, Romulus, Theseus, and their like. And although one should not speak of Moses, he having merely carried out what was ordered him by God, still he deserves admiration, if only for that grace which made him worthy to speak with God. But regarding Cyrus and others who have acquired or founded kingdoms, they will all be found worthy of admiration; and if their particular actions and methods are examined they will not appear very different from those of Moses, although he had so great a Master. And in examining their life and deeds it will be seen that they owed nothing to fortune but the opportunity which gave them matter to be shaped into what form they thought fit; and without that opportunity their powers would have been wasted,

Virtue

and without their powers the opportunity would have come in vain.

It was thus necessary that Moses should find the people of Israel slaves in Egypt and oppressed by the Egyptians, so that they were disposed to follow him in order to escape from their servitude. It was necessary that Romulus should be unable to remain in Alba, and should have been exposed at his birth, in order that he might become King of Rome and founder of that nation. It was necessary that Cyrus should find the Persians discontented with the empire of the Medes, and the Medes weak and effeminate through long peace. Theseus could not have shown his abilities if he had not found the Athenians dispersed. These opportunities, therefore, gave these men their chance, and their own great qualities enabled them to profit by them, so as to ennable their country and augment its fortunes.

Those who by the exercise of abilities such as these become princes, obtain their dominions with difficulty but retain them easily, and the difficulties which they have in acquiring their dominions arise in part from the new rules and regulations that they have to introduce in order to establish their position securely. It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things. For the reformer has enemies in all those who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new order, this lukewarmness arising partly from fear of their adversaries, who have the laws in their favour; and partly from the incredulity of mankind, who do not truly believe in anything new until they have had actual experience of it. Thus it arises that on every opportunity for attacking the reformer, his opponents do so with the zeal of partisans, the others

or their share of the security

only defend him half-heartedly, so that between them he runs great danger. It is necessary, however, in order to investigate thoroughly this question, to examine whether these innovators are independent, or whether they depend upon others, that is to say, whether in order to carry out their designs they have to entreat or are able to compel. In the first case they invariably succeed ill, and accomplish nothing; but when they can depend on their own strength and are able to use force, they rarely fail. Thus it comes about that all armed prophets have conquered and unarmed ones failed; for besides what has been already said, the character of peoples varies, and it is easy to persuade them of a thing, but difficult to keep them in that persuasion. And so it is necessary to order things so that when they no longer believe, they can be made to believe by force. Moses, Cyrus, Theseus, and Romulus would not have been able to keep their constitutions observed for so long had they been disarmed, as happened in our own time with Fra Girolamo Savonarola, who failed entirely in his new rules when the multitude began to disbelieve in him, and he had no means of holding fast those who had believed nor of compelling the unbelievers to believe. Therefore such men as these have great difficulty in making their way, and all their dangers are met on the road and must be overcome by their own abilities; but when once they have overcome them and have begun to be held in veneration, and have suppressed those who envied them, they remain powerful and secure, honoured and happy.

To the high examples given I will add a lesser one, which, however, is in some measure comparable and will serve as an instance of all such cases, that of Hiero of Syracuse, who from a private individual became Prince of Syracuse, without other aid from fortune beyond the opportunity; for the

772C7  
(307-216 BC)

Syracusans being oppressed, elected him as their captain, from which post he rose by ability to be prince; while still in private life his virtues were such that it was written of him, that he lacked nothing to reign but the kingdom. He abolished the old militia, raised a new one, abandoned his old friendships and formed others; and as he had thus friends and soldiers of his own choosing, he was able on this foundation to build securely, so that while he had great trouble in acquiring his position he had little in maintaining it.

### Chapter VII OF NEW DOMINIONS ACQUIRED BY THE POWER OF OTHERS OR BY FORTUNE

THOSE who rise from private citizens to be princes merely by fortune have little trouble in rising but very much in maintaining their position. They meet with no difficulties on the way as they fly over them, but all their difficulties arise when they are established. Such are they who are granted a state either for money, or by favour of him who grants it, as happened to many in Greece, in the cities of Ionia and of the Hellespont, who were created princes by Darius in order to hold these places for his security and glory; such were also those emperors who from private citizens rose to power by bribing the army. Such as these depend absolutely on the good will and fortune of those who have raised them, both of which are extremely inconstant and unstable. They neither know how to, nor are in a position to maintain their rank, for unless he be a man of great genius it is not likely that one who has always lived in a private position should know how to command, and they are unable to

maintain themselves because they possess no forces friendly and faithful to them. Moreover, states quickly founded, like all other things of rapid beginnings and growth, cannot have deep roots and wide ramifications, so that the first storm destroys them, unless, as already said, the man who thus becomes a prince is of such great genius as to be able to take immediate steps for maintaining what fortune has thrown into his lap, and lay afterwards those foundations which others make before becoming princes.

With regard to these two methods of becoming a prince, —by ability or by good fortune, I will here adduce two examples which have occurred within our memory, those of Francesco Sforza and Cesare Borgia. Francesco, by appropriate means and through great abilities, from citizen became Duke of Milan, and what he had attained after a thousand difficulties he maintained with little trouble. On the other hand, Cesare Borgia, commonly called Duke Valentine, acquired the state by the influence of his father and lost it when that influence failed, and that although every measure was adopted by him and everything done that a prudent and capable man could do to establish himself firmly in a state that the arms and the favours of others had given him. For, as we have said, he who does not lay his foundations beforehand may by great abilities do so afterwards, although with great trouble to the architect and danger to the building. If, then, one considers the procedure of the duke, it will be seen how firm were the foundations he had laid to his future power, which I do not think it superfluous to examine, as I know of no better precepts for a new prince to follow than may be found in his actions; and if his measures were not successful, it was through no fault of his own but only by the most extraordinary malignity of fortune.

In wishing to aggrandise the duke his son, Alexander VI had to meet very great difficulties both present and future. In the first place, he saw no way of making him ruler of any state that was not a possession of the Church. He knew that the Duke of Milan and the Venetians would not consent in his attempt to take papal cities, because Faenza and Rimini were already under the protection of the Venetians. He saw, moreover, that the military forces of Italy, especially those which might have served him, were in the hands of those who would fear the greatness of the pope, and therefore he could not depend upon them, being all under the command of the Orsini and Colonna and their adherents. It was, therefore, necessary to disturb the existing condition and bring about disorders in the states of Italy in order to obtain secure mastery over a part of them; this was easy, for he found the Venetians, who, actuated by other motives, had invited the French into Italy, which he not only did not oppose, but facilitated by dissolving the first marriage of King Louis. The king came thus into Italy with the aid of the Venetians and the consent of Alexander, and had hardly arrived at Milan before the pope obtained troops from him for his enterprise in the Romagna, which was made possible for him thanks to the reputation of the king. The duke having thus obtained the Romagna and defeated the Colonna, was hindered by two things in maintaining it and proceeding further: the one, his forces, of which he doubted the fidelity; the other the will of France; that is to say, he feared lest the arms of the Orsini of which he had availed himself should fail him, and not only hinder him in obtaining more but take from him what he had already conquered, and he also feared that the king might do the same. He had evidence of this as regards the Orsini when, after taking Faenza, he assaulted Bologna and ob-

served their backwardness in the assault. And as regards the king, he perceived his designs when, after taking the dukedom of Urbino, he attacked Tuscany, and the king made him desist from that enterprise. Whereupon the duke decided to depend no longer on the fortunes and arms of others. The first thing he did was to weaken the parties of the Orsini and Colonna in Rome by gaining all their adherents who were gentlemen and making them his own followers, by granting them large remuneration, and appointing them to commands and offices according to their rank, so that their attachment to their parties was extinguished in a few months, and entirely concentrated on the duke. After this he awaited an opportunity for crushing the chiefs of the Orsini, having already suppressed those of the Colonna family, and when the opportunity arrived he made good use of it, for the Orsini seeing at length that the greatness of the duke and of the Church meant their own ruin, convoked a diet at Magione in the Perugino. Hence sprang the rebellion of Urbino and the tumults in Romagna and infinite dangers to the duke, who overcame them all with the help of the French; and having regained his reputation, neither trusting France nor other foreign forces, in order not to venture on their alliance, he had recourse to stratagem. He dissembled his aims so well that the Orsini made their peace with him, being represented by Signor Paulo whose suspicions the duke disarmed with every courtesy, presenting him with robes, money, and horses, so that in their simplicity they were induced to come to Sinigaglia and fell into his hands. Having thus suppressed these leaders and made their partisans his friends, the duke had laid a very good foundation to his power, having all the Romagna with the duchy of Urbino, and having gained the favour of the inhabitants, who began to feel the benefit of his rule.

And as this part is worthy of note and of imitation by others, I will not omit mention of it. When he took the Romagna, it had previously been governed by weak rulers, who had rather despoiled their subjects than governed them, and given them more cause for disunion than for union, so that the province was a prey to robbery, assaults, and every kind of disorder. He, therefore, judged it necessary to give them a good government in order to make them peaceful and obedient to his rule. For this purpose he appointed Messer Remirro de Orco, a cruel and able man, to whom he gave the fullest authority. This man, in a short time, was highly successful in rendering the country orderly and united, whereupon the duke, not deeming such excessive authority expedient, lest it should become hateful, appointed a civil court of justice in the centre of the province under an excellent president, to which each city appointed its own advocate. And as he knew that the harshness of the past had engendered some amount of hatred, in order to purge the minds of the people and to win them over completely, he resolved to show that if any cruelty had taken place it was not by his orders, but through the harsh disposition of his minister. And having found the opportunity he had him cut in half and placed one morning in the public square at Cesena with a piece of wood and blood-stained knife by his side. The ferocity of this spectacle caused the people both satisfaction and amazement. But to return to where we left off.

The duke being now powerful and partly secured against present perils, being armed himself, and having in a great measure put down those neighbouring forces which might injure him, had now to get the respect of France, if he wished to proceed with his acquisitions, for he knew that the king, who had lately discovered his error, would not

## Chapter VIII

### OF THOSE WHO HAVE ATTAINED THE POSITION OF PRINCE BY VILLAINY

BUT as there are still two ways of becoming prince which cannot be attributed entirely either to fortune or to ability, they must not be passed over, although one of them could be more fully discussed if we were treating of republics. These are when one becomes prince by some nefarious or villainous means, or when a private citizen becomes the prince of his country through the favour of his fellow-citizens. And in speaking of the former means, I will give two examples, one ancient, the other modern, without entering further into the merits of this method, as I judge them to be sufficient for any one obliged to imitate them.

Agathocles the Sicilian rose not only from private life but from the lowest and most abject position to be King of Syracuse. The son of a potter, he led a life of the utmost wickedness through all the stages of his fortune. Nevertheless, his wickedness was accompanied by such vigour of mind and body that, having joined the militia, he rose through its ranks to be prætor of Syracuse. Having been appointed to this position, and having decided to become prince, and to hold with violence and without the support of others that which had been constitutionally granted him; and having imparted his design to Hamilcar the Carthaginian, who was fighting with his armies in Sicily, he called together one morning the people and senate of Syracuse, as if he had to deliberate on matters of importance to the republic, and at a given signal had all the senators and the

richest men of the people killed by his soldiers. After their death he occupied and held rule over the city without any civil strife. And although he was twice beaten by the Carthaginians and ultimately besieged, he was able not only to defend the city, but leaving a portion of his forces for its defence, with the remainder he invaded Africa, and in a short time liberated Syracuse from the siege and brought the Carthaginians to great extremities, so that they were obliged to come to terms with him, and remain contented with the possession of Africa, leaving Sicily to Agathocles. Whoever considers, therefore, the actions and qualities of this man, will see few if any things which can be attributed to fortune; for, as above stated, it was not by the favour of any person, but through the grades of the militia, in which he had advanced with a thousand hardships and perils, that he arrived at the position of prince, which he afterwards maintained by so many courageous and perilous expedients. It cannot be called virtue to kill one's fellow-citizens, betray one's friends, be without faith, without pity, and without religion; by these methods one may indeed gain power, but not glory. For if the virtues of Agathocles in braving and overcoming perils, and his greatness of soul in supporting and surmounting obstacles be considered, one sees no reason for holding him inferior to any of the most renowned captains. Nevertheless his barbarous cruelty and inhumanity, together with his countless atrocities, do not permit of his being named among the most famous men. We cannot attribute to fortune or virtue that which he achieved without either.

In our own times, during the pontificate of Alexander VI, Oliverotto da Fermo had been left as a young fatherless boy under the care of his maternal uncle, Giovanni Fogliani, who brought him up, and sent him in early youth to

sooner seated than soldiers rushed out of hiding-places and killed Giovanni and all the others. After which massacre Oliverotto mounted his horse, rode through the town and besieged the chief magistrate in his palace, so that through fear they were obliged to obey him and form a government, of which he made himself prince. And all those being dead who, if discontented, could injure him, he fortified himself with new orders, civil and military, in such a way that within the year that he held the principality he was not only safe himself in the city of Fermo, but had become formidable to all his neighbours. And his overthrow would have been difficult, like that of Agathocles, if he had not allowed himself to be deceived by Cesare Borgia, when he captured the Orsini and Vitelli at Sinigaglia, as already related, where he also was taken, one year after the parricide he had committed, and strangled, together with Vitellozzo, who had been his teacher in ability and atrocity.

Some may wonder how it came about that Agathocles, and others like him, could, after infinite treachery and cruelty, live secure for many years in their country and defend themselves from external enemies without being conspired against by their subjects; although many others have, owing to their cruelty, been unable to maintain their position in times of peace, not to speak of the uncertain times of war. I believe this arises from the cruelties being exploited well or badly. Well committed may be called those (if it is permissible to use the word well of evil) which are perpetrated once for the need of securing one's self, and which afterwards are not persisted in, but are exchanged for measures as useful to the subjects as possible. Cruelties ill committed are those which, although at first few, increase rather than diminish with time. Those who follow the former method may remedy in some measure their condition, both with God

and man; as did Agathocles. As to the others, it is impossible for them to maintain themselves.

Whence it is to be noted, that in taking a state the conqueror must arrange to commit all his cruelties at once, so as not to have to recur to them every day, and so as to be able, by not making fresh changes, to reassure people and win them over by benefiting them. Whoever acts otherwise, either through timidity or bad counsels, is always obliged to stand with knife in hand, and can never depend on his subjects, because they, owing to continually fresh injuries, are unable to depend upon him. For injuries should be done all together, so that being less tasted, they will give less offence. Benefits should be granted little by little, so that they may be better enjoyed. And above all, a prince must live with his subjects in such a way that no accident of good or evil fortune can deflect him from his course; for necessity arising in adverse times, you are not in time with severity, and the good that you do does not profit, as it is judged to be forced upon you, and you will derive no benefit whatever from it.

### Chapter IX

#### OF THE CIVIC PRINCIPALITY

BUT we now come to the case where a citizen becomes prince not through crime or intolerable violence, but by the favour of his fellow-citizens, which may be called a civic principality. To attain this position depends not entirely on worth or entirely on fortune, but rather on cunning assisted by fortune. One attains it by help of popular favour or by the favour of the aristocracy. For in every city these two

opposite parties are to be found, arising from the desire of the populace to avoid the oppression of the great, and the desire of the great to command and oppress the people. And from these two opposing interests arises in the city one of the three effects: either absolute government, liberty, or licence. The former is created either by the populace or the nobility, depending on the relative opportunities of the two parties; for when the nobility see that they are unable to resist the people they unite in exalting one of their number and creating him prince, so as to be able to carry out their own designs under the shadow of his authority. The populace, on the other hand, when unable to resist the nobility, endeavour to exalt and create a prince in order to be protected by his authority. He who becomes prince by help of the nobility has greater difficulty in maintaining his power than he who is raised by the populace, for he is surrounded by those who think themselves his equals, and is thus unable to direct or command as he pleases. But one who is raised to leadership by popular favour finds himself alone, and has no one, or very few, who are not ready to obey him. Besides which, it is impossible to satisfy the nobility by fair dealing and without inflicting injury on others, whereas it is very easy to satisfy the mass of the people in this way. For the aim of the people is more honest than that of the nobility, the latter desiring to oppress, and the former merely to avoid oppression. It must also be added that the prince can never insure himself against a hostile populace on account of their number, but he can against the hostility of the great, as they are but few. The worst that a prince has to expect from a hostile people is to be abandoned, but from hostile nobles he has to fear not only desertion but their active opposition, and as they are more far-seeing and more cunning, they are always in time to save themselves and take sides

with the one who they expect will conquer. The prince is, moreover, obliged to live always with the same people, but he can easily do without the same nobility, being able to make and unmake them at any time, and improve their position or deprive them of it as he pleases.

And to throw further light on this part of my argument, I would say, that the nobles are to be considered in two different manners; that is, they are either to be ruled so as to make them entirely dependent on your fortunes, or else not. Those that are thus bound to you and are not rapacious, must be honoured and loved; those who stand aloof must be considered in two ways, they either do this through pusillanimity and natural want of courage, and in this case you ought to make use of them, and especially such as are of good counsel, so that they may honour you in prosperity and in adversity you have not to fear them. But when they are not bound to you of set purpose and for ambitious ends, it is a sign that they think more of themselves than of you; and from such men the prince must guard himself and look upon them as secret enemies, who will help to ruin him when in adversity.

One, however, who becomes prince by favour of the populace, must maintain its friendship, which he will find easy, the people asking nothing but not to be oppressed. But one who against the people's wishes becomes prince by favour of the nobles, should above all endeavour to gain the favour of the people; this will be easy to him if he protects them. And as men, who receive good from whom they expected evil, feel under a greater obligation to their benefactor, so the populace will soon become even better disposed towards him than if he had become prince through their favour. The prince can win their favour in many ways, which vary according to circumstances, for which no certain rule can be

given, and will therefore be passed over. I will only say, in conclusion, that it is necessary for a prince to possess the friendship of the people; otherwise he has no resource in times of adversity.

Nabis, prince of the Spartans, sustained a siege by the whole of Greece and a victorious Roman army, and defended his country against them and maintained his own position. It sufficed when the danger arose for him to make sure of a few, which would not have sufficed if the populace had been hostile to him. And let no one oppose my opinion in this by quoting the trite proverb, "He who builds on the people, builds on mud"; because that is true when a private citizen relies upon the people and persuades himself that they will liberate him if he is oppressed by enemies or by the magistrates; in this case he might often find himself deceived, as were in Rome the Gracchi and in Florence Messer Georgio Scali. But when it is a prince who founds himself on this basis, one who can command and is a man of courage, and does not get frightened in adversity, and does not neglect other preparations, and one who by his own valour and measures animates the mass of the people, he will not find himself deceived by them, and he will find that he has laid his foundations well.

X //

Usually these principalities are in danger when the prince from the position of a civil ruler changes to an absolute one, for these princes either command themselves or by means of magistrates. In the latter case their position is weaker and more dangerous, for they are at the mercy of those citizens who are appointed magistrates, who can, especially in times of adversity, with great facility deprive them of their position, either by acting against them or by not obeying them. The prince is not in time, in such dangers, to assume absolute authority, for the citizens and subjects who are ac-

prince will always overcome those difficulties by now raising the hopes of his subjects that the evils will not last long, now impressing them with fear of the enemy's cruelty, now by dexterously assuring himself of those who appear too bold. Besides which, the enemy would naturally burn and ravage the country on first arriving and at the time when men's minds are still hot and eager to defend themselves, and therefore the prince has still less to fear, for after some time, when people have cooled down, the damage is done, the evil has been suffered, and there is no remedy, so that they are the more ready to unite with their prince, as it appears that he is under an obligation to them, their houses having been burnt and their possessions ruined in his defence.

It is the nature of men to be as much bound by the benefits that they confer as by those they receive. From which it follows that, everything considered, a prudent prince will not find it difficult to uphold the courage of his subjects both at the commencement and during a state of siege, if he possesses provisions and means to defend himself.

## Chapter XI

### OF ECCLESIASTICAL PRINCIPALITIES

It now only remains to us to speak of ecclesiastical principalities, with regard to which the difficulties lie wholly before they are possessed. They are acquired either by ability or by fortune; but are maintained without either, for they are sustained by ancient religious customs, which are so powerful and of such quality, that they keep their princes in power in whatever manner they proceed and live. These princes alone have states without defending them, have sub-

jects without governing them, and their states, not being defended, are not taken from them; their subjects not being governed do not resent it, and neither think nor are capable of alienating themselves from them. Only these principalities, therefore, are secure and happy. But as they are upheld by higher causes, which the human mind cannot attain to, I will abstain from speaking of them; for being exalted and maintained by God, it would be the work of a presumptuous and foolish man to discuss them. However, I might be asked how it has come about that the Church has reached such great temporal power, when, previous to Alexander VI, the Italian potentates—and not merely the really powerful ones, but every lord or baron, however insignificant—held it in slight esteem as regards temporal power; whereas now it is dreaded by a king of France, whom it has been able to drive out of Italy, and has also been able to ruin the Venetians. Therefore, although this is well known, I do not think it superfluous to call it to mind.

Before Charles, King of France, came into Italy, this country was under the rule of the Pope, the Venetians, the King of Naples, the Duke of Milan, and the Florentines. These potentates had to have two chief cares: one, that no foreigner should enter Italy by force of arms, the other that none of the existing governments should extend its dominions. Those chiefly to be watched were the Pope and the Venetians. To keep back the Venetians required the alliance of all the others, as in the defence of Ferrara, and to keep down the Pope they made use of the Roman barons. These were divided into two factions, the Orsini and the Colonna, and as there was constant quarrelling between them, and they were constantly under arms, before the eyes of the Pope, they kept the papacy weak and infirm. And although there arose now and then a resolute Pope like Sextus,

yet his fortune or ability was never able to liberate him from these evils. The shortness of their life was the reason of this, for in the course of ten years which, as a general rule, a Pope lived, he had great difficulty in suppressing even one of the factions, and if, for example, a Pope had almost put down the Colonna, a new Pope would succeed who was hostile to the Orsini, which caused the Colonna to spring up again, and he was not in time to suppress them.

This caused the temporal power of the Pope to be of little esteem in Italy. Then arose Alexander VI who, of all the pontiffs who have ever reigned, best showed how a Pope might prevail both by money and by force. With Duke Valentine as his instrument, and seizing the opportunity of the French invasion, he did all that I have previously described in speaking of the actions of the duke. And although his object was to aggrandise not the Church but the duke, what he did resulted in the aggrandisement of the Church, which after the death of the duke became the heir of his labours. Then came Pope Julius, who found the Church powerful, possessing all Romagna, all the Roman barons suppressed, and the factions destroyed by the severity of Alexander. He also found the way open for accumulating wealth in ways never used before the time of Alexander. These measures were not only followed by Julius, but increased; he resolved to gain Bologna, put down the Venetians and drive the French from Italy, in all which enterprises he was successful. He merits the greater praise, as he did everything to increase the power of the Church and not of any private person. He also kept the Orsini and Colonna parties in the condition in which he found them, and although there were some leaders among them who might have made changes, there were two things that kept them steady: one, the greatness of the Church, which they

dreaded; the other, the fact that they had no cardinals, who are the origin of the tumults among them. For these parties are never at rest when they have cardinals, for these stir up the parties both within Rome and outside, and the barons are forced to defend them. Thus from the ambitions of prelates arise the discords and tumults among the barons. His holiness, Pope Leo X, therefore, has found the pontificate in a very powerful condition, from which it is hoped that as those Popes made it great by force of arms, so he through his goodness and infinite other virtues will make it both great and venerated.

## Chapter XII

### THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF MILITIA AND MERCENARY SOLDIERS

*(164)*  
HAVING now discussed fully the qualities of these principalities of which I proposed to treat, and partially considered the causes of their prosperity or failure, and having also showed the methods by which many have sought to obtain such states, it now remains for me to treat generally of the methods, both offensive and defensive, that can be used in each of them. We have said already how necessary it is for a prince to have his foundations good, otherwise he is certain to be ruined. The chief foundations of all states, whether new, old, or mixed, are good laws and good arms. And as there cannot be good laws where there are not good arms, and where there are good arms there must be good laws, I will not now discuss the laws, but will speak of the arms.

I say, therefore, that the arms by which a prince defends his possessions are either his own, or else mercenaries, or

auxiliaries, or mixed. The mercenaries and auxiliaries are useless and dangerous, and if any one supports his state by the arms of mercenaries, he will never stand firm or sure, as they are disunited, ambitious, without discipline, faithless, bold amongst friends, cowardly amongst enemies, they have no fear of God, and keep no faith with men. Ruin is only deferred as long as the assault is postponed; in peace you are despoiled by them, and in war by the enemy. The cause of this is that they have no love or other motive to keep them in the field beyond a trifling wage, which is not enough to make them ready to die for you. They are quite willing to be your soldiers so long as you do not make war, but when war comes, it is either fly or decamp altogether. I ought to have little trouble in proving this, since the ruin of Italy is now caused by nothing else but through her having relied for many years on mercenary arms. These did indeed help certain individuals to power, and appeared courageous when matched against each other, but when the foreigner came they showed their worthlessness. Thus it came about that King Charles of France was allowed to take Italy without the slightest trouble, and those who said that it was owing to our sins, spoke the truth, but it was not the sins they meant but those that I have related. And as it was the sins of princes, they too have suffered the punishment.

I will explain more fully the defects of these arms. Mercenary captains are either very capable men or not; if they are, you cannot rely upon them, for they will always aspire to their own greatness, either by oppressing you, their master, or by oppressing others against your intentions; but if the captain is not an able man, he will generally ruin you. And if it is replied to this, that whoever has armed forces will do the same, whether these are mercenary or not, I

would reply that as armies are to be used either by a prince or by a republic, the prince must go in person to take the position of captain, and the republic must send its own citizens. If the man sent turns out incompetent, it must change him; and if capable, keep him by law from going beyond the proper limits. And it is seen by experience that only princes and armed republics make very great progress, whereas mercenary forces do nothing but harm, and also an armed republic submits less easily to the rule of one of its citizens than a republic armed by foreign forces.

Rome and Sparta were for many centuries well armed and free. The Swiss are well armed and enjoy great freedom. As an example of mercenary armies in antiquity there are the Carthaginians, who were oppressed by their mercenary soldiers, after the termination of the first war with the Romans, even while they still had their own citizens as captains. Philip of Macedon was made captain of their forces by the Thebans after the death of Epaminondas, and after gaining the victory he deprived them of liberty. The Milanese, on the death of Duke Philip, hired Francesco Sforza against the Venetians, who having overcome the enemy at Caravaggio, allied himself with them to oppress the Milanese his own employers. The father of this Sforza, being a soldier in the service of Queen Giovanna of Naples, left her suddenly unarmed, by which she was compelled, in order not to lose the kingdom, to throw herself into the arms of the King of Aragon. And if the Venetians and Florentines have in times past increased their dominions by means of such forces, and their captains have not made themselves princes but have defended them, I reply that the Florentines in this case have been favoured by chance, for of the capable leaders whom they might have feared, some did not conquer, some met with opposition, and others

directed their ambition elsewhere. The one who did not conquer was Sir John Hawkwood, whose fidelity could not be known as he was not victorious, but every one will admit that, had he conquered, the Florentines would have been at his mercy. Sforza had always the Bracceschi against him which served as a mutual check. Francesco directed his ambition towards Lombardy; Braccio against the Church and the kingdom of Naples.

But let us look at what occurred a short time ago. The Florentines appointed Paolo Vitelli their captain, a man of great prudence, who had risen from a private station to the highest reputation. If he had taken Pisa no one can deny that it was highly important for the Florentines to retain his friendship, because had he become the soldier of their enemies they would have had no means of opposing him; and if they had retained him they would have been obliged to obey him. As to the Venetians, if one considers the progress they made, it will be seen that they acted surely and gloriously so long as they made war with their own forces; that it was before they commenced their enterprises on land that they fought courageously with their own gentlemen and armed populace, but when they began to fight on land they abandoned this virtue, and began to follow the Italian custom. And at the commencement of their land conquests they had not much to fear from their captains, their territories not being very large, and their reputation being great; but as their possessions increased, as they did under Carmagnola, they had an example of their mistake. For seeing that he was very powerful, after he had defeated the Duke of Milan, and knowing, on the other hand, that he was but lukewarm in this war, they considered that they would not make any more conquests with him, and they neither would nor could dismiss him, for fear of losing what they had al-

*Nerti - Clerical only because of Clark  
futility. Church a lively worldly Power.*

ready gained. In order to make sure of him they were therefore obliged to execute him. They then had for captains Bartolommeo da Bergamo, Roberto da San Severino, Count di Pitigliano, and such like, from whom they had to fear loss instead of gain, as happened subsequently at Vailà, where in one day they lost what they had laboriously gained in eight hundred years; for with these forces, only slow and trifling acquisitions are made, but sudden and miraculous losses. And as I have cited these examples from Italy, which has now for many years been governed by mercenary forces, I will now deal more largely with them, so that having seen their origin and progress, they can be better remedied.

You must understand that in these latter times, as soon as the empire began to be repudiated in Italy and the Pope to gain greater reputation in temporal matters, Italy was divided into many states; many of the principal cities took up arms against their nobles, who, favoured by the emperor, had held them in subjection, and the Church encouraged this in order to increase its temporal power. In many other cities one of the inhabitants became prince. Thus Italy having fallen almost entirely into the hands of the Church and a few republics, and the priests and other citizens not being accustomed to bear arms, they began to hire foreigners as soldiers. The first to bring into reputation this kind of militia was Alberigo da Como, a native of Romagna. Braccio and Sforza, who were in their day the arbiters of Italy were, amongst others, trained by him. After these came all those others who up to the present day have commanded the armies of Italy, and the result of their prowess has been that Italy has been overrun by Charles, preyed on by Louis, tyrannised over by Ferrando, and insulted by the Swiss. The system adopted by them was, in the first place, to increase their own reputation by discrediting the infantry. They did

this because, as they had no country and lived on their earnings, a few foot soldiers did not augment their reputation, and they could not maintain a large number and therefore they restricted themselves almost entirely to cavalry, by which with a smaller number they were well paid and honoured. They reduced things to such a state that in an army of 20,000 soldiers there were not 2,000 foot. They had also used every means to spare themselves and the soldiers any hardship or fear by not killing each other in their encounters, but taking prisoners without expectation of ransom. They made no attacks on fortifications by night; and those in the fortifications did not attack the tents at night, they made no stockades or ditches round their camps, and did not take the field in winter. All these things were permitted by their military code, and adopted, as we have said, to avoid trouble and danger, so that they have reduced Italy to slavery and degradation.

### Chapter XIII

#### OF AUXILIARY, MIXED, AND NATIVE TROOPS

WHEN one asks a powerful neighbour to come to aid and defend one with his forces, they are termed auxiliaries and are as useless as mercenaries. This was done in recent times by Julius, who seeing the wretched failure of his mercenary forces, in his Ferrara enterprise, had recourse to auxiliaries, and arranged with Ferrando, King of Spain, that he should help him with his armies. These forces may be good in themselves, but they are always dangerous for those who borrow them, for if they lose you are defeated, and if they conquer you remain their prisoner. And although ancient

history is full of examples of this, I will not depart from the example of Pope Julius II, which is still fresh. Nothing could be less prudent than the course he adopted; for, wishing to take Ferrara, he put himself entirely into the power of a foreigner. But by good fortune there arose a third cause which prevented him reaping the effects of his bad policy; for when his auxiliaries were beaten at Ravenna, the Swiss rose up and drove back the victors, against all expectation of himself or others, so that he was not taken prisoner by the enemy which had fled, nor by his own auxiliaries, having conquered by other arms than theirs. The Florentines, being totally disarmed, hired 10,000 Frenchmen to attack Pisa, by which measure they ran greater risk than at any period of their struggles. The emperor of Constantinople, to oppose his neighbours, put 10,000 Turks into Greece, who after the war would not go away again, which was the beginning of the servitude of Greece to the infidels.

And one, therefore, who wishes not to conquer, would do well to use these forces, which are much more dangerous than mercenaries, as with them ruin is complete, for they are all united, and owe obedience to others, whereas with mercenaries, when they have conquered, it requires more time and a good opportunity for them to injure you, as they do not form a single body and have been engaged and paid by you, therefore a third party that you have made leader cannot at once acquire enough authority to be able to injure you. In a word, the greatest danger with mercenaries lies in their cowardice and reluctance to fight, but with auxiliaries the danger lies in their courage.

A wise prince, therefore, always avoids these forces and has recourse to his own, and would prefer rather to lose with his own men than conquer with the forces of others,

not deeming it a true victory which is gained by foreign arms. I never hesitate to cite the example of Cesare Borgia and his actions. This duke entered Romagna with auxiliary troops, leading forces composed entirely of French soldiers, and with these he took Imola and Forlì; but as they seemed unsafe, he had recourse to mercenaries as a less risky policy, and hired the Orsini and Vitelli. Afterwards finding these uncertain to handle, unfaithful, and dangerous, he suppressed them, and relied upon his own men. And the difference between these forces can be easily seen if one considers the difference between the reputation of the duke when he had only the French, when he had the Orsini and Vitelli, and when he had to rely on himself and his own soldiers. His reputation will be found to have constantly increased, and he was never so highly esteemed as when every one saw that he was the sole master of his forces.

I do not wish to depart from recent Italian instances, but I cannot omit Hiero of Syracuse, whom I have already mentioned. This man being, as I said, made head of the army by the Syracusans, immediately recognised the uselessness of that militia which was organized like our Italian mercenary troops, and as he thought it unsafe either to retain them or dismiss them, he had them cut in pieces and thenceforward made war with his own arms and not those of others. I would also call to mind a symbolic tale from the Old Testament which well illustrates this point. When David offered to Saul to go and fight against the Philistine champion Goliath, Saul, to encourage him, armed him with his own arms, which when David had tried on, he refused saying, that with them he could not fight so well; he preferred, therefore, to face the enemy with his own sling and knife. In short, the arms of others either fail, overburden, or else impede you. Charles VII, father of King Louis XI,

having through good fortune and bravery liberated France from the English, recognised this necessity of being armed with his own forces, and established in his kingdom a system of men-at-arms and infantry. Afterwards King Louis his son abolished the infantry and began to hire Swiss, which mistake being followed by others is, as may now be seen, a cause of danger to that kingdom. For by giving such reputation to the Swiss, France has disheartened all her own troops, the infantry having been abolished and the men-at-arms being obliged to foreigners for assistance; for being accustomed to fight with Swiss troops, they think they cannot conquer without them. Whence it comes that the French are insufficiently strong to oppose the Swiss, and without the aid of the Swiss they will not venture against others. The armies of the French are thus of a mixed kind, partly mercenary and partly her own; taken together they are much better than troops entirely composed of mercenaries or auxiliaries, but much inferior to national forces.

And let this example be sufficient, for the kingdom of France would be invincible if Charles's military organization had been developed or maintained. But men with their lack of prudence initiate novelties and, finding the first taste good, do not notice the poison within, as I pointed out previously in regard to wasting fevers.

The prince, therefore, who fails to recognise troubles in his state as they arise, is not truly wise, and it is given to few to be thus. If we consider the first cause of the collapse of the Roman Empire we shall find it merely due to the hiring of Goth mercenaries, for from that time we find the Roman strength begin to weaken. All the advantages derived from the Empire fell to the Goths.

I conclude then by saying that no prince is secure without his own troops, on the contrary he is entirely dependent

on fortune, having no trustworthy means of defence in time of trouble. It has always been held and proclaimed by wise men 'quod nihil sit tam infirmum aut instabile quam fama potentiae non sua vi nixae.' One's own troops are those composed either of subjects or of citizens or of one's own dependants; all others are mercenaries or auxiliaries. The way to organise one's own troops is easily learnt if the methods of the four princes mentioned above be studied, and if one considers how Philip, father of Alexander the Great, and many republics and sovereigns have organised theirs. With such examples as these there is no need to labour the point.

#### Chapter XIV

##### THE DUTIES OF A PRINCE WITH REGARD TO THE MILITIA

A PRINCE should therefore have no other aim or thought, nor take up any other thing for his study, but war and its organisation and discipline, for that is the only art that is necessary to one who commands, and it is of such virtue that it not only maintains those who are born princes, but often enables men of private fortune to attain to that rank. And one sees, on the other hand, that when princes think more of luxury than of arms, they lose their state. The chief cause of the loss of states, is the contempt of this art, and the way to acquire them is to be well versed in the same.

Francesco Sforza, through being well armed, became, from private status, Duke of Milan; his sons, through wishing to avoid the fatigue and hardship of war, from dukes became private persons. For among other evils caused by being disarmed, it renders you contemptible; which is one

of those disgraceful things which a prince must guard against, as will be explained later. Because there is no comparison whatever between an armed and a disarmed man; it is not reasonable to suppose that one who is armed will obey willingly one who is unarmed; or that any unarmed man will remain safe among armed servants. For one being disdainful and the other suspicious, it is not possible for them to act well together. And therefore a prince who is ignorant of military matters, besides the other misfortunes already mentioned, cannot be esteemed by his soldiers, nor have confidence in them.

He ought, therefore, never to let his thoughts stray from the exercise of war; and in peace he ought to practise it more than in war, which he can do in two ways: by action and by study. As to action, he must, besides keeping his men well disciplined and exercised, engage continually in hunting, and thus accustom his body to hardships; and meanwhile learn the nature of the land, how steep the mountains are, how the valleys debouch, where the plains lie, and understand the nature of rivers and swamps. To all this he should devote great attention. This knowledge is useful in two ways. In the first place, one learns to know one's country, and can the better see how to defend it. Then by means of the knowledge and experience gained in one locality, one can easily understand any other that it may be necessary to observe; for the hills and valleys, plains and rivers of Tuscany, for instance, have a certain resemblance to those of other provinces, so that from a knowledge of the country in one province one can easily arrive at a knowledge of others. And that prince who is lacking in this skill is wanting in the first essentials of a leader; for it is this which teaches how to find the enemy, take up quarters, lead armies, plan battles and lay siege to towns with advantage.

Philopœmen, prince of the Achaei, among other praises bestowed on him by writers, is lauded because in times of peace he thought of nothing but the methods of warfare, and when he was in the country with his friends, he often stopped and asked them: If the enemy were on that hill and we found ourselves here with our army, which of us would have the advantage? How could we safely approach him maintaining our order? If we wished to retire, what ought we to do? If they retired, how should we follow them? And he put before them as they went along all the contingencies that might happen to an army, heard their opinion, gave his own, fortifying it by argument; so that thanks to these constant reflections there could never happen any incident when actually leading his armies for which he was not prepared.

But as to exercise for the mind, the prince ought to read history and study the actions of eminent men, see how they acted in warfare, examine the causes of their victories and defeats in order to imitate the former and avoid the latter, and above all, do as some men have done in the past, who have imitated some one, who has been much praised and glorified, and have always kept his deeds and actions before them, as they say Alexander the Great imitated Achilles, Cæsar Alexander, and Scipio Cyrus. And whoever reads the life of Cyrus written by Xenophon, will perceive in the life of Scipio how gloriously he imitated the former, and how, in chastity, affability, humanity, and liberality Scipio conformed to those qualities of Cyrus as described by Xenophon.

A wise prince should follow similar methods and never remain idle in peaceful times, but industriously make good use of them, so that when fortune changes she may find him prepared to resist her blows, and to prevail in adversity.

To learn how not to be good.

## Chapter XV

### OF THE THINGS FOR WHICH MEN, AND ESPECIALLY PRINCES, ARE PRAISED OR BLAMED

It now remains to be seen what are the methods and rules for a prince as regards his subjects and friends. And as I know that many have written of this, I fear that my writing about it may be deemed presumptuous, differing as I do, especially in this matter, from the opinions of others. But my intention being to write something of use to those who understand, it appears to me more proper to go to the real truth of the matter than to its imagination; and many have imagined republics and principalities which have never been seen or known to exist in reality; for how we live is so far removed from how we ought to live, that he who abandons what is done for what ought to be done, will rather learn to bring about his own ruin than his preservation. A man who wishes to make a profession of goodness in everything must necessarily come to grief among so many who are not good. Therefore it is necessary for a prince, who wishes to maintain himself, to learn how not to be good, and to use this knowledge and not use it, according to the necessity of the case.

Leaving on one side, then, those things which concern only an imaginary prince, and speaking of those that are real, I state that all men, and especially princes, who are placed at a greater height, are reputed for certain qualities which bring them either praise or blame. Thus one is considered liberal, another *misero* or miserly (using a Tuscan term, seeing that *avaro* with us still means one who is ra-

paciously acquisitive and *misero* one who makes grudging use of his own); one a free giver, another rapacious; one cruel, another merciful; one a breaker of his word, another trustworthy; one effeminate and pusillanimous, another fierce and high-spirited; one humane, another haughty; one lascivious, another chaste; one frank, another astute; one hard, another easy; one serious, another frivolous; one religious, another an unbeliever, and so on. I know that every one will admit that it would be highly praiseworthy in a prince to possess all the above-named qualities that are reputed good, but as they cannot all be possessed or observed, human conditions not permitting of it, it is necessary that he should be prudent enough to avoid the scandal of those vices which would lose him the state, and guard himself if possible against those which will not lose it him, but if not able to, he can indulge them with less scruple. And yet he must not mind incurring the scandal of those vices, without which it would be difficult to save the state, for if one considers well, it will be found that some things which seem virtues would, if followed, lead to one's ruin, and some others which appear vices result in one's greater security and wellbeing.

