

TWO EPISTLES TO JULIUS CÆSAR, ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE;

WHICH HAVE BEEN ASCRIBED TO SALLUST.

“THESE Letters were formerly entitled Orations. But that they are Letters is apparent from various passages in them; and especially from the twelfth section of the first, in which the writer says, *forsitan, imperator, perlectis litteris, &c.* I have therefore followed Cortius in giving them that name. That which I have placed first, in accordance with the opinions of the best French translators, De Brosset, Dureau Delamalle, and Eusebe Salvert, is generally put second. But it is evident, from the ninth section of the first, and from the second section of the second, that they were written in the order in which they are here given.

“There has been much contention amongst scholars whether they were written by Sallust, or by some imitator of Sallust’s style. Cortius maintains that they are not Sallust’s, and bestows great labour in proving that every word in them may be found in Sallust’s other writings; and hence infers that they are not the composition of Sallust. Any other person might possibly, from such premises, have formed a different conclusion. But Cortius wrote his commentary in a passion, and does not scruple to charge the author of the Epistles, throughout his notes, with the grossest folly and stupidity; reproaches which would certainly recoil upon himself, had he not, by his other annotations on Sallust, honourably rendered himself proof against them. Douza, a man of as great learning as Cortius, asserts that they must certainly be Sallust’s; ‘for there could not be taken, says he, ‘from the same spring, two drops of water more like to one another than these letters are like the relics of Sallust which fortune has spared us.’ That such is the case, every one who reads the letters will understand as well as Douza. . . . Carrio expresses doubts; of which the chief cause is, that they are not cited by the old grammarians, who adduce so many phrases from Sallust’s other works; and I am willing to allow this objection its due weight. But De Brosset answers it by observing that they may have been little known, from having been written as to a private friend, and without any intention that they should be laid before the public.

“They were found by Pomponius Lætus in a manuscript in the Vatican, attached to the fragments of Sallust’s History. Lætus, when he published them, did not prefix Sallust’s name; but that circumstance is no proof for or against them. I am induced to ascribe them to Sallust, first, by the diction, which is truly Sallustian, and, secondly, by the remarkable knowledge of political affairs which appears in them. It seems impossible to me that any *Pseudo-Sallust* could have

brought the days of Cæsar so vividly before his mental vision, and have spoken with such fitness and accuracy concerning the transactions of those times. There are many things in the letters which, as it appears to me, could not have been written but by a person who had been present at the occurrences of which he speaks; many things, which, if not written by the well-known Sallust, would almost oblige me to believe that there must have been two Sallusts. I therefore proceed to comment upon them as Sallust's own productions." *Burnouf*.

"Those who have denied that these Epistles are Sallust's, have rested their negations on arguments which are far from being satisfactory. Nor can I see the usual penetration of Cortius in the remarks which he has made on these compositions; for in saying that elegance of construction, judicious connexion, and what he calls numerousness of style, are not to be found in them, he seems to me to be totally in error. To assert that the whole complexion of the language is at variance with the diction of Sallust, is so far from being just, that we may rather suppose the author to have collected all the flowers of Sallust's style, with a view to give a greater air of genuineness to his productions. But there are other considerations which show that these Letters, or Orations, as some would call them, are forgeries. Not one of the grammarians has cited them; nor is the name of Sallust prefixed to them in the Vatican manuscript, which I have carefully collated. They are added to the orations and epistles extracted from the History of Sallust, but the writer of the manuscript appears to have been totally ignorant of the name of their author. It is difficult, too, to show at what time, or with what intention, such epistles could have been written to Cæsar by Sallust. They seem, indeed, to refer to the end of Cæsar's lifetime, when he was endeavouring to settle the state by passing new laws, and when Sallust was proconsul of Numidia; for I can hardly suppose that Sallust addressed Cæsar by letter when they were both at Rome. But there are many expressions in the Epistles which show that they cannot be assigned to any certain period. In the first Epistle, c. ii., mention is made of an *adverse consul*, and commentators reasonably supposed that this may refer to Lentulus (Comp. Cæs., B. C., i., 1, 2); and it would accordingly be inferred that this letter was written soon after the war commenced; but in c. iv., the writer speaks of Cato and Domitius as being dead; Pompey must therefore have been killed before the time to which he alludes; yet in c. iii. he speaks of Pompey as being still alive; and, to surprise the reader still more, he recurs, in c. ix., to Domitius and Cato again, expatiating on their abilities, and intimating that they are still to be feared. This confusion of times might be remedied by expunging the fourth section, but this would be to support a bad cause by an unsatisfactory mode of proceeding. However, if we grant that the letters were written at the particular time at which they profess to have been written, it is further to be considered whether the subjects of them are suitable to the genius of Sallust, and to the friendship which subsisted between him and Cæsar. In the second letter it will readily be acknowledged that there are many sentiments worthy of Sallust; for the writer of it may fairly be allowed to have considerable knowledge of political affairs. But however acutely he reasons on the general regulation of a state, the letter, unless it contains admonitions adapted either to establish or correct the condition of affairs at the time of Cæsar, ought not to have been addressed to him.

