

Source: The Histories of Polybius V2 by Polybius □

(translated by Evelyn S. Shuckburgh 1889)

I.—SHORTER FRAGMENTS

The first eight of these fragments belong to book 6, but as they do not fall in with what remains of the text, I have placed them here. I have divided these fragments into two classes: (A) those which seem to have some distinct reference which can be recognised or guessed: (B) those which though fairly complete in themselves cannot be so classed. A good many more, generally quoted by Suidas for the sake of some one word, did not seem worth putting in an English dress. The numbers in brackets are those of Hultsch's text.

A

I (6, 2)

I believe Rome to have been founded in the second year of the 7th Olympiad.¹ B.C. 751.

¹ Dionysius Hal. (i, 74) quotes this statement of Polybius with the remark that it is founded on a single tablet in the custody of the Pontifices. Various calculations as to the date were:—

Eratosthenes	}	.	.	Olymp. 7, 1	.	.	.	B.C. 752.					
followed by													
Apollodorus													
Nepos													
Dionysius													
Lutatius	}	.	.	Olymp. 8, 1	.	.	.	B.C. 748.					
Q. Fabius Pictor													
Timaeus									38th year before Olymp. 1	.	.	.	B.C. 813.
L. Cincius Alimantus									Olymp. 12, 4	.	.	.	B.C. 729.
M. Porcius Cato									432 years after the Trojan war.	.	.	.	B.C. 752.
Varro	}	.	.	Olymp. 6, 2	.	.	.	B.C. 755.					
Velleius Paterculus													
Pomponius Atticus													

But even granting a definite act of foundation (on which see Mommsen, *H. of R.* vol. i. p. 4), the Olympic register before 672 B.C. is a very uncertain foundation on which to build. See *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, vol. ii. p. 164 sq.

II (6, 2)

Polybius, like Aristodemus of Elis, informs us that the register of the athletic victors at the Olympic games began to be kept from the 27th Olympiad, at which Coroebus of Elis was first registered as conqueror in the stadium; and this Olympiad was regarded as an era by the Greeks from which to calculate dates.¹

III (6, 2)

The Palatine was named after Pallas, who died there. He was the son of Heracles and Lavina, daughter of Evander. His maternal grandfather raised a barrow as his tomb on this hill, and called the place after him the Pallantium.

IV (6, 2)

Among the Romans women are forbidden to drink wine; and they drink what is called *passum*, which is made from raisins, and tastes very like the sweet wine of Aegosthena or Crete. This is what they drink to quench their thirst. But it is almost impossible for them to drink wine without being found out. For, to begin with, the woman has not got the charge of wine; and, in the next place, she is bound to kiss all her male relatives and those of her husband, down to his cousins, every day on seeing them for the first time; and as she cannot tell which of them she will meet, she has to be on her guard. For if she has but tasted wine, there is no occasion for any formal accusation.²

V (6, 2)

He also founded Ostia at the mouth of the Tiber. Ancus Marcius,
Livy, I, 33.

¹ From Eusebius. It may be noted that this statement of Polybius is an earlier evidence than any other for the existence of an Olympian register prior to B.C. 600. Pausanias also dates the register from the year of Coroebus's victory (5, 8, 6).

² I have translated this passage as it stands in the various editions of Polybius. But I feel convinced that none of it belongs to him except the first sentence. It comes from Athenaeus, 440 E.

VI (6, 2)

Lucius, the son of Demaratus of Corinth, came to Rome relying on his own ability and wealth, and convinced that the advantages he possessed would place him in the front rank in the state: for he had a wife who, among other useful qualities, was admirably suited by nature to assist in any political enterprise. Arrived at Rome, and admitted to citizenship, he devoted himself to flattering the king; and before very long his wealth, his natural dexterity, and, more than all, his early training, enabled him so to please the king's taste that he gained his cordial liking and confidence. As time went on his intimacy became so close that he lived with [Ancus] Marcius, and assisted him in managing his kingdom. While so engaged, he contrived to make himself useful to every one. All who were suitors for anything found in him an active supporter and friend: his wealth was spent with noble liberality and judgment on various objects of national importance; and thus he secured for himself the gratitude of many, and the goodwill and good word of all, and finally obtained the throne. . . .¹

Every branch of virtue should be practised by those who aim at good training, from childhood, but, above all, courage. . .

(6, 1)

An impossible lie admits of no defence even.

(6, 1)

It is the act of a wise and sensible man to recognise—as Hesiod puts it—“how much greater the half is than the whole.”²

VII (6, 1)

To learn sincerity towards the Gods is a kind of image of truthfulness towards each other.

¹ See Livy, i, 34. Dionys. Halic. 3, 46.

² Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 40, νῆπιον' οὐδὲ ἴσασω ὄσω πλέον ἤμισυ πάντος.

VIII (6, 1)

It generally happens in the world that men who acquire have a natural turn for keeping; while those who succeed to wealth, without any trouble to themselves, are apt to squander it.

IX (10)

The strongest fortifications are in general dangerous to both sides; which may be illustrated from what occurs in the case of citadels. These last are regarded as contributing greatly to the security of the cities in which they stand, and to the protection of their freedom; but they often turn out to be the origin of slavery and indisputable misfortunes.¹

X (13)

Some few approved of his doing so, but the majority objected, saying, some that it was folly, and others that it was madness for a man thus to risk and hazard his life, who was quite unacquainted with the kind of fighting in use among these barbarians.²

XI (16)

“Secure retreat in case disaster fall.”