## Chapter XVI

### OF LIBERALITY AND NIGGARDLINESS

BEGINNING now with the first qualities above named, I say that it would be well to be considered liberal; nevertheless liberality such as the world understands it will injure you, because if used virtuously and in the proper way, it will not

be known, and you will incur the disgrace of the contrary vice. But one who wishes to obtain the reputation of liberality among men, must not omit every kind of sumptuous display, and to such an extent that a prince of this character will consume by such means all his resources, and will be at last compelled, if he wishes to maintain his name for liberality, to impose heavy taxes on his people, become extortionate, and do everything possible to obtain money. This will make his subjects begin to hate him, and he will be little esteemed being poor, so that having by this liberality injured many and benefited but few, he will feel the first little disturbance and be endangered by every peril. If he recognises this and wishes to change his system, he incurs at once the charge of niggardliness.

A prince, therefore, not being able to exercise this virtue of liberality without risk if it be known, must not, if he be prudent, object to be called miserly. In course of time he will be thought more liberal, when it is seen that by his parsimony his revenue is sufficient, that he can defend himself against those who make war on him, and undertake enterprises without burdening his people, so that he is really liberal to all those from whom he does not take, who are infinite in number, and niggardly to all to whom he does not give, who are few. In our times we have seen nothing great done except by those who have been esteemed niggardly; the others have all been ruined. Pope Julius II, although he had made use of a reputation for liberality in order to attain the papacy, did not seek to retain it afterwards, so that he might be able to wage war. The present King of France has carried on so many wars without imposing an extraordinary tax, because his extra expenses were covered by the parsimony he had so long practised. The present King of Spain, if he had been thought liberal, would

not have engaged in and been successful in so many enterprises.

For these reasons a prince must care little for the reputation of being a miser, if he wishes to avoid robbing his subjects, if he wishes to be able to defend himself, to avoid becoming poor and contemptible, and not to be forced to become rapacious; this niggardliness is one of those vices which enable him to reign. If it is said that Cæsar attained the empire through liberality, and that many others have reached the highest positions through being liberal or being thought so, I would reply that you are either a prince already or else on the way to become one. In the first case, this liberality is harmful; in the second, it is certainly necessary to be considered liberal. Cæsar was one of those who wished to attain the mastery over Rome, but if after attaining it he had lived and had not moderated his expenses, he would have destroyed that empire. And should any one reply that there have been many princes, who have done great things with their armies, who have been thought extremely liberal, I would answer by saying that the prince may either spend his own wealth and that of his subjects or the wealth of others. In the first case he must be sparing, but for the rest he must not neglect to be very liberal. The liberality is very necessary to a prince who marches with his armies, and lives by plunder, sack and ransom, and is dealing with the wealth of others, for without it he would not be followed by his soldiers. And you may be very generous indeed with what is not the property of yourself or your subjects, as were Cyrus, Cæsar, and Alexander; for spending the wealth of others will not diminish your reputation, but increase it, only spending your own resources will injure you. There is nothing which destroys itself so much as liberality, for by using it you lose the power of using it, and

Throughout a prince must be minded  
to be considered etc. -- under the line.

become either poor and despicable, or, to escape poverty, rapacious and hated. And of all things that a prince must guard against, the most important are being despicable or hated, and liberality will lead you to one or other of these conditions. It is, therefore, wiser to have the name of a miser, which produces disgrace without hatred, than to incur of necessity the name of being rapacious, which produces both disgrace and hatred.

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### Chapter XVII

#### OF CRUELTY AND CLEMENCY, AND WHETHER IT IS BETTER TO BE LOVED OR FEARED

X PROCEEDING to the other qualities before named, I say that every prince must desire to be considered merciful and not cruel. He must, however, take care not to misuse this mercifulness. Cesare Borgia was considered cruel, but his cruelty had brought order to the Romagna, united it, and reduced it to peace and fealty. If this is considered well, it will be seen that he was really much more merciful than the Florentine people, who, to avoid the name of cruelty, allowed Pistoia to be destroyed. A prince, therefore, must not mind incurring the charge of cruelty for the purpose of keeping his subjects united and faithful; for, with a very few examples, he will be more merciful than those who, from excess of tenderness, allow disorders to arise, from whence spring bloodshed and rapine; for these as a rule injure the whole community, while the executions carried out by the prince injure only individuals. And of all princes, it is impossible for a new prince to escape the reputation of cruelty, new

states being always full of dangers. Wherefore Virgil through the mouth of Dido says:

Res dura, et regni novitas me talia cogunt  
Moliri, et late fines custode tueri.

Nevertheless, he must be cautious in believing and acting, and must not be afraid of his own shadow, and must proceed in a temperate manner with prudence and humanity, so that too much confidence does not render him incautious, and too much diffidence does not render him intolerant.

From this arises the question whether it is better to be loved more than feared, or feared more than loved. The reply is, that one ought to be both feared and loved, but as it is difficult for the two to go together, it is much safer to be feared than loved, if one of the two has to be wanting. For it may be said of men in general that they are ungrateful, voluble, dissemblers, anxious to avoid danger, and covetous of gain; as long as you benefit them, they are entirely yours; they offer you their blood, their goods, their life, and their children, as I have before said, when the necessity is remote; but when it approaches, they revolt. And the prince who has relied solely on their words, without making other preparations, is ruined; for the friendship which is gained by purchase and not through grandeur and nobility of spirit is bought but not secured, and at a pinch is not to be expended in your service. And men have less scruple in offending one who makes himself loved than one who makes himself feared; for love is held by a chain of obligation which, men being selfish, is broken whenever it serves their purpose; but fear is maintained by a dread of punishment which never fails.

Still, a prince should make himself feared in such a way that if he does not gain love, he at any rate avoids hatred;

for fear and the absence of hatred may well go together, and will be always attained by one who abstains from interfering with the property of his citizens and subjects or with their women. And when he is obliged to take the life of any one, let him do so when there is a proper justification and manifest reason for it; but above all he must abstain from taking the property of others, for men forget more easily the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony. Then also pretexts for seizing property are never wanting, and one who begins to live by rapine will always find some reason for taking the goods of others, whereas causes for taking life are rarer and more fleeting.

But when the prince is with his army and has a large number of soldiers under his control, then it is extremely necessary that he should not mind being thought cruel; for without this reputation he could not keep an army united or disposed to any duty. Among the noteworthy actions of Hannibal is numbered this, that although he had an enormous army, composed of men of all nations and fighting in foreign countries, there never arose any dissension either among them or against the prince, either in good fortune or in bad. This could not be due to anything but his inhuman cruelty, which together with his infinite other virtues, made him always venerated and terrible in the sight of his soldiers, and without it his other virtues would not have sufficed to produce that effect. Thoughtless writers admire on the one hand his actions, and on the other blame the principal cause of them.

And that it is true that his other virtues would not have sufficed may be seen from the case of Scipio (famous not only in regard to his own times, but all times of which memory remains), whose armies rebelled against him in Spain, which arose from nothing but his excessive kindness,

which allowed more licence to the soldiers than was consonant with military discipline. He was reproached with this in the senate by Fabius Maximus, who called him a corrupter of the Roman militia. Locri having been destroyed by one of Scipio's officers was not revenged by him, nor was the insolence of that officer punished, simply by reason of his easy nature; so much so, that some one wishing to excuse him in the senate, said that there were many men who knew rather how not to err, than how to correct the errors of others. This disposition would in time have tarnished the fame and glory of Scipio had he persevered in it under the empire, but living under the rule of the senate this harmful quality was not only concealed but became a glory to him.

I conclude, therefore, with regard to being feared and loved, that men love at their own free will, but fear at the will of the prince, and that a wise prince must rely on what is in his power and not on what is in the power of others, and he must only contrive to avoid incurring hatred, ~~as~~ has been explained.

### Chapter XVIII

#### IN WHAT WAY PRINCES MUST KEEP FAITH

How laudable it is for a prince to keep good faith and live with integrity, and not with astuteness, every one knows. Still the experience of our times shows those princes to have done great things who have had little regard for good faith, and have been able by astuteness to confuse men's brains, and who have ultimately overcome those who have made loyalty their foundation.

You must know, then, that there are two methods of fighting, the one by law, the other by force: the first method is that of men, the second of beasts; but as the first method is often insufficient, one must have recourse to the second. It is therefore necessary for a prince to know well how to use both the beast and the man. This was covertly taught to rulers by ancient writers, who relate how Achilles and many others of those ancient princes were given to Chiron the centaur to be brought up and educated under his discipline. The parable of this semi-animal, semi-human teacher is meant to indicate that a prince must know how to use both natures, and that the one without the other is not durable.

A prince being thus obliged to know well how to act as a beast must imitate the fox and the lion, for the lion cannot protect himself from traps, and the fox cannot defend himself from wolves. One must therefore be a fox to recognise traps, and a lion to frighten wolves. Those that wish to be only lions do not understand this. Therefore, a prudent ruler ought not to keep faith when by so doing it would be against his interest, and when the reasons which made him bind himself no longer exist. If men were all good, this precept would not be a good one; but as they are bad, and would not observe their faith with you, so you are not bound to keep faith with them. Nor have legitimate grounds ever failed a prince who wished to show colourable excuse for the non-fulfilment of his promise. Of this one could furnish an infinite number of modern examples, and show how many times peace has been broken, and how many promises rendered worthless, by the faithlessness of princes, and those that have been best able to imitate the fox have succeeded best. But it is necessary to be able to disguise this character well, and to be a great feigner and dissembler; and men are

so simple and so ready to obey present necessities, that one who deceives will always find those who allow themselves to be deceived.

I will only mention one modern instance. Alexander VI did nothing else but deceive men, he thought of nothing else, and found the occasion for it; no man was ever more able to give assurances, or affirmed things with stronger oaths, and no man observed them less; however, he always succeeded in his deceptions, as he well knew this aspect of things.

It is not, therefore, necessary for a prince to have all the above-named qualities, but it is very necessary to seem to have them. I would even be bold to say that to possess them and always to observe them is dangerous, but to appear to possess them is useful. Thus it is well to seem merciful, faithful, humane, sincere, religious, and also to be so; but you must have the mind so disposed that when it is needful to be otherwise you may be able to change to the opposite qualities. And it must be understood that a prince, and especially a new prince, cannot observe all those things which are considered good in men, being often obliged, in order to maintain the state, to act against faith, against charity, against humanity, and against religion. And, therefore, he must have a mind disposed to adapt itself according to the wind, and as the variations of fortune dictate, and, as I said before, not deviate from what is good, if possible, but be able to do evil if constrained.

A prince must take great care that nothing goes out of his mouth which is not full of the above-named five qualities, and, to see and hear him, he should seem to be all mercy, faith, integrity, humanity, and religion. And nothing is more necessary than to seem to have this last quality, for men in general judge more by the eyes than by the hands,

for every one can see, but very few have to feel. Everybody sees what you appear to be, few feel what you are, and those few will not dare to oppose themselves to the many, who have the majesty of the state to defend them; and in the actions of men, and especially of princes, from which there is no appeal, the end justifies the means. Let a prince therefore aim at conquering and maintaining the state, and the means will always be judged honourable and praised by every one, for the vulgar is always taken by appearances and the issue of the event; and the world consists only of the vulgar, and the few who are not vulgar are isolated when the many have a rallying point in the prince. A certain prince of the present time, whom it is well not to name, never does anything but preach peace and good faith, but he is really a great enemy to both, and either of them, had he observed them, would have lost him state or reputation on many occasions.

*Si guarda al fine: one vede il result*

### Chapter XIX

#### THAT WE MUST AVOID BEING DESPISED AND HATED

But as I have now spoken of the most important of the qualities in question, I will now deal briefly and generally with the rest. The prince must, as already stated, avoid those things which will make him hated or despised; and whenever he succeeds in this, he will have done his part, and will find no danger in other vices. He will chiefly become hated, as I said, by being rapacious, and usurping the property and women of his subjects, which he must abstain from doing, and whenever one does not attack the property or honour of the generality of men, they will live contented; and one will

only have to combat the ambition of a few, who can be easily held in check in many ways. He is rendered despicable by being thought changeable, frivolous, effeminate, timid, and irresolute; which a prince must guard against as a rock of danger, and so contrive that his actions show grandeur, spirit, gravity, and fortitude; and as to the government of his subjects, let his sentence be irrevocable, and let him adhere to his decisions so that no one may think of deceiving or cozening him.

The prince who creates such an opinion of himself gets a great reputation, and it is very difficult to conspire against one who has a great reputation, and he will not easily be attacked, so long as it is known that he is capable and revered by his subjects. For a prince must have two kinds of fear: one internal as regards his subjects, one external as regards foreign powers. From the latter he can defend himself with good arms and good friends, and he will always have good friends if he has good arms; and internal matters will always remain quiet, if they are not perturbed by conspiracy and there is no disturbance from without; and even if external powers sought to attack him, if he has ruled and lived as I have described, he will always if he stands firm, be able to sustain every shock, as I have shown that Nabis the Spartan did. But with regard to the subjects, if not acted on from outside, it is still to be feared lest they conspire in secret, from which the prince may guard himself well by avoiding hatred and contempt, and keeping the people satisfied with him, which it is necessary to accomplish, as has been related at length. And one of the most potent remedies that a prince has against conspiracies, is that of not being hated by the mass of the people; for whoever conspires always believes that he will satisfy the people by the death of their prince; but if he thought to offend them

by doing this, he would fear to engage in such an undertaking, for the difficulties that conspirators have to meet are infinite. Experience shows that there have been very many conspiracies, but few have turned out well, for whoever conspires cannot act alone, and cannot find companions except among those who are discontented; and as soon as you have disclosed your intention to a malcontent, you give him the means of satisfying himself, for by revealing it he can hope to secure everything he wants; to such an extent that seeing a certain gain by doing this, and seeing on the other hand only a doubtful one and full of danger, he must either be a rare friend to you or else a very bitter enemy to the prince if he keeps faith with you. And to express the matter in a few words, I say, that on the side of the conspirator there is nothing but fear, jealousy, suspicion, and dread of punishment which frightens him; and on the side of the prince there is the majesty of government, the laws, the protection of friends and of the state which guard him. When to these things is added the goodwill of the people, it is impossible that any one should have the temerity to conspire. For whereas generally a conspirator has to fear before the execution of his plot, in this case, having the people for an enemy, he must also fear after his crime is accomplished, and thus he is not able to hope for any refuge.

Numberless instances might be given of this, but I will content myself with one which took place within the memory of our fathers. Messer Annibale Bentivogli, Prince of Bologna, ancestor of the present Messer Annibale, was killed by the Canneschi, who conspired against him. He left no relations but Messer Giovanni, who was then an infant, but after the murder the people rose up and killed all the Canneschi. This arose from the popular goodwill that the house of Bentivogli enjoyed at that time, which was so

and the 300 years before the French Revolution;

great that, as there was nobody left after the death of Annibale who could govern the state, the Bolognese hearing that there was one of the Bentivogli family in Florence, who had till then been thought the son of a blacksmith, came to fetch him and gave him the government of the city, and it was governed by him until Messer Giovanni was old enough to assume the government.

I conclude, therefore, that a prince need trouble little about conspiracies when the people are well disposed, but when they are hostile and hold him in hatred, then he must fear everything and everybody. Well-ordered states and wise princes have studied diligently not to drive the nobles to desperation, and to satisfy the populace and keep it contented, for this is one of the most important matters that a prince has to deal with.

Among the kingdoms that are well ordered and governed in our time is France, and there we find numberless good institutions on which depend the liberty and security of the king; of these the chief is the parliament and its authority, because he who established that kingdom, knowing the ambition and insolence of the great nobles, deemed it necessary to have a bit in their mouths to check them. And knowing on the other hand the hatred of the mass of the people against the great, based on fear, and wishing to secure them, he did not wish to make this the special care of the king, to relieve him of the dissatisfaction that he might incur among the nobles by favouring the people, and among the people by favouring the nobles. He therefore established a third judge that, without direct charge of the king, kept in check the great and favoured the lesser people. Nor could any better or more prudent measure have been adopted, nor better precaution for the safety of the king and the kingdom. From which another notable rule can be

drawn, that princes should let the carrying out of unpopular duties devolve on others, and bestow favours themselves. I conclude again by saying that a prince must esteem his nobles, but not make himself hated by the populace.

It may perhaps seem to some, that considering the life and death of many Roman emperors that they are instances contrary to my opinion, finding that some who always lived nobly and showed great strength of character, nevertheless lost the empire, or were killed by their subjects who conspired against them. Wishing to answer these objections, I will discuss the qualities of some emperors, showing the cause of their ruin not to be at variance with what I have stated, and I will also meanwhile consider the things to be noted by whoever reads the deeds of these times. I will content myself with taking all those emperors who succeeded to the empire from Marcus the philosopher to Maximinus; these were Marcus, Commodus his son, Pertinax, Julianus, Severus, Antoninus, Caracalla his son, Macrinus, Helio-gabalus, Alexander, and Maximinus. And the first thing to note is, that whereas other princes have only to contend against the ambition of the great and the insolence of the people, the Roman emperors had a third difficulty, that of having to support the cruelty and avarice of the soldiers, which was such that it was the cause of the ruin of many, it being hardly possible to satisfy both the soldiers and the people. For the people love tranquillity, and therefore like pacific princes, but the soldiers prefer a prince of military spirit, who is insolent, cruel, and rapacious. They wish him to exercise these qualities on the people so that they may get double pay and give vent to their avarice and cruelty. Thus it came about that those emperors who, by nature or art, had not such a reputation as could keep both parties in check, were invariably ruined, and the greater

number of them who were raised to the empire being new men, knowing the difficulties of these two opposite dispositions, confined themselves to satisfying the soldiers, and thought little of injuring the people. This choice was necessary, princes not being able to avoid being hated by some one. They must first try not to be hated by the mass of the people; if they cannot accomplish this they must use every means to escape the hatred of the most powerful parties. And therefore these emperors, who being new men had need of extraordinary favours, adhered to the soldiers rather than to the people; whether this, however, was of use to them or not, depended on whether the prince knew how to maintain his reputation with them. From these causes it resulted that Marcus, Pertinax, and Alexander, being all of modest life, lovers of justice, enemies of cruelty, humane and benign, all came to a sad end except Marcus. Marcus alone lived and died in honour, because he succeeded to the empire by hereditary right and did not owe it either to the soldiers or to the people; besides which, possessing many virtues which made him revered, he kept both parties in their place as long as he lived and was never either hated or despised. But Pertinax was created emperor against the will of the soldiers, who being accustomed to live licentiously under Commodus, could not put up with the honest life to which Pertinax wished to limit them, so that having made himself hated, and to this contempt being added because he was old, he was ruined at the very beginning of his administration.

Whence it may be seen that hatred is gained as much by good works as by evil, and therefore, as I said before, a prince who wishes to maintain the state is often forced to do evil, for when that party, whether populace, soldiery, or nobles, whichever it be that you consider necessary to you

*not to be good*

for keeping your position, is corrupt, you must follow its humour and satisfy it, and in that case good works will be inimical to you. But let us come to Alexander, who was of such goodness, that among other things for which he is praised, it is said that in the fourteen years that he reigned no one was put to death by him without a fair trial. Nevertheless, being considered effeminate, and a man who allowed himself to be ruled by his mother, and having thus fallen into contempt, the army conspired against him and killed him.

Considering, on the other hand, the qualities of Commodus, Severus, Antoninus, Caracalla, and Maximinus, you will find them extremely cruel and rapacious; to satisfy the soldiers there was no injury which they would not inflict on the people, and all except Severus ended badly. Severus, however, had such abilities that by maintaining the soldiers friendly to him, he was able to reign happily, although he oppressed the people, for his virtues made him so admirable in the sight both of the soldiers and the people that the latter were, in some degree, astonished and stupefied, while the former were respectful and contented.

As the deeds of this ruler were great and notable for a new prince, I will briefly show how well he could use the qualities of the fox and the lion, whose natures, as I said before, it is necessary for a prince to imitate. Knowing the sloth of the Emperor Julianus, Severus, who was leader of the army in Slavonia, persuaded the troops that it would be well to go to Rome to avenge the death of Pertinax, who had been slain by the Praetorian guard, and under this pretext, without revealing his aspirations to the throne, marched with his army to Rome and was in Italy before his departure was known. On his arrival in Rome the senate elected him emperor through fear, and killed Julianus. There remained

after this beginning two difficulties to be faced by Severus before he could obtain the whole control of the empire: one in Asia, where Nigrinus, head of the Asiatic armies, had declared himself emperor; the other in the west from Albinus, who also aspired to the empire. And as he judged it dangerous to show himself hostile to both, he decided to attack Nigrinus and deceive Albinus, to whom he wrote that having been elected emperor by the senate he wished to share that dignity with him; he sent him the title of Cæsar and, by deliberation of the senate, he was declared his colleague; all of which was accepted as true by Albinus. But when Severus had defeated and killed Nigrinus, and pacified things in the East, he returned to Rome and charged Albinus in the senate with having, unmindful of the benefits received from him, traitorously sought to assassinate him, and stated that he was therefore obliged to go and punish his ingratitude. He then went to France to meet him, and there deprived him of both his position and his life.

Whoever examines in detail the actions of Severus, will find him to have been a very ferocious lion and an extremely astute fox, and will find him to have been feared and respected by all and not hated by the army; and will not be surprised that he, a new man, should have been able to hold so much power, since his great reputation defended him always from the hatred that his rapacity might have produced in the people. But Antoninus his son was also a man of great ability, and possessed qualities that rendered him admirable in the sight of the people and also made him popular with the soldiers, for he was a military man, capable of enduring the most extreme hardships, disdainful of delicate food, and every other luxury, which made him loved by all the armies. However, his ferocity and cruelty were so great and unheard of, through his having, after

of. Tamerlane; Grec johesl amori; more of these  
to go.

executing many private individuals, caused a large part of the population of Rome and all that of Alexandria to be killed, that he became hated by all the world and began to be feared by those about him to such an extent that he was finally killed by a centurion in the midst of his army. Whence it is to be noted that this kind of death, which proceeds from the deliberate action of a determined man, cannot be avoided by princes, since any one who does not fear death himself can inflict it, but a prince need not fear much on this account, as such men are extremely rare. He must only guard against committing any grave injury to any one he makes use of, or has about him for his service, like Antoninus had done, having caused the death with contumely of the brother of that centurion, and also threatened him every day, although he still retained him in his body-guard, which was a foolish and dangerous thing to do, as the fact proved.

But let us come to Commodus, who might easily have kept the empire, having succeeded to it by heredity, being the son of Marcus, and it would have sufficed for him to follow in the steps of his father to have satisfied both the people and the soldiers. But being of a cruel and bestial disposition, in order to be able to exercise his rapacity on the people, he sought to favour the soldiers and render them licentious; on the other hand, by not maintaining his dignity, by often descending into the theatre to fight with gladiators and committing other contemptible actions, little worthy of the imperial dignity, he became desppicable in the eyes of the soldiers, and being hated on the one hand and despised on the other, he was conspired against and killed.

There remains to be described the character of Maximinus. He was an extremely warlike man, and as the armies

and from Marcus those that are useful and glorious for conserving a state that is already established and secure.

## Chapter XX

### WHETHER FORTRESSES AND OTHER THINGS WHICH PRINCES OFTEN CONTRIVE ARE USEFUL OR INJURIOUS

SOME princes, in order to hold their possessions securely, have disarmed their citizens, some others have kept their subject lands divided into parts, others have fomented enmities against themselves, others have endeavoured to win over those whom they suspected at the commencement of their rule: some have constructed fortresses, others have cast them down and destroyed them. And although one cannot pronounce a definite judgment as to these things without going into the particulars of the state to which such a deliberation is to be applied, still I will speak in such a general way as the matter will permit.

A new prince has never been known to disarm his subjects, on the contrary, when he has found them disarmed he has always armed them, for by arming them these arms become your own, those that you suspected become faithful and those that were faithful remain so, and from being merely subjects become your partisans. And since all the subjects cannot be armed, when you give the privilege of arms to some, you can deal more safely with the others; and this different treatment that they recognise renders your men more obliged to you. The others will excuse you, judging that those have necessarily greater merit who have greater danger and heavier duties. But when you disarm them, you commence to offend them and show that you dis-

trust them either through cowardice or lack of confidence, and both of these opinions generate hatred against you. And as you cannot remain unarmed, you are obliged to resort to a mercenary militia, of which we have already stated the value; and even if it were good it cannot be sufficient in number to defend you against powerful enemies and suspected subjects. Therefore, as I have said, a new prince in a new dominion always has his subjects armed. History is full of such examples.

But when a prince acquires a new state as an addition to his old one, then it is necessary to disarm that state, except those who in acquiring it have sided with you; and even these one must, when time and opportunity serve, render weak and effeminate, and arrange things so that all the arms of the new state are in the hands of your soldiers who live near you in your old state.

Our forefathers and those who were esteemed wise used to say that it was necessary to hold Pistoia by means of factions and Pisa with fortresses, and for this purpose they fomented differences in some of their subject towns in order to possess them more easily. In those days when there was a balance of power in Italy, this was doubtless well done, but does not seem to me to be a good precept for the present time, for I do not believe that the divisions thus created ever do any good; on the contrary it is certain that when the enemy approaches, the cities thus divided will be at once lost, for the weaker faction will always side with the enemy and the other will not be able to stand.

The Venetians, actuated, I believe, by the aforesaid motives, fomented the Guelf and Ghibelline factions in the cities subject to them, and although they never allowed them to come to bloodshed, they yet encouraged these differences among them, so that the citizens, being occupied

in their own quarrels, might not act against them. This, however, did not avail them anything, as was seen when, after the defeat of Vailà, a part of those subjects immediately took courage and seized the whole state. Such methods, besides, argue weakness in a prince, for in a strong government such dissensions will never be permitted. They are profitable only in time of peace, as by such means it is easy to manage one's subjects, but when it comes to war, the fallacy of such a policy is at once shown.

Without doubt princes become great when they overcome difficulties and opposition, and therefore fortune, especially when it wants to render a new prince great, who has greater need of gaining a great reputation than a hereditary prince, raises up enemies and compels him to undertake wars against them, so that he may have cause to overcome them, and thus climb up higher by means of that ladder which his enemies have brought him. There are many who think therefore that a wise prince ought, when he has the chance, to foment astutely some enmity, so that by suppressing it he will augment his greatness.

Princes, and especially new ones, have found more faith and more usefulness in those men, whom at the beginning of their power they regarded with suspicion, than in those they at first confided in. Pandolfo Petrucci, Prince of Siena, governed his state more by those whom he suspected than by others. But of this we cannot speak at large, as it strays from the subject; I will merely say that these men who at the beginning of a new government were enemies, if they are of a kind to need support to maintain their position, can be very easily gained by the prince, and they are the more compelled to serve him faithfully as they know they must by their deeds cancel the bad opinion previously held of them, and thus the prince will always derive greater help.

from them than from those who, serving him with greater security, neglect his interests.

And as the matter requires it, I will not omit to remind a prince who has newly taken a state with the secret help of its inhabitants, that he must consider well the motives that have induced those who have favoured him to do so, and if it is not natural affection for him, but only because they were not contented with the state as it was, he will have great trouble and difficulty in maintaining their friendship, because it will be impossible for him to content them. And on well examining the cause of this in the examples drawn from ancient and modern times it will be seen that it is much easier to gain the friendship of those men who were contented with the previous condition and were therefore at first enemies, than that those who not being contented, became his friends and helped him to occupy it.

It has been the custom of princes in order to be able to hold their state securely, to erect fortresses, as a bridle and bit to those who have designs against them, and in order to have a secure refuge against a sudden assault. I approve this method, because it was anciently used. Nevertheless, Messer Niccolò Vitelli has been seen in our own time to destroy two fortresses in Città di Castello in order to keep that state. Guid'Ubaldo, Duke of Urbino, on returning to his dominions from which he had been driven by Cesare Borgia, razed to their foundations all the fortresses of that province, and considered that without them it would be more difficult for him to lose the state again. The Bentivogli, in returning to Bologna, took similar measures. Therefore fortresses may or may not be useful according to the times; if they do good in one way, they do harm in another. The question may be discussed thus: a prince who fears his own people more than foreigners ought to build fortresses, but

*(real emperors, Nobles & others  
better - too far from me.)*

he who has greater fear of foreigners than of his own people ought to do without them. The castle of Milan built by Francesco Sforza has given and will give more trouble to the house of Sforza than any other disorder in that state. Therefore the best fortress is to be found in the love of the people, for although you may have fortresses they will not save you if you are hated by the people. When once the people have taken arms against you, there will never be lacking foreigners to assist them. In our times we do not see that they have profited any ruler, except the Countess of Forlì on the death of her consort Count Girolamo, for she was thus enabled to escape the popular rising and await help from Milan and recover the state; the circumstances being then such that no foreigner could assist the people. But afterwards they were of little use to her when Cesare Borgia attacked her and the people being hostile to her allied themselves with the foreigner. So that then and before it would have been safer for her not to have been hated by the people than to have had the fortresses. Having considered these things I would therefore praise the one who erects fortresses and the one who does not, and would blame any one who, trusting in them, reck little of being hated by his people.

### Chapter XXI

#### HOW A PRINCE MUST ACT IN ORDER TO GAIN REPUTATION

NOTHING causes a prince to be so much esteemed as great enterprises and giving proof of prowess. We have in our own day Ferdinand, King of Aragon, the present King of Spain. He may almost be termed a new prince, because from

a weak king he has become for fame and glory the first king in Christendom, and if you regard his actions you will find them all very great and some of them extraordinary. At the beginning of his reign he assailed Granada, and that enterprise was the foundation of his state. At first he did it at his leisure and without fear of being interfered with; he kept the minds of the barons of Castile occupied in this enterprise, so that thinking only of that war they did not think of making innovations, and he thus acquired reputation and power over them without their being aware of it. He was able with the money of the Church and the people to maintain his armies, and by that long war to lay the foundations of his military power, which afterwards has made him famous. Besides this, to be able to undertake greater enterprises, and always under the pretext of religion, he had recourse to a pious cruelty, driving out the Moors from his kingdom and despoiling them. No more miserable or unusual example can be found. He also attacked Africa under the same pretext, undertook his Italian enterprise, and has lately attacked France; so that he has continually contrived great things, which have kept his subjects' minds uncertain and astonished, and occupied in watching their result. And these actions have arisen one out of the other, so that they have left no time for men to settle down and act against him.

It is also very profitable for a prince to give some outstanding example of his greatness in the internal administration, like those related of Messer Bernabò of Milan. When it happens that some one does something extraordinary, either good or evil, in civil life, he must find such means of rewarding or punishing him which will be much talked about. And above all a prince must endeavour in every action to obtain fame for being great and excellent.

The possibilities of greatness --  
like a whetstone; War, enterprises, time  
fear &c. or some THE PRINCE ~~success~~ 83

A prince is further esteemed when he is a true friend or a true enemy, when, that is, he declares himself without reserve in favour of some one or against another. This policy is always more useful than remaining neutral. For if two neighbouring powers come to blows, they are either such that if one wins, you will have to fear the victor, or else not. In either of these two cases it will be better for you to declare yourself openly and make war, because in the first case if you do not declare yourself, you will fall a prey to the victor, to the pleasure and satisfaction of the one who has been defeated, and you will have no reason nor anything to defend you and nobody to receive you. For, whoever wins will not desire friends whom he suspects and who do not help him when in trouble, and whoever loses will not receive you as you did not take up arms to venture yourself in his cause.

Antiochus went to Greece, being sent by the Aetolians to expel the Romans. He sent orators to the Achaeans who were friends of the Romans to encourage them to remain neutral; on the other hand the Romans persuaded them to take up arms on their side. The matter was brought before the council of the Achaeans for deliberation, where the ambassador of Antiochus sought to persuade them to remain neutral, to which the Roman ambassador replied: 'As to what is said that it is best and most useful for your state not to meddle in our war, nothing is further from the truth; for if you do not meddle in it you will become, without any favour or any reputation, the prize of the victor.'

And it will always happen that the one who is not your friend will want you to remain neutral, and the one who is your friend will require you to declare yourself by taking arms. Irresolute princes, to avoid present dangers, usually follow the way of neutrality and are mostly ruined by it.

But when the prince declares himself frankly in favour of one side, if the one to whom you adhere conquers, even if he is powerful and you remain at his discretion, he is under an obligation to you and friendship has been established, and men are never so dishonest as to oppress you with such a patent ingratitude. Moreover, victories are never so prosperous that the victor does not need to have some scruples, especially as to justice. But if your ally loses, you are sheltered by him, and so long as he can, he will assist you; you become the companion of a fortune which may rise again. In the second case, when those who fight are such that you have nothing to fear from the victor, it is still more prudent on your part to adhere to one; for you go to the ruin of one with the help of him who ought to save him if he were wise, and if he conquers he rests at your discretion, and it is impossible that he should not conquer with your help.

And here it should be noted that a prince ought never to make common cause with one more powerful than himself to injure another, unless necessity forces him to it, as before said; for if he wins you rest in his power, and princes must avoid as much as possible being under the will and pleasure of others. The Venetians united with France against the Duke of Milan, although they could have avoided that alliance, and from it resulted their own ruin. But when one cannot avoid it, as happened in the case of the Florentines when the Pope and Spain went with their armies to attack Lombardy, then the prince ought to join for the above reasons. Let no state believe that it can always follow a safe policy, rather let it think that all are doubtful. This is found in the nature of things, that one never tries to avoid one difficulty without running into another, but prudence consists in being able to know the

nature of the difficulties, and taking the least harmful as good.

A prince must also show himself a lover of merit, give preferment to the able, and honour those who excel in every art. Moreover he must encourage his citizens to follow their callings quietly, whether in commerce, or agriculture, or any other trade that men follow, so that this one shall not refrain from improving his possessions through fear that they may be taken from him, and that one from starting a trade for fear of taxes; but he should offer rewards to whoever does these things, and to whoever seeks in any way to improve his city or state. Besides this, he ought, at convenient seasons of the year, to keep the people occupied with festivals and shows; and as every city is divided either into guilds or into classes, he ought to pay attention to all these groups, mingle with them from time to time, and give them an example of his humanity and munificence, always upholding, however, the majesty of his dignity, which must never be allowed to fail in anything whatever.

## Chapter XXII

### OF THE SECRETARIES OF PRINCES

THE choice of a prince's ministers is a matter of no little importance; they are either good or not according to the prudence of the prince. The first impression that one gets of a ruler and of his brains is from seeing the men that he has about him. When they are competent and faithful one can always consider him wise, as he has been able to recognise their ability and keep them faithful. But when they are

the reverse, one can always form an unfavourable opinion of him, because the first mistake that he makes is in making this choice.

There was nobody who knew Messer Antonio da Venafro as the minister of Pandolfo Petrucci, Prince of Siena, who did not consider Pandolfo to be a very prudent man, having him for his minister. There are three different kinds of brains, the one understands things unassisted, the other understands things when shown by others, the third understands neither alone nor with the explanations of others. The first kind is most excellent, the second also excellent, but the third useless. It is therefore evident that if Pandolfo was not of the first kind, he was at any rate of the second. For every time the prince has the judgment to know the good and evil that any one does or says, even if he has no originality of intellect, yet he can recognise the bad and good works of his minister and correct the one and encourage the other; and the minister cannot hope to deceive him and therefore remains good.

For a prince to be able to know a minister there is this method which never fails. When you see the minister think more of himself than of you, and in all his actions seek his own profit, such a man will never be a good minister, and you can never rely on him; for whoever has in hand the state of another must never think of himself but of the prince, and not mind anything but what relates to him. And, on the other hand, the prince, in order to retain his fidelity ought to think of his minister, honouring and enriching him, doing him kindnesses, and conferring on him honours and giving him responsible tasks, so that the great honours and riches bestowed on him cause him not to desire other honours and riches, and the offices he holds make him fearful of changes. When princes and their min-

isters stand in this relation to each other, they can rely the one upon the other; when it is otherwise, the result is always injurious either for one or the other of them.

### Chapter XXIII

#### HOW FLATTERERS MUST BE SHUNNED

I MUST not omit an important subject, and mention of a mistake which princes can with difficulty avoid, if they are not very prudent, or if they do not make a good choice. And this is with regard to flatterers, of which courts are full, because men take such pleasure in their own things and deceive themselves about them that they can with difficulty guard against this plague; and by wishing to guard against it they run the risk of becoming contemptible. Because there is no other way of guarding one's self against flattery than by letting men understand that they will not offend you by speaking the truth; but when every one can tell you the truth, you lose their respect. A prudent prince must therefore take a third course, by choosing for his council wise men, and giving these alone full liberty to speak the truth to him, but only of those things that he asks and of nothing else; but he must ask them about everything and hear their opinion, and afterwards deliberate by himself in his own way, and in these councils and with each of these men comport himself so that every one may see that the more freely he speaks, the more he will be acceptable. Beyond these he should listen to no one, go about the matter deliberately, and be determined in his decisions. Whoever acts otherwise either acts precipitately through

position in Italy in our days, such as the King of Naples, the Duke of Milan and others, one will find in them first a common defect as to their arms, for the reasons discussed at length, then we observe that some of them either had the people hostile to them, or that if the people were friendly they were not able to make sure of the nobility, for without these defects, states are not lost that have enough strength to be able to keep an army in the field. Philip of Macedon, not the father of Alexander the Great, but the one who was conquered by Titus Quintius, did not possess a great state compared to the greatness of Rome and Greece which assailed him, but being a military man and one who knew how to ingratiate himself with the people and make sure of the great, he was able to sustain the war against them for many years; and if at length he lost his power over some cities, he was still able to keep his kingdom.

Therefore, those of our princes who had held their possessions for many years must not accuse fortune for having lost them, but rather their own remissness; for having never in quiet times considered that things might change (as it is a common fault of men not to reckon on storms in fair weather) when adverse times came, they only thought of fleeing, instead of defending themselves; and hoped that the people, enraged by the insolence of the conquerors, would recall them. This measure, when others are wanting, is good; but it is very bad to have neglected the other remedies for that one, for nobody would desire to fall because he believed that he would then find some one to pick him up. This may or may not take place, and if it does, it does not afford you security, as you have not helped yourself but been helped like a coward. Only those defences are good, certain and durable, which depend on yourself alone and your own ability.

# Chance of Fortune!

## HOW MUCH FORTUNE CAN DO IN HUMAN AFFAIRS AND HOW IT MAY BE OPPOSED

It is not unknown to me how many have been and are of opinion that worldly events are so governed by fortune and by God, that men cannot by their prudence change them, and that on the contrary there is no remedy whatever, and for this they may judge it to be useless to toil much about them, but let things be ruled by chance. This opinion has been more held in our day, from the great changes that have been seen, and are daily seen, beyond every human conjecture. When I think about them, at times I am partly inclined to share this opinion. Nevertheless, that our free-will may not be altogether extinguished, I think it may be true that fortune is the ruler of half our actions, but that she allows the other half or thereabouts to be governed by us. I would compare her to an impetuous river that, when turbulent, inundates the plains, casts down trees and buildings, removes earth from this side and places it on the other; every one flees before it, and everything yields to its fury without being able to oppose it; and yet though it is of such a kind, still when it is quiet, men can make provision against it by dykes and banks, so that when it rises it will either go into a canal or its rush will not be so wild and dangerous. So it is with fortune, which shows her power where no measures have been taken to resist her, and directs her fury where she knows that no dykes or barriers have been made to hold her. And if you regard Italy, which has been the seat of these changes, and who has given the

~~by one; long or miles. Then  
the part of long.~~

impulse to them, you will see her to be a country without dykes or banks of any kind. If she had been protected by proper measures, like Germany, Spain, and France, this inundation would not have caused the great changes that it has, or would not have happened at all.