"It may be said that the design of the author of the epistle was to admonish

Cæsar to use his victory with moderation, and not to listen to the sanguinary suggestions of unprincipled men. But what men he means, I cannot understand. Among the many vices imputed to Cæsar, a willingness to allow himself to be directed, with too great facility, by the counsels of others, can hardly be numbered; and he exercised his power with such clemency and gentleness, as excited the admiration even of his enemies. The writer of the letter, indeed, might be thought to have set forth his counsels, not with a view to the benefit of others, but to relieve some uneasy feeling in his own mind. He says that the licence of expenditure and rapacity is to be restrained; that the usurers are to be suppressed; that the honour paid to money should be diminished, and military service equalised. Such are the counsels of the second letter; and among them are intermingled many remarks on the merits of Cæsar, on the perverse proceedings of the opposite faction, and on the corrupt morals of the youth; all of which may justly be regarded as wholly foreign to the author's subject. But if we allow that this epistle was written by Sallust himself, we must assuredly admit that the other (which is properly put first) was composed by some declaimer, as a mere exercise of the intellect. Some things are expressed in both letters in nearly the same words; as in the first section of each epistle: *quod prius defessi, &c.*; 'that men are sooner weary of praising you, than you of doing things worthy of praise.' Other things, again, are totally at variance with one another; thus Sylla, in the second epistle, cap. v., is accused of cruelty; while in the first, cap. iv., he is extolled for clemency. The imitations, also, of parts of the introductions to the Catiline and Jugurtha are ridiculous; as in the first epistle, cap. i.: *Sed mihi studium fuit adolescentulo, &c.*; and cap. x.: *Postquam mihi artes, &c.* The seventh chapter, too, is extremely similar to the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Catiline. As for the words, and figures of speech, copied from Sallust, they are so numerous that the reader can regard their accumulation only as the work of a jejune declaimer; thus, in the first epistle, cap. ix.: *Parantur hæc disciplina Græcorum, &c.*, he takes from the Jugurtha, c. lxxxv., the expressions of contempt for Greek learning which Sallust has attributed to Marius, and reproduces them as the sentiments of Sallust himself, not reflecting that Sallust was a great reader of the Greek authors, and sought water for his own brooks in the springs of Thucydides. Compare also cap. v., *in duas partes, &c.*, and Jugurtha, c. xli.

"But to say nothing more of such imitations, which every reader may easily find for himself, what, let me ask, is the object of the whole of the first epistle? The modest author offers advice to Cæsar about the regulation of the state. But what was the advice which he thought worthy of being the subject of two epistles to Cæsar, when he was busied with important occupations? He assails the faction of the nobles, as if it had not been at all humbled, and is inspired with such ardour for malediction, that he decries those whom he had previously extolled, and heaps reproaches on those, as living men, whom he had before represented as dead. Compare cap. iv. and ix. of the first epistle. He advises Cæsar to add to the number of citizens; but many new citizens had already been made; he thinks that the eagerness for getting money should be discouraged, but he had spoken at greater length on this subject in the other epistle. He thinks that the senate should be augmented, but Cæsar had before admitted into it a number of the worst characters. He is persuaded that the authority of the senate would be greatly increased, if the senators should vote by ballot, but he forgets that means

would thus be furnished for practising dishonesty; for many men of weak minds are restrained from immoral dealings only by a false ambition, which excites in them a desire to appear good, though real goodness is far from them; and if such men can but conceal their corrupt practices, they will dare anything whatsoever. But the writer's want of judgment is most flagrantly manifested in his suggestions to Cæsar to restore liberty which had been overthrown. Can it be supposed that Sallust was so ignorant of Cæsar's disposition, and of the state of public affairs, as to offer such advice? The *prosopopœia*, too, of Rome, uttering prayers and supplications, as she appears on the page of Cicero, militates against the genuineness of the epistles. When I take all these points into consideration, I am so far from believing that the epistles are Sallust's, that I cannot even suppose them to be both the work of the same author. We might rather imagine that two students of rhetoric, who had made themselves masters of the striking peculiarities of Sallust's ornate diction, and who knew that Sallust himself was a friend of Cæsar, and an opponent of the aristocratic party, had resolved on giving, in these letters, an imitation of Sallust's style and manner. The similarity of the subjects of the letters throughout, and of many particular passages, induces me to believe that two young men, who were under the same teacher of oratory, had engaged in a contest to show which of them had made the greatest progress in this peculiar study. This opinion, I think, might be more fully supported by a more minute examination and comparison of particular passages." *Gerlach*

