

BOOK I

SECTION I. THE HELVETIAN WAR

The country known collectively as Gaul presents in reality three distinct divisions, inhabited respectively by the Belgae, the Aquitani, and a race which, though commonly described by us as Gauls, is known in the vernacular as Celts. Between these three divisions there exist fundamental differences both of language, customs, and political organization. Geographically, the Gauls lie midway between the Aquitani and Belgae, the respective boundaries being the Garumna (*Garonne*) in the south, and the Matrona (*Marne*) and Sequana (*Saône*) in the north. Of the three the Belgae are conspicuously the bravest race, a fact doubtless derived from the peculiarity of their position, which not only keeps them strangers to the civilization and refinement so characteristic of the Province (*Provence*), and protects them against traders and all their attendant evils, but brings them also into closest contact with the Germans beyond the Rhine, between whom and themselves there exists perpetual war. The same cause, it may be noted in passing, produces in the Helvetii those striking martial qualities in which they so far excel all the other Gauls; there being scarcely a day that does not witness some border skirmish with their German neighbors, either in repelling a raid upon themselves, or in making reprisals across the frontier. The middle section of the country, inhabited, as already stated, by the Gauls, begins from the Rhone, and from there extends to the Garonne, the Outer Ocean, and the

Belgae: whilst on its eastern border, at the territories of the Segunani and Helvetii, it marches with the Rhine. The general trend of the country is northwards. The Belgic division starts from the frontier of the Gauls, and from there stretches to the lower reaches of the Rhine, the country therefore facing north and east; whilst the Aquitani fill up all the region between the Garonne, the line of the Pyrenees, and the bend of the Bay of Biscay, fronting accordingly northwards.

Among the Helvetii at the time our narrative opens the most conspicuous figure, both as regards wealth and family descent, was a chieftain named Orgetorix. Three years earlier, in the consulship of M. Messalla and M. Pupius Piso, his restless craving for absolute power had led him to inaugurate a secret movement among the ruling chiefs, by which he persuaded the government to undertake a national migration from their present homes, having as its object (what, according to him, would be an easy result of their military supremacy), the ultimate domination of all Gaul. Such a proposal won the more ready acceptance, from the natural obstacles to expansion by which the Helvetii on all sides found themselves surrounded. Along their northern and eastern frontiers the Rhine forms a barrier which by its formidable depth and width effectually bars all outlet towards the Germans; westwards the lofty range of the Jura blocks the way to the Segunani; southwards the lake of Geneva and the Rhone cut off all access to the Province (*Provincia*). The effect of these obstacles was seriously to impede their freedom of movement, as well as greatly to diminish the opportunities for border warfare; two restrictions which, to a people of born fighters, were peculiarly distasteful. And further, there was the constant feeling amongst them that their present limited area, embracing as it did no more than 240 miles in length and 180 in breadth, was neither adequate to their dense population, nor worthy of their great military name and fame.

To these predisposing causes for action the appeal of Orgetorix added the required occasion, and the Helvetian authorities at once decided to make the necessary preparations for a general exodus. Sumpter beasts and wagons were to be bought up wherever procurable, all the land possible was to be laid down with corn, in order to

guarantee supplies upon the road, peace and friendship were to be secured with all neighboring states. For these several measures two years were deemed to be sufficient: the third, by a solemn resolution of the tribe, was fixed for the departure. The general supervision of affairs was entrusted to Orgetorix, and he accordingly undertook as his special duty the mission to foreign states. The first to be visited were the Segunani; where, entering into communication with a chief named Casticus, a son of that Catamantaloedis, who during his long reign over his people had been honored by the Senate with the coveted title of "Friend of Rome," he urged him to seize upon the scepter so lately wielded by his father. Proceeding next to the Aedui, he made similar proposals to a prince called Dumnorix, commending his suit by bestowing upon him the hand of his daughter in marriage. He was to rise against his own brother Divitiacus, at that time the acknowledged ruler of the Aeduan country and the trusted representative of the people. In the case of each, success was to be guaranteed by the approaching accession of himself to sovereign power at home; and the military preeminence of the Helvetii being unquestioned throughout Gaul, they were bidden to look to him for the acquisition of their crown, through the civil and military resources that would then be his. These allurements succeeded in their aim, and the three conspirators, having pledged one another to mutual loyalty, looked forward, when once established on their thrones, to climbing, through a coalition of the three most powerful and resolute tribes in the country, to the consolidated empire of a united Gaul.