This must suffice as regards opposition to fortune in general. But limiting myself more to particular cases, I would point out how one sees a certain prince to-day fortunate and to-morrow ruined, without seeing that he has changed in character or otherwise. I believe this arises in the first place from the causes that we have already discussed at length; that is to say, because the prince who bases himself entirely on fortune is ruined when fortune changes. I also believe that he is happy whose mode of procedure accords with the needs of the times, and similarly he is unfortunate whose mode of procedure is opposed to the times. For one sees that men in those things which lead them to the aim that each one has in view, namely, glory and riches, proceed in various ways; one with circumspection, another with impetuosity, one by violence, another by cunning, one with patience, another with the reverse; and each by these diverse ways may arrive at his aim. One sees also two cautious men, one of whom succeeds in his designs, and the other not, and in the same way two men succeed equally by different methods, one being cautious, the other impetuous, which arises only from the nature of the times, which does or does not conform to their method of procedure. From this it results, as I have said, that two men, acting differently, attain the same effect, and of two others acting in the same way, one attains his goal and not the other. On this depend also the changes in prosperity, for if it happens that time and circumstances are favourable to one who acts with caution and prudence he will be successful,

but if time and circumstances change he will be ruined, because he does not change his mode of procedure. No man is found so prudent as to be able to adapt himself to this, either because he cannot deviate from that to which his nature disposes him, or else because having always prospered by walking in one path, he cannot persuade himself that it is well to leave it; and therefore the cautious man, when it is time to act suddenly, does not know how to do so and is consequently ruined; for if one could change one's nature with time and circumstances, fortune would never change.

Pope Julius II acted impetuously in everything he did and found the times and conditions so in conformity with that mode of procedure, that he always obtained a good result. Consider the first war that he made against Bologna while Messer Giovanni Bentivogli was still living. The Venetians were not pleased with it, neither was the King of Spain, France was conferring with him over the enterprise, notwithstanding which, owing to his fierce and impetuous disposition, he engaged personally in the expedition. This move caused both Spain and the Venetians to halt and hesitate, the latter through fear, the former through the desire to recover the entire kingdom of Naples. On the other hand, he engaged with him the King of France, because seeing him make this move and desiring his friendship in order to put down the Venetians, that king judged that he could not refuse him his troops without manifest injury. Thus Julius by his impetuous move achieved what no other pontiff with the utmost human prudence would have succeeded in doing, because, if he had waited till all arrangements had been made and everything settled before leaving Rome, as any other pontiff would have done, it would never have succeeded. For the king of France would

have found a thousand excuses, and the others would have inspired him with a thousand fears. I will omit his other actions, which were all of this kind and which all succeeded well, and the shortness of his life did not suffer him to experience the contrary, for had times followed in which it was necessary to act with caution, his ruin would have resulted, for he would never have deviated from these methods to which his nature disposed him.

I conclude then that fortune varying and men remaining fixed in their ways, they are successful so long as these ways conform to circumstances, but when they are opposed then they are unsuccessful. I certainly think that it is better to be impetuous than cautious, for fortune is a woman, and it is necessary, if you wish to master her, to conquer her by force; and it can be seen that she lets herself be overcome by the bold rather than by those who proceed coldly. And therefore, like a woman, she is always a friend to the young, because they are less cautious, fiercer, and master her with greater audacity.

### Chapter XXVI

#### X X EXHORTATION TO LIBERATE ITALY FROM THE BARBARIANS

HAVING now considered all the things we have spoken of, and thought within myself whether at present the time was not propitious in Italy for a new prince, and if there was not a state of things which offered an opportunity to a prudent and capable man to introduce a new system that would do honour to himself and good to the mass of the people, it seems to me that so many things concur to favour a new ruler that I do not know of any time more fitting for such

*This personal hope -- sacred & private*

an enterprise. And if, as I said, it was necessary in order that the power of Moses should be displayed that the people of Israel should be slaves in Egypt, and to give scope for the greatness and courage of Cyrus that the Persians should be oppressed by the Medes, and to illustrate the pre-eminence of Theseus that the Athenians should be dispersed, so at the present time, in order that the might of an Italian genius might be recognised, it was necessary that Italy should be reduced to her present condition, and that she should be more enslaved than the Hebrews, more oppressed than the Persians, and more scattered than the Athenians; without a head, without order, beaten, despoiled, lacerated, and overrun, and that she should have suffered ruin of every kind.

And although before now a gleam of hope has appeared which gave hope that some individual might be appointed by God for her redemption, yet at the highest summit of his career he was thrown aside by fortune, so that now, almost lifeless, she awaits one who may heal her wounds and put a stop to the pillaging of Lombardy, to the rapacity and extortion in the Kingdom of Naples and in Tuscany, and cure her of those sores which have long been festering. Behold how she prays God to send some one to redeem her from this barbarous cruelty and insolence. Behold her ready and willing to follow any standard if only there be some one to raise it. There is nothing now she can hope for but that your illustrious house may place itself at the head of this redemption, being by its power and fortune so exalted, and being favoured by God and the Church, of which it is now the ruler. Nor will this be very difficult, if you call to mind the actions and lives of the men I have named. And although those men were rare and marvellous, they were none the less men, and each of them had less opportunity

than the present, for their enterprise was not juster than this, nor easier, nor was God more their friend than He is yours. Here is a just cause; *'iustum enim est bellum quibus necessarium, et pia arma ubi nulla nisi in armis spes est.'* Here is the greatest willingness, nor can there be great difficulty where there is great willingness, provided that the measures are adopted of those whom I have set before you as examples. Besides this, unexampled wonders have been seen here performed by God, the sea has been opened, a cloud has shown you the road, the rock has given forth water, manna has rained, and everything has contributed to your greatness, the remainder must be done by you. God will not do everything, in order not to deprive us of freewill and the portion of the glory that falls to our lot.

*m. b. n.  
al  
faz  
to be  
p. r. v.  
from*

It is no marvel that none of the before-mentioned Italians have done that which it is to be hoped your illustrious house may do; and if in so many revolutions in Italy and so many warlike operations, it always seems as if military capacity were extinct, this is because the ancient methods were not good, and no one has arisen who knew how to discover new ones. Nothing does so much honour to a newly-risen man than the new laws and measures which he introduces. These things, when they are well based and have greatness in them, render him revered and admired, and there is not lacking scope in Italy for the introduction of every kind of new organisation. Here there is great virtue in the members, if it were not wanting in the heads. Look how in duels and in contests of a few the Italians are superior in strength, dexterity, and intelligence. But when it comes to armies they make a poor show; which proceeds entirely from the weakness of the leaders, for those that know are not obeyed, and every one thinks that he knows, there being hitherto nobody who has raised himself so high both by valour and

fortune as to make the others yield. Hence it comes about that for so long a time, in all the wars waged during the last twenty years, whenever there has been an entirely Italian army it has always been a failure, as witness first Taro, then Alexandria, Capua, Genoa, Vailà, Bologna, and Mestri.

If your illustrious house, therefore, wishes to follow those great men who redeemed their countries, it is before all things necessary, as the true foundation of every undertaking, to provide yourself with your own forces, for you cannot have more faithful, or truer and better soldiers. And although each one of them may be good, they will united become even better when they see themselves commanded by their prince, and honoured and favoured by him. It is therefore necessary to prepare such forces in order to be able with Italian prowess to defend the country from foreigners. And although both the Swiss and Spanish infantry are deemed terrible, none the less they each have their defects, so that a third method of array might not only oppose them, but be confident of overcoming them. For the Spaniards cannot sustain the attack of cavalry, and the Swiss have to fear infantry which meets them with resolution equal to their own. From which it has resulted, as will be seen by experience, that the Spaniards cannot sustain the attack of French cavalry, and the Swiss are overthrown by Spanish infantry. And although a complete example of the latter has not been seen, yet an instance was furnished in the battle of Ravenna, where the Spanish infantry attacked the German battalions, which are organised in the same way as the Swiss. The Spaniards, through their bodily agility and aided by their bucklers, had entered between and under their pikes and were in a position to attack them safely without the Germans being able to defend themselves; and if the cavalry had not charged them they would have utterly

not by the creation of arms but the  
change (variazione) of (order) organization

destroyed them.) Knowing therefore the defects of both these kinds of infantry, a third kind can be created which can resist cavalry and need not fear infantry, and this will be done by the choice of arms and a new organisation. And these are the things which, when newly introduced, give reputation and grandeur to a new prince.

*and see -  
and at*  
This opportunity must not, therefore, be allowed to pass, so that Italy may at length find her liberator. I cannot express the love with which he would be received in all those provinces which have suffered under these foreign invasions, with what thirst for vengeance, with what steadfast faith, with what love, with what grateful tears. What doors would be closed against him? What people would refuse him obedience? What envy could oppose him? What Italian would withhold allegiance? This barbarous domination stinks in the nostrils of every one. May your illustrious house therefore assume this task with that courage and those hopes which are inspired by a just cause, so that under its banner our fatherland may be raised up, and under its auspices be verified that saying of Petrarch:

*Valour against fell wrath*

Will take up arms; and be the combat quickly sped!

For, sure, the ancient worth, *valour*

That in Italians stirs the heart, is not yet dead.

to sustain on your alliance and I know well the services  
which you may do to us if you will make your  
own strength and the strength of our friends  
in Italy and France equal.

## NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

TO

ZANOBIO BUONDELMONTE AND COSIMO  
RUCELLAI,

### GREETING

WITH this I send you a gift which, if it bears no proportion  
to the extent of the obligations which I owe you, is nevertheless  
the best that I am able to offer to you; for I have endeav-  
ored to embody in it all that long experience and assiduous  
research have taught me of the affairs of the world. And as  
neither yourselves nor any one else can ask more than that  
of me, you cannot complain that I have not given you more;  
though you may well complain of my lack of talent when  
my arguments are poor, and of the fallacies of my judgment  
on account of the errors into which I have doubtless fallen  
many times. This being so, however, I know not which of  
us has the greater right to complain,—I, that you should  
have forced me to write what I should never have attempted  
of my own accord, or you, that I should have written with-  
out giving you cause to be satisfied.

Accept it, then, as one accepts whatever comes from  
friends, looking rather to the intention of him who gives,  
than to the thing offered. And believe me, that I feel a satis-  
faction in this, that, even if I have often erred in the

Discourses written for those who do not have  
paper!

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NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

course of this work, I have assuredly made no mistake in having chosen you above all other friends to whom to dedicate these discourses. In doing this, I give some proof of gratitude, although I may seem to have departed from the ordinary usage of writers, who generally dedicate their works to some prince; and, blinded by ambition or avarice, praise him for all the virtuous qualities he has not, instead of censuring him for his real vices, whilst I, to avoid this fault, do not address myself to such as are princes, but to those who by their infinite good qualities are worthy to be such; not to those who could load me with honors, rank, and wealth, but rather to those who have the desire to do so, but have not the power. For to judge rightly, men should esteem rather those who are, and not those who can be generous; and those who would know how to govern states, rather than those who have the right to govern, but lack the knowledge.

For this reason have historians praised Hiero of Syracuse, a mere private citizen, more than Perseus of Macedon, monarch though he was; for Hiero only lacked a principality to be a prince, whilst the other had nothing of the king except the diadem. Be it good or bad, however, you wanted this work, and such as it is I send it to you; and should you continue in the belief that my opinions are acceptable to you, I shall not fail to continue to examine this history, as I promised you in the beginning of it. Farewell!

From ~~that~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~envy~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~began~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~praise~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~now~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~bring~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~own~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~you~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~desire~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~such~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~you~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~giving~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~no~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~more~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~envy~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~than~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~that~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~good~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~or~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~bad~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~you~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~want~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~it~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~have~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~such~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~you~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~desire~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~as~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~I~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~do~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~have~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~but~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~those~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~who~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~have~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~desire~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~do~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~so~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~but~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~have~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~power~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~For~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~judge~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~rightly~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~men~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~should~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~esteem~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~rather~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~those~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~who~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~are~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~not~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~those~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~who~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~can~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~be~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~generous~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~and~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~those~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~who~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~would~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~know~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~how~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~govern~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~states~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~rather~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~than~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~those~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~who~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~have~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~right~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~govern~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~but~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~lack~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~knowledge~~ <sup>70</sup> ~~70~~

Philip II, last King of Macedon,  
defeated by Pompey in 168 BC  
17th century

Newness; The new road is: ~~the old~~  
~~to the same old situation~~

## DISCOURSES

ON THE

### FIRST TEN BOOKS OF TITUS LIVIUS.

#### FIRST BOOK

#### INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH the envious nature of men, so prompt to blame and so slow to praise, makes the discovery and introduction of any new principles and systems as dangerous almost as the exploration of unknown seas and continents, yet, animated by that desire which impels me to do what may prove for the common benefit of all, I have resolved to open a new route, which has not yet been followed by any one, and may prove difficult and troublesome, but may also bring me some reward in the approbation of those who will kindly appreciate my efforts.

And if my poor talents, my little experience of the present and insufficient study of the past, should make the result of my labors defective and of little utility, I shall at least have shown the way to others, who will carry out my views with greater ability, eloquence, and judgment, so that if I do not merit praise, I ought at least not to incur censure.

When we consider the general respect for antiquity, and how often—to say nothing of other examples—a great price

<sup>103</sup>  
The first shows the way to others!

is paid for some fragments of an antique statue, which we are anxious to possess to ornament our houses with, or to give to artists who strive to imitate them in their own works; and when we see, on the other hand, the wonderful examples which the history of ancient kingdoms and republics presents to us, the prodigies of virtue and of wisdom displayed by the kings, captains, citizens, and legislators who have sacrificed themselves for their country,—when we see these, I say, more admired than imitated, or so much neglected that not the least trace of this ancient virtue remains, we cannot but be at the same time as much surprised as afflicted. The more so as in the differences which arise between citizens, or in the maladies to which they are subjected, we see these same people have recourse to the judgments and the remedies prescribed by the ancients. The civil laws are in fact nothing but decisions given by their jurisconsults, and which, reduced to a system, direct our modern jurists in their decisions. And what is the science of medicine, but the experience of ancient physicians, which their successors have taken for their guide? And yet to found a republic, maintain states, to govern a kingdom, organize an army, conduct a war, dispense justice, and extend empires, you will find neither prince, nor republic, nor captain, nor citizen, who has recourse to the examples of antiquity! This neglect, I am persuaded, is due less to the weakness to which the vices of our education have reduced the world, than to the evils caused by the proud indolence which prevails in most of the Christian states, and to the lack of real knowledge of history, the true sense of which is not known, or the spirit of which they do not comprehend. Thus the majority of those who read it take pleasure only in the variety of the events which history relates, without ever thinking of imitating the noble actions, deeming

17, 39 = 216

that not only difficult, but impossible; as though heaven, the sun, the elements, and men had changed the order of their motions and power, and were different from what they were in ancient times.

Wishing, therefore, so far as in me lies, to draw mankind from this error, I have thought it proper to write upon those books of Titus Livius that have come to us entire despite the malice of time; touching upon all those matters which, after a comparison between the ancient and modern events, may seem to me necessary to facilitate their proper understanding. In this way those who read my remarks may derive those advantages which should be the aim of all study of history; and although the undertaking is difficult, yet, aided by those who have encouraged me in this attempt, I hope to carry it sufficiently far, so that but little may remain for others to carry it to its destined end.

### Chapter I

#### OF THE BEGINNING OF CITIES IN GENERAL, AND ESPECIALLY THAT OF THE CITY OF ROME

THOSE who read what the beginning of Rome was, and what her lawgivers and her organization, will not be astonished that so much virtue should have maintained itself during so many centuries; and that so great an empire should have sprung from it afterwards. To speak first of her origin, we will premise that all cities are founded either by natives of the country or by strangers. The little security which the natives found in living dispersed; the impossibility for each to resist isolated, either because of the situation or because

of their small number, the attacks of any enemy that might present himself; the difficulty of uniting in time for defence at his approach, and the necessity of abandoning the greater number of their retreats, which quickly became a prize to the assailant,—such were the motives that caused the first inhabitants of a country to build cities for the purpose of escaping these dangers. They resolved, of their own accord, or by the advice of some one who had most authority amongst them, to live together in some place of their selection that might offer them greater conveniences and greater facility of defence. Thus, amongst many others were Athens and Venice; the first was built under the authority of Theseus, who had gathered the dispersed inhabitants; and the second owed its origin to the fact that several tribes had taken refuge on the little islands situated at the head of the Adriatic Sea, to escape from war, and from the Barbarians who after the fall of the Roman Empire had overrun Italy. These refugees of themselves, and without any prince to govern them, began to live under such laws as seemed to them best suited to maintain their new state. In this they succeeded, happily favored by the long peace, for which they were indebted to their situation upon a sea without issue, where the people that ravaged Italy could not harass them, being without any ships. Thus from that small beginning they attained that degree of power in which we see them now.

The second case is when a city is built by strangers; these may be either freemen, or subjects of a republic or of a prince, who, to relieve their states from an excessive population, or to defend a newly acquired territory which they wish to preserve without expense, send colonies there. The Romans founded many cities in this way within their empire. Sometimes cities are built by a prince, not for the pur-

pose of living there, but merely as monuments to his glory; such was Alexandria, built by Alexander the Great. But as all these cities are at their very origin deprived of liberty, they rarely succeed in making great progress, or in being counted amongst the great powers. Such was the origin of Florence; for it was built either by the soldiers of Sylla, or perhaps by the inhabitants of Mount Fiesole, who, trusting to the long peace that prevailed in the reign of Octavian, were attracted to the plains along the Arno. Florence, thus built under the Roman Empire, could in the beginning have no growth except what depended on the will of its master.

The founders of cities are independent when they are people who, under the leadership of some prince, or by themselves, have been obliged to fly from pestilence, war, or famine, that was desolating their native country, and are seeking a new home. These either inhabit the cities of the country of which they take possession, as Moses did; or they build new ones, as was done by Æneas. In such case we are able to appreciate the talents of the founder and the success of his work, which is more or less remarkable according as he, in founding the city, displays more or less wisdom and skill. Both the one and the other are recognized by the selection of the place where he has located the city, and by the nature of the laws which he establishes in it. And as men work either from necessity or from choice, and as it has been observed that virtue has more sway where labor is the result of necessity rather than of choice, it is a matter of consideration whether it might not be better to select for the establishment of a city a sterile region, where the people, compelled by necessity to be industrious, and therefore less given to idleness, would be more united, and less exposed by the poverty of the country to occasions for discord; as

Freedom of the man - independent  
as a. - - - - individual

feminacy which is the natural fruit of the softness of their climate.

I say, then, that for the establishment of a city it is wisest to select the most fertile spot, especially as the laws can prevent the ill effects that would otherwise result from that very fertility.

When Alexander the Great wished to build a city that should serve as a monument to his glory, his architect, Dino-crates, pointed out to him how he could build a city on Mount Athos, which place he said, besides being very strong, could be so arranged as to give the city the appearance of the human form, which would make it a wonder worthy of the greatness of its founder. Alexander having asked him what the inhabitants were to live upon, he replied, "That I have not thought of"; at which Alexander smiled, and, leaving Mount Athos as it was, he built Alexandria, where the inhabitants would be glad to remain on account of the richness of the country and the advantages which the proximity of the Nile and the sea afforded them.

If we accept the opinion that Aeneas was the founder of Rome, then we must count that city as one of those built by strangers; but if Romulus is taken as its founder, then must it be classed with those built by the natives of the country. Either way it will be seen that Rome was from the first free and independent; and we shall also see (as we shall show further on) to how many privations the laws of Romulus, of Numa, and of others subjected its inhabitants; so that neither the fertility of the soil, nor the proximity of the sea, nor their many victories, nor the greatness of the Empire, could corrupt them during several centuries, and they maintained there more virtues than have ever been seen in any other republic.

The great things which Rome achieved, and of which

*Everything depends on the beginning!*

'Titus Livius has preserved the memory, have been the work either of the government or of private individuals; and as they relate either to the affairs of the interior or of the exterior, I shall begin to discourse of those internal operations of the government which I believe to be most noteworthy, and shall point out their results. This will be the subject of the discourses that will compose this First Book, or rather First Part.

## Chapter II

### OF THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF REPUBLICS, AND OF WHAT KIND THE ROMAN REPUBLIC WAS

I WILL leave aside what might be said of cities which from their very birth have been subject to a foreign power, and will speak only of those whose origin has been independent, and which from the first governed themselves by their own laws, whether as republics or as principalities, and whose constitution and laws have differed as their origin. Some have had at the very beginning, or soon after, a legislator, who, like Lycurgus with the Lacedæmonians, gave them by a single act all the laws they needed. Others have owed theirs to chance and to events, and have received their laws at different times, as Rome did. It is a great good fortune for a republic to have a legislator sufficiently wise to give her laws so regulated that, without the necessity of correcting them, they afford security to those who live under them. Sparta observed <sup>in the beginning</sup> her laws for more than eight hundred years without altering them and without experiencing a single dangerous disturbance. Unhappy, on the contrary, is that republic which, not having at the beginning fallen

*Beginning! Plato - 2000  
Nannington:*

*orders of the City.*

into the hands of a sagacious and skilful legislator, is herself obliged to reform her laws. More unhappy still is that republic which from the first has diverged from a good constitution. And that republic is furthest from it whose vicious institutions impede her progress, and make her leave the right path that leads to a good end; for those who are in that condition can hardly ever be brought into the right road. Those republics, on the other hand, that started without having even a perfect constitution, but made a fair beginning, and are capable of improvement,—such republics, I say, may perfect themselves by the aid of events. It is very true, however, that such reforms are never effected without danger, for the majority of men never willingly adopt any new law tending to change the constitution of the state, unless the necessity of the change is clearly demonstrated; and as such a necessity cannot make itself felt without being accompanied with danger, the republic may easily be destroyed before having perfected its constitution. That of Florence is a complete proof of this: reorganized after the revolt of Arezzo, in 1502, it was overthrown after the taking of Prato, in 1512.

Having proposed to myself to treat of the kind of government established at Rome, and of the events that led to its perfection, I must at the beginning observe that some of the writers on polities distinguished three kinds of government, viz. the monarchical, the aristocratic, and the democratic; and maintain that the legislators of a people must choose from these three the one that seems to them most suitable. Other authors, wiser according to the opinion of many, count six kinds of governments, three of which are very bad, and three good in themselves, but so liable to be corrupted that they become absolutely bad. The three good ones are those which we have just named; the three bad

*republics*

*regions' powers*

ones result from the degradation of the other three, and each of them resembles its corresponding original, so that the transition from the one to the other is very easy. Thus monarchy becomes tyranny; aristocracy degenerates into oligarchy; and the popular government lapses readily into licentiousness. So that a legislator who gives to a state which he founds, either of these three forms of government, constitutes it but for a brief time; for no precautions can prevent either one of the three that are reputed good, from degenerating into its opposite kind; so great are in these the attractions and resemblances between the good and the evil.

Chance has given birth to these different kinds of governments amongst men; for at the beginning of the world the inhabitants were few in number, and lived for a time dispersed, like beasts. As the human race increased, the necessity for uniting themselves for defence made itself felt; the better to attain this object, they chose the strongest and most courageous from amongst themselves and placed him at their head, promising to obey him. Thence they began to know the good and the honest, and to distinguish them from the bad and vicious; for seeing a man injure his benefactor aroused at once two sentiments in every heart, hatred against the ingrate and love for the benefactor. They blamed the first, and on the contrary honored those the more who showed themselves grateful, for each felt that he in turn might be subject to a like wrong; and to prevent similar evils, they set to work to make laws, and to institute punishments for those who contravened them. Such was the origin of justice. This caused them, when they had afterwards to choose a prince, neither to look to the strongest nor bravest, but to the wisest and most just. But when they began to make sovereignty hereditary and non-elective, the children quickly degenerated from their fathers; and, so far from

trying to equal their virtues, they considered that a prince had nothing else to do than to excel all the rest in luxury, indulgence, and every other variety of pleasure. The prince consequently soon drew upon himself the general hatred. An object of hatred, he naturally felt fear; fear in turn dictated to him precautions and wrongs, and thus tyranny quickly developed itself. Such were the beginning and causes of disorders, conspiracies, and plots against the sovereigns, set on foot, not by the feeble and timid, but by those citizens who, surpassing the others in grandeur of soul, in wealth, and in courage, could not submit to the outrages and excesses of their princes.

Under such powerful leaders the masses armed themselves against the tyrant, and, after having rid themselves of him, submitted to these chiefs as their liberators. These, abhorring the very name of prince, constituted themselves a new government; and at first, bearing in mind the past tyranny, they governed in strict accordance with the laws which they had established themselves; preferring public interests to their own, and to administer and protect with greatest care both public and private affairs. The children succeeded their fathers, and ignorant of the changes of fortune, having never experienced its reverses, and indisposed to remain content with this civil equality, they in turn gave themselves up to cupidity, ambition, libertinage, and violence, and soon caused the aristocratic government to degenerate into an oligarchic tyranny, regardless of all civil rights. They soon, however, experienced the same fate as the first tyrant; the people, disgusted with their government, placed themselves at the command of whoever was willing to attack them, and this disposition soon produced an avenger, who was sufficiently well seconded to destroy them. The memory of the prince and the wrongs committed

whether they govern themselves or are governed.

by him being still fresh in their minds, and having overthrown the oligarchy, the people were not willing to return to the government of a prince. A popular government was therefore resolved upon, and it was so organized that the authority should not again fall into the hands of a prince or a small number of nobles. And as all governments are at first looked up to with some degree of reverence, the popular state also maintained itself for a time, but which was never of long duration, and lasted generally only about as long as the generation that had established it; for it soon ran into that kind of license which inflicts injury upon public as well as private interests. Each individual only consulted his own passions, and a thousand acts of injustice were daily committed, so that, constrained by necessity, or directed by the counsels of some good man, or for the purpose of escaping from this anarchy, they returned anew to the government of a prince, and from this they generally lapsed again into anarchy, step by step, in the same manner and from the same causes as we have indicated.

B  
Such is the circle which all republics are destined to run through. Seldom, however, do they come back to the original form of government, which results from the fact that their duration is not sufficiently long to be able to undergo these repeated changes and preserve their existence. But it may well happen that a republic lacking strength and good counsel in its difficulties becomes subject after a while to some neighboring state, that is better organized than itself; and if such is not the case, then they will be apt to revolve indefinitely in the circle of revolutions. I say, then, that all kinds of government are defective; those three which we have qualified as good because they are too short-lived, and the three bad ones because of their inherent viciousness. Thus sagacious legislators, knowing the vices of each of

3 elements: pris - or - nobility - people  
mixed government -

these systems of government by themselves, have chosen one that should partake of all of them, judging that to be the most stable and solid. In fact, when there is combined under the same constitution a prince, a nobility, and the power of the people, then these three powers will watch and keep each other reciprocally in check.

Amongst those justly celebrated for having established such a constitution, Lycurgus beyond doubt merits the highest praise. He organized the government of Sparta in such manner that, in giving to the king, the nobles, and the people each their portion of authority and duties, he created a government which maintained itself for over eight hundred years in the most perfect tranquillity, and reflected infinite glory upon this legislator. On the other hand, the constitution given by Solon to the Athenians, by which he established only a popular government, was of such short duration that before his death he saw the tyranny of Pisistratus arise. And although forty years afterwards the heirs of the tyrant were expelled, so that Athens recovered her liberties and restored the popular government according to the laws of Solon, yet it did not last over a hundred years; although a number of laws that had been overlooked by Solon were adopted, to maintain the government against the insolence of the nobles and the license of the populace. The fault he had committed in not tempering the power of the people and that of the prince and his nobles, made the duration of the government of Athens very short, as compared with that of Sparta.

But let us come to Rome. Although she had no legislator like Lycurgus, who constituted her government, at her very origin, in a manner to secure her liberty for a length of time, yet the disunion which existed between the Senate and the people produced such extraordinary events, that

- (a) Never mention the age in which  
(b) insatiable of change (c) impermanent

chance did for her what the laws had failed to do. Thus, if Rome did not attain the first degree of happiness, she at least had the second. Her first institutions were doubtless defective, but they were not in conflict with the principles that might bring her to perfection. For Romulus and all the other kings gave her many and good laws, well suited even to a free people; but as the object of these princes was to found a monarchy, and not a republic, Rome, upon becoming free, found herself lacking all those institutions that are most essential to liberty, and which her kings had not established. And although these kings lost their empire, for the reasons and in the manner which we have explained, yet those who expelled them appointed immediately two consuls in place of the king; and thus it was found that they had banished the title of king from Rome, but not the regal power. The government, composed of Consuls and a Senate, had but two of the three elements of which we have spoken, the monarchical and the aristocratic; the popular power was wanting. In the course of time, however, the insolence of the nobles, produced by the causes which we shall see further on, induced the people to rise against the others. The nobility, to save a portion of their power, were forced to yield a share of it to the people; but the Senate and the Consuls retained sufficient to maintain their rank in the state. It was then that the Tribunes of the people were created, which strengthened and confirmed the republic, being now composed of the three elements of which we have spoken above. Fortune favored her, so that, although the authority passed successively from the kings and nobles to the people, by the same degrees and for the same reasons that we have spoken of, yet the royal authority was never entirely abolished to bestow it upon the nobles; and these were never entirely deprived of their authority to give it to

*Authority  
gradually  
lost to  
the public.*

the people; but a combination was formed of the three powers, which rendered the constitution perfect, and this perfection was attained by the disunion of the Senate and the people, as we shall more fully show in the following two chapters.

### Chapter III

#### OF THE EVENTS THAT CAUSED THE CREATION OF TRIBUNES IN ROME; WHICH MADE THE REPUBLIC MORE PERFECT

All those who have written upon civil institutions demonstrate (and history is full of examples to support them) that whoever desires to found a state and give it laws, must start with assuming that all men are bad and ever ready to display their vicious nature, whenever they may find occasion for it. If their evil disposition remains concealed for a time, it must be attributed to some unknown reason; and we must assume that it lacked occasion to show itself; but time, which has been said to be the father of all truth, does not fail to bring it to light. After the expulsion of the Tarquins the greatest harmony seemed to prevail between the Senate and the people. The nobles seemed to have laid aside all their haughtiness and assumed popular manners, which made them supportable even to the lowest of the citizens. The nobility played this role so long as the Tarquins lived, without their motive being divined; for they feared the Tarquins, and also lest the ill-treated people might side with them. Their party therefore assumed all possible gentleness in their manners towards the people. But so soon as the death of the Tarquins had relieved them of their apprehensions, they began to vent upon the people all the venom

they had so long retained within their breasts, and lost no opportunity to outrage them in every possible way; which is one of the proofs of the argument we have advanced, that men act right only upon compulsion; but from the moment that they have the option and liberty to commit wrong with impunity, then they never fail to carry confusion and disorder everywhere. It is this that has caused it to be said that poverty and hunger make men industrious, and that the law makes men good; and if fortunate circumstances cause good to be done without constraint, the law may be dispensed with. But when such happy influence is lacking, then the law immediately becomes necessary. Thus the nobles, after the death of the Tarquins, being no longer under the influence that had restrained them, determined to establish a new order of things, which had the same effect as the misrule of the Tarquins during their existence; and therefore, after many troubles, tumults, and dangers occasioned by the excesses which both the nobles and the people committed, they came, for the security of the people, to the creation of the Tribunes, who were endowed with so many prerogatives, and surrounded with so much respect, that they formed a powerful barrier between the Senate and the people, which curbed the insolence of the former.

#### Chapter IV

##### THE DISUNION OF THE SENATE AND THE PEOPLE RENDERS THE REPUBLIC OF ROME POWERFUL AND FREE

I SHALL not pass over in silence the disturbances that occurred in Rome from the time of the death of the Tarquins to that of the creation of the Tribunes; and shall afterwards

refute the opinion of those who claim that the Roman republic has always been a theatre of turbulence and disorder, and that if its extreme good fortune and the military discipline had not supplied the defects of her constitution, she would have deserved the lowest rank amongst the republics.

It cannot be denied that the Roman Empire was the result of good fortune and military discipline; but it seems to me that it ought to be perceived that where good discipline prevails there also will good order prevail, and good fortune rarely fails to follow in their train. Let us, however, go into details upon this point. I maintain that those who blame the quarrels of the Senate and the people of Rome condemn that which was the very origin of liberty, and that they were probably more impressed by the cries and noise which these disturbances occasioned in the public places, than by the good effect which they produced; and that they do not consider that in every republic there are two parties, that of the nobles and that of the people; and all the laws that are favorable to liberty result from the opposition of these parties to each other, as may easily be seen from the events that occurred in Rome. From the time of the Tarquins to that of the Gracchi, that is to say, within the space of over three hundred years, the differences between these parties caused but very few exiles, and cost still less blood; they cannot therefore be regarded as having been very injurious and fatal to a republic, which during the course of so many years saw on this account only eight or ten of its citizens sent into exile, and but a very small number put to death, and even but a few condemned to pecuniary fines. Nor can we regard a republic as disorderly where so many virtues were seen to shine. For good examples are the result of good education, and good education is due to good laws; and

good laws in their turn spring from those very agitations which have been so inconsiderately condemned by many. For whoever will carefully examine the result of these agitations will find that they have neither caused exiles nor any violence prejudicial to the general good, and will be convinced even that they have given rise to laws that were to the advantage of public liberty. And if it be said that these are strange means,—to hear constantly the cries of the people furious against the Senate, and of a Senate declaiming against the people, to see the populace rush tumultuously through the streets, close their houses, and even leave the city of Rome,—I reply, that all these things can alarm only those who read of them, and that every free state ought to afford the people the opportunity of giving vent, so to say, to their ambition; and above all those republics which on important occasions have to avail themselves of this very people. Now such were the means employed at Rome; when the people wanted to obtain a law, they resorted to some of the extremes of which we have just spoken, or they refused to enroll themselves to serve in the wars, so that the Senate was obliged to satisfy them in some measure. The demands of a free people are rarely pernicious to their liberty; they are generally inspired by oppressions, experienced or apprehended; and if their fears are ill founded, resort is had to public assemblies where the mere eloquence of a single good and respectable man will make them sensible of their error. "The people," says Cicero, "although ignorant, yet are capable of appreciating the truth, and yield to it readily when it is presented to them by a man whom they esteem worthy of their confidence."

One should show then more reserve in blaming the Roman government, and consider that so many good effects, which originated in that republic, cannot but result from

objects of the nobles and of the people, we must see that the first have a great desire to dominate, whilst the latter have only the wish not to be dominated, and consequently a greater desire to live in the enjoyment of liberty; so that when the people are intrusted with the care of any privilege or liberty, being less disposed to encroach upon it, they will of necessity take better care of it; and being unable to take it away themselves, will prevent others from doing so.

On the contrary, it is said, in favor of the course adopted by Sparta and Venice, that the preference given to the nobility, as guardians of public liberty, has two advantages: the first, to yield something to the ambition of those who, being more engaged in the management of public affairs, find, so to say, in the weapon which the office places in their hands, a means of power that satisfies them; the other, to deprive the restless spirit of the masses of an authority calculated from its very nature to produce trouble and dissensions, and apt to drive the nobles to some act of desperation, which in time may cause the greatest misfortunes. Rome is even adduced as an example of this; for having confided, it is said, this authority to the tribunes of the people, these were seen not to be content with having only one Consul taken from this class, but wanted both to be plebeians. They afterwards claimed the Censure, the Prætoriate, and all the other dignities of the republic. And not satisfied with these advantages, and urged on by the same violence, they came in the end to idolize all those whom they saw disposed to attack the nobles, which gave rise to the power of Marius and to the ruin of Rome.

And, truly, whoever weighs all these reasons accurately may well remain in doubt which of the two classes he would choose as the guardians of liberty, not knowing which would be least dangerous,—those who seek to acquire an

not, like Sparta, limit the number of her citizens; and therefore a king for life and a limited senate would have been of no benefit to her so far as union was concerned. If any one therefore wishes to establish an entirely new republic, he will have to consider whether he wishes to have her expand in power and dominion like Rome, or whether he intends to confine her within narrow limits. In the first case, it will be necessary to organize her as Rome was, and submit to dissensions and troubles as best he may; for without a great number of men, and these well armed, no republic can ever increase. In the second case, he may organize her like Sparta and Venice; but as expansion is the poison of such republics, he must by every means in his power prevent her from making conquests, for such acquisitions by a feeble republic always prove their ruin, as happened to both Sparta and Venice; the first of which, having subjected to her rule nearly all Greece, exposed its feeble foundations at the slightest accident, for when the rebellion of Thebes occurred, which was led by Pelopidas, the other cities of Greece also rose up and almost ruined Sparta.

In like manner, Venice, having obtained possession of a great part of Italy, and the most of it not by war, but by means of money and fraud, when occasion came for her to give proof of her strength, she lost everything in a single battle. I think, then, that to found a republic which should endure a long time it would be best to organize her internally like Sparta, or to locate her, like Venice, in some strong place; and to make her sufficiently powerful, so that no one could hope to overcome her readily, and yet on the other hand not so powerful as to make her formidable to her neighbors. In this wise she might long enjoy her independence. For there are but two motives for making war against a republic: one, the desire to subjugate her; the

other, the apprehension of being subjugated by her. The two means which we have indicated remove, as it were, both these pretexts for war; for if the republic is difficult to be conquered, her defences being well organized, as I suppose, then it will seldom or never happen that any one will venture upon the project of conquering her. If she remains quiet within her limits, and experience shows that she entertains no ambitious projects, the fear of her power will never prompt any one to attack her; and this would even be more certainly the case if her constitution and laws prohibited all aggrandizement. And I certainly think that if she could be kept in this equilibrium it would be the best political existence, and would insure to any state real tranquillity. But as all human things are kept in a perpetual movement, and can never remain stable, ~~states naturally either rise or decline, and necessity compels them to many acts to which reason will not influence them~~; so that, having organized a republic competent to maintain herself without expanding, still, if forced by necessity to extend her territory, in such case we shall see her foundations give way and herself quickly brought to ruin. And thus, on the other hand, if Heaven favors her so as never to be involved in war, the continued tranquillity would enervate her, or provoke internal dissensions, which together, or either of them separately, will be apt to prove her ruin. Seeing then the impossibility of establishing in this respect a perfect equilibrium, and that a precise middle course cannot be maintained, it is proper in the organization of a republic to select the most honorable course, and to constitute her so that, even if necessity should oblige her to expand, she may yet be able to preserve her acquisitions. To return now to our first argument, I believe it therefore necessary rather to take the constitution of Rome as a model than that of any other

were no means in that republic for bringing charges against the ambition of powerful citizens. For to accuse a noble before only eight judges did not suffice; the number of the judges should be many, for the few are apt to favor the few in their decisions. Thus, if there had been in Florence a tribunal before which the citizens could have preferred charges against Soderini, their fury against him might have been assuaged without calling in the Spanish troops; or if he had not been liable to the charges, no one would have dared to bring them against him, for fear of being himself accused in turn; and thus on both sides the animosity would have ceased, which occasioned so much trouble.

Whence we may conclude that, whenever the aid of foreign powers is called in by any party in a state, it is to be ascribed to defects in its constitution, and more especially to the want of means for enabling the people to exhaust the malign humors that spring up among men, without having recourse to extraordinary measures; all of which can easily be provided against by instituting accusations before numerous judges, and giving these sufficient influence and importance. These things were so well organized in Rome that, with the many dissensions between the Senate and the people, neither the one nor the other, nor any private citizen, ever attempted to avail of foreign force; for having the remedy at home, there was no occasion to look for it elsewhere. And although the above examples are abundantly sufficient to prove this, yet I will adduce another, mentioned by Titus Livius in his history. At Chiusi (Clusium), in those days one of the most famous cities of Tuscany, a certain Lucumones had violated the sister of Arnutes, and, unable to revenge himself because of the power of the offender, Arnutes went to call in the aid of the Gauls, who at that time ruled over the country now called Lombardy, and

*honestas  
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### Chapter IX

TO FOUND A NEW REPUBLIC, OR TO REFORM ENTIRELY THE OLD INSTITUTIONS OF AN EXISTING ONE, MUST BE THE WORK OF ONE MAN ONLY

It may perhaps appear to some that I have gone too far into the details of Roman history before having made any mention of the founders of that republic, or of her institutions, her religion, and her military establishment. Not wishing, therefore, to keep any longer in suspense the desires of those who wish to understand these matters, I say that many will perhaps consider it an evil example that the founder of a civil society, as Romulus was, should first have killed his brother, and then have consented to the death of Titus Tatius, who had been elected to share the royal authority with him; from which it might be concluded that the citizens, according to the example of their prince, might, from ambition and the desire to rule, destroy those who attempt to oppose their authority. This opinion would be correct, if we do not take into consideration the object which Romulus had in view in committing that homicide. But we must assume, as a general rule, that it never or rarely happens that a republic or monarchy is well constituted, or its old institutions entirely reformed, unless it is done by only one individual; it is even necessary that he whose mind has conceived such a constitution should be alone in carrying it into effect. A sagacious legislator of a republic, therefore, whose object is to promote the public good, and not his private interests, and who prefers his country to his own successors, should concentrate all authority in himself; and a wise mind

if. 46<sup>2</sup>, 71

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will never censure any one for having employed any extraordinary means for the purpose of establishing a kingdom or constituting a republic. It is well that, when the act accuses him, the result should excuse him; and when the result is good, as in the case of Romulus, it will always absolve him from blame. For he is to be reprehended who commits violence for the purpose of destroying, and not he who employs it for beneficent purposes. The lawgiver should, however, be sufficiently wise and virtuous not to leave this authority which he has assumed either to his heirs or to any one else; for mankind, being more prone to evil than to good, his successor might employ for evil purposes the power which he had used only for good ends. Besides, although one man alone should organize a government, yet it will not endure long if the administration of it remains on the shoulders of a single individual; it is well, then, to confide this to the charge of many, for thus it will be sustained by the many. Therefore, as the organization of anything cannot be made by many, because the divergence of their opinions hinders them from agreeing as to what is best, yet, when once they do understand it, they will not readily agree to abandon it. That Romulus deserves to be excused for the death of his brother and that of his associate, and that what he had done was for the general good, and not for the gratification of his own ambition, is proved by the fact that he immediately instituted a Senate with which to consult, and according to the opinions of which he might form his resolutions. And on carefully considering the authority which Romulus reserved for himself, we see that all he kept was the command of the army in case of war, and the power of convoking the Senate. This was seen when Rome became free, after the expulsion of the Tarquins, when there was no other innovation made upon the existing order of things

the weakness of the other Greek republics. For being soon after attacked by the Macedonians, and Sparta by herself being inferior in strength, and there being no one whom he could call to his aid, he was defeated; and thus his project, so just and laudable, was never put into execution. Considering, then, all these things, I conclude that, to found a republic, one must be alone; and that Romulus deserves to be absolved from, and not blamed for, the death of Remus and of Tatusius.

