

## BOOK XXXVII

1. THERE was a great deal of talk of all sorts in Greece, first as to the Carthaginians when the Romans conquered them, and subsequently as to the question of the pseudo-Philip. The opinions expressed in regard to the Carthaginians were widely divided, and indicated entirely opposite views. Some commended the Romans for their wise and statesmanlike policy in regard to that kingdom. For the removal of a perpetual menace, and the utter destruction of a city which had disputed the supremacy with them, and could even then if it got an opportunity have still been disputing it,—thus securing the supremacy for their own country,—were the actions of sensible and far-sighted men. Others contradicted this, and asserted that the Romans had no such policy in view when they obtained their supremacy; and that they had gradually and insensibly become perverted to the same ambition for power, which had once characterised the Athenians and Lacedaemonians; and though they had advanced more slowly than these last, that they would from all appearances yet arrive at the same consummation. For in old times they had only carried on war until their opponents were beaten, and induced to acknowledge the obligation of obedience and acceptance of their orders; but that nowadays they had given a foretaste of their policy by their conduct to Perseus, in utterly destroying the Macedonian dynasty root and branch, and had given the finishing stroke to that policy by the course adopted in regard to the Carthaginians; for though this latter people had committed no act of irretrievable outrage, they had taken measures of irretrievable severity against them, in spite of their offering to accept any terms, and submitting to any injunctions that might be placed upon them. Others

again said that the Romans were generally a truly civilised people; and that they had this peculiarity, on which they prided themselves, that they conducted their wars openly and generously, not employing night surprises or ambuscades, but scorning every advantage to be gained by stratagem and deceit, and regarding open and face-to-face combats as alone becoming to their character: but that in the present instance their whole campaign against the Carthaginians had been conducted by means of stratagem and deceit. Little by little,—by holding out inducements here, and practising concealment there,—they had deprived them of all hopes of assistance from their allies. This was a line of conduct more appropriate by rights to the intriguing chicanery of a monarchy, than to a republican and Roman policy. Again, there were some who took the opposite line to these. They said that if it were really true that, before the Carthaginians had made the surrender, the Romans had behaved as alleged, holding out inducements here, and making half revelations there, they would be justly liable to such charges; but if, on the contrary, it was only after the Carthaginians had themselves made the surrender,—acknowledging the right of the Romans to take what measures they chose concerning them,—that the latter in the exercise of their undoubted right had imposed and enjoined what they determined upon, then this action must cease to be looked on as partaking of the nature of impiety or treachery. And some denied that it was an impiety at all: for there were three ways in which such a thing could be defined, none of which applied to the conduct of the Romans. An impiety was something done against the gods, or one's parents, or the dead; treachery was something done in violation of oaths or written agreements; an injustice something done in violation of law and custom. But the Romans could not be charged on any one of these counts: they had offended neither the gods, their parents, nor the dead; nor had they broken oaths or treaties, but on the contrary charged the Carthaginians with breaking them. Nor again had they violated laws, customs, or their own good faith; for having received a voluntary surrender, with the full power of doing what they pleased in the event of the submitting party not obeying their injunc-

tions, they had, in view of that eventuality having arisen, applied force to them.

2. Such were the criticisms commonly made on the dealings of the Romans with the Carthaginians. But as The pretended Philip, son of Perseus, B. C. 149. to the Pseudo-Philip, the report at first appeared quite beneath consideration. A Philip suddenly appears in Macedonia, as though he had dropped from the skies, in contempt of Macedonians and Romans alike, without having the least reasonable pretext for his claim, as every one knew that the real Philip had died in Alba in Italy two years after Perseus himself. But when, three or four months afterwards, a report arrived that he had conquered the Macedonians in a battle in the territory of the Odomanti beyond the Strymon, some believed it, but the majority were still incredulous. But presently, when news came that he had conquered the Macedonians in a battle on this side of the Strymon, and was master of all Macedonia; and when letters and envoys came from the Thessalians to the Achaeans imploring help, as though the danger were now affecting Thessaly, it seemed an astonishing and inexplicable event; for there was nothing to give it the air of probability, or to supply a rational explanation of it.

Such was the view taken of these things in Greece. . . .