But their secret was ill-kept: their plot was betrayed, and fully reported to the Helvetian authorities. In accordance with tribal usage Orgetorix was summoned to stand his trial in chains; conviction was to be followed by being publicly burned at the stake. On the appointed day the accused surrendered to his judges; but he came at the head of ten thousand serfs, who had been specially drafted from his wide estates, and with countless numbers of retainers and poor debtors also impressed for the occasion, and, thus surrounded, successfully defied the court. Justly incensed at so gross an outrage, the Helvetian authorities prepared to uphold the civil arm by an appeal to the sword; and steps had already been taken to call out the tribal

levies, when suddenly Orgetorix died; nor is there wanting the suspicion, strongly held by the Helvetii, that his death was self-inflicted.

It was not, however, allowed to affect their decision as to migration. When to the best of their judgment every arrangement had been perfected, under a strong impulse to take an irrevocable step that should more easily reconcile them to whatever dangers fortune might have in store, they deliberately burned down everyone of their twelve fortified towns, four hundred open villages, and every private residence throughout the land. At the same time all stocks of corn not destined to be carried with them on the march were indiscriminately committed to the flames; the only provisions permitted to remain being three months' supplies of ground grain for each head of the population. Three of their nearest neighbors, the Rauraci, Tulingi, and Latovici, were also induced to follow their example of burning their towns and villages, and to throw in their lot with the migratory movement; whilst another people, the Boii, whose home had been formerly beyond the Rhine, but who had since invaded Norican territory and there laid siege to Noreia (*Nemmarki in Syria*), were invited to join them and received into close alliance.

Two routes, and two only, presented themselves as practicable for their purpose. They might either pass through the country of the Sequani, by a narrow and difficult defile running between Mount Jura and the Rhone; so narrow that even a single line of cars could hardly pass, and so completely dominated by the frowning heights, that even a slender force could easily bar it in their face—or they might go through the Roman Province, a far easier and less complicated route, where, just across the upper Rhone, which here forms the boundary, lay the friendly district of the Allobroges.¹ This people had been only lately reduced to obedience, and numerous fords were also available in their country. The actual point of contact of the two tribes is the city of Geneva, which lies at the easternmost end of the Allobroges, and communicates by a bridge with the Helvetii on the opposite side. Either then, they argued, they would peacefully persuade the Allobroges, who hardly yet seemed reconciled to Roman rule, to grant them a passage through their borders, or else they would compel them by armed force. Everything being ready

for the start, a date was fixed on which the entire nation was to assemble along the northern bank of the Rhone; this date being the twenty-eighth of March, in the consulship of Lucius Piso and Aulus Gabinius (58 bc).

The news that the Helvetii were contemplating a movement across the Province reached Caesar whilst still in Rome. Upon its receipt, he hastily quitted the capital, and traveling through post-haste to Further Gaul, quickly reached Geneva. Arrived here, he issued orders to raise the military forces of the Province to their utmost limit (the whole of Further Gaul, it should be mentioned, was at the time garrisoned by a single legion only), and to cut down the bridge at Geneva. His arrival had not escaped the notice of the Helvetian leaders, and a deputation of their chief notables, headed by the two chiefs Nannius and Verucloetius, presently appeared to lay their case before the Roman governor. These informed him that their sole intention was to march through the Province without causing any disturbance of the peace, and only for the reason that no other route lay open to them, and that for this they humbly solicited his leave. In considering his answer, Caesar found it impossible to forget that these same Helvetii had not so many years before² first routed a Roman army and afterwards forced it under the yoke, whilst causing the death also of its commander, the consul Lucius Cassius. This fact alone precluded a favorable reply; but apart altogether from this, it was difficult to believe that a people, who harbored no very friendly feelings towards Rome, would repress their natural instincts of plunder and pillage, if once allowed the chance of marching through the Province. On the other hand, it was essential to temporize till the concentration of the new levies was completed; and he therefore replied to the envoys that he should require to think over the matter, and that if they had anything further to urge they might return on April 13.