### Chapter X

#### IN PROPORTION AS THE FOUNDERS OF A REPUBLIC OR MONARCHY ARE ENTITLED TO PRAISE, SO DO THE FOUNDERS OF A TYRANNY DESERVE EXECRATION

Of all men who have been eulogized, those deserve it most who have been the authors and founders of religions; next come such as have established republics or kingdoms. After these the most celebrated are those who have commanded armies, and have extended the possessions of their kingdom or country. To these may be added literary men, but, as these are of different kinds, they are celebrated according to their respective degrees of excellence. All others—and their number is infinite—receive such share of praise as pertains to the exercise of their arts and professions. On the contrary, those are doomed to infamy and universal execration who have destroyed religions, who have overturned republics and kingdoms, who are enemies of virtue, of letters, and of every art that is useful and honorable to mankind. Such are the impious and violent, the ignorant, the idle, the vile and degraded. And there are none so foolish or so wise, so

wicked or so good, that, in choosing between these two qualities, they do not praise what is praiseworthy and blame that which deserves blame. And yet nearly all men, deceived by a false good and a false glory, allow themselves voluntarily or ignorantly to be drawn towards those who deserve more blame than praise. Such as by the establishment of a republic or kingdom could earn eternal glory for themselves incline to tyranny, without perceiving how much glory, how much honor, security, satisfaction, and tranquillity of mind, they forfeit; and what infamy, disgrace, blame, danger, and disquietude they incur. And it is impossible that those who have lived as private citizens in a republic, or those who by fortune or courage have risen to be princes of the same, if they were to read history and take the records of antiquity for example, should not prefer Scipio to Cæsar; and that those who were (originally) princes should not rather choose to be like Agesilaus, Timoleon, and Dion, than Nabis, Phalaris, and Dionysius; for they would then see how thoroughly the latter were despised, and how highly the former were appreciated. They would furthermore see that Timoleon and the others had no less authority in their country than Dionysius and Phalaris, but that they enjoyed far more security, and for a much greater length of time. Nor let any one be deceived by the glory of that Cæsar who has been so much celebrated by writers; for those who praised him were corrupted by his fortune, and frightened by the long duration of the empire that was maintained under his name, and which did not permit writers to speak of him with freedom. And if any one wishes to know what would have been said of him if writers had been free to speak their minds, let them read what Catiline said of him. Cæsar is as much more to be condemned, as he who commits an evil deed is more guilty than he who merely has

the evil intention. He will also see how highly Brutus was eulogized; for, not being allowed to blame Cæsar on account of his power, they extolled his enemy. Let him also note how much more praise those Emperors merited who, after Rome became an empire, conformed to the laws like good princes, than those who took the opposite course; and he will see that Titus, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus, and Marcus Aurelius did not require the Praetorians nor the multitudinous legions to defend them, because they were protected by their own good conduct, the good will of the people, and by the love of the Senate. He will furthermore see that neither the Eastern nor the Western armies sufficed to save Caligula, Nero, Vitellius, and so many other wicked Emperors, from the enemies which their bad conduct and evil lives had raised up against them.

And if the history of these men were carefully studied, it would prove an ample guide to any prince, and serve to show him the way to glory or to infamy, to security or to perpetual apprehension. For of the twenty-six Emperors that reigned from the time of Cæsar to that of Maximinus, sixteen were assassinated, and ten only died a natural death; and if, amongst those who were killed, there were one or two good ones, like Galba and Pertinax, their death was the consequence of the corruption which their predecessors had engendered amongst the soldiers. And if amongst those who died a natural death there were some wicked ones, like Severus, it was due to their extraordinary good fortune and courage, which two qualities rarely fall to the lot of such men. He will furthermore learn from the lessons of that history how an empire should be organized properly; for all the Emperors that succeeded to the throne by inheritance, except Titus, were bad, and those who became Emperors by adoption were all good, such as the five from Nero to Mar-

cus Aurelius; and when the Empire became hereditary, it came to ruin. Let any prince now place himself in the times from Nerva to Marcus Aurelius, and let him compare them with those that preceded and followed that period, and let him choose in which of the two he would like to have been born, and in which he would like to have reigned. In the period under the good Emperors he will see the prince secure amidst his people, who are also living in security; he will see peace and justice prevail in the world, the authority of the Senate respected, the magistrates honored, the wealthy citizens enjoying their riches, nobility and virtue exalted, and everywhere will he see tranquillity and well-being. And on the other hand he will behold all animosity, license, corruption, and all noble ambition extinct. During the period of the good Emperors he will see that golden age when every one could hold and defend whatever opinion he pleased; in fine, he will see the triumph of the world, the prince surrounded with reverence and glory, and beloved by his people, who are happy in their security. If now he will but glance at the times under the other Emperors, he will behold the atrocities of war, discords and sedition, cruelty in peace as in war, many princes massacred, many civil and foreign wars, Italy afflicted and overwhelmed by fresh misfortunes, and her cities ravaged and ruined; he will see Rome in ashes, the Capitol pulled down by her own citizens, the ancient temples desolate, all religious rites and ceremonies corrupted, and the city full of adultery; he will behold the sea covered with ships full of flying exiles, and the shores stained with blood. He will see innumerable cruelties in Rome, and nobility, riches, and honor, and above all virtue, accounted capital crimes. He will see informers rewarded, servants corrupted against their masters, the freedmen arrayed against their patrons, and those who were

without enemies betrayed and oppressed by their friends. And then will he recognize what infinite obligations Rome, Italy, and the whole world owed to Cæsar. And surely, if he be a man, he will be shocked at the thought of re-enacting those evil times, and be fired with an intense desire to follow the example of the good. And truly, if a prince be anxious for glory and the good opinion of the world, he should rather wish to possess a corrupt city, not to ruin it wholly like Cæsar, but to reorganize it like Romulus. For certainly the heavens cannot afford a man a greater opportunity of glory, nor could men desire a better one. And if for the proper organization of a city it should be necessary to abolish the principality, he who had failed to give her good laws for the sake of preserving his rank may be entitled to some excuse; but there would be none for him who had been able to organize the city properly and yet preserve the sovereignty. And, in fine, let him to whom Heaven has vouchsafed such an opportunity reflect that there are two ways open to him; one that will enable him to live securely and insure him glory after death, and the other that will make his life one of constant anxiety, and after death consign him to eternal infamy.

### Chapter XI

#### OF THE RELIGION OF THE ROMANS

ALTHOUGH the founder of Rome was Romulus, to whom, like a daughter, she owed her birth and her education, yet the gods did not judge the laws of this prince sufficient for so great an empire, and therefore inspired the Roman Senate to elect Numa Pompilius as his successor, so that he

might regulate all those things that had been omitted by Romulus. Numa, finding a very savage people, and wishing to reduce them to civil obedience by the arts of peace, had recourse to religion as the most necessary and assured support of any civil society; and he established it upon such foundations that for many centuries there was nowhere more fear of the gods than in that republic, which greatly facilitated all the enterprises which the Senate or its great men attempted. Whoever will examine the actions of the people of Rome as a body, or of many individual Romans, will see that these citizens feared much more to break an oath than the laws; like men who esteem the power of the gods more than that of men. This was particularly manifested in the conduct of Scipio and Manlius Torquatus; for after the defeat which Hannibal had inflicted upon the Romans at Cannæ many citizens had assembled together, and, frightened and trembling, agreed to leave Italy and fly to Sicily. When Scipio heard of this, he went to meet them, and with his drawn sword in hand he forced them to swear not to abandon their country. Lucius Manlius, father of Titus Manlius, who was afterwards called Torquatus, had been accused by Marcus Pomponius, one of the Tribunes of the people. Before the day of judgment Titus went to Marcus and threatened to kill him if he did not promise to withdraw the charges against his father; he compelled him to take an oath, and Marcus, although having sworn under the pressure of fear, withdrew the accusation against Lucius. And thus these citizens, whom neither the love of country nor the laws could have kept in Italy, were retained there by an oath that had been forced upon them by compulsion; and the Tribune Pomponius disregarded the hatred which he bore to the father, as well as the insult offered him by the son, for the sake of complying with his oath and preserv-

ing his honor; which can be ascribed to nothing else than the religious principles which Numa had instilled into the Romans. And whoever reads Roman history attentively will see in how great a degree religion served in the command of the armies, in uniting the people and keeping them well conducted, and in covering the wicked with shame. So that if the question were discussed whether Rome was more indebted to Romulus or to Numa, I believe that the highest merit would be conceded to Numa; for where religion exists it is easy to introduce armies and discipline, but where there are armies and no religion it is difficult to introduce the latter. And although we have seen that Romulus could organize the Senate and establish other civil and military institutions without the aid of divine authority, yet it was very necessary for Numa, who feigned that he held converse with a nymph, who dictated to him all that he wished to persuade the people to; and the reason for all this was that Numa mistrusted his own authority, lest it should prove insufficient to enable him to introduce new and unaccustomed ordinances in Rome. In truth, there never was any remarkable lawgiver amongst any people who did not resort to divine authority, as otherwise his laws would not have been accepted by the people; for there are many good laws, the importance of which is known to the sagacious lawgiver, but the reasons for which are not sufficiently evident to enable him to persuade others to submit to them; and therefore do wise men, for the purpose of removing this difficulty, resort to divine authority. Thus did Lycurgus and Solon, and many others who aimed at the same thing.

The Roman people, then, admiring the wisdom and goodness of Numa, yielded in all things to his advice. It is true that those were very religious times, and the people with whom Numa had to deal were very untutored and super-

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stitious, which made it easy for him to carry out his designs, being able to impress upon them any new form. And doubtless, if any one wanted to establish a republic at the present time, he would find it much easier with the simple mountaineers, who are almost without any civilization, than with such as are accustomed to live in cities, where civilization is already corrupt; as a sculptor finds it easier to make a fine statue out of a crude block of marble than out of a statue badly begun by another. Considering then, all these things, I conclude that the religion introduced by Numa into Rome was one of the chief causes of the prosperity of that city; for this religion gave rise to good laws, and good laws bring good fortune, and from good fortune results happy success in all enterprises. And as the observance of divine institutions is the cause of the greatness of republics, so the disregard of them produces their ruin; for where the fear of God is wanting, there the country will come to ruin, unless it be sustained by the fear of the prince, which may temporarily supply the want of religion. But as the lives of princes are short, the kingdom will of necessity perish as the prince fails in virtue. Whence it comes that kingdoms which depend entirely upon the virtue of one man endure but for a brief time, for his virtue passes away with his life, and it rarely happens that it is renewed in his successor, as Dante so wisely says:—

"T is seldom human wisdom descends from sire to son;  
Such is the will of Him who gave it,  
That at his hands alone we may implore the boon."

The welfare, then, of a republic or a kingdom does not consist in having a prince who governs it wisely during his lifetime, but in having one who will give it such laws that it will maintain itself even after his death. And although un-

tutored and ignorant men are more easily persuaded to adopt new laws or new opinions, yet that does not make it impossible to persuade civilized men who claim to be enlightened. The people of Florence are far from considering themselves ignorant and benighted, and yet Brother Girolamo Savonarola succeeded in persuading them that he held converse with God. I will not pretend to judge whether it was true or not, for we must speak with all respect of so great a man; but I may well say that an immense number believed it, without having seen any extraordinary manifestations that should have made them believe it; but it was the purity of his life, the doctrines he preached, and the subjects he selected for his discourses, that sufficed to make the people have faith in him. Let no one, then, fear not to be able to accomplish what others have done, for all men (as we have said in our Preface) are born and live and die in the same way, and therefore resemble each other.

## Chapter XII

THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING RELIGION A PROMINENT INFLUENCE  
IN A STATE, AND HOW ITALY WAS RUINED BECAUSE SHE FAILED  
IN THIS RESPECT THROUGH THE CONDUCT OF THE CHURCH OF  
ROME

PRINCES and republics who wish to maintain themselves free from corruption must above all things preserve the purity of all religious observances, and treat them with proper reverence; for there is no greater indication of the ruin of a country than to see religion contemned. And this is easily understood, when we know upon what the religion of a country is founded; for the essence of every religion is based upon

some one main principle. The religion of the Gentiles had for its foundation the responses of the oracles, and the tenets of the augurs and aruspices; upon these alone depended all their ceremonies, rites, and sacrifices. For they readily believed that the Deity which could predict their future good or ill was also able to bestow it upon them. Thence arose their temples, their sacrifices, their supplications, and all the other ceremonies; for the oracle of Delphos, the temple of Jupiter Ammon, and other celebrated oracles, kept the world in admiration and devoutness. But when these afterwards began to speak only in accordance with the wishes of the princes, and their falsity was discovered by the people, then men became incredulous, and disposed to disturb all good institutions. It is therefore the duty of princes and heads of republics to uphold the foundations of the religion of their countries, for then it is easy to keep their people religious, and consequently well conducted and united. And therefore everything that tends to favor religion (even though it were believed to be false) should be received and availed of to strengthen it; and this should be done the more, the wiser the rulers are, and the better they understand the natural course of things. Such was, in fact, the practice observed by sagacious men; which has given rise to the belief in the miracles that are celebrated in religions, however false they may be. For the sagacious rulers have given these miracles increased importance, no matter whence or how they originated; and their authority afterwards gave them credence with the people. Rome had many such miracles; and one of the most remarkable was that which occurred when the Roman soldiers sacked the city of Veii; some of them entered the temple of Juno, and, placing themselves in front of her statue, said to her, "Will you come to Rome?" Some imagined that they observed the

*Reformation foreseen - but -  
Primacy of fabrication over religion*

statue make a sign of assent, and others pretended to have heard her reply, "Yes." Now these men, being very religious, as reported by Titus Livius, and having entered the temple quietly, they were filled with devotion and reverence, and might really have believed that they had heard a reply to their question, such as perhaps they could have presupposed. But this opinion and belief was favored and magnified by Camillus and the other Roman chiefs.

And certainly, if the Christian religion had from the beginning been maintained according to the principles of its founder, the Christian states and republics would have been much more united and happy than what they are. Nor can there be a greater proof of its decadence than to witness the fact that the nearer people are to the Church of Rome, which is the head of our religion, the less religious are they. And whoever examines the principles upon which that religion is founded, and sees how widely different from those principles its present practice and application are, will judge that her ruin or chastisement is near at hand. But as there are some of the opinion that the well-being of Italian affairs depends upon the Church of Rome, I will present such arguments against that opinion as occur to me; two of which are most important, and cannot according to my judgment be controverted. The first is, that the evil example of the court of Rome has destroyed all piety and religion in Italy, which brings in its train infinite improprieties and disorders; for as we may presuppose all good where religion prevails, so where it is wanting we have the right to suppose the very opposite. We Italians then owe to the Church of Rome and to her priests our having become irreligious and bad; but we owe her a still greater debt, and one that will be the cause of our ruin, namely, that the Church has kept and still keeps our country divided. And certainly a country can

never be united and happy, except when it obeys wholly one government, whether a republic or a monarchy, as is the case in France and in Spain; and the sole cause why Italy is not in the same condition, and is not governed by either one republic or one sovereign, is the Church; for having acquired and holding a temporal dominion, yet she has never had sufficient power or courage to enable her to seize the rest of the country and make herself sole sovereign of all Italy. And on the other hand she has not been so feeble that the fear of losing her temporal power prevented her from calling in the aid of a foreign power to defend her against such others as had become too powerful in Italy; as was seen in former days by many sad experiences, when through the intervention of Charlemagne she drove out the Lombards, who were masters of nearly all Italy; and when in our times she crushed the power of the Venetians by the aid of France, and afterwards with the assistance of the Swiss drove out in turn the French. The Church, then, not having been powerful enough to be able to master all Italy, nor having permitted any other power to do so, has been the cause why Italy has never been able to unite under one head, but has always remained under a number of princes and lords, which occasioned her so many dissensions and so much weakness that she became a prey not only to the powerful barbarians, but of whoever chose to assail her. This we other Italians owe to the Church of Rome, and to none other. And any one, to be promptly convinced by experiment of the truth of all this, should have the power to transport the court of Rome to reside, with all the power it has in Italy, in the midst of the Swiss, who of all peoples nowadays live most according to their ancient customs so far as religion and their military system are concerned; and he would see in a very little while that the evil habits of

## Chapter XIV

THE ROMANS INTERPRETED THE AUSPICES ACCORDING TO NECESSITY, AND VERY WISELY MADE SHOW OF OBSERVING RELIGION, EVEN WHEN THEY WERE OBLIGED IN REALITY TO DISREGARD IT; AND IF ANY ONE RECKLESSLY DISPARAGED IT, HE WAS PUNISHED

X || | THE system of auguries was not only, as we have said above, the principal basis of the ancient religion of the Gentiles, but was also the cause of the prosperity of the Roman republic. Whence the Romans esteemed it more than any other institution, and resorted to it in their Consular Comitii, in commencing any important enterprise, in sending armies into the field, in ordering their battles, and in every other important civil or military action. Nor would they ever have ventured upon any expedition unless the augurs had first persuaded the soldiers that the gods promised them victory. Amongst other aruspices the armies were always accompanied by a certain class of soothsayers, termed Pollari (guardians of the sacred fowls), and every time before giving battle to the enemy, they required these Pollari to ascertain the auspices; and if the fowls ate freely, then it was deemed a favorable augury, and the soldiers fought confidently, but if the fowls refused to eat, then they abstained from battle. Nevertheless, when they saw a good reason why certain things should be done, they did them anyhow, whether the auspices were favorable or not; but then they turned and interpreted the auguries so artfully, and in such manner, that seemingly no disrespect was shown to their religious belief. This was done by the Consul Papirius on

Appius Pulcher acted just the contrary way in Sicily during the first Punic war; for wishing to fight the Carthaginian army, he caused the Pollari to ascertain the auspices; and when they reported that the fowls did not eat, he said, "Then let us see whether they will drink," and had them thrown into the sea; he then went to battle, and was defeated. For which he was punished at Rome, whilst Papirius was rewarded; not so much because the one had been beaten and the other victorious, but because the one had contravened the auspices with prudence, and the other with temerity. Nor had this system of consulting the aruspices any other object than to inspire the soldiers on the eve of battle with that confidence which is the surest guaranty of victory. This system was practised not only by the Romans, but also by other peoples, of which it seems to me proper to adduce an example in the following chapter.

### Chapter XV

#### HOW THE SAMNITES RESORTED TO RELIGION AS AN EXTREME REMEDY FOR THEIR DESPERATE CONDITION

THE Samnites had been repeatedly defeated by the Romans, and had been completely routed in Tuscany, their armies destroyed, and their generals killed. Their allies, such as the Tuscans, Gauls, and Umbrians, had also been beaten, so that "they could not hold out any longer with their own forces, or with those of their allies; yet would they not desist from the war, and sooner than give up the unsuccessful defence of their liberty, they preferred risking defeat rather than not make one more attempt at victory"; and therefore resolved upon one last supreme effort. And knowing that to

*Fear makes man resolute in courage*

conquer they must inspire their soldiers with obstinate courage, for which there was no more efficient means than religion, they resolved, by the advice of Ovius Paccius, their high priest, to renew one of their ancient religious practices, which was arranged in the following manner. A solemn sacrifice was first made to their gods, and then, in the midst of the bleeding victims and smoking altars, they made all the chiefs of the army swear never to give up the fight. After this, they called in their soldiers one by one, and there, before these altars and surrounded by centurions with drawn swords in their hands, they made them swear, first, not to reveal anything they had seen or heard; and then, with horrid imprecations and incantations, they exacted an oath from them, and a pledge to the gods, promptly to go wherever commanded by their chiefs, and not to fly from the enemy, and to kill instantly whomever they saw flying; and if they failed in any particular in the compliance with this oath, it would be visited upon their families and descendants. Some of the men who were frightened and refused to swear were instantly put to death by the centurions; so that those who followed were terrified by the spectacle, and all took the oath. And by way of giving a more imposing effect to their assembled troops, they clothed one half of them in white, with crests and plumes on their casques; and thus they took position at Aquilonia. Papirius marched against them, and by way of encouraging his soldiers he said to them, "Those crests and plumes cannot inflict wounds, and neither will paint or gilding prevent Roman javelins from piercing their shields." And to diminish the impression which the oath of the enemy had produced upon his men, he said that such an oath was calculated to inspire fear, and not courage, in those who had taken it; for it caused them at the same time to fear their own citizens, their gods,

and their enemies. So that, when they came to battle, the Samnites were defeated; for the Roman valor, and the fears of the Samnites, who remembered their former defeats, overcame all the obstinacy which their religion and their oath had infused into them. Nevertheless it showed that the Samnites knew of no more powerful means of reviving hope and reanimating their former courage; and proves in the most ample manner how much confidence religious faith, judiciously availed of, will inspire. And although this example might perhaps be deemed to belong elsewhere, as the event occurred amongst a foreign people, yet, as it refers to one of the most important institutions of the republic of Rome, I have thought it proper to mention it here in support of what I have said on that subject, and so as not to be obliged to recur to it hereafter.

## Chapter XVI

A PEOPLE THAT HAS BEEN ACCUSTOMED TO LIVE UNDER A PRINCE PRESERVES ITS LIBERTIES WITH DIFFICULTY, IF BY ACCIDENT IT HAS BECOME FREE

MANY examples in ancient history prove how difficult it is for a people that has been accustomed to live under the government of a prince to preserve its liberty, if by some accident it has recovered it, as was the case with Rome after the expulsion of the Tarquins. And this difficulty is a reasonable one; for such a people may well be compared to some wild animal, which (although by nature ferocious and savage) has been as it were subdued by having been always kept imprisoned and in servitude, and being let out into the open fields, not knowing how to provide food and shelter for it-

self, becomes an easy prey to the first one who attempts to chain it up again. The same thing happens to a people that has not been accustomed to self-government; for, ignorant of all public affairs, of all means of defence or offence, neither knowing the princes nor being known by them, it soon relapses under a yoke, oftentimes much heavier than the one which it had but just shaken off. This difficulty occurs even when the body of the people is not wholly corrupt; but when corruption has taken possession of the whole people, then it cannot preserve its free condition even for the shortest possible time, as we shall see further on; and therefore our argument has reference to a people where corruption has not yet become general, and where the good still prevails over the bad. To the above comes another difficulty, which is, that the state that becomes free makes enemies for itself, and not friends. All those become its enemies who were benefited by the tyrannical abuses and fattened upon the treasures of the prince, and who, being now deprived of these advantages, cannot remain content, and are therefore driven to attempt to re-establish the tyranny, so as to recover their former authority and advantages. A state then, as I have said, that becomes free, makes no friends; for free governments bestow honors and rewards only according to certain honest and fixed rules, outside of which there are neither the one nor the other. And such as obtain these honors and rewards do not consider themselves under obligations to any one, because they believe that they were entitled to them by their merits. Besides the advantages that result to the mass of the people from a free government, such as to be able freely to enjoy one's own without apprehension, to have nothing to fear for the honor of his wife and daughters, or for himself,—all these, I say, are not appreciated by any one whilst he is in the enjoyment of

them; for no one will confess himself under obligation to any one merely because he has not been injured by him.

Thus it is that a state that has freshly achieved liberty makes enemies, and no friends. And to prevent this inconvenience, and the disorders which are apt to come with it, there is no remedy more powerful, valid, healthful, and necessary than the killing of the sons of Brutus, who, as history shows, had conspired with other Roman youths for no other reason than because under the Consuls they could not have the same extraordinary advantages they had enjoyed under the kings; so that the liberty of the people seemed to have become their bondage. Whoever undertakes to govern a people under the form of either republic or monarchy, without making sure of those who are opposed to this new order of things, establishes a government of very brief duration. It is true that I regard as unfortunate those princes who, to assure their government to which the mass of the people is hostile, are obliged to resort to extraordinary measures; for he who has but a few enemies can easily make sure of them without great scandal, but he who has the masses hostile to him can never make sure of them, and the more cruelty he employs the feebler will his authority become; so that his best remedy is to try and secure the good will of the people. Although I have departed in this discourse from my subject, in speaking sometimes of a republic and sometimes of a prince, yet I will say a few words more, so as not to be obliged to come back to this matter.

A prince, then, who wishes the good will of a people that is hostile to him, (I speak of such princes as have been tyrants in their country,) should first of all ascertain what the people really desire, and he will always find that they want two things: one, to revenge themselves on those who have been the cause of their enslavement, and the other, to

recover their liberty. The first of these desires the prince may satisfy entirely, and the second in part. As to the first, the following is an example in point. When Clearchus, tyrant of Heraclea, had been banished, a dissension arose between the people and the nobles of Heraclea. The latter, finding themselves the feebler of the two, resolved to recall Clearchus; and having conspired together, they placed him in opposition to the popular faction of the people of Heraclea, and thus deprived the people of their liberty. Clearchus, finding himself placed between the insolence of the nobles on the one hand, whom he could in no way content or control, and the rage of the popular faction on the other hand, who could not support the loss of their liberty, resolved suddenly to rid himself of the importunities of the nobles, and to secure to himself the good will and support of the people. Availing of a favorable opportunity, he had all the nobles massacred, to the extreme satisfaction of the people; and in this way he satisfied one of the wishes of the people, namely, the desire of revenge. But as to the other popular desire, that of recovering their liberty, the prince, not being able to satisfy that, should examine the causes that make them desire to be free; and he will find that a small part of them wish to be free for the purpose of commanding, whilst all the others, who constitute an immense majority, desire liberty so as to be able to live in greater security. For in all republics, however organized, there are never more than forty or fifty citizens who attain a position that entitles them to command. As this is a small number, it is easy to make sure of them, either by having them put out of the way, or by giving them such a share of the public honors and offices as, according to their condition, will in great measure content them. The others, who only care to live in security, are easily satisfied by institutions and laws that con-

firm at the same time the general security of the people and the power of the prince. When a prince does this, and the people see that by no chance he infringes the laws, they will in a very little while be content, and live in tranquillity. An example of this is the kingdom of France, where there would be no security but for the fact that the king there has bound himself by a number of laws that provide for the security of all his people. Those who organized that state wanted that the kings should dispose of the army and treasury at their own will, but that in all other matters they should conform to the laws. That sovereign, therefore, or that republic, which fails from the start to secure its authority, should do so on the first occasion, as the Romans did; and he who allows the opportunity to pass will repent too late not having done what he should have done in the beginning. The Romans, being not yet corrupted when they recovered their liberty, were able to maintain it after the death of the sons of Brutus and the expulsion of the Tarquins, by means of such laws and institutions as we have treated of above. But if the people had been corrupt, then there would have been no sufficient remedies found in Rome or elsewhere to maintain their liberty, as we shall show in the next chapter.

### Chapter XVII

#### A CORRUPT PEOPLE THAT BECOMES FREE CAN WITH GREATEST DIFFICULTY MAINTAIN ITS LIBERTY

I THINK that it was necessary for royalty to be extinguished in Rome, else she would in a very short time have become feeble and devoid of energy. For the degree of corruption to

which the kings had sunk was such that, if it had continued for two or three successive reigns, and had extended from the head to the members of the body so that these had become also corrupt, it would have been impossible ever to have reformed the state. But losing the head whilst the trunk was still sound, it was easy to restore Rome to liberty and proper institutions. And it must be assumed as a well-demonstrated truth, that a corrupt people that lives under the government of a prince can never become free, even though the prince and his whole line should be extinguished; and that it would be better that the one prince should be destroyed by another. For a people in such condition can never become settled unless a new prince be created, who by his good qualities and valor can maintain their liberty; but even then it will last only during the lifetime of the new prince. It was thus that the freedom of Syracuse was preserved at different times by the valor of Dion and Timoleon during their lives, but after their death the city relapsed under the former tyranny. But there is not a more striking example of this than Rome itself, which after the expulsion of the Tarquins was enabled quickly to resume and maintain her liberty; but after the death of Cæsar, Caligula, and Nero, and after the extinction of the entire Cæsarian line, she could not even begin to re-establish her liberty, and much less preserve it. And this great difference in the condition of things in one and the same city resulted entirely from this fact, that at the time of the Tarquins the Roman people was not yet corrupt, whilst under the Cæsars it became corrupt to the lowest degree. For to preserve her sound and ready to expel the kings in the time of the Tarquins, it sufficed merely that they should take an oath never to permit any of them ever to reign again in Rome; but in the time of the Cæsars the authority of Brutus with all the

Eastern legions was insufficient to keep her disposed to preserve that liberty which he, in imitation of the first Brutus, had restored to her. This was the result of that corruption which had been spread amongst the people by the faction of Marius, at the head of which was Cæsar, who had so blinded the people that they did not perceive the yoke they were imposing upon themselves.

And although the example of Rome is preferable to all others, yet will I cite on this subject some instances amongst peoples known in our times. And therefore I say that no change, however great or violent, could ever restore Milan and Naples to liberty, because the whole people of those states were thoroughly corrupt. This was seen after the death of Philip Visconti, when Milan attempted to recover her liberty, but knew not how, nor was she able to maintain it. It was a great good fortune for Rome, therefore, that no sooner did her kings become corrupt than they were expelled, before the corruption had time to extend to the heart of the people. This corruption caused endless disturbances in Rome; but as the intention of the people was good, these troubles, instead of harming, rather benefited the republic. And from this we may draw the conclusion that, where the mass of the people is sound, disturbances and tumults do no serious harm; but where corruption has penetrated the people, the best laws are of no avail, unless they are administered by a man of such supreme power that he may cause the laws to be observed until the mass has been restored to a healthy condition. And I know not whether such a case has ever occurred, or whether it possibly ever could occur (as I have said above). For if a state or city in decadence, in consequence of the corruption of the mass of its people, is ever raised up again, it must be through the virtue of some one man then living, and not by the people; and so

soon as such a man dies, the people will relapse into their corrupt habits; as was the case in Thebes, which by the virtue of Epaminondas could, during his lifetime, maintain the form of a republic and its dominion, but immediately upon his death relapsed into anarchy. And the reason of this is that one man cannot live long enough to have time to bring a people back to good habits which for any length of time has indulged in evil ones. Or if one of extreme long life, or two continuous virtuous successors, do not restore the state, it will quickly lapse into ruin, no matter how many dangers and how much bloodshed have been incurred in the effort to restore it. For such corruption and incapacity to maintain free institutions result from a great inequality that exists in such a state; and to reduce the inhabitants to equality requires the application of extraordinary measures, which few know how, or are willing, to employ; as will be shown more fully elsewhere.

### Chapter XVIII

HOW IN A CORRUPT STATE A FREE GOVERNMENT MAY BE MAINTAINED, ASSUMING THAT ONE EXISTS THERE ALREADY; AND HOW IT COULD BE INTRODUCED, IF NONE HAD PREVIOUSLY EXISTED

I BELIEVE it will not be amiss to consider whether in a state that has become corrupt a free government that has existed there can be maintained; or if there has been none before, whether one could be established there. Upon this subject I must say that either one of them would be exceedingly difficult. And although it is impossible to give any definite rules for such a case, (as it will be necessary to proceed according

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to the different degrees of corruption,) yet, as it is well to reason upon all subjects, I will not leave this problem without discussing it. I will suppose a state to be corrupt to the last degree, so as to present the subject in its most difficult aspect, there being no laws nor institutions that suffice to check a general corruption. For as good habits of the people require good laws to support them, so laws, to be observed, need good habits on the part of the people. Besides, the constitution and laws established in a republic at its very origin, when men were still pure, no longer suit when men have become corrupt and bad. And although the laws may be changed according to circumstances and events, yet it is seldom or never that the constitution itself is changed; and for this reason the new laws do not suffice, for they are not in harmony with the constitution, that has remained intact. To make this matter better understood, I will explain how the government of Rome was constituted and what the nature of the laws was, which together with the magistrates restrained the citizens. The constitution of the state reposed upon the authority of the people, the Senate, the Tribunes, and the Consuls, and upon the manner of choosing and creating the magistrates, and of making the laws. These institutions were rarely or never varied by events; but the laws that restrained the citizens were often altered, such as the law relating to adultery, the sumptuary laws, that in relation to ambition, and many others, which were changed according as the citizens from one day to another became more and more corrupt. Now the constitution remaining unchanged, although no longer suitable to the corrupt people, the laws that had been changed became powerless for restraint; yet they would have answered very well if the constitution had also been modified at the same time with the laws.

they may even be injurious under such circumstances, and therefore it becomes necessary to resort to extraordinary measures, such as violence and arms, and above all things to make one's self absolute master of the state, so as to be able to dispose of it at will. And as the reformation of the political condition of a state presupposes a good man, whilst the making of himself prince of a republic by violence naturally presupposes a bad one, it will consequently be exceedingly rare that a good man should be found willing to employ wicked means to become prince, even though his final object be good; or that a bad man, after having become prince, should be willing to labor for good ends, and that it should enter his mind to use for good purposes that authority which he has acquired by evil means. From these combined causes arises the difficulty or impossibility of maintaining liberty in a republic that has become corrupt, or to establish it there anew. And if it has to be introduced and maintained, then it will be necessary to reduce the state to a monarchical, rather than a republican form of government; for men whose turbulence could not be controlled by the simple force of law can be controlled in a measure only by an almost regal power. And to attempt to restore men to good conduct by any other means would be either a most cruel or an impossible undertaking. This, as I have related above, was done by Cleomenes, who for the sake of being alone in the government had all the Ephores massacred; and if Romulus for the same object killed his brother and the Sabine Titus Tatius, and if both he and Cleomenes afterwards employed their power well, we must nevertheless bear in mind that neither of them had to deal with a people so tainted with corruption as that we have considered in this chapter, and therefore they could desire the good and conform their measures accordingly to achieve it.

with Philip of Macedon and Alexander the Great, a republic should be able to do still more, having the power to elect not only two successions, but an infinite number of most competent and virtuous rulers one after the other; and this system of electing a succession of virtuous men should ever be the established practice of every republic.

### Chapter XXI

#### PRINCES AND REPUBLICS WHO FAIL TO HAVE NATIONAL ARMIES ARE MUCH TO BE BLAMED

SUCH princes and republics of modern times as have no national troops for defence or attack ought well to be ashamed of it; for they should bear in mind that, according to the example of Tullus, their not having armies of their own is not from the want of men fit for military service, but that the fault is wholly theirs, in not knowing how to make soldiers of their men. For when Tullus ascended the throne, after forty years of peace, he did not find a man that had ever borne arms in war; but as he contemplated making war, he neither attempted to avail himself of the Samnites, the Tuscans, nor of any other people accustomed to fight, but, like a most sagacious prince, he resolved to employ only his own subjects; and such was his skill and courage that he promptly created an excellent army within his own kingdom. And there is nothing more true than that, if there are no soldiers where there are men, it is not owing to any natural or local defect, but is solely the fault of the prince; in proof of which I cite the following most recent example. Everybody knows that quite lately the king of England attacked the kingdom of France, and employed for that purpose no other soldiers except his own subjects; and although

pointed combat. All three of the Curatii were killed, and only one of the Roman Horatii survived; and consequently Metius, king of the Albans, and his people, became subject to the Romans. When this surviving Horatius returned to Rome he met his sister, who was contracted in marriage to one of the slain Curatii; and when he heard her lamenting the death of her lover he killed her. He was judicially tried for this crime, and after a long discussion was acquitted, not so much on account of his own merit as on account of the prayers of his father. Now there are three things to be noted in these occurrences: the first, that one should never risk his whole fortune with only a portion of his forces; the second, that in a well-ordered state a man's merits should never extenuate his crimes; and the third, that it is never wise to enter into agreements the observance of which is doubtful. For the loss of independence is a matter of such supreme importance to a state that it is not to be supposed that any king or people will ever remain satisfied that the action of three of their citizens should subject them to servitude; as was seen in the case of Metius, who, although immediately upon the victory of the Horatii he confessed himself conquered and promised obedience to Tullus, yet on the very first expedition in which he had to take part against the Veienti he attempted by fraud to evade his obligations, like one who perceives too late the imprudence of the agreement he has made. Having said enough upon this third point, we will treat more fully of the others in the following chapters.

gone either to meet him in advance of these, or, when they did not wish to do that, have awaited his coming in easy and open places; the reason of which is the one I have above alleged. For you cannot employ a large force in guarding rugged and mountainous places; be it that you cannot obtain provisions there for any length of time, or that the defiles are so narrow as to admit of only a small number of men, so that it becomes impossible to sustain the shock of an enemy who comes in large force. Now for the enemy it is easy to come in full force, for his intention is to pass, and not to stop there; whilst on the contrary he who has to await the approach of the enemy cannot possibly keep so large a force there, for the reason that he will have to establish himself for a longer time in those confined and sterile places, not knowing when the enemy may come to make the attempt to pass. And once having lost the pass which you had hoped to hold, and upon which your people and army had confidently relied, they are generally seized with such terror that they are lost, without your having even been able to test their courage; and thus you lose your whole fortune from having risked only a portion of your forces.

It is well known what difficulties Hannibal encountered in passing the Alps that separate Lombardy from France, as well as the mountains that divide Lombardy from Tuscany; nevertheless, the Romans awaited him first on the Ticino, and afterwards in the plains of Arezzo; for they preferred rather to expose their army to being defeated in a place where they themselves had a chance of being the victors, than to move it to the mountains, to be destroyed there by the difficulties of the locality. And whoever reads history attentively will find that very few of the best commanders have attempted to hold such passes, for the very reasons which I have given, and because they cannot close

them all; the mountains being in that respect like the open country, in having not only well known roads that are generally used, but also many others, which, if unknown to strangers, are yet familiar to the people of the country, by whose aid any invader may always be guided to any desired point. Of this we have a most notable and recent example in 1515, when Francis I., king of France, wanted to enter Italy for the purpose of recovering the state of Lombardy. Those who opposed him in this attempt, relied mainly upon their confident expectations that the Swiss would arrest his march in the mountain passes. But the event proved that their confidence was vain, for the king of France, leaving aside the two or three passes that were guarded by the Swiss, came by another route hitherto quite unknown, and was in Italy and upon them before they knew anything of it; so that their terror-stricken troops retreated to Milan, and the entire Milanese population yielded themselves to the French, having been disappointed in their hopes that the French would be kept out by the difficulty of passing the Alps.

### Chapter XXIV

WELL-ORDERED REPUBLICS ESTABLISH PUNISHMENTS AND REWARDS  
FOR THEIR CITIZENS, BUT NEVER SET OFF ONE AGAINST THE  
OTHER

THE services of Horatius had been of the highest importance to Rome, for by his bravery he had conquered the Curatii; but the crime of killing his sister was atrocious, and the Romans were so outraged by this murder that he was put upon trial for his life, notwithstanding his recent great

acres of land. The story of Manlius Capitolinus is equally well known; having saved the Capitol from the Gauls who were besieging it, he received from each of those who had been shut up in it with him a small measure of flour, which (according to the current prices of things in those days in Rome) was a reward of considerable value and importance. But when Manlius afterwards, inspired by envy or his evil nature, attempted to stir up a rebellion, and sought to gain the people over to himself, he was, regardless of his former services, precipitated from that very Capitol which it had been his previous glory to have saved.