3. A despatch from Manius Manilius to the Achaeans having reached the Peloponnese, saying that Polybius sent for to negotiate with Carthage, B. C. 149. they would oblige him by sending Polybius of Megalopolis with all speed to Lilybaeum, as he was wanted on account of certain public affairs, the Achaeans decided to send him in accordance with the letter of the consul. And as I felt bound to obey the Romans, I put everything else aside, and sailed at the beginning of summer. But when we arrived at Corcyra, we found another despatch from the consul to the Corcyreans had come, announcing that the Carthaginians had already surrendered all the hostages to them, and were prepared to obey them.<sup>1</sup> Thinking, therefore, that the war was at an end, and that there was no more occasion for our services, we sailed back to the Peloponnese. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Livy, *Ep.* 49.

4. It should not excite surprise that I sometimes designate myself by my proper name, and at other times by the common forms of expression—for instance, “when *I* had said this,” or “we had agreed to this.” For as I was much personally involved in the transactions about to be related, it becomes necessary to vary the methods of indicating myself; that I may not weary by continual repetition of my own name, nor again by introducing the words “of me,” or “through me,” at every turn, fall insensibly into an appearance of egotism. I wished, on the contrary, by an interchangeable use of these terms, and by selecting from time to time the one which seemed most in place, to avoid, as far as could be, the offensiveness of talk about one’s self; for such talk, though naturally unacceptable, is frequently inevitable, when one cannot in any other way give a clear exposition of the subjects. I am somewhat assisted in this point by the accident that, as far as I know, no one up to our own time has ever had the same name as myself.<sup>1</sup> . . .

5. The statues of Callicrates<sup>2</sup> were carried in under the cover of darkness, while those of Lycortas were brought out again by broad daylight, to occupy their original position: and this coincidence drew the remark from every one, that we ought never to use our opportunities against others in a spirit of presumption, knowing that it is extremely characteristic of Fortune to subject those who set a precedent to the operation of their own ideas and principles in their turn. . . .

The mere love of novelty inherent in mankind is a sufficient incentive to any kind of change. . . .

6. The Romans sent envoys to restrain the impetuosity of Mission to Bithy- Nicomedes and to prevent Attalus from going nia to investigate to war with Prusias. The men appointed were the quarrel between Nicomedes Marcus Licinius, who was suffering from gout, (II.) and his and was quite lamed by it, and with him Aulus

<sup>1</sup> He seems to have forgotten his namesake mentioned in II, 15.

<sup>2</sup> For Callicrates, the author of the Romanising policy, see 26, 1-3. One of the statues raised to him by the Spartan exiles was at Olympia, the base of which has been discovered. See Hicks’s *Greek Inscriptions*, p. 330. To what the fragment refers is not clear, but evidently to something connected with the popular movement against Sparta, and a recurrence to the policy of Philopomen as represented by Lycortas, which eventually brought down the vengeance of Rome.

Mancinus, who, from a tile falling on his head, had so many and such great scars on it, that it was a matter of wonder that he escaped with his life, and Lucius Malleolus who was reputed the stupidest man in Rome. As the business required speed and boldness, these men seemed the least suitable possible for the purpose that could be conceived; and accordingly they say that Marcus Porcius Cato remarked in the Senate that "Not only would Prusias perish before they got there, but that Nicomedes would grow old in his kingdom. For how could a mission make haste, or if it did, how could it accomplish anything, when it had neither feet, head, nor intelligence?" . . .

7. King Prusias was exceedingly repulsive in personal appearance, though his reasoning powers were somewhat superior: but externally he seemed only half a man, and was cowardly and effeminate in all matters pertaining to war. For not only was he timid, but he was averse to all hardships, and in a word was utterly unmanned in mind and body throughout his whole life; qualities which all the world object to in kings, but the Bithynians above all people. Moreover, he was also exceedingly dissolute in regard to sensual pleasures; was completely without education or philosophy, or any of the knowledge which they embrace; and had not the remotest idea of what virtue is. He lived the barbaric life of a Sardanapallus day and night. Accordingly, directly his subjects got the least hope of being able to do so, they conceived an implacable resolution not only to throw off allegiance to the king, but to press for vengeance upon him.<sup>1</sup> . . .

8. Museum is a place near Olympus in Macedonia. . . .

9. As I blame those who assign fortune and destiny as the moving causes in common events and catastrophes, I wish now to enter as minutely on the discussion of this subject as the nature of an historical work will admit. Those things of which it is impossible or difficult for a mere

Character of  
Prusias II.