Meanwhile he proceeded to strengthen his own defenses. The distance between the western end of Lake Geneva, where it passes into the Rhone, and a point lower down the stream where the Jura range (the barrier between the Helvetian and Sequanian lands) descends upon the river, is between eighteen and nineteen miles. Along this stretch of water he constructed, with the single legion of his original

command and the various drafts since arrived from the Province, a fortified embankment, 16 feet high, protected by a ditch, which when completed was strengthened by a line of forts garrisoned by detachments. These measures, he hoped, would successfully frustrate any attempt on the part of the enemy to force a passage against his will. The Helvetian envoys, on the day appointed, again presented themselves in camp. Here they were plainly told that the settled policy of the Roman government was never to allow anyone a passage through its southern Province, and any attempt at violence on their side would be instantly resisted. Disappointed in this expectation, the Helvetii next turned to the desperate expedient of forcing the Roman lines. For this operation every device was exhausted. Pontoon bridges, rafts improvised by the score, the fords of the Rhone where the river was shallowest, were all tried in turn: sometimes by day, though more often at night, until, finding themselves always and everywhere rolled back before the solid strength of the obstructions, the rapid mobility of the defense, and the ceaseless discharge of spears, they finally abandoned the attempt.

There remained the single route through the Segunani; a route that, owing to the narrow gorge through which it leads, it was impossible to take should the Segunani prove unfriendly. Failing therefore to obtain the necessary consent by direct negotiations of their own, the Helvetian authorities dispatched a deputation to the Aeduan chieftain Dumnorix, conceiving that his advocacy might perhaps enlist for them the sympathy of the Segunanian government. To the task now devolving on him Dumnorix was admirably fitted. Popular manners and a judicious employment of immense wealth had won for him an assured place in the counsels of the Segunani; whilst his marriage with a Helvetian princess, a daughter of the late chief Orgetorix, cemented his friendship with that people. He cherished, moreover, certain dynastic ambitions of his own, and with that object was secretly plotting the overthrow of the present Aeduan régime; it was therefore to his interest to lay under obligation all the surrounding nations that he could. Most willingly, therefore, did he now listen to the preferred appeal for help; and at his request the Segunani agreed to grant the Helvetii the desired passage, each party giving

pledges to the other, the Segunani, that they would not oppose the march of the Helvetii, and the latter, that they would commit neither robbery nor violence on their road.

These intrigues were duly reported to the Roman governor, who now learnt that the present Helvetian design was to march by way of the Segunani and Aedui to the distant settlements of the Santones, in Southwestern Gaul. As the lands of this tribe are situated not far from the territory of Tolosa (*Toulouse*), and Tolosa, as need scarcely be added, is an important center of the Roman Province, the new movement, if consummated, was fraught with grave danger to the Empire; for it could not fail to bring upon the flank of the rich corn plains of this district a race of turbulent tribesmen, openly and avowedly hostile to Rome. In the face of such a menace one course alone was possible. Deputing his chief-of-staff, Titus Labienus, to hold the recently erected line of works, the Roman commander by rapid stages hastened back to Italy; where, besides embodying two new legions, he summoned from their winter cantonments round Aquileia (*Aquileia*) the three that formed his original establishment in these quarters. At the head of these five he then selected the nearest route across the Alps and started back for Gaul. A certain amount of trouble was encountered from the hill tribes of the Ceutrones, Graioceli, and Caturiges, who gathered on their mountain fastnesses to obstruct his passage; but though frequent actions were necessary to dislodge them, the army accomplished the march from Ocelum, the last town on the Italian side, to the Vocontii in the Further or Western Province, in just under a week. From thence the advance was continued to the Allobroges, and from the Allobroges to the Segusiavi, who, as the first people beyond the Rhone, lie outside the Roman Province.