### Chapter XXV

WHOEVER WISHES TO REFORM AN EXISTING GOVERNMENT IN A FREE STATE SHOULD AT LEAST PRESERVE THE SEMBLANCE OF THE OLD FORMS

HE who desires or attempts to reform the government of a state, and wishes to have it accepted and capable of maintaining itself to the satisfaction of everybody, must at least retain the semblance of the old forms; so that it may seem to the people that there has been no change in the institutions, even though in fact they are entirely different from the old ones. For the great majority of mankind are satisfied with appearances, as though they were realities, and are often even more influenced by the things that seem than by those that are. The Romans understood this well, and for that reason, when they first recovered their liberty, and had created two Consuls in place of a king, they would not allow these more than twelve lictors, so as not to exceed the number that had served the king. Besides this,

*Only great changes everything.*

the Romans were accustomed to an annual sacrifice that could only be performed by the king in person; and as they did not wish that the people, in consequence of the absence of the king, should have occasion to regret the loss of any of their old customs, they created a special chief for that ceremony, whom they called the king of the sacrifice, and placed him under their high priest; so that the people enjoyed these annual sacrificial ceremonies, and had no pretext, from the want of them, for desiring the restoration of the kings. And this rule should be observed by all who wish to abolish an existing system of government in any state, and introduce a new and more liberal one. For as all novelties excite the minds of men, it is important to retain in such innovations as much as possible the previously existing forms. And if the number, authority, and duration of the term of service of the magistrates be changed, the titles at least ought to be preserved. This, as I have said, should be observed by whoever desires to convert an absolute government either into a republic or a monarchy; but, on the contrary, he who wishes to establish an absolute power, such as ancient writers called a tyranny, must change everything, as we shall show in the following chapter.

### Chapter XXVI

A NEW PRINCE IN A CITY OR PROVINCE CONQUERED BY HIM SHOULD ORGANIZE EVERYTHING ANEW

WHOEVER becomes prince of a city or state, especially if the foundation of his power is feeble, and does not wish to establish there either a monarchy or a republic, will find the

best means for holding that principality to organize the government entirely anew (he being himself a new prince there); that is, he should appoint new governors with new titles, new powers, and new men, and he should make the poor rich, as David did when he became king, "who heaped riches upon the needy, and dismissed the wealthy empty-handed." Besides this, he should destroy the old cities and build new ones, and transfer the inhabitants from one place to another; in short, he should leave nothing unchanged in that province, so that there should be neither rank, nor grade, nor honor, nor wealth, that should not be recognized as coming from him. He should take Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander, for his model, who by proceeding in that manner became, from a petty king, master of all Greece. And his historian tells us that he transferred the inhabitants from one province to another, as shepherds move their flocks from place to place. Doubtless these means are cruel and destructive of all civilized life, and neither Christian nor even human, and should be avoided by every one. In fact, the life of a private citizen would be preferable to that of a king at the expense of the ruin of so many human beings. Nevertheless, whoever is unwilling to adopt the first and humane course must, if he wishes to maintain his power, follow the latter evil course. But men generally decide upon a middle course, which is most hazardous; for they know neither how to be entirely good or entirely bad, as we shall illustrate by examples in the next chapter.

and murdered his nephews and cousins for the sake of obtaining possession of the state; but they concluded that mankind were neither utterly wicked nor perfectly good, and that when a crime has in itself some grandeur or magnitude they will not know how to attempt it. Thus Giovanpaolo Baglioni, who did not mind open incest and parricide, knew not how, or, more correctly speaking, dared not, to attempt an act (although having a justifiable opportunity) for which every one would have admired his courage, and which would have secured him eternal fame, as being the first to show these prelates how little esteem those merit who live and govern as they do; and as having done an act the greatness of which would have overshadowed the infamy and all the danger that could possibly result from it.

### Chapter XXVIII

#### WHY ROME WAS LESS UNGRATEFUL TO HER CITIZENS THAN ATHENS

IN reading the history of republics we find in all of them a degree of ingratitude to their citizens; this, however, seems to have been the case to a less extent in Rome than in Athens, and perhaps less even than in any other republic. In seeking for the reason of this difference, so far as Rome and Athens are concerned, I believe it was because Rome had less cause for mistrusting her citizens than Athens. In fact, from the time of the expulsion of the kings until Sylla and Marius, no Roman citizen ever attempted to deprive his country of her liberty; so that, there being no occasion to suspect her citizens, there was consequently no cause for

of ingratitude, I shall continue what I have to say in relation to it in the next chapter.

## Chapter XXIX

### WHICH OF THE TWO IS MOST UNGRATEFUL, A PEOPLE OR A PRINCE

It seems to me proper here, in connection with the above subject, to examine whether the people or a prince is more liable to the charge of ingratitude; and by way of illustrating this question the better, I set out by saying that the vice of ingratitude springs either from avarice or fear. For when a people or a prince has sent a general on some important expedition where by his success he acquires great glory, the prince or people is in turn bound to reward him. But if instead of such reward they dishonor and wrong him, influenced thereto by avarice, then they are guilty of an inexcusable wrong, which will involve them in eternal infamy. And yet there are many princes who commit this wrong, for which fact Tacitus assigns the reason in the following sentence: "Men are more ready to repay an injury than a benefit, because gratitude is a burden and revenge a pleasure."  
sneek But when they fail to reward, or rather when they offend, not from avarice, but from suspicion and fear, then the people or the prince have some excuse for their ingratitude. We read of many instances of this kind; for the general who by his valor has conquered a state for his master, and won great glory for himself by his victory over the enemy, and has loaded his soldiers with rich booty, acquires necessarily with his own soldiers, as well as with those of the enemy and with the subjects of the prince, so high a

in Naples for King Ferdinand of Aragon against the French; how he defeated them, and conquered the kingdom for Ferdinand; and how he was rewarded by his king, who left Spain, and came to Naples, and first deprived Gonsalvo of his command of the army, and then took the control of the strong places from him, and finally carried him off with him to Spain, where Gonsalvo soon after died in obscurity.

Fear and suspicion are so natural to princes that they cannot defend themselves against them, and thus it is impossible for them to show gratitude to those who, by victories achieved under their banners, have made important conquests for them. If then a prince cannot prevent himself from committing such wrongs, it is surely no wonder, nor matter worthy of more consideration, if a people acts in a similar manner. For as a free city is generally influenced by two principal objects, the one to aggrandize herself, and the other to preserve her liberties, it is natural that she should occasionally be betrayed into faults by excessive eagerness in the pursuit of either of these objects. As to the faults that result from the desire for aggrandizement, we shall speak in another place; and those resulting from the desire to preserve her liberty are amongst others the following, namely, to injure those citizens whom she should reward, and to suspect those in whom she should place most confidence. And although the effects of such conduct occasion great evils in a republic that is already corrupt, and which often lead to despotism,—as was seen under Cæsar in Rome, who took for himself by force what ingratitude had refused him,—still, in a republic not yet entirely corrupt, they may be productive of great good in preserving her freedom for a greater length of time; as the dread of punishment will keep men better, and less ambitious.

## Chapter XXX

HOW PRINCES AND REPUBLICS SHOULD ACT TO AVOID THE VICE OF INGRATITUDE, AND HOW A COMMANDER OR A CITIZEN SHOULD ACT SO AS NOT TO EXPOSE HIMSELF TO IT

A PRINCE, to avoid the necessity of living in constant mistrust or of being ungrateful, should command all his expeditions in person, as the Roman Emperors did in the beginning, and as the Sultan does at the present time, and as in fact all valiant princes ever have done and will do. For if victorious, all the glory and fruits of their conquests will be theirs; but if they are not present themselves at the action, and the glory of victory falls to the share of another, then it will seem to them that the conquest will not profit them unless they extinguish that glory of another which they have failed to achieve themselves. Thus they became ungrateful and unjust, and in that way their loss will be greater than their gain. But if from indolence or want of sagacity they remain idle at home, and confide the expedition to a commander, then I have no advice to give them but to follow their own inspirations. But I say to the commander, judging that he will not be able to escape the fangs of ingratitude, that he must do one of two things: either he must leave the army immediately after victory, and place himself at the disposal of his prince, carefully avoiding all show of insolence or ambition, so that the prince, deprived of all grounds of fear or suspicion, may reward him or at least not wrong him; or if this does not suit him, then he must boldly adopt the other course, and act in all respects as though he believed the conquest were for his own account,

*It must be either entirely bad or entirely good, both distinguished.*

## THE DISCOURSES

and not for his prince,—conciliating to himself the good will of his army and of the subjected people, forming friendships and alliances with the neighboring princes, occupying the strongholds with his own men, corrupting the chiefs of his army and making sure of such as he cannot corrupt,—and in this wise seek to punish his prince in advance for the ingratitude which he is likely to show him. And there is no other way for him to do. But, as I have already said, men neither know how to be entirely good nor wholly bad; and it so happens almost invariably that a general, after a great victory, is unwilling to leave his army, and to conduct himself with becoming modesty, and knows not how to take a decided course, which has in itself something honorable and grand; and thus he remains undecided, and whilst in this ambiguous state he is crushed.

A republic that wishes to avoid the vice of ingratitude cannot employ the same means as a prince; that is to say, she cannot go and command her own expeditions, and is obliged therefore to confide them to some one of her citizens. But it is proper that I should suggest as the best means to adopt the same course that Rome did, in being less ungrateful than others and which resulted from her institutions. For as the whole city, nobles and plebeians, devoted themselves to the business of war, there arose at all times in Rome so many brave and victorious generals, that the people had no cause for mistrusting any one of them, there being so many that they could watch each other. And thus they kept themselves so pure, and careful not to give the least umbrage, that they afforded the people not the least ground for suspecting them of ambition; and if any of them arrived at the dictatorship, their greatest glory consisted in promptly laying this dignity down again; and thus, having inspired no fear or mistrust, they gave no cause for ingratitude. A re-

to the ruin of the state, as in fact proved to be the case after his death. For the citizens, regardless of the counsels of Uzzano, combined against Cosimo and drove him from Florence. The consequence was that the partisans of Cosimo, to resent this insult, shortly afterwards recalled him and made him prince of the republic, which position he never would have attained but for the previous hostility manifested towards him. The same thing happened in Rome with regard to Cæsar, who by his courage and merits at first won the favor of Pompey and of other prominent citizens, but which favor was shortly after converted into fear; to which Cicero testifies, saying "that Pompey had begun too late to fear Cæsar." This fear caused them to think of measures of safety, which however only accelerated the ruin of the republic.

I say, then, that inasmuch as it is difficult to know these evils at their first origin, owing to an illusion which all new things are apt to produce, the wiser course is to temporize with such evils when they are recognized, instead of violently attacking them; for by temporizing with them they will either die out of themselves, or at least their worst results will be long deferred. And princes or magistrates who wish to destroy such evils must watch all points, and must be careful in attacking them not to increase instead of diminishing them, for they must not believe that a fire can be extinguished by blowing upon it. They should carefully examine the extent and force of the evil, and if they think themselves sufficiently strong to combat it, then they should attack it regardless of consequences; otherwise they should let it be, and in no wise attempt it. For it will always happen as I have said above, and as it did happen to the neighboring tribes of Rome; who found that it would have been more advantageous, after Rome had grown so much in

would have been taken; for power can easily take a name, but a name cannot give power. And it is seen that the dictatorship, whenever created according to public law and not usurped by individual authority, always proved beneficial to Rome; it is the magistracies and powers that are created by illegitimate means which harm a republic, and not those that are appointed in the regular way, as was the case in Rome, where in the long course of time no Dictator ever failed to prove beneficial to the republic. The reason of this is perfectly evident: first, before a citizen can be in a position to usurp extraordinary powers, many things must concur, which in a republic as yet uncorrupted never can happen; for he must be exceedingly rich, and must have many adherents and partisans, which cannot be where the laws are observed; and even if he had them, he would never be supported by the free suffrages of the people, for such men are generally looked upon as dangerous. Besides this, Dictators were appointed only for a limited term, and not in perpetuity, and their power to act was confined to the particular occasion for which they were created. This power consisted in being able to decide alone upon the measures to be adopted for averting the pressing danger, to do whatever he deemed proper without consultation, and to inflict punishment upon any one without appeal. But the Dictator could do nothing to alter the form of the government, such as to diminish the powers of the Senate or the people, or to abrogate existing institutions and create new ones. So that, taking together the short period for which he held the office, and the limited powers which he possessed, and the fact that the Roman people were as yet uncorrupted, it is evident that it was impossible for him to exceed his powers and to harm the republic; which on the contrary, as all experience shows, was always benefited by him.

namely, that the authority which is violently usurped, and not that which is conferred by the free suffrages of the people, is hurtful to republics. In this, however, there are two things to be considered; namely, the manner in which the authority is bestowed, and the length of time for which it is given. For when full power is conferred for any length of time (and I call a year or more a long time) it is always dangerous, and will be productive of good or ill effects, according as those upon whom it is conferred are themselves good or bad. And if we examine the power given to the Decemvirs and that of the Dictators, we shall find that of the former beyond comparison the greater. For at the creation of a Dictator, the Tribunes, the Consuls, and the Senate all remained with their respective powers, of which they could not be deprived by the Dictator. And even if he could have removed any one from the consulate or from the Senate, yet he could not abrogate the senatorial order and make new laws himself. So that the Senate, the Consuls, and the Tribunes, remaining in full authority, served as it were as a guard to watch that the Dictator did not transcend his powers. But in the creation of the Decemvirs just the opposite was the case; for their appointment cancelled that of the Consuls and Tribunes, and to the Decemvirs the power was given to make new laws, and in fact to do everything that the Roman people were competent to do. So that, finding themselves alone, without Tribunes or Consuls, and without the necessity of appealing to the Roman people, and having therefore no one to watch them, they were enabled in the second year, instigated by the ambition of Appius, to become overbearing, and to abuse their power. And therefore, when we said that an authority conferred by the free suffrages of the people never harmed a republic, we presupposed that the people, in giving that

power, would limit it, as well as the time during which it was to be exercised. But if from having been deceived, or from any other reason, they are induced to give this power imprudently, and in the way in which the Roman people gave it to the Decemvirs, then the same thing will happen to them as happened to the Romans. This is easily proved by examining the causes that kept the Dictators within the limits of their duties, and those which made the Decemvirs transcend theirs; and by examining, further, the conduct of those republics that were well constituted, in giving power for any length of time, as the Spartans did to their kings, and as the Venetians gave to their Doges. In both these cases we see that guardians were appointed to watch that neither the king nor the Doge could abuse the power intrusted to him. Nor is it of any advantage in such a case that the mass of the people is not corrupt, for absolute authority will very quickly corrupt the people, and will create friends and partisans for itself. Nor is it any disadvantage to be poor and without family influence, for riches and every other favor will quickly run after power, as we shall show in the case of the creation of the Decemvirs.

### Chapter XXXVI

#### CITIZENS WHO HAVE BEEN HONORED WITH THE HIGHER OFFICES SHOULD NOT DISDAIN LESS IMPORTANT ONES

THE Romans had made Marcus Fabius and C. Manilius Consuls, and had gained a most glorious victory over the Veienti and the Etruscans, which, however, cost the life of Quintus Fabius, brother of the Consul, and who had himself been Consul the year before. This ought to make us

## Chapter XXXVII

WHAT TROUBLES RESULTED IN ROME FROM THE ENACTMENT OF  
THE AGRARIAN LAW, AND HOW VERY WRONG IT IS TO MAKE  
LAWS THAT ARE RETROSPECTIVE AND CONTRARY TO OLD ESTAB-  
LISHED CUSTOMS

It was a saying of ancient writers, that men afflict themselves in evil, and become weary of the good, and that both these dispositions produce the same effects. For when men are no longer obliged to fight from necessity, they fight from ambition, which passion is so powerful in the hearts of men that it never leaves them, no matter to what height they may rise. The reason of this is that nature has created men so that they desire everything, but are unable to attain it; desire being thus always greater than the faculty of acquiring, discontent with what they have and dissatisfaction with themselves result from it. This causes the changes in their fortunes; for as some men desire to have more, whilst others fear to lose what they have, enmities and war are the consequences; and this brings about the ruin of one province and the elevation of another. I have made these remarks because the Roman people were not content with having secured themselves against the nobles by the creation of the Tribunes, to which they had been driven by necessity. Having obtained this, they soon began to fight from ambition, and wanted to divide with the nobles their honors and possessions, being those things which men value most. Thence the frenzy that occasioned the contentions about the agrarian law, which finally caused the destruction of the Roman republic. Now, as in well-regulated republics the state ought

Recurse only because "unknown  
q not understood" past, that owing to in-

216. *qds that* NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI

*Machiavelli's* Leys notr. of  
accurrence - necessity,

## Chapter XXXIX

### THE SAME ACCIDENTS OFTEN HAPPEN TO DIFFERENT PEOPLES

cf. 103 WHOEVER considers the past and the present will readily observe that all cities and all peoples are and ever have been animated by the same desires and the same passions; so that it is easy, by diligent study of the past, to foresee what is likely to happen in the future in any republic, and to apply those remedies that were used by the ancients, or, not finding any that were employed by them, to devise new ones from the similarity of the events. But as such considerations are neglected or not understood by most of those who read, or, if understood by these, are unknown by those who govern, it follows that the same troubles generally recur in all republics.

The city of Florence, having after the year 1494 lost a portion of her dominions, such as Pisa and other places, was obliged to make war upon him who held these places; and as he was powerful, they expended great sums of money without any advantage. These large expenditures necessitated heavy taxes, and these caused infinite complaints from the people; and as the war was conducted by a council composed of ten citizens who were called "the Ten of the War," the mass of the people began to hold them in aversion, as being the cause of the war and its expenses, and began to persuade themselves that, if this council were done away with, the war would also be ended. Thus when the time came for reappointing the Ten, they allowed their term to expire without renewing the council, and committed their functions to the Signoria. This course was the more perni-

they remained until the Decemvirs abdicated their magistracy, and the Consuls and Tribunes were re-established, and Rome was restored to its ancient liberty and form of government.

Here we must note that the necessity of creating the tyranny of the Decemvirs in Rome arose from the same causes that generally produce tyrannies in cities; that is to say, the too great desire of the people to be free, and the equally too great desire of the nobles to dominate. And if the two parties do not agree to secure liberty by law, and either the one or the other throws all its influence in favor of one man, then a tyranny is the natural result. The people and the nobles of Rome agreed to create the Decemvirs, and to endow them with such great powers, from the desire which the one party had to destroy the consular office, and the other that of the Tribunes. Having created the Ten, it seemed to the people that Appius had come over to them and would aid them to keep the nobility down, and therefore they supported him. Now when a people goes so far as to commit the error of giving power to one man so that he may defeat those whom they hate, and if this man be shrewd, it will always end in his becoming their tyrant. For with the support of the people he will be enabled to destroy the nobility, and after these are crushed he will not fail in turn to crush the people; and by the time that they become sensible of their own enslavement, they will have no one to look to for succor. This is the course which all those have followed who have imposed tyrannies upon republics. And if Appius had done the same, his despotism would have had more vitality, and would not have been overthrown so quickly; but he did exactly the reverse, and could not have acted with more imprudence. For to hold his despotic authority he made himself the enemy of those who had given

it to him, and who could have maintained him in it; and he equally made himself the friend of those who had in no way contributed to it, and who could do nothing to keep him in it; and he ruined those who were his friends, and sought to make those his friends who never could become so. For although it is the nature of the nobility to desire to dominate, yet those who have no share in such domination are the enemies of the tyrant, who can never win them all over to him, because of their extreme ambition and avarice, which are so great that the tyrant can never have riches and honors enough to bestow to satisfy them all. And thus Appius, in abandoning the people and allying himself with the nobles, committed a manifest error, both for the reasons above stated, and because, to hold a government by violence, it is necessary that the oppressor should be more powerful than the oppressed. Whence it is that those tyrants who have the masses for friends and the nobles for enemies are more secure in the possession of their power, because their despotism is sustained by a greater force than that of those who have the people for their enemies and the nobles for their friends. For with the support of the people his internal forces suffice to sustain him, as was the case with Nabis, the tyrant of Sparta, when he was assailed by all Greece and the Romans; he made sure of the few nobles, and having the people his friends he succeeded in defending himself by their aid, which he never would have been able to do had the people been hostile to him. But the internal forces of the other class, being but few in numbers, are insufficient to maintain him, and therefore it becomes necessary to look for support elsewhere; and this may be of three different kinds. One is to have a body guard composed of foreigners; another is to arm the people of the country, and have them serve in place of the people of the city; and the third is to

## Chapter XLI

IT IS IMPRUDENT AND UNPROFITABLE SUDDENLY TO CHANGE FROM HUMILITY TO PRIDE, AND FROM GENTLENESS TO CRUELTY

BESIDES the other errors committed by Appius in attempting to maintain his tyranny, that of changing too suddenly from one quality to the extreme opposite was of no little moment. Although his astuteness in deceiving the people by simulating to be of their party was well employed, and equally so the means he used to bring about the reappointment of the Ten, as well as his audacity in nominating himself, contrary to the expectations of the nobles, and in naming colleagues to suit his own purposes; yet it was very ill-judged in him suddenly to change his character, and from having been a friend of the people, all at once to show himself their enemy,—from being humane to become haughty, and from being easy of access to become difficult,—and to do this so suddenly and without excuse that everybody could see the falseness of his soul. For he who for a time has seemed good, and for purposes of his own wants to become bad, should do it gradually, and should seem to be brought to it by the force of circumstances; so that, before his changed nature deprives him of his former friends, he may have gained new ones, and that his authority may not be diminished by the change. Otherwise his deception will be discovered, and he will lose his friends and be ruined.

*ambitione behren playz g ambitious  
Ambition = career = power.*

## Chapter XLII

## HOW EASILY MEN MAY BE CORRUPTED

IN connection with this matter of the Decemvirate, we should notice also how easily men are corrupted and become wicked, although originally good and well educated. This may be observed in those young nobles whom Appius had chosen for his followers, and who, for the small advantages they derived from it, became supporters of his tyranny; also in Quintus Fabius, one of the second Decemvirate, who, having been one of the best of men, but blinded by a little ambition and seduced by the villainy of Appius, changed his good habits into the worst, and became like Appius himself. All this, if carefully studied by the legislators of republics and monarchies, will make them more prompt in restraining the passions of men, and depriving them of all hopes of being able to do wrong with impunity.

## Chapter XLIII

THOSE ONLY WHO COMBAT FOR THEIR OWN GLORY ARE GOOD AND  
LOYAL SOLDIERS

WE will consider in this chapter how great a difference there is between an army that is well disposed, and which fights for its own glory, and one that is ill disposed, and has to fight only for the ambition of another; for whilst the Roman armies were habitually victorious under the Consuls, they were invariably beaten under the Decemvirs. This ex-

Livius says, "not for want of plenty to say in reply, but because they lacked some one to make the answer for them"; which is a case in point showing the uselessness of a multitude without a head. Virginius perceived this difficulty, and by his order they appointed twenty military Tribunes to act as their chiefs, to answer for them and to confer with the Senate. They demanded that the Senators Valerius and Horatius should be sent to them, and that they would make known their will to them. But these Senators would not go until after the Ten had resigned their magistracy; after which, having arrived at the Mons Sacer, where the people were, these demanded of them the re-establishment of the Tribunes of the people, and that no magistrates should be appointed without an appeal to the people; and, furthermore, that all the Decemvirs should be delivered up to them, as they wanted to burn them alive. Valerius and Horatius approved of their first demands, but objected to the latter as impious, saying, "You condemn cruelty, and fall into the same crime yourselves"; and advised them to say nothing about the Decemvirs, as they themselves would see that their office and authority should be taken from them, and that the people afterwards would not lack opportunity to satisfy their vengeance. From this we plainly see the folly and imprudence of demanding a thing, and saying beforehand that it is intended to be used for evil; and that one should never show one's intentions, but endeavor to obtain one's desires anyhow. For it is enough to ask a man to give up his arms, without telling him that you intend killing him with them; after you have the arms in hand, then you can do your will with them.

This wonderful intelligence of seeing

intervenes to rid the state of him. For when it has once come to that point that the citizens and the magistrates are afraid to offend him and his adherents, it will afterwards not require much effort on his part to make them render judgments and attack persons according to his will. For this reason republics should make it one of their aims to watch that none of their citizens should be allowed to do harm on pretence of doing good, and that no one should acquire an influence that would injure instead of promoting liberty; of which we shall speak more at length in another place.

### Chapter XLVII

#### ALTHOUGH MEN ARE APT TO DECEIVE THEMSELVES IN GENERAL MATTERS, YET THEY RARELY DO SO IN PARTICULARS

THE people of Rome, as has been related above, having become disgusted with the name of Consul, wanted either to have the Consuls chosen from amongst the plebeians, or that their powers should be limited. The nobility, unwilling to discredit the consular dignity by either of such changes, took a middle course, and consented that four Tribunes should be created, with consular powers, who might be taken either from the nobles or the plebeians. This satisfied the people, as it seemed to destroy the consulate, and to give them a share in the highest magistracy. This gave rise to a remarkable case; for when the election of these Tribunes came on, and the people might have elected all plebeians, they chose, instead, all from the patricians, whence Titus Livius says: "The result of this election teaches us how different minds are during the contentions for liberty and for honors, from what they are when they have to give an im-

partial judgment after the contest is over." In examining whence this difference arises, I believe that it comes from this, that men are apt to deceive themselves upon general matters, but not so much so when they come to particulars. As a general thing, the Roman people believed themselves entitled to the consulate, being the majority in the city, and having to bear more of the dangers of war, and as it was the vigor of their arms that preserved the liberty of Rome and established its power. And (as I have said) as their desire seemed to them reasonable, they were resolved to obtain it by any means. But when they had to judge of the particular qualifications of their individual candidates, they discovered their unfitness, and therefore decided that not one of them was worthy of that dignity, to which as a body they considered themselves entitled. Thus ashamed of their own candidates, they had recourse to those whom they deemed worthy of the office. Titus Livius, naturally admiring this decision, says: "Where will you find nowadays this modesty and equity, this loftiness of soul, which in those days pervaded the whole people?"

In corroboration of this example we may adduce another notable one which occurred in Capua, after Hannibal had defeated the Romans at Cannæ. Whilst all Italy rose up in consequence of this defeat, Capua still remained in a state of insubordination, because of the hatred that existed between the people and the Senate. Pacovius Calanus being at that time one of the supreme magistrates, and foreseeing the dangers that would result from the disorders in that city, resolved by means of the authority of his office to try and reconcile the people and the Senate; with this purpose he caused the Senate to be assembled, and stated to them the animosity which the people felt towards them, and the danger to which they were exposed of being massacred by

fear to which they have been subjected has in great measure humbled them, and you will now find in them that humanity which you in vain look for elsewhere." This suggestion prevailed, and a reconciliation between the two orders followed, and the people, when they came to act upon particulars, discovered the error into which they had fallen in looking at the subject in general.

After the expulsion in 1414 of the principal citizens from Florence, there being no regular government, but rather a certain ambitious license, so that things were going from worse to worse, many of the popular party, seeing the ruin of the city, and not comprehending the cause of it, attributed it to a few powerful citizens, who fomented these disorders so as to enable them to make a government to suit themselves, and to deprive them of their liberty. They went through the Loggia and public places speaking against those prominent citizens, and threatening that, if ever they should themselves become members of the Signoria, they would unveil their deceitful practices, and would punish them for it. It happened in several instances that these citizens did attain to the highest magistracy, and when they had risen to that place, and were enabled to see matters more closely, they discovered the real causes of the disorders, and the dangers that threatened the state, as well as the difficulty of remedying them. And seeing that the times, and not the men, caused the disorders, they promptly changed their opinions and actions, because the knowledge of things in particular had removed from their minds that delusion into which they had fallen by looking at things in general. So that those who at first had heard them speak whilst they were still private citizens, and afterwards saw them remain inactive when they had risen to the supreme magistracy, believed that this was caused, not by the real knowledge of

*Rules of Intelligence - Who are the people?*

things, but by their having been perverted and corrupted by the great. And as this happened with many, and repeatedly, it gave rise to a saying, "That these people have one mind in the public places, and another mind in the palace." Reflecting now upon all that has been said, we see that the quickest way of opening the eyes of the people is to find the means of making them descend to particulars, seeing that to look at things only in a general way deceives them; as Pacovius did with regard to Capua and the Roman Senate. I believe also that we may conclude from it that no wise man should ever disregard the popular judgment upon particular matters, such as the distribution of honors and dignities; for in these things the people never deceive themselves, or, if they do, it is much less frequently than a small body would do, who had been especially charged with such distributions. Nor does it seem to me superfluous to show in the following chapter the course which the Senate took to deceive the people in the distributions that devolved upon them.

*(Deception)*  
*General distribution*

### Chapter XLVIII

ONE OF THE MEANS OF PREVENTING AN IMPORTANT MAGISTRACY FROM BEING CONFERRED UPON A VILE AND WICKED INDIVIDUAL IS TO HAVE IT APPLIED FOR BY ONE STILL MORE VILE AND WICKED, OR BY THE MOST NOBLE AND DESERVING IN THE STATE

WHEN the Roman Senate apprehended lest the Tribunes with consular powers should be taken from amongst the plebeians, they adopted one of the two following methods: either they caused the most distinguished and influential men of Rome to become candidates, or by suitable means

similar experience as that of Cicero, who, wishing to destroy the credit and power of Mark Antony, only increased it. For Antony, having been declared an enemy of the Senate, had collected a large army, composed in great part of soldiers who had served under Caesar; Cicero wishing to withdraw these soldiers from him, advised the Senate to employ Octavian, and to send him with the army and the Consuls against Antony, alleging that so soon as the soldiers of Antony should hear the name of Octavian, the nephew of Caesar, and who had himself called Cæsar, they would leave the former and join Octavian; and that Antony, thus bereft of support, would easily be crushed. But it resulted just the other way, for Antony managed to win Octavian over to himself, who, abandoning Cicero and the Senate, allied himself with the former, which brought about the complete ruin of the party of the patricians. This might easily have been foreseen, and therefore they should not have followed the advice of Cicero, but should have borne in mind the name and character of him who had vanquished his enemies with so much glory, and seized for himself the sovereignty of Rome; and then they might have known that they could not expect from his adherents anything favorable to liberty.

### Chapter LIII

HOW BY THE DELUSIONS OF SEEING GOOD THE PEOPLE ARE OFTEN MISLED TO DESIRE THEIR OWN RUIN; AND HOW THEY ARE FREQUENTLY INFLUENCED BY GREAT HOPES AND BRAVE PROMISES

AFTER the capture of the city of the Veienti, the Roman people became possessed of the idea that it would be ad-

vantageous for the city of Rome if one half of its inhabitants were to go and settle at Veii; arguing that, inasmuch as that city was rich in lands and houses and near to Rome, one half of the Roman citizens might thus enrich themselves without in any way disturbing by their proximity the public affairs of Rome. This project seemed to the Senate and the most sagacious men of Rome useless, and fraught with danger, so much so that they declared openly that they would rather suffer death than give their consent. When the subject came to be discussed, the people became so much excited against the Senate that it would have led to violence and bloodshed, had not the Senate sheltered itself behind some of the oldest and most esteemed citizens, the reverence for whom restrained the people from carrying their insolence farther. Here we have to note two things; first, that the people often, deceived by an illusive good, desire their own ruin, and, unless they are made sensible of the evil of the one and the benefit of the other course by some one in whom they have confidence, they will expose the republic to infinite peril and damage. And if it happens that the people have no confidence in any one, as sometimes will be the case when they have been deceived before by events or men, then it will inevitably lead to the ruin of the state. Dante says upon this point in his discourse "On Monarchy," that the people often shout, "Life to our death, and death to our life!" It is this want of confidence on the part of the people that causes good measures to be often rejected in republics, as we have related above of the Venetians, who when attacked by so many enemies could not make up their minds to conciliate some of them by giving to them what they had taken from others; it was this that brought the war upon them, and caused the other powers to form a league against them before their final ruin.

Politics - gain or loss  
Brave or cowardly

Belng - & opinion

If we consider now what is easy and what difficult to persuade a people to, we may make this distinction: either what you wish to persuade them to represents at first sight gain or loss, or it seems brave or cowardly. And if you propose to them anything that upon its face seems profitable and courageous, though there be really a loss concealed under it which may involve the ruin of the republic, the multitude will ever be most easily persuaded to it. But if the measure proposed seems doubtful and likely to cause loss, then it will be difficult to persuade the people to it, even though the benefit and welfare of the republic were concealed under it. All this is supported by numerous examples amongst the Romans as well as strangers, and both in modern and in ancient times.

It was this that produced the unfavorable opinion in Rome of Fabius Maximus, who could not persuade the people of Rome that it would be advantageous for that republic to proceed slowly with the war, and to bear the assaults of Hannibal without engaging in battle with him; because the Roman people considered this course as cowardly, and did not see the advantages that would be gained by it, and Fabius had not the faculty of demonstrating these to them. The people are apt to be so blinded upon questions of courage that, although the Roman people had committed the great error of giving authority to the commander of the cavalry of the army of Fabius to engage in battle contrary to the will of Fabius, so that the Roman camp would have been broken up but for the prudence of Fabius, which remedied the error; yet this experience did not suffice them, for they subsequently made Varro Consul, for no other reason than because he had proclaimed in all the streets and public places of Rome that, if only authority were given to him, he would cut Hannibal to pieces. This

Maximus, he threatened to bring the matter before the people, well knowing that similar propositions always find favor with the people.

We may also cite on this point some examples drawn from the history of our own city of Florence. Messer Ercole Bentivogli, commander of the Florentine troops, and Antonio Giacomini, after having defeated Bartolomeo d' Alviano at San Vincenti, went to lay siege to Pisa, which enterprise was resolved upon by the people in consequence of the brave promises made by Messer Ercole, although many of the most prudent citizens objected, but could not prevent it, being carried away by the general will of the people, who relied upon the commander's brilliant promises.

I say then that there is no easier way to ruin a republic, where the people have power, than to involve them in daring enterprises; for where the people have influence they will always be ready to engage in them, and no contrary opinion will prevent them. But if such enterprises cause the ruin of states, they still more frequently cause the ruin of the particular citizens who are placed at the head to conduct them. For when defeat comes, instead of the successes which the people expected, they charge it neither upon the ill fortune or incompetence of their leaders, but upon their wickedness and ignorance; and generally either kill, imprison, or exile them, as happened to many Carthaginian and Athenian generals. Their previous victories are of no advantage to them, for they are all cancelled by present defeat, as was the case with our Giacomini, who, in consequence of his failure to take Pisa, which the people expected, as he had promised it, fell into such disgrace with the people that, notwithstanding his previous good services, his life was saved only through the humanity of the authorities, who protected him against the people.

### Chapter LIV

#### HOW MUCH INFLUENCE A GREAT MAN HAS IN RESTRAINING AN EXCITED MULTITUDE

THE second thing to note in connection with the subject of the preceding chapter is, that nothing is so apt to restrain an excited multitude as the reverence inspired by some grave and dignified man of authority who opposes them; and therefore it is not without reason that Virgil says:—

"And when they saw a man of grave aspect  
And full of virtue and of years,  
At once they all were hushed,  
And, listening, stood with eager ears."

Therefore whoever is at the head of an army, or whoever happens to be a magistrate in a city where sedition has broken out, should present himself before the multitude with all possible grace and dignity, and attired with all the insignia of his rank, so as to inspire the more respect. A few years since Florence was divided into two factions, who called themselves the Frateschi and the Arrabbiati (madmen). On coming to arms, the Frateschi were beaten; amongst these was Paolantonio Soderini, a citizen then in high repute. During these disturbances the people went armed to his house with the intent of sacking it. Messer Francesco, his brother, then Bishop of Volterra, and now Cardinal, happened by chance to be in the house; and so soon as he heard the noise and saw the crowd, he dressed himself in his best garments, and over them he put his episcopal chasuble, and then went to meet the armed mob,

and by the influence of his person and his words he stopped their further violence, which was much talked about and praised in the city for many days.

I conclude, then, that there is no better or safer way of appeasing an excited mob than the presence of some man of imposing appearance and highly respected. And to come back to the preceding text, we see with what obstinacy the Roman people had taken up the plan of going to Veii, because they deemed it advantageous and did not perceive the danger it involved; and how the discontent of the people, which had been excited by the opposition of the Senate to this project, would have led to violence, had not their fury been restrained by the most grave and reverend Senators.

### Chapter LV

PUBLIC AFFAIRS ARE EASILY MANAGED IN A CITY WHERE THE BODY OF THE PEOPLE IS NOT CORRUPT; AND WHERE EQUALITY EXISTS, THERE NO PRINCIPALITY CAN BE ESTABLISHED; NOR CAN A REPUBLIC BE ESTABLISHED WHERE THERE IS NO EQUALITY

HAVING sufficiently discussed the subject as to what is to be hoped and feared for states that are corrupt, it seems to me not amiss now to examine a resolution of the Senate of Rome in relation to the vow which Camillus had made, to give the tenth part of the booty taken from the Veienti to Apollo. These spoils having fallen into the hands of the Roman people, and there being no other way of having a correct account of it, the Roman Senate issued an edict that every one should bring to the public treasury one tenth part of the booty he had received. And although this decree was not carried into effect, the Senate having devised other

ways and means for satisfying Apollo and the people, nevertheless we can see from that resolution how entirely the Senate trusted in the honesty of the people; and how confident they were that no one would fail to return exactly what had been ordered by that edict. And on the other hand we see how the people never for a moment thought of evading it in any way by giving less than what they ought to give, and how they preferred rather to relieve themselves of this imposition by open demonstrations of indignation. This example, together with the many others heretofore cited, proves how much probity and religion these people had, and how much good there was to be hoped for from them. And truly, where this probity does not exist, no good is to be expected, as in fact it is vain to look for anything good from those countries which we see nowadays so corrupt, as is the case above all others with Italy. France and Spain also have their share of corruption, and if we do not see so many disorders and troubles in those countries as is the case daily in Italy, it is not so much owing to the goodness of their people, in which they are greatly deficient, as to the fact that they have each a king who keeps them united not only by his virtue, but also by the institutions of those kingdoms, which are as yet preserved pure.

In Germany alone do we see that probity and religion still exist largely amongst the people, in consequence of which many republics exist there in the full enjoyment of liberty, observing their laws in such manner that no one from within or without could venture upon an attempt to master them. And in proof that the ancient virtue still prevails there in great part, I will cite an example similar to that given above of the Senate and people of Rome. When these republics have occasion to spend any considerable amount of money for public account, their magistrates or

of them fall into their hands, they kill them, as being the chief promoters of all corruption and troubles.

And to explain more clearly what is meant by the term gentlemen, I say that those are called gentlemen who live idly upon the proceeds of their extensive possessions, without devoting themselves to agriculture or any other useful pursuit to gain a living. Such men are pernicious to any country or republic; but more pernicious even than these are such as have, besides their other possessions, castles which they command, and subjects who obey them. This class of men abound in the kingdom of Naples, in the Roman territory, in the Romagna, and in Lombardy; whence it is that no republic has ever been able to exist in those countries, nor have they been able to preserve any regular political existence, for that class of men are everywhere enemies of all civil government. And to attempt the establishment of a republic in a country so constituted would be impossible. The only way to establish any kind of order there is to found a monarchical government; for where the body of the people is so thoroughly corrupt that the laws are powerless for restraint, it becomes necessary to establish some superior power which, with a royal hand, and with full and absolute powers, may put a curb upon the excessive ambition and corruption of the powerful. This is verified by the example of Tuscany, where in a comparatively small extent of territory there have for a long time existed three republics, Florence, Sienna, and Lucca; and although the other cities of this territory are in a measure subject to these, yet we see that in spirit and by their institutions they maintain, or attempt to maintain their liberty; all of which is due to the fact that there are in that country no lords possessing castles, and exceedingly few or no gentlemen. On the contrary, there is such a general equality that it

would be easy for any man of sagacity, well versed in the ancient forms of civil government, to introduce a republic there; but the misfortunes of that country have been so great that up to the present time no man has arisen who has had the power and ability to do so.

We may then draw the following conclusion from what has been said: that if any one should wish to establish a republic in a country where there are many gentlemen, he will not succeed until he has destroyed them all; and whoever desires to establish a kingdom or principality where liberty and equality prevail, will equally fail, unless he withdraws from that general equality a number of the boldest and most ambitious spirits, and makes gentlemen of them, not merely in name but in fact, by giving to them castles and possessions, as well as money and subjects; so that surrounded by these he may be able to maintain his power, and that by his support they may satisfy their ambition, and the others may be constrained to submit to that yoke to which force alone has been able to subject them. And as in this way definite relations will be established between the ruler and his subjects, each will be maintained in their respective ranks. But to establish a republic in a country better adapted to a monarchy, or a monarchy where a republic would be more suitable, requires a man of rare genius and power, and therefore out of the many that have attempted it but few have succeeded; for the greatness of the enterprise frightens men so that they fail even in the very beginning. Perhaps the opinion which I have expressed, that a republic cannot be established where there are gentlemen may seem to be contradicted by the experience of the Venetian republic, in which none but gentlemen could attain to any rank or public employment. And yet this example is in no way opposed to my theory, for the gentlemen of Venice are so more in

name than in fact; for they have no great revenues from estates, their riches being founded upon commerce and movable property, and moreover none of them have castles or jurisdiction over subjects, but the name of gentleman is only a title of dignity and respect, and is in no way based upon the things that gentlemen enjoy in other countries. And as all other republics have different classes under different names, so Venice is divided into gentlemen and commonalty, and the former have all the offices and honors, from which the latter are entirely excluded; and this distribution causes no disorders in that republic, for the reasons elsewhere given. Let republics, then, be established where equality exists, and, on the contrary, principalities where great inequality prevails; otherwise the governments will lack proper proportions and have but little durability.