Limits to the belief  
of the direct inter-  
ference of Provi-  
dence in human  
affairs.

<sup>1</sup> Prusias was killed at Pergamum by his son Nicomedes with the connivance of Attalus (Livy, *Ep.* 50).

man to ascertain the causes, such as a continuous fall of rains and unseasonable wet, or, on the contrary, droughts and frosts, one may reasonably impute to God and Fortune, in default of any other explanation; and from them come destruction of fruits, as well as long-continued epidemics, and other similar things, of which it is not easy to find the cause. On such matters then, we, in default of a better, follow the prevailing opinions of the multitude, attempting by supplications and sacrifices to appease the wrath of heaven, and sending to ask the gods by what words or actions on our part a change for the better may be brought about, and a respite be obtained for the evils which are afflicting us. But those things, of which it is possible to find the origin and cause of their occurrence, I do not think we should refer to the gods. I mean such a thing as the following. In our time all Greece was visited by a dearth of children and generally a decay of population, owing to which the cities were denuded of inhabitants, and a failure of productiveness resulted, though there were no long-continued wars or serious pestilences among us. If, then, any one had advised our sending to ask the gods in regard to this, what we were to do or say in order to become more numerous and better fill our cities,—would he not have seemed a futile person, when the cause was manifest and the cure in our own hands? For this evil grew upon us rapidly, and without attracting attention, by our men becoming perverted to a passion for show and money and the pleasures of an idle life, and accordingly either not marrying at all, or, if they did marry, refusing to rear the children that were born, or at most one or two out of a great number, for the sake of leaving them well off or bringing them up in extravagant luxury. For when there are only one or two sons, it is evident that, if war or pestilence carries off one, the houses must be left heirless: and, like swarms of bees, little by little the cities become sparsely inhabited and weak. On this subject there is no need to ask the gods how we are to be relieved from such a curse: for any one in the world will tell you that it is by the men themselves if possible changing their objects of ambition; or, if that cannot be done, by passing laws for the preservation of infants. On this subject there is no need of

seers or prodigies. And the same holds good of all similar things. But in regard to events of which the causes are impossible or difficult to discover, it is reasonable to feel a difficulty. And in this class may be reckoned the course of Macedonian history. For the Macedonians had enjoyed many important favours at the hands of the Romans, having been as a nation liberated from arbitrary government and imports, and having obtained undisputed freedom in the place of slavery; and having been individually relieved to a great extent from intestine factions and civil bloodshed.<sup>1</sup> . . . They had been worsted by the Romans formerly when fighting on the side of Demetrius<sup>2</sup> and again on that of Perseus; yet when engaged on the side of a man of odious character,<sup>3</sup> and in support of his claims to the throne, they displayed great courage and conquered a Roman army. These facts may well seem a puzzle to us, for it is difficult to discover their cause. And accordingly one would be inclined to say in such matters that what had happened was a heaven-sent infatuation, and that the wrath of God had fallen upon the Macedonians. And this will be rendered evident from what remains to be told. . . .

10. Massanissa, king of the Numidians in Africa, was the best man of all the kings of our time, and the most completely fortunate; for he reigned more than sixty years in the soundest health and to extreme old age,—for he was ninety when he died. He was, besides, the most powerful man physically of all his contemporaries: for instance, when it was necessary to stand, he would do so without moving a foot all day long; and again, when he had once sat down to business he remained there the whole day; nor did it distress him the least to remain in the saddle day and night continuously; and at ninety years old, at which age he died, he left a son only four years old, called Sthembanus, who was

The inexplicable  
conduct of the  
Macedonians.

Death of Massanissa B.C. 148.  
His fortunate  
career and physical  
vigour.

<sup>1</sup> A considerable passage is here lost, with the exception of a few words, insufficient to ground a conjectural translation upon.

<sup>2</sup> Demetrius II., son of Antigonus Gonatas.

<sup>3</sup> Pseudophilippus, after cutting to pieces a Roman legion under the praetor Juventius, was conquered and captured by Q. Caecilius Metellus III B. C. 148 (Livy, *Ep.* 50; Eutrop. 4, 6).

# END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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