One ought always to keep this line in mind. From failing to do so Lucius the Roman³ met with a grave disaster. So narrow is the risk of destruction to the most powerful forces when the leaders are unwise. A sufficient illustration to thoughtful men is furnished by the headstrong invasion of Argos by Pyrrhus king of the Epirotes,⁴ and the expedition through Thrace of king Lysimachus against Dorimichaites, king of Odrysae;⁵ and indeed many other similar cases.

¹ Polybius is perhaps referring to the Acrocorinthus especially. But we must remember that many of the citadels in the third century B.C. were in the hands of Macedonian garrisons.

² This has been referred by some to the account of Scipio Aemilianus's single combat with the Spaniard. See 35, 5.

³ Perhaps L. Postumius, *Livy*, 23, 24 (Hultsch).

⁴ B.C. 272. *Plutarch, Pyrrh.* 31-34.

⁵ See *Pausan.* i, 9, 6. His disaster compelled him to give up his dominions beyond the Danube. Another and more successful war in Thrace seems referred to in *Diod. Sic.* 18, 14.

XII (23)

Marcellus never once conquered Hannibal, who in fact remained unbeaten until Scipio's victory.¹

XIII (25)

No darkness, no storm however violent, turned him from his purpose. He forced his way through all such obstacles; he overcame even disease by resolute labour, and never once failed in an object or experienced a variation in his uniform good fortune.

XIV (29)

In old times single combats among the Romans were conducted with good faith [but in our days many contrivances have been hit upon].

XV (31)

The horse, from the agony of the wound, first fell forward, and then galloped furiously through the middle of the camp.

XVI (42)

Seeing that the superstitious feelings of the soldiers were roused by these portents, he exerted himself to remove the scruples of the men by means of his own intelligence and strategic skill.

XVII (63)

SHIPS WITH SIX BANKS OF OARS

These vessels appear to be as swift sailers as penteconters, but to be much inferior to triremes; and their construction has been abandoned for many years past. Polybius, however, is supposed to lay down the measurements of such vessels, which the Romans and Carthaginians appear to have often employed in their wars with each other.²

¹ Livy, however, records more than one success of Marcellus against Hannibal, see 23, 16, 46; 27, 14. Scipio's victory of course is at Zama.

² From Zosimus, 5, 20, 7. See I, 26.

XVIII (64)

Getting completely drunk, and all flung on the ground in the various tents, they neither heard any word of command nor took any thought of the future whatever.¹

XIX (66)

In consultations of war, as in those relating to bodily sickness, one ought to take as much account of the symptoms that have since arisen as of those originally existing.

XX (90)

Cappadocia extends from Mount Taurus and Lycaonia up to the Pontic Sea. The name is Persian and arose thus. A certain Persian [named Cappadocus?] was present at a hunt with Artaxerxes, or some other king, when a lion sprang upon the king's horse. This Persian happened to be in that part of the hunting company, and drawing his sword rescued the king from his imminent danger and killed the lion. This Persian therefore ascending the highest mountain in the neighbourhood received as a gift from the king as much territory as the human eye could take in, looking east, west, north, and south.²

XXI (95)

The Celtiberians have a peculiar manœuvre in war. When they see their infantry hard pressed, they dismount and leave their horses standing in their places. They have small pegs attached to their leading reins, and having fixed them carefully into the ground, they train their horses to keep their places obediently in line until they come back and pull up the pegs.

XXII (96)

The Celtiberians excel the rest of the world in the construction of their swords; for their point is strong and service-

¹ Some refer this to a circumstance narrated in Livy, 41, 2. But Hultsch points out that Livy is not using Polybius in that period.

² From *Constantine Prophyrogeneta de thematis*, p. 18, ed. Bonnensis (Hultsch). He says that there are two Cappadocias, great and little. Great Cappadocia extending from Caesarea (Neo-Caesarea), and Mount Taurus to the Pontus, bounded on the south-west by the Halys and on the east by Melitene.

able, and they can deliver a cut with both edges. Wherefore the Romans abandoned their ancestral swords after the Hannibalian war and adopted those of the Iberians. They adopted, I say, the construction of the swords, but they can by no means imitate the excellence of the steel or the other points in which they are so elaborately finished.¹

XXIII (102)

The Roman praetor Marcus² wished to get rid of the war against the Lusitani, and laying aside war altogether, to shirk—as the saying is—“the men’s hall for the women’s bower,” because of the recent defeat of the praetor by the Lusitani.

(103)

But those of the Ligurians who fought against Mago were unable to do anything important or great.

XXIV (113)

A *mora* consisted of nine hundred men.³

XXV (117)

A general needs good sense and boldness; they are the most necessary qualities for dangerous and venturesome undertakings.

XXVI (154)

The second king of Egypt, called Philadelphus, when giving his daughter Berenice in marriage to Antiochus king of Syria, was careful to send her some Nile water, that the young bride might drink no other water.

XXVII (156)

I say this to point out the wisdom of the Romans, and the folly of those who despise the practice of making comparisons with the habits of foreign nations, and believe themselves competent to reform their own armies without reference to others.⁴

¹ See 6, 23. The excellence of Spanish steel has never perhaps been surpassed even to our day.

² See 35, 2-4.

³ Plutarch, *Pelop.* 17, who says that other authorities reckoned it at 500 and 700 men. There were originally six morae in the Spartan army. See Xenophon, *Rep. Lac.* 11, 4; *Hell.* 6, 4, 12-17.

⁴ See 6, 25.

END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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