## Chapter LVI

### THE OCCURRENCE OF IMPORTANT EVENTS IN ANY CITY OR COUNTRY IS GENERALLY PRECEDED BY SIGNS AND PORTENTS, OR BY MEN WHO PREDICT THEM

WHENCE it comes I know not, but both ancient and modern instances prove that no great events ever occur in any city or country that have not been predicted by soothsayers, revelations, or by portents and other celestial signs. And not to go from home in proof of this, everybody knows how the descent into Italy of Charles VIII, king of France, was predicted by Brother Girolamo Savonarola; and how, besides this, it was said throughout Italy that at Arezzo there had been seen and heard in the air armed men fighting together. Moreover everybody remembers how, before the death of

*French - Chie: cf. Rousseau: Plea*  
*for a stiff. behv. general wth*  
*the will to magistris; ch'f is not ap-*  
*ple.*

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return within a given time to inhabit Rome, on pain of certain penalties. At first those against whom this edict was aimed made light of it and derided it, but when the prescribed time approached they all hastened to obey. Titus Livius says on this point, "From being brave and insolent as a body, fear made them individually obedient." And truly nothing can better illustrate the character of a multitude than this example; for they are often audacious and loud in their denunciations of the decisions of their rulers, but when punishment stares them in the face, then, distrustful of each other, they rush to obey. Thus we see that whatever may be said of the good or evil disposition of the people is of little consequence, if you are well prepared to assert and maintain your authority should they be well disposed, and to defend yourself if their disposition be otherwise. This has reference specially to such evil dispositions as arise in the minds of the people from causes other than the loss of liberty, or that of a prince to whom they are much attached and who is still living; in such cases the most powerful remedies are required to restrain them, as these causes are more formidable than any others. But indispositions arising from other causes are easily controlled, especially if the multitude have no chief to whom they can look for support; for whilst on the one hand a loose mob without any leader is most formidable, yet on the other hand it is also most cowardly and feeble; and even if they are armed they will be easily subdued, if you can only shelter yourself against their first fury; for when their spirits are cooled down a little, and they see that they have all to return to their homes, they begin to mistrust themselves, and to think of their individual safety either by flight or submission. An excited multitude, therefore, that wishes to avoid such a result will have promptly to create a chief for itself, who shall direct and

keep them united, and provide for their defence; as the Roman people did when, after the death of Virginia, they left Rome and appointed from amongst themselves twenty Tribunes for their protection. And unless they do this they will experience what Titus Livius has said in the above-quoted words, that united in one body they are brave and insolent, but when afterwards each begins to think of his own danger, they become cowardly and feeble.

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## Chapter LVIII

## THE PEOPLE ARE WISER AND MORE CONSTANT THAN PRINCES

TITUS LIVIUS as well as all other historians affirm that nothing is more uncertain and inconstant than the multitude; for it appears from what he relates of the actions of men, that in many instances the multitude, after having condemned a man to death, bitterly lamented it, and most earnestly wished him back. This was the case with the Roman people and Manlius Capitolinus, whom they had condemned to death and afterwards most earnestly desired him back, as our author says in the following words: "No sooner had they found out that they had nothing to fear from him, than they began to regret and to wish him back." And elsewhere, when he relates the events that occurred in Syracuse after the death of Hieronymus, nephew of Hiero, he says: "It is the nature of the multitude either humbly to serve or insolently to dominate." I know not whether, in undertaking to defend a cause against the accusations of all writers, I do not assume a task so hard and so beset with difficulties as to oblige me to abandon it with shame, or to go on with it at the risk of being weighed

Reason - force - authority  
arguments  
persuade  
People = Kings if contr. by laws  
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down by it. Be that as it may, however, I think, and ever shall think, that it cannot be wrong to defend one's opinions with arguments founded upon reason, without employing force or authority.

I say, then, that individual men, and especially princes, may be charged with the same defects of which writers accuse the people; for whoever is not controlled by laws will commit the same errors as an unbridled multitude. This may easily be verified, for there have been and still are plenty of princes, and a few good and wise ones, such, I mean, as needed not the curb that controlled them. Amongst these, however, are not to be counted either the kings that lived in Egypt at that ancient period when that country was governed by laws, or those that arose in Sparta; neither such as are born in our day in France, for that country is more thoroughly regulated by laws than any other of which we have any knowledge in modern times. And those kings that arise under such constitutions are not to be classed amongst the number of those whose individual nature we have to consider, and see whether it resembles that of the people; but they should be compared with a people equally controlled by law as those kings were, and then we shall find in that multitude the same good qualities as in those kings, and we shall see that such a people neither obey with servility nor command with insolence. Such were the people of Rome, who, so long as that republic remained uncorrupted, neither obeyed basely nor ruled insolently, but rather held its rank honorably, supporting the laws and their magistrates. And when the unrighteous ambition of some noble made it necessary for them to rise up in self-defence, they did so, as in the case of Manlius, the Decemvirs, and others who attempted to oppress them; and so when the public good required them to obey the Dictators

and Consuls, they promptly yielded obedience. And if the Roman people regretted Manlius Capitolinus after his death, it is not to be wondered at; for they regretted his virtues, which had been such that the remembrance of them filled every one with pity, and would have had the power to produce the same effect upon any prince; for all writers agree that virtue is to be admired and praised, even in one's enemies. And if intense desire could have restored Manlius to life, the Roman people would nevertheless have pronounced the same judgment against him as they did the first time, when they took him from prison and condemned him to death. And so we have seen princes that were esteemed wise, who have caused persons to be put to death and afterwards regretted it deeply; such as Alexander the Great with regard to Clitus and other friends, and Herod with his wife Mariamne. But what our historian says of the character of the multitude does not apply to a people regulated by laws, as the Romans were, but to an unbridled multitude, such as the Syracusans; who committed all the excesses to which infuriated and unbridled men abandon themselves, as did Alexander the Great and Herod in the above-mentioned cases.

Therefore, the character of the people is not to be blamed any more than that of princes, for both alike are liable to err when they are without any control. Besides the examples already given, I could adduce numerous others from amongst the Roman Emperors and other tyrants and princes, who have displayed as much inconstancy and recklessness as any populace ever did. Contrary to the general opinion, then, which maintains that the people, when they govern, are inconsistent, unstable, and ungrateful, I conclude and affirm that these defects are not more natural to the people than they are to princes. To charge the people

and princes equally with them may be the truth, but to except princes from them would be a great mistake. For a people that governs and is well regulated by laws will be stable, prudent, and grateful, as much so, and even more, according to my opinion, than a prince, although he be esteemed wise; and, on the other hand, a prince, freed from the restraints of the law, will be more ungrateful, inconstant, and imprudent than a people similarly situated. The difference in their conduct is not due to any difference in their nature (for that is the same, and if there be any difference for good, it is on the side of the people); but to the greater or less respect they have for the laws under which they respectively live. And whoever studies the Roman people will see that for four hundred years they have been haters of royalty, and lovers of the glory and common good of their country; and he will find any number of examples that will prove both the one and the other. And should any one allege the ingratitude which the Roman people displayed towards Scipio, I shall reply the same as I have said in another place on this subject, where I have demonstrated that the people are less ungrateful than princes. But as regards prudence and stability, I say that the people are more prudent and stable, and have better judgment than a prince; and it is not without good reason that it is said, "The voice of the people is the voice of God"; for we see popular opinion prognosticate events in such a wonderful manner that it would almost seem as if the people had some occult virtue, which enables them to foresee the good and the evil. As to the people's capacity of judging of things, it is exceedingly rare that, when they hear two orators of equal talents advocate different measures, they do not decide in favor of the best of the two; which proves their ability to discern the truth of what they hear. And if occasionally they are misled in

matters involving questions of courage or seeming utility, (as has been said above,) so is a prince also many times misled by his own passions, which are much greater than those of the people. We also see that in the election of their magistrates they make far better choice than princes; and no people will ever be persuaded to elect a man of infamous character and corrupt habits to any post of dignity, to which a prince is easily influenced in a thousand different ways. When we see a people take an aversion to anything, they persist in it for many centuries, which we never find to be the case with princes. Upon both these points the Roman people shall serve me as a proof, who in the many elections of Consuls and Tribunes had to regret only four times the choice they had made. The Roman people held the name of king in such detestation, as we have said, that no extent of services rendered by any of its citizens who attempted to usurp that title could save him from his merited punishment. We furthermore see the cities where the people are masters make the greatest progress in the least possible time, and much greater than such as have always been governed by princes; as was the case with Rome after the expulsion of the kings, and with Athens after they rid themselves of Pisistratus; and this can be attributed to no other cause than that the governments of the people are better than those of princes.

X It would be useless to object to my opinion by referring to what our historian has said in the passages quoted above, and elsewhere; for if we compare the faults of a people with those of princes, as well as their respective good qualities, we shall find the people vastly superior in all that is good and glorious. And if princes show themselves superior in the making of laws, and in the forming of civil institutions and new statutes and ordinances, the people are superior in

*one's own will only like a madman -  
people - persuasion, force - violence*

X maintaining those institutions, laws, and ordinances, which certainly places them on a par with those who established them.

And finally to sum up this matter, I say that both governments of princes and of the people have lasted a long time, but both required to be regulated by laws. For a prince who knows no other control but his own will is like a madman, and a people that can do as it pleases will hardly be wise. If now we compare a prince who is controlled by laws, and a people that is untrammelled by them, we shall find more virtue in the people than in the prince; and if we compare them when both are freed from such control, we shall see that the people are guilty of fewer excesses than the prince, and that the errors of the people are of less importance, and therefore more easily remedied. For a licentious and mutinous people may easily be brought back to good conduct by the influence and persuasion of a good man, but an evil-minded prince is not amenable to such influences, and therefore there is no other remedy against him but cold steel. We may judge then from this of the relative defects of the one and the other; if words suffice to correct those of the people, whilst those of the prince can only be remedied by violence, no one can fail to see that where the greater remedy is required, there also the defects must be greater. The follies which a people commits at the moment of its greatest license are not what is most to be feared; it is not the immediate evil that may result from them that inspires apprehension, but the fact that such general confusion might afford the opportunity for a tyrant to seize the government. But with evil-disposed princes the contrary is the case; it is the immediate present that causes fear, and there is hope only in the future; for men will persuade themselves that the termination of his wicked life may give them a chance of

liberty. Thus we see the difference between the one and the other to be, that the one touches the present and the other the future. The excesses of the people are directed against those whom they suspect of interfering with the public good; whilst those of princes are against apprehended interference with their individual interests. The general prejudice against the people results from the fact that everybody can freely and fearlessly speak ill of them in mass, even whilst they are at the height of their power; but a prince can only be spoken of with the greatest circumspection and apprehension. And as the subject leads me to it, I deem it not amiss to examine in the following chapter whether alliances with a republic or with a prince are most to be trusted.

### Chapter LIX.

#### LEAGUES AND ALLIANCES WITH REPUBLICS ARE MORE TO BE TRUSTED THAN THOSE WITH PRINCES

As it is of daily occurrence that princes or republics contract leagues or friendships with each other, or that in like manner treaties and alliances are formed between a republic and a prince, it seems to me proper to examine whose faith is most constant and most to be relied upon, that of a republic or that of a prince. In examining the whole subject I believe that in many instances they are equal, but that in others there is a difference; and I believe, moreover, that agreements which are the result of force will no more be observed by a prince than by a republic, and, where either the one or the other is apprehensive of losing their state, that to

save it both will break their faith and be guilty of ingratitude. Demetrius, called the Conqueror of Cities, had conferred infinite benefits upon the Athenians. It happened that, having been defeated by his enemies, he took refuge in Athens as a city that was friendly to him, and which he had laid under obligations; but the Athenians refused to receive him, which gave Demetrius more pain than the loss of his men and the destruction of his army. Pompey, after his defeat by Cæsar in Thessaly, took refuge in Egypt with Ptolemy, whom on a former occasion he had reinstated in his kingdom, but was treacherously put to death by him. Both these instances are attributable to the same reasons; yet we see that the republic acted with more humanity and inflicted less injury than the prince. Wherever fear dominates, there we shall find equal want of faith in both, although the same influence may cause either a prince or a republic to keep faith at the risk of ruin. For it may well happen that the prince is the ally of some powerful potentate, who for the moment may not be able to assist him, but who, the prince may hope, will be able to reinstate him in his possessions; or he may believe that, having acted as his partisan, his powerful ally will make no treaties or alliances with his enemies. Such was the fate of those princes of the kingdom of Naples who adhered to the French party. And with regard to republics this occurred with Saguntum in Spain, which hazarded her own safety for the sake of adhering to the Roman party; and with Florence when in the year 1512 she followed the fortune of the French. Taking all things together now, I believe that in such cases which involve imminent peril there will be found somewhat more of stability in republics than in princes. For even if the republics were inspired by the same feelings and intentions as the princes, yet the fact of their movements being slower will

make them take more time in forming resolutions, and therefore they will less promptly break their faith.

Alliances are broken from considerations of interest; and in this respect republics are much more careful in the observance of treaties than princes. It would be easy to cite instances where princes for the smallest advantage have broken their faith, and where the greatest advantages have failed to induce republics to disregard theirs; as in the case of the proposal of Themistocles to the Athenians, when in a general assembly he told them that he had something to suggest that would be of greatest advantage to their country; but that it was of such a nature that he could not disclose it publicly without depriving them of the opportunity of availing of it. The people of Athens therefore appointed Aristides to whom Themistocles might communicate his suggestion, upon which they would decide according to the judgment of Aristides. Themistocles thereupon showed him that the fleet of united Greece, relying upon the treaty still in force, was in such position that they could easily make themselves masters of it or destroy it, which would make the Athenians arbiters of all Greece. Whereupon Aristides reported to the people that the proposed plan of Themistocles was highly advantageous but most dishonest, and therefore the people absolutely rejected it; which would not have been done by Philip of Macedon, nor many other princes, who would only have looked to the advantages, and who have gained more by their perfidy than by any other means.

I do not speak of the breaking of treaties because of an occasional non-observance, that being an ordinary matter; but I speak of the breaking of treaties from some extraordinary cause; and here I believe, from what has been said, that the people are less frequently guilty of this than princes, and are therefore more to be trusted.

## SECOND BOOK

### INTRODUCTION

MEN ever praise the olden time, and find fault with the present, though often without reason. They are such partisans of the past that they extol not only the times which they know only by the accounts left of them by historians, but, having grown old, they also laud all they remember to have seen in their youth. Their opinion is generally erroneous in that respect, and I think the reasons which cause this illusion are various. The first I believe to be the fact that we never know the whole truth about the past, and very frequently writers conceal such events as would reflect disgrace upon their century, whilst they magnify and amplify those that lend lustre to it. The majority of authors obey the fortune of conquerors to that degree that, by way of rendering their victories more glorious, they exaggerate not only the valiant deeds of the victor, but also of the vanquished; so that future generations of the countries of both will have cause to wonder at those men and times, and are obliged to praise and admire them to the utmost. Another reason is that men's hatreds generally spring from fear or envy. Now, these two powerful reasons of hatred do not exist for us with regard to the past, which can no longer inspire either apprehension or envy. But it is very different with the affairs of the present, in which we ourselves are either actors or spectators, and of which we have a complete

What is politics? or the affairs of men  
They do not "shine by their intrinsic merits"

knowledge, nothing being concealed from us; and knowing the good together with many other things that are displeasing to us, we are forced to conclude that the present is inferior to the past, though in reality it may be much more worthy of glory and fame. I do not speak of matters pertaining to the arts, which shine by their intrinsic merits, which time can neither add to nor diminish; but I speak of such things as pertain to the actions and manners of men, of which we do not possess such manifest evidence.

I repeat, then, that this practice of praising and decrying is very general, though it cannot be said that it is always erroneous; for sometimes our judgment is of necessity correct, human affairs being in a state of perpetual movement, always either ascending or declining. We see, for instance, a city or country with a government well organized by some man of superior ability; for a time it progresses and attains a great prosperity through the talents of its lawgiver. Now, if any one living at such a period should praise the past more than the time in which he lives, he would certainly be deceiving himself; and this error will be found due to the reasons above indicated. But should he live in that city or country at the period after it shall have passed the zenith of its glory and in the time of its decline, then he would not be wrong in praising the past. Reflecting now upon the course of human affairs, I think that, as a whole, the world remains very much in the same condition, and the good in it always balances the evil; but the good and the evil change from one country to another, as we learn from the history of those ancient kingdoms that differed from each other in manners, whilst the world at large remained the same. The only difference being, that all the virtues that first found a place in Assyria were thence transferred to Media, and afterwards passed to Persia, and from there they came into

much as they have equally seen both the one and the other. This would be true, if men at the different periods of their lives had the same judgment and the same appetites. But as these vary (though the times do not), things cannot appear the same to men who have other tastes, other delights, and other considerations in age from what they had in youth. For as men when they age lose their strength and energy, whilst their prudence and judgment improve, so the same things that in youth appeared to them supportable and good, will of necessity, when they have grown old, seem to them insupportable and evil; and when they should blame their own judgment they find fault with the times. Moreover, as human desires are insatiable, (because their nature is to have and to do everything whilst fortune limits their possessions and capacity of enjoyment,) this gives rise to a constant discontent in the human mind and a weariness of the things they possess; and it is this which makes them decry the present, praise the past, and desire the future, and all this without any reasonable motive. I know not, then, whether I deserve to be classed with those who deceive themselves, if in these Discourses I shall laud too much the times of ancient Rome and censure those of our own day. And truly, if the virtues that ruled then and the vices that prevail now were not as clear as the sun, I should be more reticent in my expressions, lest I should fall into the very error for which I reproach others. But the matter being so manifest that everybody sees it, I shall boldly and openly say what I think of the former times and of the present, so as to excite in the minds of the young men who may read my writings the desire to avoid the evils of the latter, and to prepare themselves to imitate the virtues of the former, whenever fortune presents them the occasion. For it is the duty of an honest man to teach others that good which the

malignity of the times and of fortune has prevented his doing himself; so that amongst the many capable ones whom he has instructed, some one perhaps, more favored by Heaven, may perform it.

Having in the preceding Book treated of the conduct of the Romans in matters relating to their internal affairs, I shall in this Book speak of what the Roman people did in relation to the aggrandizement of their empire.

Chapter I

THE GREATNESS OF THE ROMANS WAS DUE MORE TO THEIR VALOR  
AND ABILITY THAN TO GOOD FORTUNE

MANY authors, amongst them that most serious writer Plutarch, have held the opinion that the people of Rome were more indebted in the acquisition of their empire to the favors of Fortune than to their own merits. And amongst other reasons adduced by Plutarch is, that by their own confession it appears that the Roman people ascribed all their victories to Fortune, because they built more temples to that goddess than to any other deity. It seems that Livius accepts that opinion, for he rarely makes a Roman speak of valor without coupling fortune with it. Now I do not share that opinion at all, and do not believe that it can be sustained; for if no other republic has ever been known to make such conquests, it is admitted that none other was so well organized for that purpose as Rome. It was the valor of her armies that achieved those conquests, but it was the wisdom of her conduct and the nature of her institutions, as established by her first legislator, that enabled her to preserve these acquisitions, as we shall more fully set forth in the succeeding chapters. But it is said that the fact that the Roman people never had two important wars on hand at the same time was due more to their good fortune than their wisdom; for they did not engage in war with the Latins until they had beaten the Samnites so completely that the Romans themselves had to protect them with their arms; nor

this war was finished, the Romans were not engaged in any other of importance during a period of twenty years; for they only fought the Ligurians and a remnant of Gauls who were in Lombardy. And thus they remained until the second Carthaginian war broke out, and occupied them for sixteen years. When this had been most gloriously concluded, the Macedonian war occurred; and after that the war with Antiochus and Asia. When these had been victoriously terminated, there remained in the whole world neither prince nor republic that could, alone or unitedly, have resisted the Roman power. Considering now the succession of these wars, prior to the last victory, and the manner in which they were conducted, we cannot fail to recognize in them a combination of good fortune with the greatest valor and prudence. And if we examine into the cause of that good fortune we shall readily find it; for it is most certain that when a prince or a people attain that degree of reputation that all the neighboring princes and peoples fear to attack him, none of them will ever venture to do it except under the force of necessity; so that it will be, as it were, at the option of that potent prince or people to make war upon such neighboring powers as may seem advantageous, whilst adroitly keeping the others quiet. And this he can easily do, partly by the respect they have for his power, and partly because they are deceived by the means employed to keep them quiet. And other powers that are more distant and have no immediate intercourse with him, will look upon this as a matter too remote for them to be concerned about, and will continue in this error until the conflagration spreads to their door, when they will have no means for extinguishing it except their own forces, which will no longer suffice when the fire has once gained the upper hand. I will say nothing of how the Samnites re-

mained indifferent spectators when they saw the Volscians and Equeans defeated by the Romans; and not to be too prolix I will at once come to the Carthaginians, who had already acquired great power and reputation when the Romans were fighting with the Samnites and the Tuscans; for they were masters of all Africa, they held Sardinia and Sicily, and had already a foothold in Spain. Their own power, and the fact that they were remote from the confines of Rome, made them indifferent about attacking the Romans, or succoring the Samnites and Tuscans, but they did what men are apt to do with regard to a growing power, they rather sought by an alliance with the Romans to secure their friendship. Nor did they become aware of the error they had committed until after the Romans, having subjugated all the nations situated between them and the Carthaginians, began to contest the dominion of Sicily and Spain with them. The same thing happened to the Gauls as to the Carthaginians, and also to King Philip of Macedon and to Antiochus. Each one of these believed that, whilst the Romans were occupied with the other, they would be overcome, and that then it would be time enough either by peace or war to secure themselves against the Romans. So that I believe that the good fortune which followed the Romans in these parts would have equally attended other princes who had acted as the Romans did, and had displayed the same courage and sagacity.

It would be proper and interesting here to show the course which the Romans adopted when they entered the territory of an enemy, but that we have already explained this at length in our treatise of "The Prince." I will only say in a few words that they always endeavored to have some friend in these new countries who could aid them by opening the way for them to enter, and also serve as a means for re-

more individuals, those for whose benefit the thing is done are so numerous that they can always carry the measure against the few that are injured by it. But the very reverse happens where there is a prince whose private interests are generally in opposition to those of the city, whilst the measures taken for the benefit of the city are seldom deemed personally advantageous by the prince. This state of things soon leads to a tyranny, the least evil of which is to check the advance of the city in its career of prosperity, so that it grows neither in power nor wealth, but on the contrary rather retrogrades. And if fate should have it that the tyrant is enterprising, and by his courage and valor extends his dominions, it will never be for the benefit of the city, but only for his own; for he will never bestow honors and office upon the good and brave citizens over whom he tyrannizes, so that he may not have occasion to suspect and fear them. Nor will he make the states which he conquers subject or tributary to the city of which he is the despot, because it would not be to his advantage to make that city powerful, but it will always be for his interest to keep the state disunited, so that each place and country shall recognize him only as master; thus he alone, and not his country, profits by his conquests. Those who desire to have this opinion confirmed by many other arguments, need but read Xenophon's treatise "On Tyranny."

It is no wonder, then, that the ancients hated tyranny and loved freedom, and that the very name of Liberty should have been held in such esteem by them; as was shown by the Syracusans when Hieronymus, the nephew of Hiero, was killed. When his death became known to his army, which was near Syracuse, it caused at first some disturbances, and they were about committing violence upon his murderers; but when they learnt that the cry of Liberty

had been raised in Syracuse, they were delighted, and instantly returned to order. Their fury against the tyrannicides was quelled, and they thought only of how a free government might be established in Syracuse. Nor can we wonder that the people indulge in extraordinary revenge against those who have robbed them of their liberty; of which we could cite many instances, but will quote only one that occurred in Corcyra, a city of Greece, during the Peloponnesian war. Greece was at that time divided into two parties, one of which adhered to the Athenians, and the other to the Spartans, and a similar division of parties existed in most of the Greek cities. It happened that in Corcyra the nobles, being the stronger party, seized upon the liberties of the people; but with the assistance of the Athenians the popular party recovered its power, and, having seized the nobles, they tied their hands behind their backs, and threw them into a prison large enough to hold them all. They thence took eight or ten at a time, under pretence of sending them into exile in different directions; but instead of that they killed them with many cruelties. When the remainder became aware of this, they resolved if possible to escape such an ignominious death; and having armed themselves as well as they could, they resisted those who attempted to enter the prison; but when the people heard this disturbance, they pulled down the roof and upper portion of the prison, and suffocated the nobles within under its ruins. Many such notable and horrible cases occurred in that country, which shows that the people will avenge their lost liberty with more energy than when it is merely threatened.

Reflecting now as to whence it came that in ancient times the people were more devoted to liberty than in the present, I believe that it resulted from this, that men were stronger in those days, which I believe to be attributable to the differ-

*Character & action = suffrage doing  
Honor — possessions  
courage gains  
THE DISCOURSES*

ence of education, founded upon the difference of their religion and ours. For, as our religion teaches us the truth and the true way of life, it causes us to attach less value to the honors and possessions of this world; whilst the Pagans, esteeming those things as the highest good, were more energetic and ferocious in their actions. We may observe this also in most of their institutions, beginning with the magnificence of their sacrifices as compared with the humility of ours, which are gentle solemnities rather than magnificent ones, and have nothing of energy or ferocity in them, whilst in theirs there was no lack of pomp and show, to which was superadded the ferocious and bloody nature of the sacrifice by the slaughter of many animals, and the familiarity with this terrible sight assimilated the nature of men to their sacrificial ceremonies. Besides this, the Pagan religion deified only men who had achieved great glory, such as commanders of armies and chiefs of republics, whilst ours glorifies more the humble and contemplative men than the men of action. Our religion, moreover, places the supreme happiness in humility, lowliness, and a contempt for worldly objects, whilst the other, on the contrary, places the supreme good in grandeur of soul, strength of body, and all such other qualities as render men formidable; and if our religion claims of us fortitude of soul, it is more to enable us to suffer than to achieve great deeds.

These principles seem to me to have made men feeble, and caused them to become an easy prey to evil-minded men, who can control them more securely, seeing that the great body of men, for the sake of gaining Paradise, are more disposed to endure injuries than to avenge them. And although it would seem that the world has become effeminate and Heaven disarmed, yet this arises unquestionably from the baseness of men, who have interpreted our religion

according to the promptings of indolence rather than those of virtue. For if we were to reflect that our religion permits us to exalt and defend our country, we should see that according to it we ought also to love and honor our country, and prepare ourselves so as to be capable of defending her. It is this education, then, and this false interpretation of our religion, that is the cause of there not being so many republics nowadays as there were anciently; and that there is no longer the same love of liberty amongst the people now as there was then. I believe, however, that another reason for this will be found in the fact that the Roman Empire, by force of arms, destroyed all the republics and free cities; and although that empire was afterwards itself dissolved, yet these cities could not reunite themselves nor reorganize their civil institutions, except in a very few instances.

Be that, however, as it may, the Romans found everywhere a league of republics, well armed for the most obstinate defence of their liberties, showing that it required the rare ability and extreme valor of the Romans to subjugate them. And to give but one example of this, we will confine ourselves to the case of the Samnites, which really seems marvelous. This people Titus Livius himself admits to have been so powerful and valiant in arms that, until the time of the Consul Papirius Cursor, grandson of the first Papirius, a period of forty years, they were able to resist the Romans, notwithstanding their many defeats, the destruction of their cities, and much slaughter. That country, which was then so thickly inhabited and contained so many cities, is now almost a desert; and yet it was originally so powerful and well governed that it would have been unconquerable by any other than Roman valor. It is easy to discover the cause of this different state of things, for it all comes from this, that formerly that people enjoyed freedom, and now they

Now, as all the actions of men resemble those of nature, it is neither natural nor possible that a slender trunk should support great branches; and thus a small republic cannot conquer and hold cities and kingdoms that are larger and more powerful than herself, and if she does conquer them, she will experience the same fate as a tree whose branches are larger than the trunk, which will not be able to support them, and will be bent by every little breeze that blows. Such was the case with Sparta when she had conquered all the cities of Greece; but no sooner did Thebes revolt, than all the other cities revolted likewise, and the trunk was quickly left without any branches. This could not have happened to Rome, whose trunk was so strong that it could easily support all its branches. The above modes of proceeding, then, together with others of which we shall speak hereafter, made Rome great and most powerful, which Titus Livius points out in these few words: "Rome grew, whilst Alba was ruined."

#### Chapter IV

THE ANCIENT REPUBLICS EMPLOYED THREE DIFFERENT METHODS  
FOR AGGRANDIZING THEMSELVES

WHOEVER has studied ancient history will have found that the republics had three methods of aggrandizement. One of these was that observed by the ancient Tuscans, namely, to form a confederation of several republics, neither of which had any eminence over the other in rank or authority; and in their conquests of other cities they associated these with themselves, in a similar manner to that practised by the Swiss nowadays, and as was done anciently in Greece by the

Achaeans and the Ætolians. But as the Romans had many wars with the Tuscans, I will (by way of illustrating the first method) give a more particular account of these people. Before the establishment of the Roman empire, the Tuscans were very powerful in Italy, both by land and by sea; and although we have no particular history of them, yet there are some traditions and vestiges of their greatness; and it is known that they sent a colony to the shores of the sea north of them, which they called Adria, and which became so important that it gave its name to that sea, which is still called the "Adriatic." It is also known that they subjected to their authority the entire country stretching from the Tiber to the foot of the Alps, comprising the main body of Italy; although two hundred years before the Romans became so powerful the Tuscans lost their dominion over that part of the country which is now called Lombardy. This province had been seized and occupied by the Gauls, who either from necessity, or attracted by the soft climate and the fruits of Italy, and especially the wine, came there led by their chief Bellovesus; and having routed and driven out its inhabitants, they established themselves there and built numerous cities, and gave that country their own name of Gallia, which it bore until subjugated by the Romans. The Tuscans then lived in perfect equality, and employed for their aggrandizement the first method mentioned above. Their confederation consisted of twelve cities, amongst which were Clusium, Veii, Fiesole, Volterra, and others, who governed their empire; their conquests, however, could not extend beyond Italy, a considerable part of which remained still independent of them for reasons which we will state further on.

The second method employed by the ancient republics for their aggrandizement was to make associates of other states;

reserving to themselves, however, the rights of sovereignty, the seat of empire, and the glory of their enterprises. This was the method observed by the Romans. The third method was to make the conquered people immediately subjects, and not associates, and was practised by the Spartans and Athenians. Of these three methods the latter is perfectly useless, as was proved by these two republics, who perished from no other cause than from having made conquests which they could not maintain. For to undertake the government of conquered cities by violence, especially when they have been accustomed to the enjoyment of liberty, is a most difficult and troublesome task; and unless you are powerfully armed, you will never secure their obedience nor be able to govern them. And to enable you to be thus powerful it becomes necessary to have associates, by whose aid you can increase the population of your own city; and as neither Sparta nor Athens did either of these things, their conquests proved perfectly useless. Rome, on the contrary, followed the second plan, and did both things, and consequently rose to such exceeding power; and as she was the only state that persistently adhered to this system, so she was also the only one that attained such great power. Having created for herself many associates throughout Italy, she granted to them in many respects an almost entire equality, always, however, reserving to herself the seat of empire and the right of command; so that these associates (without being themselves aware of it) devoted their own efforts and blood to their own subjugation. For so soon as the Romans began to lead their armies beyond the limits of Italy, they reduced other kingdoms to provinces, and made subjects of those who, having been accustomed to live under kings, were indifferent to becoming subjects of another; and from having Roman governors, and having been con-

it. And this has caused me to consider as to whence this oblivion of things arises, which I propose to discuss in the following chapter.

## Chapter V

THE CHANGES OF RELIGION AND OF LANGUAGES, TOGETHER WITH  
THE OCCURRENCE OF DELUGES AND PESTILENCES, DESTROY THE  
RECORD OF THINGS

To those philosophers who maintain that the world has existed from eternity, we might reply, that, if it were really of such antiquity, there would reasonably be some record beyond five thousand years, were it not that we see how the records of time are destroyed by various causes, some being the acts of men and some of Heaven. Those that are the acts of men are the changes of religion and of language; for when a new sect springs up, that is to say a new religion, the first effort is (by way of asserting itself and gaining influence) to destroy the old or existing one; and when it happens that the founders of the new religion speak a different language, then the destruction of the old religion is easily effected. This we know from observing the proceedings of the Christians against the heathen religion; for they destroyed all its institutions and all its ceremonies, and effaced all record of the ancient theology. It is true that they did not succeed in destroying entirely the record of the glorious deeds of the illustrious men of the ancient creed, for they were forced to keep up the Latin language by the necessity of writing their new laws in that tongue; but if they could have written them in a new language (bearing in mind their other persecutions), there would have been no

record whatever left of preceding events. Whoever reads the proceedings of St. Gregory, and of the other heads of the Christian religion, will see with what obstinacy they persecuted all ancient memorials, burning the works of the historians and of the poets, destroying the statues and images and despoiling everything else that gave but an indication of antiquity. So that, if they had added a new language to this persecution, everything relating to previous events would in a very short time have been sunk in oblivion.

It is reasonable to suppose that what the Christians practised towards the Pagans, these practised in like manner upon their predecessors. And as the religions changed two or three times in six thousand years, all memory of the things done before that time was lost; and if nevertheless some vestiges of it remain, they are regarded as fabulous, and are believed by no one; as is the case with the history of Diodorus Siculus, who gives an account of some forty or fifty thousand years, yet is generally looked upon as being mendacious, and I believe with justice.

As to causes produced by Heaven, they are such as destroy the human race, and reduce the inhabitants of some parts of the world to a very few in number; such as pestilence, famine, or inundations. Of this the latter are the most important, partly because they are most universal, and partly because the few that escape are chiefly ignorant mountaineers, who, having no knowledge of antiquity themselves, cannot transmit any to posterity. And should there be amongst those who escape any that have such knowledge, they conceal or pervert it in their own fashion, for the purpose of gaining influence and reputation; so that there remains to their successors only just so much as they were disposed to write, and no more. And that such inundations, pestilences, and famines occur cannot be doubted, both because all his-

## Chapter VIII

## THE REASONS WHY PEOPLE LEAVE THEIR OWN COUNTRY TO SPREAD OVER OTHERS

SINCE we have discussed above the manner in which the Romans conducted their wars, and how the Tuscans were attacked by the Gauls, it seems to me not foreign to the subject to point out that there are two different kinds of war. The one springs from the ambition of princes or republics that seek to extend their empire; such were the wars of Alexander the Great, and those of the Romans, and those which two hostile powers carry on against each other. These wars are dangerous, but never go so far as to drive all its inhabitants out of a province, because the conqueror is satisfied with the submission of the people, and generally leaves them their dwellings and possessions, and even the enjoyment of their own institutions. The other kind of war is when an entire people, constrained by famine or war, leave their country with their families for the purpose of seeking a new home in a new country, not for the purpose of subjecting it to their dominion as in the first case, but with the intention of taking absolute possession of it themselves and driving out or killing its original inhabitants. This kind of war is most frightful and cruel; and it is of this kind of war that Sallust speaks at the end of the history of Jugurtha, when he says that, after Jugurtha was vanquished, they heard of the movements of the Gauls, who were coming into Italy. He then tells us that the Romans had combated all the other nations only for the purpose of subjecting them to their empire, but that in their contest with the Gauls each side

fought for its very existence. A prince or a republic that assails another country is satisfied merely to kill its chiefs, but when an entire people aims to possess itself of a country and to live upon that which gives support to its original inhabitants, it must necessarily destroy them all.

The Romans had three such most dangerous wars to sustain. The first was when Rome itself was taken by the same Gauls, who, as we have said, had taken Lombardy from the Tuscans, and established themselves in that country. Titus Livius assigns two causes for this invasion: the first, which I have already mentioned, was that the Gauls were tempted by the delicious fruits, and especially the wine of Italy, which they had not in their own country; the second was that Gaul was so overpopulated that the country could not support all its inhabitants, and therefore its chiefs deemed it necessary that a portion of them should go in search of a new country for their dwelling-place. Having formed that resolution they chose as captains of those who were to leave Bellovesus and Sicovesus, two of their princes, of whom the first came into Italy and the other went to Spain. It was this descent of Bellovesus into Italy that led to the occupation of Lombardy, and afterwards to the first attack of the Gauls upon Rome. The second war with the Gauls occurred soon after the first Carthaginian war, and it was then that the Romans slaughtered over two hundred thousand Gauls between Piombino and Pisa. The third war of this kind was when the Teutons and the Cimbrians came into Italy, who, after having defeated several Roman armies, were themselves utterly vanquished by Marius. The Romans then were victorious in these three most perilous wars; and it required all their energy to enable them to be successful; for we see that when their armies afterwards lost their ancient valor, the Roman Empire was destroyed by similar hordes, such as the Goths,

improved their countries that their population can exist there with comfort, and therefore have no occasion for migrating. And furthermore the men of these two nations are most warlike, and thus serve as a dike and bulwark to keep the Scythians, whose country joins theirs, from presuming to pass them. There have been also at times great movements amongst the Tartar hordes, but these have been checked by the Hungarians and the Poles, who have often boasted that had it not been for their armies both Italy and the Church would many a time have felt the pressure of these Tartar hordes. Let this suffice of those people.

## Chapter IX

### WHAT THE CAUSES ARE THAT MOST FREQUENTLY PROVOKE WAR BETWEEN SOVEREIGNS

THE cause of the war between the Romans and the Samnites, who had for a long time been allies, was that which generally produces ruptures between great powers. This cause is sometimes due to accident, or it results from the policy of the party that desires to make the war. Between the Romans and the Samnites the cause of war was accidental; for the intention of the Samnites in attacking the Sidicians, and afterwards the Campanians, was not to provoke war with the Romans. But the Campanians, being hard pressed, appealed for help to Rome, against the wishes both of the Romans and the Samnites, and gave themselves entirely to the Romans, who for their defence had to take the war upon themselves, believing that they could not with honor avoid it. For although they felt that it was not reasonable that they should defend the Campanians against the Samnites, who

ous enemy at so great a distance, nor carried on the war there with the same advantages. The Cimbrians routed a Roman army in Germany, and the Romans could not repair the disaster; but when the Cimbrians came into Italy, the Romans were able to unite all their forces and destroyed the Cimbrians. The Swiss are easily beaten when away from home, where they cannot send more than thirty or forty thousand men; but it is most difficult to overcome them at home, where they are able to gather together a hundred thousand men.

I conclude then, again, that a prince who has his people well armed and disciplined for war should always await a powerful and dangerous enemy at home, and should not go to meet him at a distance. But a prince whose subjects are unarmed, and the country unaccustomed to war, should always keep it as far away from home as possible; and thus both one and the other will best defend themselves, each in his own way.

### Chapter XIII

#### CUNNING AND DECEIT WILL SERVE A MAN BETTER THAN FORCE TO RISE FROM A BASE CONDITION TO GREAT FORTUNE

I BELIEVE it to be most true that it seldom happens that men rise from low condition to high rank without employing either force or fraud, unless that rank should be attained either by gift or inheritance. Nor do I believe that force alone will ever be found to suffice, whilst it will often be the case that cunning alone serves the purpose; as is clearly seen by whoever reads the life of Philip of Macedon, or that of Agathocles the Sicilian, and many others, who from the

peace dictated to them. As this victory greatly increased the reputation of the Romans with the more distant princes, who felt the weight of their name before experiencing that of their arms, so it excited envy and apprehension in those who had seen and felt their arms, amongst whom were the Latins. And this jealousy and fear were so powerful that not only the Latins, but also the colonies which the Romans had established in Latium, together with the Campanians, whose defence the Romans had but a short time previously undertaken, conspired together against the Romans. The Latins began the war in the way we have shown that most wars are begun, not by attacking the Romans, but by defending the Sidicians from the Samnites, against whom the latter were making war with the permission of the Romans. And that it is true that the Latins began the war because they had at last become aware of the bad faith of the Romans is demonstrated by Titus Livius, when at an assembly of the Latin people he puts the following words into the mouth of Annius Setinus, a Latin Prætor: "For if now we can bear servitude under the specious name of equal confederates," &c.

We see therefore that the Romans in the early beginning of their power already employed fraud, which it has ever been necessary for those to practise who from small beginnings wish to rise to the highest degree of power; and then it is the less censurable the more it is concealed, as was that practised by the Romans.