These observations of Gerlach are rather long; but, as they may be regarded as decisively settling the question respecting the authenticity and genuineness of the epistles, I have thought it better to give them in full. Kritzius, who is no friend to Gerlach in general, cordially agrees with him in opinion on this point, and bestows the highest praise on his remarks:

"The epistles to Cæsar," says he, "on the regulation of the state, I could not induce myself to add to my edition, as many incontrovertible proofs show that they are the offspring of some school of declamation, where it was rashly tried, whether it were possible to represent Sallust's force of mind merely by copying Sallust's diction. . . . I had intended to support this opinion of mine by arguments of some length, but the execution of my purpose is rendered unnecessary by the diligence and industry of Gerlach, who has examined both of the epistles with so much penetration and soundness of judgment, and shows, with so much ability, that these compositions, attributed to the most eminent of Roman historians, are certainly spurious, that whoever, after considering his arguments, can still believe them genuine, must be regarded as ready to believe the grossest absurdities that can be advanced. . . . Gerlach, at the same time, acutely conjectures that both are not the production of the same hand, and that two young men, in some school of rhetoric, may have agreed to write, on the same subject, a couple of essays to show how far each had mastered the style and matter of Sallust. Than this conjecture I can conceive nothing more probable."— See the *Life of Sallust* prefixed to this translation.

EPISTLE I.

I. I AM aware how difficult and hazardous an undertaking it is to offer advice to a prince or governor, or to any personage invested with supreme power; for they have abundance of counsellors already about them; nor has any man sufficient sagacity, or sufficient knowledge of futurity, for the task. Bad counsels, too, often succeed even better than good; since Fortune directs most affairs according to her own pleasure.

But I, in my youth¹, had a strong desire to be employed in affairs of government, and spent much time and labour in the study of them; not merely with a view to the attainment of office, which many have reached by dishonourable means, but with a desire to understand the conduct of affairs in peace and war, and the strength of the republic with regard to arms, men, and resources. After much deliberation, therefore, I resolved to think less of my character and modesty than of your honour, and to incur any hazard for the sake of advancing your glory. This determination I formed, not from any rash impulse², or from respect to your fortune, but because I have observed in your character one quality worthy of admiration above the rest, a greatness of mind which is more conspicuous in adverse than in prosperous circumstances. But your merit in this respect is sufficiently declared by others; as men were sooner weary of praising and admiring your greatness³, than you are of performing what is worthy of celebration.

II. I am, indeed, of opinion, that nothing so arduous can be proposed, that it will not be easy to you if your mind be applied to it. Nor have I addressed to you my thoughts on the state, with the hope of hearing my prudence or ability unduly commended, but with a wish to call your attention, amidst the labours of war⁴, amidst battles, victories, and the

¹ I. But I, in my youth, &c.] Compare Cat., c. iii.

Not from any rash impulse] *Non temere*. Doubtless not; for the preceding sentence says that the resolution was formed by him *multa cum animo agitantē*, 'after much deliberation.'

³ Your greatness] *Munificentiam tuam* Cortius proposes *magnificentiam*, which the sense seems to require.

⁴ II. Labours of war] *Labores militie*. Those who have imagined this epistle

cares of command, to the concerns of the city. For if you have no other aim than to take revenge on your enemies for their attacks¹, and to retain the favours of the people² against an adverse consul³, you are far from meditating what is worthy of your ability. But if that spirit still remains in you, which, from the first, disconcerted the faction of the nobility⁴, and raised the Roman people from oppressive slavery to the full enjoyment of liberty; which, in your prætorship, baffled, without arms⁵, the army of your adver-

to be genuine, consider it to have been written A.U.C. 704, when Marcellus and Lentulus were consuls, and when Cæsar was with the army in Gaul.

¹ To take revenge on your enemies for their attacks] *Uti te ab inimicorum impetu vindices*. “*Vindicare se ab aliquo*, signifies to avenge himself upon any one.” *Gordon*. Not always. But there are examples of this signification. See *Sen. Benef.*, vi., 5. *Vindictæ ab injuriis magistratuum provincie*, *Vell. Pat.*, ii., 126.