## Chapter XIX

CONQUESTS MADE BY REPUBLICS THAT ARE NOT WELL CONSTITUTED, AND DO NOT FOLLOW IN THEIR CONDUCT THE EXAMPLE OF THE ROMANS, ARE MORE CONDUCIVE TO THEIR RUIN THAN TO THEIR ADVANCEMENT

THE false opinions, founded upon bad examples, that have been introduced amongst us in this corrupt century, prevent men from liberating themselves from the force of their accustomed habits. Would it have been possible thirty years ago to have persuaded an Italian that ten thousand infantry could have attacked, in an open plain, ten thousand cavalry and as many infantry? and not only to have fought, but actually to have defeated them, as we have seen that the Swiss did at the battle of Novara, already referred to? And although history is full of such examples, yet they would not have believed it; and if they had, they would have said that nowadays the troops are better armed, and that a squadron of mounted men would be able to charge a solid wall of rock, and therefore could not be resisted by mere infantry. And with such erroneous arguments their judgments are corrupted, forgetting that Lucullus, with a comparatively small body of infantry, routed one hundred and fifty thousand cavalry of King Tigranes, amongst which there was a corps perfectly similar to the men-at-arms of the present day. The fallacy of these opinions had to be demonstrated by the example of the troops of the Ultramontanes. And as we have to admit the truth of what history tells us in regard to the infantry of the ancients, so we ought also to believe in the truth and utility of their other institutions; thus repub-

*Powers.*

lics and princes would have committed fewer errors, and would have been stronger in resisting the assaults of any enemy that might unawares have come upon them. They would not have put their hope in flight, and those who had the direction of the government of states would have been better able to point out the means of aggrandizement, or the means of preservation. They would have believed that to increase the number of their citizens, to gain allies instead of subjects, to establish colonies to guard the conquered territories, to turn all booty over to the public treasury, to subdue the enemy by incursions and battles and by sieges, to keep the state rich and the individual citizen poor, and above all to maintain a well-disciplined army,—that all these are the true means of aggrandizing a republic and founding a great empire. And if these means had not suited them, they would at least have been convinced that acquisitions by any other means would lead to the ruin of a state; they would have put a curb upon all ambition by regulating the internal affairs of their city by good laws and customs, prohibiting all conquests and confining themselves merely to providing for their security and defence; as is done by the republics of Germany, who live in that manner, and have thus enjoyed their liberty for a long time.

Nevertheless (as I have said when discussing the difference between a state organized for conquest and one that aims only at its own preservation) it is impossible for a republic to remain long in the quiet enjoyment of her freedom within her limited confines; for even if she does not molest others, others will molest her, and from being thus molested will spring the desire and necessity of conquests, and even if she has no foreign foes, she will find domestic enemies amongst her own citizens, for such seems to be the inevitable fate of all large cities. The fact that the free cities of Ger-

they had less excuse, having before their eyes the method practised by the Romans, which they might have followed, whilst the Romans, having no precedents to guide them, had to develop the system exclusively by their own sagacity. Moreover acquisitions sometimes prove most injurious even to a well-regulated republic, when they consist either in a city or province that has been enervated by pleasures and luxury; for these indulgences and habits become contagious by intercourse with the inhabitants. This happened to the Romans when they took Capua, and afterwards also to Hannibal; and if this city had been at a greater distance from Rome, and if the excesses of the soldiers had not been so promptly corrected, or if Rome herself had at that time been in the least degree corrupted, the acquisition of Capua would undoubtedly have proved the ruin of the Roman republic. Titus Livius bears witness to this in the following words: "Capua, the seat of all sensual pleasures and least conducive to military discipline, had already turned the captivated spirits of the soldiers from the remembrance of their own country." And truly cities or provinces of similar character revenge themselves upon their conquerors without battles and without blood; for by communicating to them their own corrupt habits and manners, they expose them to being vanquished by whoever chooses to attack them. Juvenal well understood this when he says in one of his satires that the conquest of foreign countries had caused the Romans to adopt foreign manners and customs, and that, in exchange for their accustomed frugality and other most admirable virtues, "Gluttony and luxury dwell there, and will avenge the conquered universe." If then conquests proved so very nearly pernicious to Rome, in the days when she displayed so much wisdom and virtue in her conduct, what would the consequence be to those who deviate so far

from that example? And what would it be, if to the other errors (which we have discussed so fully above) they add the employment of mercenaries or auxiliary troops? The dangers so frequently resulting from that we will point out in the next chapter.

## Chapter XX

### OF THE DANGERS TO WHICH PRINCES AND REPUBLICS ARE EXPOSED THAT EMPLOY AUXILIARY OR MERCENARY TROOPS

WERE it not that I have in another work of mine treated at length of the uselessness of mercenaries and auxiliaries, and of the advantage of having national troops, I should discuss that subject more fully here; as it is, however, I shall refer to it but briefly, for I do not think that I ought to pass it over entirely, having found a most striking example of it related by Titus Livius. I understand by auxiliary troops such as a prince or republic sends to your aid, but which are paid, and the commander of which is appointed by the prince or republic. Titus Livius relates the following. The Romans had on different occasions defeated the Samnites with the troops which had been sent from Rome to aid the Capuans; and having relieved these of the war of the Samnites, they returned to Rome, leaving, however, two legions in the country for the protection of the Capuans, who had been deprived of their garrison, so as to save their city from falling again a prey to the Samnites. These legions, plunged in idleness, became so fond of Capua that, forgetful of their own country and of the respect due to the Senate, they conspired to make themselves masters of that country, which they had defended with their valor, deem-

towards the others. It was this that induced the Pistojans to place themselves voluntarily under the government of Florence, whilst the others always have made, and continue to make, the most strenuous efforts to avoid becoming subject to the Florentines. And doubtless, if the Florentines had attached their neighbors to themselves by treaties of amity, or by rendering them assistance, instead of frightening them off, they would now be the undisputed masters of Tuscany. I do not mean to say by this, however, that arms and force are never to be employed, but that they should be reserved as the last resort when other means fail.

*(false)* & illus  
Chapter XXII

HOW OFTEN THE JUDGMENTS OF MEN IN IMPORTANT MATTERS  
ARE ERRONEOUS

THOSE who have been present at any deliberative assemblies of men will have observed how erroneous their opinions often are; and in fact, unless they are directed by superior men, they are apt to be contrary to all reason. But as superior men in corrupt republics (especially in periods of peace and quiet) are generally hated, either from jealousy or the ambition of others, it follows that the preference is given to what common error approves, or to what is suggested by men who are more desirous of pleasing the masses than of promoting the general good. When, however, adversity comes, then the error is discovered, and then the people fly for safety to those whom in prosperity they had neglected, as we shall show at length in its proper place. Certain events also easily mislead men who have not a great deal of experience, for they have in them so much that resembles

*comune inganno*

*inganno*

reduced who consider themselves oppressed by the terms of peace, and who, if they wished to make war, would have to yield themselves a prey to their allies, or victims to their enemies. And all this results from following evil counsels, and from taking a wrong course because of not having estimated their forces correctly, as has been shown above. Princes or republics who form a proper estimate of their forces will hardly ever be reduced to a condition similar to that of the Latins, who made terms with the Romans when they ought not to have done it, and declared war when they should not have done it; and so managed that both the friendship and the enmity of Rome proved equally injurious to them. The Latins were defeated and reduced to the greatest extremities, first by Manlius Torquatus, and afterwards by Camillus, who after having compelled them to surrender at discretion, and having placed Roman garrisons in all their towns and taken hostages from each, returned to Rome and reported to the Senate that all Latium was in the hands of the Roman people. And as the action of the Roman Senate on this occasion was very remarkable and worthy of being noted, so that it may serve as an example to any prince to whom a similar occasion may be presented, I shall quote the very words which Livius puts into the mouth of Camillus, which show both the manner in which the Romans proceeded in their aggrandizement, and how in all decisions of state they avoided half-way measures and always went to extremes. For government consists mainly in so keeping your subjects that they shall be neither able nor disposed to injure you; and this is done by depriving them of all means of injuring you, or by bestowing such benefits upon them that it would not be reasonable for them to desire any change of fortune. This will be best understood, first from the proposition of Camillus, and then from the decision of the Senate

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the city of Florence, and given her those fields which she lacked for her subsistence. But they took that middle course which is pernicious in the extreme, when the question to be decided affects the fate of men. They exiled a portion of the Aretines, and a portion of them they condemned to death; and all of them were deprived of their ancient rank and honors, which they had enjoyed in their city, and yet the city itself was left entire. And when some one in the public councils advised the destruction of Arezzo, those who were deemed the most prudent replied, that it would be but little honor for the republic to destroy that city, inasmuch as it would have the appearance of their having done it because Florence lacked the power to hold it. This was one of those specious reasons that seem true, but are not; on the same principle we should not be able to kill a parricide, or any other criminal or infamous person, lest it should be deemed dishonorable to the prince to show that he lacked force to restrain a single person. And those who reason thus do not see that often individual men, and sometimes a whole city, will act so culpably against the state that as an example to others and for his own security the prince has no other remedy but to destroy it entirely. Honor consists in being able, and knowing when and how, to chastise evil-doers; and a prince who fails to punish them, so that they shall not be able to do any more harm, will be regarded as either ignorant or cowardly. The propriety of the decisions of the Romans, when required to make any, is proved also by the judgment given against the Privernati. And here we must remark two things from the text of Livius; the one where he says, above, that rebellious subjects must either be conciliated by benefits or destroyed; and the other, where he points out the advantage of frankness and courage, especially when exhibited in the presence of judicious men. The Roman Senate was

*neg. forbearance because of entire loss  
in "individual for other" - that were  
carried -*

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But to come back to my proposition, I conclude from the two examples given that, when a decision has to be made involving the fate of powerful cities that are accustomed to free institutions, they must either be destroyed, or conciliated by benefits. Any other course will be useless; and, above all, half measures should be avoided, these being most dangerous, as was proved by the Samnites, who, when they had hemmed the Romans in between the Caudine forks, disregarded the advice of an old man, who counselled them either to let the Romans depart honorably, or to kill them all. And by taking the middle course of disarming them and obliging them to pass under a yoke, they let them depart with shame and rage in their hearts. So that the Samnites soon after found, to their cost, how salutary the old man's advice had been, and how injurious the course which they had adopted, as we shall more fully show in another place.

#### Chapter XXIV

##### FORTRESSES ARE GENERALLY MORE INJURIOUS THAN USEFUL

It may perhaps seem to the learned men of our time that the Romans acted without proper consideration when, in their desire to make sure of the people of Latium and of the city of Privernum, they did not build some fortresses there to serve as a check, and as a guaranty of their fidelity; especially as it is a general saying of our wiseacres in Florence that Pisa and other similar cities should be held by citadels. Doubtless, if the Romans had been of the same composition, they would have constructed fortresses; but as they were men of very different courage, judgment, and power, they did not build them. And so long as Rome was free, and ad-

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hered to her old customs and admirable constitution, they never built fortresses to hold either cities or countries which they had conquered, although they preserved some of the strong places which they found already existing. Seeing, then, the mode of proceeding of the Romans in this respect, and that of the princes of our present time, it seems to me proper to examine whether it is well to build fortresses, and whether they are of benefit or injury to him who builds them. We must consider, then, the object of fortresses, with reference to their serving as a means of defence against a foreign enemy as well as against one's own subjects.

In the first case, I maintain they are unnecessary, and in the second decidedly injurious. I will begin by explaining why they are injurious in the second case, and therefore say that whenever either princes or republics are afraid lest their subjects should revolt, it results mainly from the hatred of the subjects on account of the bad treatment experienced from those who govern them; and this comes either from the belief that they can best be controlled by force, or from lack of sound judgment in governing them. And one of the things that induce the belief that they can be controlled by force is the possession of fortresses with which to menace them; and thus the ill treatment that engenders hatred in the subjects arises in great measure from the fact that the prince or republic hold the fortresses, which (if this be true) are therefore by far more injurious than useful. For in the first instance (as has been said) they cause you to be more violent and audacious towards your subjects; and next, they do not afford the security which you imagine; for all the measures of force and violence that you employ to hold a people amount to nothing, except these two: either you must keep a good army always ready to take the field, as the Romans did; or you must scatter, disorganize, and destroy the

people so completely that they can in no way injure you; for, were you merely to impoverish them, "the spoliated still have their arms"; if you disarm them, "their fury will serve them instead of arms"; if you kill the chiefs and continue to oppress the others, new chiefs will spring up like the heads of the Hydra. If you build fortresses they may serve in time of peace to encourage you to oppress your subjects; but in time of war they are most useless, because they will be assailed by the enemy as well as by your subjects, and cannot possibly resist both. And if ever they were useless, it is now in our day, on account of the power of artillery, in consequence of which small places, where you cannot retreat behind second intrenchments, cannot possibly be defended, as has been explained above.

I will discuss this subject in a more familiar manner. Prince or republic, you would either keep the people of your own city in check by means of fortresses, or you wish to hold a city that has been taken in war. I shall turn to the prince, and say to him that "nothing can be more useless than such a fortress for keeping your own citizens in check, for the reasons given above; for it will make you more prompt and regardless in oppressing them, which will expose you to ruin by exciting your subjects against you to that degree that you will not be able to defend the very citadel that has provoked it." A good and wise prince, desirous of maintaining that character, and to avoid giving the opportunity to his sons to become oppressive, will never build fortresses, so that they may place their reliance upon the good will of their subjects, and not upon the strength of citadels. And although Count Francesco Sforza, who had become Duke of Milan, and was reputed a sagacious man, caused a citadel to be built at Milan, yet I maintain that in that respect he did not prove himself wise, for the result demonstrated that that

rebellion as a refuge for liberty, it was necessary to follow the practice of the old Romans, either to convert her into an ally and associate, or to destroy her entirely. How much reliance can be placed upon fortresses was shown when King Charles came into Italy, to whom they all surrendered, either through the treachery of their governors, or from fear of a worse fate. If there had been no citadel the Florentines would not have based their hopes of holding Pisa upon this means, and the king of France never would have been able in that way to deprive the Florentines of that city. The means which they in that case would have employed to hold Pisa until then, would perhaps have sufficed to preserve it altogether, and certainly would have stood the test better than the citadel.

I conclude, then, that to hold one's own country fortresses are injurious, and to hold conquered territory they are useless. The authority of the Romans is enough for me: they razed the strong places in the countries which they wished to hold, and never built any new ones. And if the example of Tarentum in ancient times, and that of Brescia in modern times, be quoted in opposition to my opinion, both of which places were recovered from their revolted inhabitants by means of their citadels, I reply, that for the recovery of Tarentum Fabius Maximus was sent at the beginning of the year with the entire army, and he would have succeeded in retaking that city independent of the citadel, although he made use of it; for if the citadel had not existed, he would have found other means of accomplishing the same end. And truly I do not see of what sort of advantage a fortress can be, if to recover possession of your country it is necessary to send a consular army with a Fabius Maximus to command it. That the Romans would have retaken Tarentum anyhow is proved by the example of Capua, where there was no cita-

del, and which they recovered by the mere valor of their army. But let us come to Brescia. I say that it rarely happens, as it did in this case, that when a city revolts, and whilst the citadel remains in your hands, you should have a powerful army near at hand, like that of the French; for Gaston de Foix was with his army at Bologna, and the moment he heard of the loss of Brescia he marched his army there, and, having arrived, recovered the place by means of the citadel. But the citadel of Brescia to be thus of service needed a Gaston de Foix with the French army to come to its support within three days. Thus this example does not suffice to controvert the instances I have adduced; for a number of fortresses have been taken and retaken in the wars of our times, according as the one or the other party were the stronger or the weaker in the field; not only in Lombardy, but also in the Romagna, in the kingdom of Naples, and in fact throughout all Italy. But as to the building of fortresses for defence against foreign enemies, I say that they are not needed by those peoples or kingdoms that have good armies; for good armies suffice for their defence without fortresses, but fortresses without good armies are incompetent for defence. Experience proves this to be the case with those who manage their government and other affairs well, as was the case with the Romans and Spartans; for whilst the Romans built no fortresses, the Spartans not only refrained from doing so, but even did not permit their city to be protected by walls, for they wanted to rely solely upon the valor of their men for their defence, and upon no other means. And therefore when a Spartan was asked by an Athenian whether he did not think the walls of Athens admirable, he replied, "Yes, if the city were inhabited by women."

The prince, then, who has a good army, may have upon his frontiers, or on the sea, some fortresses that may for

some days hold an enemy in check, to enable the prince to gather his forces; such fortresses may occasionally be useful to him, but not necessary. But when the prince has not a good army, then fortresses whether within his territory or upon the frontiers are either injurious or useless to him; injurious, because they are easily lost, and when lost are turned against him; and even if they are so strong that the enemy cannot take them, he will march by with his army and leave them in the rear; and thus they are of no benefit, for good armies, unless opposed by equally powerful ones, march into the enemy's country regardless of cities or fortresses, which they leave in their rear. We have many instances of this in ancient history; and Francesco Maria did the same thing quite recently, when, marching to attack Urbino, he left ten hostile cities behind him without paying the least attention to them. A prince then, who can raise a good army, need not build any fortresses; and one who cannot should not build any. It is proper enough that he should fortify the city in which he resides, so as to be able to resist the first shock of an enemy, and to afford himself the time to negotiate, or to obtain aid from without for his relief; but anything more is mere waste of money in time of peace, and useless in time of war. And thus whoever reflects upon all I have said upon the subject will see that the same wisdom which inspired the Romans in all other matters equally guided them in their decisions respecting the Latins and the Privernati, when, instead of relying upon fortresses, they secured the allegiance of these people by wiser and more magnanimous means.

## Chapter XXV

IT IS AN ERROR TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE INTERNAL DISSENSIONS OF A CITY, AND TO ATTEMPT TO TAKE POSSESSION OF IT WHILST IN THAT CONDITION

THE dissensions between the people and the nobility in the Roman republic were so great, that the Veienti together with the Tuscans, thought the opportunity favorable for crushing out the name of Rome entirely; and having formed an army and made incursions into the Roman territory, the Senate sent Cn. Manlius and M. Fabius against them; and when they had moved their army near to that of the Veienti, these began with insults and attacks to abuse and offend the Romans, with such a degree of temerity and insolence that it caused the Romans to forget their dissensions and to become united; so that when it came to a regular battle between them and the Veienti and Tuscans, the Romans completely defeated and routed them. This shows how apt men are to deceive themselves (as we have shown above) in deciding upon what course they are to take, and how frequently they lose where they had confidently hoped to win. The Veienti thought that, by assailing the Romans at a moment when they were divided by internal dissensions, they would have an easy victory over them; but their very attack restored union amongst the Romans, and that caused the defeat of the Veienti. These dissensions in republics are generally the result of idleness and peace, whilst apprehension and war are productive of union; and therefore if the Veienti had been wise, the more they had seen the Romans divided amongst themselves, the more they would have kept war away from them, and should have tried to subjugate them

by the arts of peace. The way to do this is to try and win the confidence of the citizens that are divided amongst themselves, and to manage to become the arbiter between them, unless they should have come to arms; but having come to arms, then sparingly to favor the weaker party, so as to keep up the war and make them exhaust themselves, and not to give them occasion for the apprehension, by a display of your forces, that you intend to subjugate them and make yourself their prince. And if this course be well carried out, it will generally end in your obtaining the object you aim at. The city of Pistoja (as I have said in another chapter) did not come to the republic of Florence by any other than the above means; for its people being divided amongst themselves, the Florentines favored first one party and then the other, and brought them to that point that, wearied of their disturbed existence, they threw themselves spontaneously into the arms of Florence. The city of Sienna changed her government through the influence of the Florentines only when these aided her with small and unimportant favors; for had these favors been large and of importance, the Sienese would immediately have united in defence of the existing government. I will add one more example to the above. Filippo Visconti, Duke of Milan, often made war upon Florence, relying upon her internal dissensions, but was always the loser; so that he said, in lamenting his unsuccessful attempts, that "the follies of the Florentines have cost him two millions in gold."

The Veienti and the Tuscans then (as I have said above) were deluded by the hope of being able to take advantage of the dissensions of the Romans, and were in the end defeated by them in battle. And in the same way will all those be deceived who in a similar manner and for similar reasons believe that they can subjugate a people.

to but him and his army. Knowing that this was the last resource of his country, Hannibal did not want to risk it without having first tried all other means, and was not ashamed to ask for peace, convinced that peace and not war was the only means of saving his country. The Romans having refused his request, he resolved to fight, though almost certain of defeat, judging that there might possibly be a chance of his being victorious, and that at least he should lose gloriously. And if so great and valiant a general as Hannibal, with his entire army, sought peace rather than risk a battle, seeing that his defeat would expose his country to enslavement, what should any less valiant and experienced generals do? But men always commit the error of not knowing where to limit their hopes, and by trusting to these rather than to a just measure of their resources, they are generally ruined.

### Chapter XXVIII

#### HOW DANGEROUS IT IS FOR A REPUBLIC OR A PRINCE NOT TO AVENGE A PUBLIC OR A PRIVATE INJURY

WHAT men will do from indignation and resentment is clearly seen from what happened to the Romans when they had sent the three Fabii as ambassadors to the Gauls, who had come to attack the Tuscans, and more especially the city of Clusium. The inhabitants having sent to Rome for assistance, the Romans sent ambassadors to the Gauls to notify them to abstain from making war upon their allies, the Tuscans. These ambassadors being more accustomed to act than to speak, and having arrived at the place at the very moment when the Tuscans and Gauls were engaged in battle, threw themselves upon the latter to combat them.

to be the will of Heaven that we should not have provided. And if the events to which I refer occurred at Rome, where there was so much virtue, so much religion, and such order, it is no wonder that similar circumstances occur even much more frequently in a city or province deficient in the above advantages. As the case in point is most remarkable in proving the power of Heaven over human affairs, Titus Livius relates it at length in the most effective language, saying that "Heaven, wishing to make the Romans feel its power, first caused the Fabii, who had been sent as ambassadors to the Gauls, to commit a grave error; and then, in consequence of this act, it excited the Gauls to make war upon Rome. Afterwards, Heaven ordained that nothing worthy of the Roman people should be done to meet this war, having first caused Camillus, the only citizen capable of averting so great an evil, to be exiled to Ardea; and afterwards, the same people who had repeatedly created a Dictator to check the impetuous attacks of the Volscians and other neighboring enemies, failed to do so when the Gauls were marching upon Rome." They also displayed great lack of zeal and diligence in their levies of troops, which were very insufficient; and altogether they were so slow in taking up arms, that they were barely in time to encounter the Gauls upon the river Allia, ten miles from Rome. Here the Tribunes established their camp, without any sign of their customary diligence, without proper examination of the ground, without surrounding the camp with either ditch or stockade, and without any of those precautions which divine or human reason would prompt. And in their order of battle they formed their ranks open and feeble, so that neither the soldiers nor the captains did anything worthy of the Roman discipline; for they fought without bloodshed, and fled even before they were fairly attacked. The greater part of the army went off to Veii, and

the rest retreated to Rome, where they went direct to the Capitol, without entering even their own houses. And the Senate, so far from defending Rome (any more than the others), did not even close its gates; a portion sought safety in flight, and a portion took refuge in the Capitol with the remnant of the army. It is true that in the defence of this citadel they employed some method and prudence; they did not encumber it with useless men; they supplied it with all the provisions possible, so as to be able to support a long siege; and the crowd of useless old men, women, and children fled and dispersed in great part to the neighboring places, and the others remained in Rome, a prey to the Gauls; so that any one who had read of the deeds done by this people so many years before, and had then witnessed their conduct on that occasion, could not possibly have believed them to be the same people. And Titus Livius, who has given an account of all the above troubles, concludes by saying, "Fortune thus blinds the minds of men when she does not wish them to resist her power."

Nothing could be more true than this conclusion; and therefore men who habitually live in great adversity or prosperity deserve less praise or less blame. For it will generally be found that they have been brought to their ruin or their greatness by some great occasion offered by Heaven, which gives them the opportunity, or deprives them of the power, to conduct themselves with courage and wisdom. It certainly is the course of Fortune, when she wishes to effect some great result, to select for her instrument a man of such spirit and ability that he will recognize the opportunity which is afforded him. And thus, in the same way, when she wishes to effect the ruin and destruction of states, she places men at the head who contribute to and hasten such ruin; and if

there be any one powerful enough to resist her, she has him killed, or deprives him of all means of doing any good. The instances cited show clearly how Fortune, by way of strengthening Rome and carrying her to that greatness to which she attained, deemed it necessary to subject her to defeat, (as we shall show in the beginning of the following Book,) but did not wish to ruin her entirely. And therefore we see how she caused Camillus to be exiled, but not killed; how she caused the city of Rome to be taken by the Gauls, but not the citadel; and in the same way she caused the Romans to do nothing well for the protection of the city, whilst in their preparations for the defence of the Capitol they omitted nothing. To permit Rome to be taken, Fortune caused the greater part of the troops who were beaten on the river Allia to go to Veii, and thus seemingly cut off all means for saving the city; and yet, at the same time whilst doing all this, she prepared everything for the recovery of Rome. She caused almost an entire army to go to Veii, and Camillus to be exiled to Ardea, so that, under the command of a general with a reputation untarnished by the disgrace of defeat, a sufficient body of troops might be brought together for the recapture of the city.

I might cite some modern examples in confirmation of the views I have advanced, but do not deem it necessary, as that of the Romans suffices. I repeat, then, as an incontrovertible truth, proved by all history, that men may second Fortune, but cannot oppose her; they may develop her designs, but cannot defeat them. But men should never despair on that account; for, not knowing the aims of Fortune, which she pursues by dark and devious ways, men should always be hopeful, and never yield to despair, whatever troubles or ill fortune may befall them.

## Chapter XXX

## REPUBLICS AND PRINCES THAT ARE REALLY POWERFUL DO NOT PURCHASE ALLIANCES BY MONEY, BUT BY THEIR VALOR AND THE REPUTATION OF THEIR ARMIES

THE Romans were besieged in the Capitol, and although in expectation of succor from Veii and from Camillus, yet, driven by hunger, they came to terms with the Gauls, according to which they were to pay them a certain amount of gold; but whilst in the act of concluding this arrangement, the gold being already in the scales, Camillus arrived with his army, which according to Livius was caused by Fortune, "who did not want that the Romans should live as having purchased their freedom with gold." It is noteworthy that not only in this instance, but also in the whole course of the existence of the Roman republic, the Romans never made any acquisitions by means of money; nor did they ever purchase a peace, but secured it always by the valor of their arms, which I do not believe can be said of any other republic.

Amongst the other indications by which the power of a republic may be recognized is the relation in which they live with their neighbors; if these are tributary to her by way of securing her friendship and protection, then it is a sure sign that that republic is powerful. But if these neighboring states, though they may be more feeble than herself, draw money from her, then it is a sure indication of great weakness on the part of the republic. Let any one read the whole history of Rome, and he will see that the Massilians, the Eduans, the isle of Rhodes, Hiero of Syracuse, the kings

Eumenes and Masinissa, all living near the confines of the Roman Empire, for no other reason than to secure to themselves its friendship and protection, contributed materially to its needs and expenses by large tributes. On the other hand, we see in the case of feeble states, and to begin with our own Florence in the past century and at the period of her greatest glory, that there was not a petty lord in the Romagna that did not draw a pension from her, besides also allowing pensions to Perugia, Castello, and other neighboring cities. But the very reverse would have been the case if Florence had been warlike and powerful; for then they would have paid tribute to her for the advantage of having her protection, and instead of selling their friendship to Florence they would have had to purchase hers. The Florentines, however, are not the only ones that can be reproached with this habitual cowardice; the Venetians acted in the same way, and even the king of France, who with so great a kingdom became tributary to the Swiss and to the king of England; and this resulted solely from their having disarmed their peoples, and because the king of France and the other states mentioned preferred the immediate advantage of being able to oppress their subjects, and to avoid an imaginary rather than a real evil, to doing that which would have assured their own tranquillity and the permanent happiness of their states. Such a cowardly policy may for a time insure quiet, but will inevitably lead in the end to irretrievable injury and ruin.

It would be tedious to relate how many times the Florentines, the Venetians, and the kingdom of France have bought off wars with money; and how many times they subjected themselves to an ignominy to which the Romans submitted once only. It would be equally tedious to relate how many places the Florentines and the Venetians have purchased!

for where men have but little wisdom and valor, Fortune more signally displays her power; and as she is variable, so the states and republics under her influence also fluctuate, and will continue to fluctuate until some ruler shall arise who is so great an admirer of antiquity as to be able to govern such states so that Fortune may not have occasion, with every revolution of the sun, to display her influence and power.

### Chapter XXXI

#### HOW DANGEROUS IT IS TO TRUST TO THE REPRESENTATIONS OF EXILES

It seems to me not amiss to speak here of the danger of trusting to the representations of men who have been expelled from their country, this being a matter that all those who govern states have to act upon almost daily; and I touch upon it the more willingly, as Titius Livius gives a most memorable instance of it, though in a measure foreign to the subject he treats upon. When Alexander the Great went with his army into Asia, Alexander of Epirus, his brother-in-law and uncle, came with his army into Italy, having been called there by the banished Lucanians, who had held out the hope to him that by their means he would be able to seize that whole country; and when Alexander, upon their assurances and the hopes held out by them, had come into Italy, they killed him, because they had been promised by the citizens of Lucania permission to return to their homes if they would assassinate Alexander. We see, then, how vain the faith and promises of men are who are exiles from their own country. As to their faith, we have to bear in mind that,

Persuasion!

Saving! Original principle

Corruption

### THIRD BOOK

#### Chapter I

TO INSURE A LONG EXISTENCE TO RELIGIOUS SECTS OR REPUBLICS,  
IT IS NECESSARY FREQUENTLY TO BRING THEM BACK TO THEIR  
ORIGINAL PRINCIPLES

THERE is nothing more true than that all the things of this world have a limit to their existence; but those only run the entire course ordained for them by Heaven that do not allow their body to become disorganized, but keep it unchanged in the manner ordained, or if they change it, so do it that it shall be for their advantage, and not to their injury. And as I speak here of mixed bodies, such as republics or religious sects, I say that those changes are beneficial that bring them back to their original principles. And those are the best-constituted bodies, and have the longest existence, which possess the intrinsic means of frequently renewing themselves, or such as obtain this renovation in consequence of some extrinsic accidents. And it is a truth clearer than light that, without such renovation, these bodies cannot continue to exist; and the means of renewing them is to bring them back to their original principles. For, as all religious republics and monarchies must have within themselves some goodness, by means of which they obtain their first growth and reputation, and as in the process of time this goodness becomes corrupted, it will of necessity destroy the body unless +

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had occurred in Rome every ten years, that city never would have become so corrupt; but as both became more rare, corruption increased more and more. In fact, after Marcus Regulus we find not a single instance of such virtuous example; and although the two Catos arose, yet there was so long an interval between Regulus and them, and between the one Cato and the other, and they were such isolated instances, that their example could effect but little good; and especially the latter Cato found the citizens of Rome already so corrupt that he utterly failed to improve them by his example. Let this suffice so far as regards republics.

Now with regard to religions we shall see that revivals are equally necessary, and the best proof of this is furnished by our own, which would have been entirely lost had it not been brought back to its pristine principles and purity by Saint Francis and Saint Dominic; for by their voluntary poverty and the example of the life of Christ, they revived the sentiment of religion in the hearts of men, where it had become almost extinct. The new orders which they established were so severe and powerful that they became the means of saving religion from being destroyed by the licentiousness of the prelates and heads of the Church. They continued themselves to live in poverty; and by means of confessions and preachings they obtained so much influence with the people, that they were able to make them understand that it was wicked even to speak ill of wicked rulers, and that it was proper to render them obedience and to leave the punishment of their errors to God. And thus these wicked rulers do as much evil as they please, because they do not fear a punishment which they do not see nor believe. This revival of religion then by Saint Francis and Saint Dominic has preserved it and maintains it to this day. Monarchies also have need of renewal, and to bring their institutions back to

first principles. The kingdom of France shows us the good effects of such renewals; for this monarchy more than any other is governed by laws and ordinances. The Parliaments, and mainly that of Paris, are the conservators of these laws and institutions, which are renewed by them from time to time, by executions against some of the princes of the realm, and at times even by decisions against the king himself. And thus this kingdom has maintained itself up to the present time by its determined constancy in repressing the ambition of the nobles; for if it were to leave them unpunished, the disorders would quickly multiply, and the end would doubtless be either that the guilty could no longer be punished without danger, or that the kingdom itself would be broken up.

X We may conclude, then, that nothing is more necessary for an association of men, either as a religious sect, republic, or monarchy, than to restore to it from time to time the power and reputation which it had in the beginning, and to strive to have either good laws or good men to bring about such a result, without the necessity of the intervention of any extrinsic force. For although such may at times be the best remedy, as in the case of Rome (when captured by the Gauls), yet it is so dangerous that it is in no way desirable. But to show how the actions of some men in particular made Rome great, and produced the most excellent effects in that city, I will make them the subject of the discourses of this Third Book, with which I shall close my reflections upon the first Ten Books of the history of Titus Livius. And although the actions of some of the kings were great and remarkable, yet as history treats of them very fully I shall leave them aside, and not speak of them, excepting so far as regards some things which they did for their personal advantage; and shall begin with Junius Brutus, the father of Roman liberty.

when his son Sextus committed that crime Brutus and Collatinus would have appealed to Tarquin for vengeance against Sextus, instead of stirring up the Roman people as they did.

Princes should remember, then, that they begin to lose their state from the moment when they begin to disregard the laws and ancient customs under which the people have lived contented for a length of time. And if, having thus lost their state, they should ever become wise enough to see with what facility princes preserve their thrones who conduct themselves prudently, they would regret their loss the more, and would condemn themselves to greater punishments than that to which others have doomed them. For it is much easier to be beloved by the good than the wicked, and to obey the laws than to enforce them; and if kings desire to know what course they have to pursue to do this, they need take no other trouble than to follow the example of the lives of good rulers, such as Timoleon of Corinth, Aratus of Sicyon, and the like, whose lives they will find to have afforded as much security and satisfaction to him who ruled as to those who were governed; which should make kings desire to imitate them, as is easily done. For when men are well governed, they neither seek nor desire any other liberty; as was experienced by the two above-named princes, whom their people constrained to reign to the end of their lives, though they often wished to retire to private life.

Having discussed in the preceding chapters the evil dispositions that are apt to be stirred up against princes, and the conspiracy set on foot by the sons of Brutus against their country, and those formed against Tarquinius Priscus and Servius Tullus, it seems to me nevertheless not amiss to treat this subject at length in the following chapter, it being a matter well worthy of the attention of princes and subjects.

Chapter VI

## OF CONSPIRACIES

It seems to me proper now to treat of conspiracies, being a matter of so much danger both to princes and subjects; for history teaches us that many more princes have lost their lives and their states by conspiracies than by open war. But few can venture to make open war upon their sovereign, whilst every one may engage in conspiracies against him. On the other hand, subjects cannot undertake more perilous and foolhardy enterprises than conspiracies, which are in every respect most difficult and dangerous; and thence it is that, though so often attempted, yet they so rarely attain the desired object. And therefore, so that princes may learn to guard against such dangers, and that subjects may less rashly engage in them, and learn rather to live contentedly under such a government as Fate may have assigned to them, I shall treat the subject at length, and endeavor not to omit any point that may be useful to the one or the other. And certainly that is a golden sentence of Cornelius Tacitus, where he says "that men should honor the past and obey the present; and whilst they should desire good princes, they should bear with those they have, such as they are";—and surely whoever acts otherwise will generally involve himself and his country in ruin.

In entering upon the subject, then, we must consider first against whom conspiracies are formed; and it will be found generally that they are made either against the country or against the prince. It is of these two kinds that I shall speak at present; for conspiracies that have for their object the surrender of any town to an enemy that besieges it, or that

have some similar purpose, have already been sufficiently discussed above. In the first instance we will treat of those that are aimed against the sovereign, and examine the causes that provoke them; these are many, though one is more important than all the rest, namely, his being hated by the mass of the people. For when a prince has drawn upon himself universal hatred, it is reasonable to suppose that there are some particular individuals whom he has injured more than others, and who therefore desire to revenge themselves. This desire is increased by seeing the prince held in general aversion. A prince, then, should avoid incurring such universal hatred; and, as I have spoken elsewhere of the way to do this, I will say no more about it here. If the prince will avoid this general hatred, the particular wrongs to individuals will prove less dangerous to him; partly because men rarely attach sufficient importance to any wrong done them to expose themselves to great danger for the sake of avenging it, and partly because, even if they were so disposed and had the power to attempt it, they would be restrained by the general affection for the prince. The different wrongs which a prince can inflict upon a subject consist either in an attempt upon his possessions, his person, or his honor. In matters of personal injury, threats are worse than the execution; in fact, menaces involve the only danger, there being none in the execution, for the dead cannot avenge themselves, and in most cases the survivors allow the thought of revenge to be interred with the dead. But he who is threatened, and sees himself constrained by necessity either to dare and do or to suffer, becomes a most dangerous man to the prince as we shall show in its proper place. Besides this kind of injury, a man's property and honor are the points upon which he will be most keenly sensitive. A prince, then, should be most careful to avoid touching these; for he can never despoil a

formed by a single individual or by many; the one cannot be called a conspiracy, but rather a determined purpose on the part of one man to assassinate the prince. In such case the first of the three dangers to which conspiracies are exposed is avoided; for the individual runs no risk before the execution of his plot, for as no one possesses his secret, there is no danger of his purpose coming to the ears of the prince. Any individual, of whatever condition, may form such a plot, be he great or small, noble or plebeian, familiar or not familiar with the prince; for every one is permitted on occasions to speak to the prince, and has thus the opportunity of satisfying his vengeance. Pausanias, of whom I have spoken elsewhere, killed Philip of Macedon as he was proceeding to the temple, surrounded by a thousand armed men, and having his son and his son-in-law on either side. But Pausanias was a noble, and well known to the prince. A poor and abject Spaniard stabbed King Ferdinand of Spain in the neck; the wound was not mortal, but it showed nevertheless that this man had the audacity as well as the opportunity of striking the prince. A Turkish Dervish drew a scimitar upon Bajazet, the father of the present Grand Turk; he did not wound him, but it shows that this man too had the audacity and the opportunity to have done it, had he so chosen. I believe it is not uncommon to find men who form such projects (the mere purpose involving neither danger nor punishment), but few carry them into effect; and of those who do, very few or none escape being killed in the execution of their designs, and therefore but few are willing to incur such certain death.

But let us leave the plots formed by single individuals, and come to conspiracies formed by a number of persons. These, I say, have generally for their originators the great men of the state, or those on terms of familiar intercourse with the

prince. None other, unless they are madmen, can engage in conspiracies; for men of low condition, who are not intimate with the prince, have no chance of success, not having the necessary conveniences for the execution of their plots. In the first place, men of no position have not the means of assuring themselves of the good faith of their accomplices, as no one will engage in their plot without the hope of those advantages that prompt men to expose themselves to great dangers. And thus, so soon as they have drawn two or three others into their scheme, some one of them denounces and ruins them. But supposing even that they have the good fortune not to be betrayed, they are nevertheless exposed to so many difficulties in the execution of the plot, from being debarred free access to the prince, that it seems almost impossible for them to escape ruin in the execution. For if the great men of a state, who are in familiar intercourse with the prince, succumb under the many difficulties of which we have spoken, it is natural that these difficulties should be infinitely increased for the others. And therefore those who know themselves to be weak avoid them, for where men's lives and fortunes are at stake they are not all insane; and when they have cause for hating a prince, they content themselves with cursing and vilifying him, and wait until some one more powerful and of higher position than themselves shall avenge them. Still, if one of this class of persons should be daring enough to attempt such an undertaking, he would merit praise rather for his intention than for his prudence.

We see, then, that conspiracies have generally been set on foot by the great, or the friends of the prince; and of these, as many have been prompted to it by an excess of benefits as by an excess of wrongs. Such was the cause of the conspiracy of Perennius against Commodus, of Plautianus against Severus, and of Sejanus against Tiberius. All these

men had been so loaded with riches, honors, and dignities by their Emperors that nothing seemed wanting to complete their power and to satisfy their ambition but the Empire itself; and to obtain that they set conspiracies on foot against their masters, which all resulted, however, as their ingratitude deserved. More recently, however, we have seen the conspiracy of Jacopo Appiano succeed against Piero Gambarote, prince of Pisa; this Jacopo owed his support, education, and reputation to Piero, and yet he deprived him of his state. The conspiracy of Coppola against Ferdinand of Aragon, in our own day, was of the same character; Coppola had attained such greatness that he seemed to lack nothing but the throne, and to obtain this he risked his life, and lost it. And certainly if any conspiracy of the great against a prince is likely to succeed, it should be one that is headed by one, so to say, almost himself a king, who can afford the conspirators every opportunity to accomplish his design; but, blinded by the ambition of dominion, they are equally blind in the conduct of the conspiracy, for if their villainy were directed by prudence, they could not possibly fail of success. A prince, then, who wishes to guard against conspiracies should fear those on whom he has heaped benefits quite as much, and even more, than those whom he has wronged; for the latter lack the convenient opportunities which the former have in abundance. The intention of both is the same, for the thirst of dominion is as great as that of revenge, and even greater. A prince, therefore, should never bestow so much authority upon his friends but that there should always be a certain distance between them and himself, and that there should always be something left for them to desire; otherwise they will almost invariably become victims of their own imprudence, as happened to those whom we have mentioned above.

encouraged those who were disposed to conspire; and the other paved the way for his own destruction, and was, as it were, the chief of the conspiracy against himself, as was proved by experience, for Callippus, being able to conspire with impunity against Dion, plotted so well that he deprived him of his state and his life.

### Chapter VII

#### THE REASONS WHY THE TRANSITIONS FROM LIBERTY TO SERVITUDE AND FROM SERVITUDE TO LIBERTY ARE AT TIMES EFFECTED WITHOUT BLOODSHED, AND AT OTHER TIMES ARE MOST SAN- GUINARY

THE question may suggest itself to some persons why it is that, in the many changes that carry a state from freedom to tyranny, and from servitude to liberty, some are effected by bloodshed, and others without any. In fact, history shows that in such changes sometimes an infinite number of lives are sacrificed; whilst at other times it has not cost the life of a single person. Such was the revolution in Rome which transferred the government from the kings to the consuls, where only the Tarquins were expelled, and no one else suffered injury. This depends upon whether the state that changes its form of government does so by violence, or not. When effected by violence the change will naturally inflict suffering upon many; these in turn will desire to revenge themselves, and from this desire of revenge results the shedding of blood. But when such a change is effected by the general consent of the citizens, who have made the state great, then there is no reason why the people should wish to harm any one but the chiefs of the state. Such was the

the one is the impossibility of resisting the natural bent of our characters; and the other is the difficulty of persuading ourselves, after having been accustomed to success by a certain mode of proceeding, that any other can succeed as well. It is this that causes the varying success of a man; for the times change, but he does not change his mode of proceeding. The ruin of states is caused in like manner, as we have fully shown above, because they do not modify their institutions to suit the changes of the times. And such changes are more difficult and tardy in republics; for necessarily circumstances will occur that will unsettle the whole state, and when the change of proceeding of one man will not suffice for the occasion.

Having made mention of Fabius Maximus, and the manner in which he held Hannibal at bay, it seems to me opportune in the next chapter to examine the question whether a general who is resolved anyhow to give battle to the enemy can be prevented by the latter from doing so.

#### Chapter X.

##### A GENERAL CANNOT AVOID A BATTLE WHEN THE ENEMY IS RESOLVED UPON IT AT ALL HAZARDS

"**CNEIUS SULPITIUS**, appointed Dictator against the Gauls, protracted the war by refusing to commit himself to the fortunes of battle against an enemy whose position was being daily made worse by time and the disadvantages of the country." When an error is very generally adopted, I believe it to be advantageous often to refute it; and therefore, although I have already several times pointed out how much we differ in our important actions from the ancients, yet it seems to me

evil seen as changing fortunes

ing to the Swiss, was attacked and routed by them. The same thing occurred to the French army when encamped before Novara, where they were equally defeated by the Swiss.

## Chapter XI

WHOEVER HAS TO CONTEND AGAINST MANY ENEMIES MAY nevertheless overcome them, though he be inferior in power, provided he is able to resist their first efforts

THE power of the Tribunes of the people in Rome was very great, as has already been said several times, but it was necessary to restrain the ambition of the nobles, who would otherwise have corrupted the republic much more than it was already. Nevertheless, as all human institutions (as has been observed elsewhere) contain some inherent evil that gives rise to unforeseen accidents, it becomes necessary to provide against these by new measures. The Tribunes had become insolent and formidable to the nobility and to all Rome, and would have become dangerous to the liberties of the republic had not Appius Claudius pointed out the way for the Romans to protect themselves against the ambition of the Tribunes. As there was always to be found amongst them some one more easily intimidated or corrupted than the others, or some lover of the public good, Claudius advised that they should oppose such a one to his colleagues whenever these wanted to pass any act contrary to the wishes of the Senate. This expedient tempered the formidable authority of the Tribunes, and for a long while proved most advantageous to Rome; and it has caused me to reflect that the presumption of success should always be in favor of a

power from the league, they were crushed. In fact, we see that the Pope, after having recovered what belonged to him, became their friend; and so did Spain; and both of these powers would gladly have saved to the Venetians their possessions in Lombardy if they could have done it, so as to prevent France from becoming so powerful in Italy. The Venetians might, by sacrificing a part, have saved the rest; this would have been a wise course for them to pursue, provided they had done so before seeming to be forced to it by necessity; but after the war was actually begun, such a course would have been disgraceful, and probably of little advantage. Before the war only a few of the citizens of Venice could discern the danger, still fewer perceived the remedy, and none advised it. But to return to what I said at the beginning of this discourse, I conclude that, as the Roman Senate found the means for saving the country from the ambition of the Tribunes, who were many, so will any one prince find a remedy, when assailed by many enemies, provided he has wisdom and skill, by suitable means, to create such misunderstandings between them as will cause their disunion.

### Chapter XII

A SKILFUL GENERAL SHOULD ENDEAVOR BY ALL MEANS IN HIS POWER TO PLACE HIS SOLDIERS IN THE POSITION OF BEING OBLIGED TO FIGHT, AND AS FAR AS POSSIBLE RELIEVE THE ENEMY OF SUCH NECESSITY

WE have already pointed out the advantage of necessity in human actions, and to what glorious achievements it has given rise. Some moral philosophers have even maintained

that without it neither the hand nor the tongue of man, the two noblest instruments of his glory, would have served his purpose perfectly, nor carried human works to that height of perfection which they have attained. The ancient commanders of armies, who well knew the powerful influence of necessity, and how it inspired the soldiers with the most desperate courage, neglected nothing to subject their men to such a pressure, whilst, on the other hand, they employed every device that ingenuity could suggest to relieve the enemy's troops from the necessity of fighting. Thus they often opened the way for the enemy to retreat, which they might easily have barred; and closed it to their own soldiers for whom they could with ease have kept it open. Whoever then desires that a city should make an obstinate resistance, or that an army should fight with determination in the field, should above all things endeavor to inspire them with the conviction of the necessity for their utmost efforts. A skilful general, then, who has to besiege a city, can judge of the difficulties of its capture by knowing and considering to what extent the inhabitants are under the necessity of defending themselves. If he finds that to be very urgent, then he may deem his task in proportion difficult; but if the motive for resistance is feeble, then he may count upon an easy victory. Thence it comes that it is more difficult to reduce a country to subjection that has revolted, than it was to conquer it originally. For not having given any special offence before the conquest that would cause them to fear punishment, they yield easily; but having offended by the rebellion and fearing the penalty, they defend themselves with great obstinacy.

Such a determined resistance may also be caused by the natural hatred between neighboring princes and republics, which arises from rivalry and the thirst of dominion. The

Roman army if one of the Tribunes had not the sagacity to open a way for them to escape. This shows that the Veientes, when constrained by necessity, fought with the most desperate valor; but when they saw the way open for their escape, they thought more of saving themselves than of fighting. The Volscians and Equeans having entered with their troops upon Roman territory, the Romans sent two Consuls with armies against them. Becoming engaged in battle, the Volscian army under command of Vettius Messius suddenly found itself shut in between their own intrenchments, which were occupied by the Romans, and the other Roman army. And seeing that they would have to perish or cut their way out with the sword, Messius addressed his soldiers in the following words: "Follow me! You have no walls nor ditches to encounter, but only men armed like yourselves. Equals in valor, you have the advantage of necessity, that last and most powerful of weapons!" It is thus that Titus Livius styles necessity "the last and most powerful weapon." Camillus, the most experienced of the Roman generals, had penetrated with his army into the city of Veii, for the purpose of facilitating its capture; and to deprive the enemy of the extreme necessity of defending himself, he ordered his soldiers, in a voice loud enough to be heard by the Veientes, not to harm those that should be disarmed. This caused the latter to lay down their arms, and the city was taken almost without bloodshed. This example was afterwards imitated by several other generals.

the Romans had sent Quintius and Agrippa against the Equeans, adds, that the latter begged his colleague to take upon himself the sole conduct of the war, saying to him, "In important affairs it is necessary for success that the principal authority should reside in one man only." This is just the contrary of what is done by our princes and republics of the present day; who confide to several commissaries and chiefs the administration of places subject to them, which creates an inconceivable confusion. And if we seek for the causes of the reverses experienced by the Italian and French armies in our times, we shall find that to have been the most powerful of all the causes. So that we may truly conclude that it is better to confide any expedition to a single man of ordinary ability, rather than to two, even though they are men of the highest merit, and both having equal authority.

## Chapter XVI

IN TIMES OF DIFFICULTY MEN OF MERIT ARE SOUGHT AFTER, BUT IN EASY TIMES IT IS NOT MEN OF MERIT, BUT SUCH AS HAVE RICHES AND POWERFUL RELATIONS, THAT ARE MOST IN FAVOR

It ever has been, and ever will be the case, that men of rare and extraordinary merit are neglected by republics in times of peace and tranquillity; for jealous of the reputation which such men have acquired by their virtues, there are always in such times many other citizens, who want to be, not only their equals, but their superiors. The Greek historian Thucydides gives the following striking instance of this. The Athenian republic, having obtained the advantage in the Peloponnesian war, having checked the pride of the Spartans and subjected almost all Greece to their rule, acquired

was due to nothing else than to their having by chance been the first to learn that the enemy was retreating; had this, on the other hand, been first known to the Venetians, it would have given the victory to them.

### Chapter XIX

#### WHETHER GENTLE OR RIGOROUS MEASURES ARE PREFERABLE IN GOVERNING THE MULTITUDE

WHILST the Roman republic was disturbed by the dissensions between the nobles and the people, a war occurred; and they sent their armies into the field under the command of Quintius and Appius Claudius. Appius, naturally cruel and rude in his mode of commanding, was badly obeyed by his troops; so that he had to fly from his province as though he had been beaten. Quintius, on the other hand, being of a gentle and humane disposition, was cheerfully obeyed by his men, and returned to Rome victorious; whence it would seem that a multitude is more easily governed by humanity and gentleness than by haughtiness and cruelty. Nevertheless, Cornelius Tacitus (followed in this respect by many other writers) holds the opposite opinion, and says, "To govern the multitude, severity is worth more than gentleness." In attempting to reconcile these two opposite opinions, we must consider whether the people to be governed are your equals or your subjects. If they are your equals, then you cannot entirely depend upon rigorous measures, nor upon that severity which Tacitus recommends. And as the people of Rome divided the sovereignty with the nobles, any one who had temporarily become chief of the state could not rule them with harshness and cruelty. And we have frequently

for the purpose of ingratiating himself with Camillus and the Romans, led these children, on pretence of making them take exercise, into the Roman camp; and presenting them to Camillus, said to him, "By means of these children as hostages, you will be able to compel the city to surrender." Camillus not only declined the offer, but had the teacher stripped and his hands tied behind his back, and then had a rod put into the hands of each of the children wherewith he directed them to whip him all the way back to the city. Upon learning this fact, the citizens of Faliscia were so much touched by the humanity and integrity of Camillus, that they surrendered the place to him without any further defence. This example shows that an act of humanity and benevolence will at all times have more influence over the minds of men than violence and ferocity. It also proves that provinces and cities which no armies and no engines of war, nor any other efforts of human power, could conquer, have yielded to an act of humanity, benevolence, chastity, or generosity. History furnishes many other instances of this besides the one just cited. It tells us how the Roman arms could not drive Pyrrhus out of Italy, but that the magnanimity of Fabricius in making known to him the offer of his confidential servant to poison him caused Pyrrhus to leave it voluntarily. It also shows us that the taking of New Carthage, in Spain, did not give Scipio Africanus so much reputation as the example of chastity which he gave in restoring intact to her husband a young and beautiful wife, whose honor he had respected; which act gained him the hearts of all Spain. History also shows us how much the people desire to find such virtues in great men, and how much they are extolled by historians and biographers of princes, and by those who trace their proper course of conduct. Amongst these, Xenophon takes great pains to show how

all the cities of Italy, and entire populations, revolted in his favor. In seeking for the causes of this difference, we find several. The first is the love of novelty, which manifests itself equally in those who are well off and in those who are not. For, as we have said elsewhere, and with truth, men get tired of prosperity, just as they are afflicted by the reverse. This love of change, then, so to speak, opens the way to every one who takes the lead in any innovation in any country. If he is a stranger they run after him, and if he is of the country they surround him, increase his influence, and favor him in every way; so that, whatever his mode of proceeding and conduct may be, he will succeed in making rapid progress. In the second place, men are prompted in their actions by two main motives, namely, love and fear; so that he who makes himself beloved will have as much influence as he who makes himself feared, although generally he who makes himself feared will be more readily followed and obeyed than he who makes himself beloved. It matters little, therefore, to any general by which of these two systems he proceeds, provided he be a man of sufficient courage and ability to have made a great reputation for himself. For when this is as great as was the case with Hannibal and Scipio, it cancels all the errors which a general may commit, either by an excess of gentleness or by too great severity. Either of these extremes may be productive of great evils, that will be apt to prove ruinous to a prince; for he who carries too far the desire to make himself beloved will soon become contemned, if he deviates in the slightest degree from the true path; and the other, who aims at making himself feared, will make himself hated, if he goes in the least degree too far; and our nature does not permit us always to keep the just middle course. Either extreme, therefore, must be compensated for by some extraordinary

merits, such as those of Hannibal and Scipio; and yet we see how the conduct of both of these brought them disgrace as well as the highest success.

Of their successes we have already spoken; let us look now at the misfortunes which they experienced. That of Scipio occurred when his soldiers combined with some of his allies and revolted, for which there was no other cause than that they did not fear him. For men are so restless that the slightest opening for their ambition causes them quickly to forget all the affection for him with which the humanity of the prince had inspired them. This was the case with the soldiers and allies of Scipio; so that to arrest the evil he was obliged to adopt measures of the extremest severity, which until then he had so carefully avoided. As to Hannibal, there is no particular instance where his cruelty and perfidy caused him any immediate injury; but we may well presume that Naples and many other cities remained faithful to Rome solely from fear of Hannibal's cruelty. This much is certain, that his ferocity made him more hated by the Roman people than any other enemy which that republic ever had. So that whilst they informed Pyrrhus, even whilst he was still in Italy with his army, of the offer made to them by his physician to poison him, yet they never forgave Hannibal; and, though disarmed and a fugitive, they pursued him so relentlessly that he killed himself to avoid falling into their hands. But if the impiousness, perfidy, and cruelty of Hannibal had such disastrous consequences for him in the end, he had on the other hand a very great advantage from it, and which has excited the admiration of all the historians; namely, that in his army, although composed of men of so many different nations, there never occurred any dissensions amongst themselves, or any sedition against him. This could only be ascribed to the terror which he personally inspired,

and which was so great that, combined with his high reputation for courage and ability, it kept his soldiers quiet and united.

I conclude, then, that it matters little whether a general adopts the one or the other course, provided he be possessed of such high ability as to enable him to achieve success by either line of conduct; for, as has been said, both have their defects and their dangers, unless compensated for by extraordinary talent and courage. Having shown that Scipio and Hannibal, the one by most praiseworthy and the other by most detestable conduct, attained the same results, I think I ought not to omit speaking also of two other Roman citizens who acquired equal glory by different methods, though both most praiseworthy.

## Chapter XXII

### HOW MANLIUS TORQUATUS BY HARSHNESS, AND VALERIUS CORVINUS BY GENTLENESS, ACQUIRED EQUAL GLORY

THERE were in Rome at the same time two distinguished generals, Manlius Torquatus and Valerius Corvinus. Equals in bravery, triumphs, and reputation, they achieved these advantages, so far as the enemy was concerned, by the same merits and conduct; but as regards their armies, and the treatment of their men, their manner differed widely. Manlius commanded with the utmost severity, and subjected his soldiers without intermission to great labor and fatigue. Valerius, on the other hand, treated his soldiers with the highest degree of humanity and affability. Thus the one, by way of securing the obedience of his troops, had his own son put to death, whilst the other never injured any one.

## Chapter XXIV

## THE PROLONGATION OF MILITARY COMMANDS CAUSED ROME THE LOSS OF HER LIBERTY

If we study carefully the conduct of the Roman republic, we discover two causes of her decadence; the one was the dissensions consequent upon the agrarian laws, and the other the prolongation of her military commands. If these matters had been better understood in the beginning, and proper remedies applied, the liberties of Rome would have endured longer, and she would probably have enjoyed greater tranquillity. And although the prolongation of these powers does not seem to have engendered any actual disturbances, yet the facts show how injurious the authority which citizens acquired thereby proved to civil liberty. But these inconveniences might have been avoided if those other citizens to whom the prolongation of the magistracies were conceded had been as wise and as virtuous as L. Quintius. His good qualities were indeed a notable example; for when an agreement had been concluded between the people and the Senate, and the military powers of the Tribunes had been extended by the people for one year in the belief that they would be able to restrain the ambition of the nobles, the Senate, from a spirit of rivalry and a desire not to appear less powerful than the people, wanted also to extend the term of the consulate of L. Quintius. But he absolutely opposed this determination, saying that they should strive rather to destroy the evil examples, than to add to their number by others and worse ones; and he demanded the creation of new Consuls. If the citizens of Rome generally had shared the virtue and

prudence of L. Quintius, they would never have permitted the practice of the prolongation of the magistracies, which custom led to the prolongation of the military commands, which in time proved the ruin of this republic.

The first to whom such prolongation of a military command was granted was P. Philo, who was engaged in the siege of Palæopolis at the time when his consulate was about to expire. The Senate, believing that he would soon accomplish the capture of that city, instead of sending him a successor named him Proconsul; and thus he was the first who held that office. Although the Senate had been actuated in this matter only by considerations of public utility, yet it was this example which in time caused Rome the loss of her liberty. For the farther the Roman armies went from Rome, the more necessary did such prolongation of the military commands seem to the Senate, and the more frequently did they practise it. Two evils resulted from this: the first, that a less number of men became experienced in the command of armies, and therefore distinguished reputation was confined to a few; and the other, that, by the general remaining a long while in command of an army, the soldiers became so attached to him personally that they made themselves his partisans, and, forgetful of the Senate, recognized no chief or authority but him. It was thus that Sylla and Marius were enabled to find soldiers willing to follow their lead even against the republic itself. And it was by this means that Cæsar was enabled to make himself absolute master of his country. Thus, if Rome had not prolonged the magistracies and the military commands, she might not so soon have attained the zenith of her power; but if she had been slower in her conquests, she would have also preserved her liberties the longer.

## Chapter XXV

OF THE POVERTY OF CINCINNATUS, AND THAT OF MANY OTHER  
ROMAN CITIZENS

WE have argued elsewhere that it is of the greatest advantage in a republic to have laws that keep her citizens poor. Although there does not appear to have been any special law to this effect in Rome, (the agrarian law having met with the greatest opposition,) yet experience shows that even so late as four hundred years after its foundation there was still great poverty in Rome. We cannot ascribe this fact to any other cause than that poverty never was allowed to stand in the way of the achievement of any rank or honor, and that virtue and merit were sought for under whatever roof they dwelt; it was this system that made riches naturally less desirable. We have a manifest proof of this on the occasion when the Consul Minutius and his army were surrounded by the Equeans, and all Rome was full of apprehensions lest the army should be lost, so that they resorted to the creation of a Dictator, their last remedy in times of difficulty. They appointed L. Quintius Cincinnatus, who at the time was on his little farm, which he cultivated with his own hands. This circumstance is celebrated by Titus Livius in the following golden words: "After this let men not listen to those who prefer riches to everything else in this world, and who think that there is neither honor nor virtue where wealth does not flow." Cincinnatus was engaged in ploughing his fields, which did not exceed four acres, when the messengers of the Senate arrived from Rome to announce his election to the dictatorship, and to point out

*Poverty honored*

to him the imminent danger of the Roman republic. He immediately put on his toga, gathered an army, and went to the relief of Minutius; and having crushed and despoiled the enemy, and freed the Consul and his army, he would not permit them to share the spoils, saying, "I will not allow you to participate in the spoils of those to whom you came so near falling a prey." He deprived Minutius of the consulate, and reduced him to the rank of lieutenant, saying to him, "You will remain in this grade until you have learned to be Consul."

Cincinnatus had chosen for his master of cavalry L. Tarquinus whose poverty had obliged him to fight on foot. Let us note here how Rome honored poverty, (as has been said,) and how four acres of land sufficed for the support of so good and great a citizen as Cincinnatus. We find also that poverty was still honored in the times of Marcus Regulus, who when commanding an army in Africa asked permission of the Roman Senate to return to look after his farm, which was being spoiled by the laborers in whose charge it had been left by him. These instances suggest two reflections: the one, that these eminent citizens were content to remain in such poverty, and that they were satisfied merely to win honor by their military achievements, and to leave all the profits of them to the public treasury; for if they had thought of enriching themselves by their wars, they would have cared little whether their fields were being spoiled or not; and the other, as to the magnanimity of these citizens, who, when placed at the head of an army, rose above all princes solely by the grandeur of their souls. They regarded neither kings nor republics; nothing astonished and nothing inspired them with fear. Having returned to private life, they were frugal, humble, and devoted to the care of their little properties, obedient to the magistrates, and respectful to

## Chapter XXVII

OF THE MEANS FOR RESTORING UNION IN A CITY, AND OF THE  
COMMON ERROR WHICH SUPPOSES THAT A CITY MUST BE KEPT  
DIVIDED FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRESERVING AUTHORITY

We observe, from the example of the Roman Consuls in restoring harmony between the patricians and plebeians of Ardea, the means for obtaining that object, which is none other than to kill the chiefs of the opposing factions. In fact, there are only three ways of accomplishing it; the one is to put the leaders to death, as the Romans did, or to banish them from the city, or to reconcile them to each other under a pledge not to offend again. Of these three ways, the last is the worst, being the least certain and effective; for it is impossible that, after dissensions that have caused so much bloodshed and other outrages, a forced peace should be enduring. The parties meeting each other daily face to face will with difficulty abstain from mutual insults, and in their daily intercourse fresh causes for quarrel will constantly occur.

The city of Pistoja furnishes a most striking example in point. Fifteen years ago that city was divided into two factions, the Panciatichi and the Cancellieri, and this division continues to the present day; but then they were in arms, whilst now they have laid them down. After many disputes, they had come to bloodshed, to the pulling down of houses, plundering each other's property, and every other kind of hostilities; and the Florentines, upon whom it devolved to restore order in that city, always employed for that purpose the third means, namely, conciliation, which, however, in-

variably led to greater troubles and disorders. So that, tired of this method, they resorted to the second; that is, they removed the chiefs of the factions by imprisoning some and exiling others to various places; and thus they succeeded in restoring order in a manner that could and does, endure to this day. Doubtless, however, the first means (that of putting the chiefs of the factions to death) would have been the most effectual, but would have required a power and courage not to be expected from a feeble republic like Florence, which could with difficulty employ even the second method.

These, as I have said in the beginning, are some of the errors which the princes of our day are apt to commit. When they are called upon on great occasions to take decided measures, they ought to examine the conduct of the ancients on similar occasions. But the weakness of the princes of the present day, caused by an effeminate education and want of instruction, makes them regard the maxims of the ancients as inhuman, or impossible of application. And certainly modern opinions are very far from the truth when they maintain, as some wise men of our city did not long since, that "Pistoja must be controlled by means of factions, and Pisa by means of fortresses." They do not see that both of these means would have been equally useless. I will say nothing here of fortresses, having discussed that subject at length in a former chapter; but I will show how nothing is to be gained by attempting to control cities by means of keeping alive factions. For it is impossible either for prince or republic to preserve an equal influence over both the old factions, it being in the nature of man in all differences of opinion to prefer either the one side or the other. Thus, one of the parties being malcontent, you will lose the city on the occasion of the first war, it being impossible to hold it against enemies from without and within. If the government

of the city is a republic, then there is no surer way of corrupting the citizens, and to divide the city against itself, than to foment the spirit of faction that may prevail there; for each party will strive by every means of corruption to secure friends and supporters, which gives rise to two most serious evils: first, that a government which changes often, according to the caprice of the one or the other faction, can never be good, and consequently never can secure to itself the good will and attachment of its citizens; and, secondly, that such favoring of factions keeps the republic of necessity divided. The historian Biondo attests the truth of this when he says, in speaking of the Florentines and Pistojans: "The Florentines, whilst endeavoring to restore harmony in Pistoja, became divided amongst themselves." The evils resulting from such a division are manifest. In the year 1501, Florence lost Arezzo, the Val di Tevere, and the Val di Chiana, which were taken from her by the Vitelli and the Duke Valentino. The king of France sent a Seigneur de Lant to cause a restitution to the Florentines of all the places they had lost. The Seigneur de Lant, finding in all the castles only men claiming to belong to the party of Marzocco,\* censured this division most severely, saying that, if in France any one of the subjects were to call himself of the king's party, he would immediately be punished, because such a remark could have no other meaning than that there were people in the country who were opposed to the king, who wanted the whole realm to be his friends, and that it should be united and without parties. But all these diversities of opinion and modes of governing spring from the weakness of those who are at

\* Marzocco was the name familiarly given by the people of Florence to the marble lion supporting the arms of Florence, at the door of the Palazzo Vecchio. Thence the party supporting the government of Florence was called the party of Marzocco. The marble lion is attributed to the chisel of Donatello.

the head of governments, and who, lacking the requisite force and energy to preserve their states, resort to such expedients; which in times of tranquillity may occasionally be of service, but when trouble and adversity come, then their fallacy becomes manifest.

### Chapter XXVIII

#### THE ACTIONS OF CITIZENS SHOULD BE WATCHED, FOR OFTEN SUCH AS SEEM VIRTUOUS CONCEAL THE BEGINNING OF TYRANNY

THE city of Rome was afflicted by a famine; and as the public magazines were insufficient to supply the deficiency of food, a citizen named Spurius Melius, who was very rich for those times, resolved to lay in a private stock of grain and feed the people at his own expense. This liberality attracted crowds of people, and so won him the popular favor that the Senate, fearing the evil consequences that might arise from it, and for the purpose of putting an end to the evil before it should grow too great, created, expressly against Spurius, a Dictator, who had him put to death. This shows that very often actions that seem good on the surface, and which cannot reasonably be objected to, may become oppressive and highly dangerous to a republic, unless they are corrected betimes. To explain this matter more fully, I say that a republic that has no distinguished citizens cannot be well governed; but, on the other hand, it is often the great influence of such distinguished citizens that is the cause of states being reduced to servitude. And to prevent this the institutions of the state should be so regulated that the influence of citizens shall be founded only upon such acts as are of benefit to the state, and not upon such as are injurious to the public in-

Savonarola

instigation of no other feelings than those of envy and jealousy. Brother Girolamo Savonarola fully understood the necessity of this course, which was recognized also by Pietro Soderini, Gonfalonier of Florence. Savonarola, however, could not put it into practice for want of power and authority; still, he was not remiss in doing all he could, for his sermons abound with accusations and invectives against the wise of this world, for it was thus he styled the jealous opponents of his doctrines. The other, Soderini, believed that he would be able in time to silence envy by his affability and good fortune, and by bestowing benefits upon some of his adversaries. Feeling himself young, and being loaded with public favors on account of his conduct, he hoped to triumph over the jealousy of his rivals without any violence or public disturbance. But he forgot that in such matters nothing is to be expected from time, that goodness does not suffice, and that benefits will not placate envious malignity. So that both these men came to their ruin, which was caused by their lack of knowledge or power to crush envy.

Let us now come to the other part of our subject, namely, the orders given by Camillus, inside and outside of the city, for the safety of Rome. And it is truly with good reason that historians such as Titus Livius give a more exact and detailed account of certain events, so that future generations may learn therefrom how to defend themselves under similar circumstances. And here we must remark that there is not a more ineffectual and hazardous mode of defending a city than to do it in a disorderly and tumultuous manner. This is shown by the precaution which Camillus took to raise a third regular army for the protection of the city, which was then and may still be regarded by some to have been superfluous, inasmuch as the people of the city were warlike and used to arms. And therefore they considered it

unnecessary to raise a special army, as it would have been sufficient to arm the citizens when occasion should require it. But Camillus thought differently, and every wise person will share his opinion; for he never would permit a multitude to take to arms without order or discipline. And according to his example, any one charged with the defence of a city should avoid, as a dangerous rock, the arming of a tumultuous multitude; but he should select and enroll those whom he wants to arm, and teach them whom they have to obey, the places for assembling, and where to march; and then he must order those who are not enrolled to remain at home to protect their houses. Those who adopt this system in a city that is attacked will easily be able to defend it, whilst those who act otherwise and disregard the example of Camillus will surely fail.

### Chapter XXXI

#### GREAT MEN AND POWERFUL REPUBLICS PRESERVE AN EQUAL DIGNITY AND COURAGE IN PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY

AMONGST the admirable sayings and doings related of Camillus by our historian, Titus Livius, for the purpose of showing how a great man conducts himself, he puts the following words into his mouth: "My courage has neither been inflated by the dictatorship nor abated by exile." These words show that a truly great man is ever the same under all circumstances; and if his fortune varies, exalting him at one moment and oppressing him at another, he himself never varies, but always preserves a firm courage, which is so closely interwoven with his character that every one can readily see that the fickleness of fortune has no power over him. The

clined these terms, but accepted battle, and was defeated; whereupon he sent his messengers back to Scipio with orders to accept the conditions previously offered by him. Scipio added no further conditions to those which he had named before his victory, saying: "The Romans do not lose their courage in defeat, nor does victory make them overbearing."

The conduct of the Venetians was exactly the opposite of this; for in good fortune (which they imagined entirely the result of a skill and valor which they did not possess) they carried their insolence to that degree that they called the king of France a son of St. Mark. They had no respect for the Church, nor for any other power in all Italy; and had the presumption to think of creating another empire similar to that of the Romans. Afterwards, when their good fortune abandoned them, and they suffered a partial defeat at Vaila at the hands of the king of France, they not only lost the greater part of their state by a rebellion, but, under the influence of their cowardly and abject spirit, they actually made large concessions of territory to the Pope and the king of Spain, and were so utterly demoralized that they sent ambassadors to the Emperor, and made themselves tributary to him; and by way of moving the Pope to compassion, they addressed him the most humiliating letters of submission. And to this wretchedness were they reduced within the short space of four days, and after a but partial defeat. Their army, after having sustained a fight, retreated; about the half of it was attacked and beaten; but one of their Proveditori saved himself, and reached Verona with over twenty thousand men, horse and foot. If there had been but one spark of true valor in the Venetians, they could easily have recovered from this check, and faced Fortune anew; for they would still have been in time either to have conquered, or to have lost less ignominiously, or to have concluded a more honorable

trates by the best evidences they can obtain of the qualifications of the candidates, and are less liable to error than princes when equally counselled. Every citizen, therefore, who desires to win the favor of the people, should strive to merit it by some notable action, according to the example of Titus Manlius.

### Chapter XXXV

#### OF THE DANGER OF BEING PROMINENT IN COUNSELLING ANY ENTERPRISE, AND HOW THAT DANGER INCREASES WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF SUCH ENTERPRISE

It is too lengthy and important a matter to attempt here to discuss the danger of becoming the chief promoter of any new enterprise that affects the interests of the many, and the difficulties of directing and bringing it to a successful conclusion, and then to maintain it. Leaving such a discussion, therefore, till a more convenient occasion, I shall speak here only of those dangers to which those expose themselves who counsel a republic or a prince to undertake some grave and important enterprise in such a manner as to take upon themselves all the responsibility of the same. For as men only judge of matters by the result, all the blame of failure is charged upon him who first advised it; whilst in case of success he receives commendations, but the reward never equals the punishment. The present Sultan Selim, called the Grand Turk, having prepared (according to the report of some who have come from that country) to make war upon Syria and Egypt, was advised by one of his Pashas, who was stationed on the borders of Persia, rather to march

against the Shah. Influenced by this advice, the Sultan started upon that enterprise with a very powerful army. Having arrived in that country, where there are vast deserts and little water, he experienced all the same difficulties that had in ancient times caused the loss of several Roman armies there. These difficulties were so overwhelming, that, although always successful against the enemy, yet he saw a large part of his army destroyed by pestilence and famine. This so infuriated the Sultan against the Pasha who had advised this enterprise that he put him to death. History relates many instances of citizens having been sent into exile for having counselled enterprises that terminated unsuccessfully. Some Roman citizens were foremost in urging the selection of Consuls from amongst the people. It happened that the first one so chosen was defeated with his army in the field, and the originators of that system would certainly have been punished if the party to conciliate which it was adopted had not been so powerful. Certainly those who counsel princes and republics are placed between two dangers. If they do not advise what seems to them for the good of the republic or the prince, regardless of the consequences to themselves, then they fail of their duty; and if they do advise it, then it is at the risk of their position and their lives; for all men are blind in this, that they judge of good or evil counsels only by the result.

In reflecting as to the means for avoiding this dilemma of either disgrace or danger, I see no other course than to take things moderately, and not to undertake to advocate any enterprise with too much zeal; but to give one's advice, calmly and modestly. If then either the republic or the prince decides to follow it, they may do so, as it were, of their own will, and not as though they were drawn into it by your importunity. In adopting this course it is not reasonable to

suppose that either prince or republic will manifest any ill will towards you on account of a resolution not taken contrary to the wishes of the many. For the danger arises when your advice has caused the many to be contravened. In that case, when the result is unfortunate, they all concur in your destruction. And although by following the course which I advise you may fail to obtain that glory which is acquired by having been one against many in counselling an enterprise which success has justified, yet this is compensated for by two advantages. The first is, that you avoid all danger; and the second consists in the great credit which you will have if, after having modestly advised a certain course, your counsel is rejected, and the adoption of a different course results unfortunately. And although you cannot enjoy the glory acquired by the misfortunes of your republic or your prince, yet it must be held to be of some account.

I do not believe that I can give a better advice upon this point than the above; for to advise men to be silent and to withhold the expression of any opinion would render them useless to a republic, as well as to a prince, without avoiding danger. For after a while they would become suspect, and might even experience the same fate as that which befell a certain friend of King Perseus of Macedon. This king having been defeated by Paulus Æmilius, and having fled with a few adherents, it happened that, in discussing the late events, one of them began to point out to Perseus the many errors he had committed, to which he ascribed his ruin. "Traitor," exclaimed the king, in turning upon him, "you have waited until now to tell me all this, when there is no longer any time to remedy it";—and with these words he slew him with his own hands. Thus was this man punished for having been silent when he should have spoken, and for having spoken when he should have been silent: his having

main body of the army, despite of the enemy, who was all around him, nor the places guarded by the enemy. It was therefore of the utmost importance that Decius had such a thorough knowledge of the country, which enabled him, by the taking of that hill, to save the Roman army, and afterwards to save himself and the troops he had with him by knowing how to escape the enemy by whom he was surrounded.

#### Chapter XL

##### DECEIT IN THE CONDUCT OF A WAR IS MERITORIOUS

ALTHOUGH deceit is detestable in all other things, yet in the conduct of war it is laudable and honorable; and a commander who vanquishes an enemy by stratagem is equally praised with one who gains victory by force. This is proved by the judgment of those who have written the lives of great men, and who give much credit to Hannibal and others who were most remarkable in that respect. History gives so many examples of this that I need not cite any of them here. But I will say this, that I do not confound such deceit with perfidy, which breaks pledged faith and treaties; for although states and kingdoms may at times be won by perfidy, yet will it ever bring dishonor with it. But I speak of those feints and stratagems which you employ against an enemy that distrusts you, and in the employment of which properly consists the art of war. Such was that practised by Hannibal when he feigned flight on the lake of Perugia (Thrasimene), for the purpose of hemming in the Consul and the Roman army; and when he attached blazing fagots to the horns of his cattle to enable him to escape from the hands of Fabius

*The only thing above glory:  
one's country.*

#### THE DISCOURSES

Maximus. Such was also the stratagem of Pontius, general of the Samnites, to draw the Romans into the defiles of the Caudine Forks. Having concealed his army behind a mountain, he sent a number of his soldiers disguised as herdsmen with droves of cattle into the plains. These, on being captured and interrogated by the Romans as to the whereabouts of the Samnite army, answered, according to the instructions of Pontius, that it was engaged in the siege of the town of Nocera. The Consuls, believing it, entered the defiles of Caudium, where they were promptly hemmed in by the Samnites. This victory won by stratagem would have been most glorious for Pontius had he followed the advice of his father, who wanted him either to allow the Romans to pass out entirely free, or to kill them all; but not to take any half-way measures, which, as we have said elsewhere, are always pernicious, "and never make a friend nor rid you of an enemy."

#### Chapter XLI

##### ONE'S COUNTRY MUST BE DEFENDED, WHETHER WITH GLORY OR WITH SHAME; IT MUST BE DEFENDED ANYHOW

As stated above, the Roman Consul and his army were shut in by the Samnites, who proposed to him the most ignominious conditions, such as to pass under a yoke, and to send the army back to Rome disarmed; which filled the Consul and the army with despair. But the Legate Lentulus said, "That for the purpose of saving the country no propositions ought to be rejected. The safety of Rome depended upon that army, and he maintained that it ought to be saved at any price; that the defence of their country was always good, no mat-

ter whether effected by honorable or ignominious means. That if the army were saved, Rome would in time be able to wipe out that disgrace; but if the army were lost, even if they died most gloriously, Rome and her liberties would also be lost." This advice of Lentulus was followed; and the case deserves to be noted and reflected upon by every citizen who finds himself called upon to counsel his country. For where the very safety of the country depends upon the resolution to be taken, no considerations of justice or injustice, humanity or cruelty, nor of glory or of shame, should be allowed to prevail. But putting all other considerations aside, the only question should be, What course will save the life and liberty of the country? The French follow this maxim by words and deeds in defending the majesty of their king and the greatness of France; for nothing excites their impatience more than to hear any one say that such or such a thing is discreditable to the king. For they say that their king can suffer no shame from any resolutions he may take, whether in good or in ill fortune; for whether he be victor or vanquished is a matter that only concerns the king.

## Chapter XLII

### PROMISES EXACTED BY FORCE NEED NOT BE OBSERVED

WHEN the Consuls returned to Rome with their troops disarmed and the insult to which they had been subjected at the Caudine Forks, the Consul Sp. Posthumius was the first who said in the Senate, that the peace agreed to at Caudium ought not to be observed. He maintained that this peace did not bind the Roman people, but only himself individually and those others who had assisted in concluding it. And

TROLLOPE, ANTHONY  
TURGENEV, IVAN  
VAN LOON, HENDRIK W.  
WEBLEN, THORSTEIN  
VIRGIL'S WORKS

VOLTAIRE  
WALPOLE, HUGH  
WALTON, IZAAK  
WEBB, MARY  
WELLS, H. G.  
WHARTON, EDITH  
WHITMAN, WALT  
WILDE, OSCAR  
WILDE, OSCAR  
WILDE, OSCAR  
WOOLF, VIRGINIA  
WOOLF, VIRGINIA  
WRIGHT, RICHARD  
YEATS, W. B.  
YOUNG, G. F.  
ZOLA, EMILE  
ZWEIG, STEFAN

Barchester Towers and The Warden 41  
Fathers and Sons 21  
Ancient Man 105  
The Theory of the Leisure Class 63  
Including The Aeneid, Eclogues, and  
Georgics 75  
Candide 47  
Fortitude 178  
The Compleat Angler 26  
Precious Bane 219  
Tono Bungay 197  
The Age of Innocence 229  
Leaves of Grass 97  
Dorian Gray, De Profundis 125  
Poems and Fairy Tales 84  
The Plays of Oscar Wilde 83  
Mrs. Dalloway 96  
To the Lighthouse 217  
Native Son 221  
Irish Fairy and Folk Tales 44  
The Medici 179  
Nana 142  
Amok (In Collected German Stories 108)

Interest (noble) versus love (she/he)  
Finally I am still in the state  
what we think we can't tell him  
had remained yesterday.  
What saves us is that there between  
us and our self is shared  
in Democracy.

Printed to : bring power other person, poss.  
surrounded by servants. First easier to expand  
but difficult to hold. Whereas freedom  
easy to expand, almost impossible to hold.

Primarily ownership or rule of the private  
individual, may be seen as basis of  
a career: fortune of ability.

Lesser Borges clearly about to write  
Shelby, condition of Shelby: slavery of dependence  
main purpose: keep of the foreigner. <sup>army of 4000</sup> p. 36!  
main point: not being <sup>78</sup> ~~left~~.  
Therefore better to be used by popular.

Mainly against the nobles. Slave of love  
of the people for the tyrol. (80 p. sens.)  
Love of fear: no psychological factor but  
question of power: love = free will = my own  
power. Fear = imposed by will of other -  
dependence of the other fellow's power.

Proof: Examples. The state of today are  
great research-laboratory for the expansion  
of the state. (p. 76)

Nation - State; conquest of State from  
Nation - Right in state is good for...  
connected with Tr. Rev. & his artless.