² Favours of the people] *Beneficia populi*. “Alluding to prolonged command of the army, and the privilege of being a candidate for the consulship in his absence” *Burnouf*.

³ An adverse consul] *Adversum consulem*. “He means Lentulus. See *Cæs.*, B. C., i., 1, 2.” *Cortius*. Most other commentators agree with him.

⁴ Which, from the first, disconcerted the faction of the nobility] *Qui jam à principio nobilitatis factionem disturbavit*. “This may refer to what Suetonius says in his *Life of Cæsar*, c. v.: ‘After he was made a military tribune, . . . he vigorously supported the advocates for restoring the tribunitial authority, which had been very much reduced by Sylla;’ and c. xi.: ‘He engaged a part of the tribunes, in a design to procure for him the province of Egypt by a vote of the people, . . . but he could not carry his point, from the opposition made by the nobility. In order, therefore, to lessen their authority by all the means in his power, he again set up the trophies erected in honour of Caius Marius, on account of his conquest of Jugurtha, and of the Cimbri and Teutones, which had formerly been demolished by Sylla.’” *Burnouf*.

⁵ Baffled, without arms, &c.] *In præturâ armis inimicorum inermis disjecit*. *Burnouf* refers to Suetonius, *J. Cæsar*, c. xvi.: “He likewise stood very resolutely by Cæcilius Metellus, tribune of the commons, in his preferring some very seditious bill to the people, in spite of all opposition from his colleagues, till they were both by a vote of the house displaced. He ventured, notwithstanding, to continue in his office of administering justice; but finding some prepared to hinder him by force of arms, he dismissed his officers, threw off his gown, and got privately home, with a resolution to be quiet, since the times ran so strong against him. He likewise pacified the mob, that in two days after gathered about him, and in a riotous manner offered him their assistance for the vindication of his honour. Which happening contrary to expectation, the senate, who had met in all haste upon occasion of this tumult, gave him their thanks by some of the leading members of the house, sent for him, and after they had highly commended his behaviour, cancelled their former vote, and restored him to his place.” *Clarke’s Translation*.

saries; and which has achieved such eminent and illustrious actions, both at home and in the field, that not even your detractors complain of anything but your greatness, accept the suggestions which I offer to you concerning the government of the state, and which you will find, I trust¹, either consonant with propriety, or not greatly at variance with it.

III. Since Pompey, either from deficiency of judgment, or from perversely preferring what was to his own injury², has committed such an error as to put arms into the hands of his enemies³, it must be your part to settle the state in those particulars⁴ in which he has disordered it. First of all, he gave to a few senators unlimited authority with regard to the revenues, disbursements, and judicial proceedings, but left the Roman commonalty, who had the supreme power before, in a state of slavery under laws which were not even equal for all. Though the judicial power has been appointed to the three orders⁵, as before, yet the same faction still governs, giving and taking away as they please; oppressing the innocent, and raising their partisans to honour; while no wickedness, no dishonesty or disgrace, is a bar to the attainment of office; whatever appears desirable, they seize and render their own, and make their will and pleasure their law, as arbitrarily as victors in a conquered city. I should be, comparatively, but little concerned, if the superiority which they exercise, according to their custom, for the enslaving of others⁶, had been obtained by their own merit; but they are the basest of mankind, whose magnanimity

¹ I trust] *Profectò*.

² III. Preferring what was to his own injury] *Quia nihil maluit quam quod sibi obesset*. *Sibi* is the reading of Curtius; Havercamp's, and several other editions, have *tibi*, which, indeed, seems to suit better with the *animi pravitate* which precedes. The sense will then be, "that Pompey acted either from want of judgment, or from a desire to oppose Cæsar." Curtius's note on *sibi obesset* is, "The writer refers to that obstinacy of Pompey, with which he rejected all terms of peace and concord, when Cæsar was inclined to settle matters amicably."

³ To put arms into the hands of his enemies] *Ut hostibus tela in manus jaceret*. "Compelling his enemies to take up arms." *Curtius*. But the expression may be figurative.

⁴ In those particulars, &c.] *Quibus ille rebus rempublicam conturbavit, eisdem tibi restituendum est*. "Les points de droit public qu'il a renversés, sont ceux que vous avez d'abord à redresser." *De Brosses*.

⁵ To the three orders] *Tribus ordinibus*. By a law of L. Aurelius Cotta, A.U.C. 684, the right of being *judices* was given to the senators, equites, and *tribuni ævarii*.

⁶ Of others] *Alterius*. The singular for the plural.

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