The Helvetii were found to have already passed the gorge of the Jura, and to have crossed the country of the Segunani. They had now appeared among the Aedui (district of *Lyon*), whose cultivated lands they were plundering on all sides. Unable to protect either themselves or their property from such a scourge, the Aedui dispatched an urgent appeal for help to Caesar, reminding him of their unswerving devotion in the past to Rome, which, as they put it,

had surely deserved a kinder fate than, virtually beneath the eyes of a Roman army, to see their fields ravaged, their children swept into slavery, and their cities carried by the sword. Along with this appeal there came a similar message from the Ambarrian Aedui (politically and racially connected with the parent stock) announcing that the enemy had already licked up all the countryside, and only with the greatest difficulty were kept out from the towns. The same story was repeated by a body of Allobroges, who came flying from their settlements beyond the Rhone, bearing the pitiful tale that, beyond the bare surface of the soil, they had nothing left to call their own. Reports like these admitted of but one solution. To look on quietly whilst the Helvetii slowly made their way across Gaul to their goal among the Santoni, amid the wreckage and ruin of prosperous Roman allies, was a course of conduct wholly indefensible in the eyes of a responsible Roman governor.

Between the territories of the Aedui and Segunani there flows a tributary of the Rhone, called the Arar (*Saône*), so extraordinarily sluggish in its movement that the eye can scarcely discern the direction of the current. This river the Helvetii were now engaged in crossing by means of rafts and temporary pontoons; and according to the reports of scouts had already transported three-fourths of their number to the western bank, leaving about a quarter still remaining. Shortly after midnight, therefore, a force of three legions quietly left camp under the personal leadership of Caesar, and coming up with that section of the enemy which had not yet passed the stream, fell upon them without warning. Disorganized by their passage, large numbers were destroyed, and the rest only escaped by seeking refuge in the woods. The particular division thus accounted for proved to be that of the Tigurini, one of the four principal cantons into which the Helvetian race is subdivided. It was this division which, in the memory of those still alive, had by itself issued from its homes, and after destroying a Roman consul, Lucius Cassius, on the field of battle, had forced the survivors to pass under the yoke. Fortunately, therefore, or providentially, that particular section of the Helvetian people which had inflicted this signal disaster upon Roman arms was now the first to pay the penalty. An interesting circumstance of

the event that may perhaps be mentioned was that Caesar was able to avenge not only a national but also a private quarrel; for among those who fell that day with Cassius before the swords of the Tigurini was one of his generals, Lucius Piso, grandfather to the present bearer of that name, whose daughter Caesar had lately married.

After the decision of this battle, there remained the further task of overtaking the rest of the Helvetian force. For this purpose it was necessary to bridge the Arar; and this having been done, the army was transported to the farther side. Such a rapid advance on the part of their opponent took the Helvetian leaders completely by surprise. That an operation like the passage of this river, which had taxed all their ingenuity to accomplish within three weeks, should be safely conducted by their pursuers in twenty-four hours, was a feat that filled them with amazement, and their immediate answer was an offer to negotiate. Their spokesman on this occasion was the old chieftain Divico, famous as having led the Helvetian army in its memorable campaign against Cassius. He now put forward the following proposals.

As the price of peace, the Helvetii were prepared to retire to any part of the country that Caesar might enjoin, and to settle anywhere that he might wish. Any further attempt to goad them into war would be answered as they had already answered it by that first reverse inflicted on Roman arms, and as became a nation of their spirit. True, Caesar had surprised an isolated detachment, where circumstances rendered it impossible for those who had first crossed the river to go to the assistance of their kinsmen: yet he would be a bold man if he exaggerated the importance of this achievement, or made the fatal mistake of underestimating his opponent's strength. If there was one thing which the Helvetii had inherited as a tradition from their fathers, it was to fight in the open like men, and not to rely on trickery or ambushade. The Roman commander therefore would be wise to pause ere hazarding a step, the result of which could only be to associate the name of the place on which they stood with a terrible disaster to the Roman race, and the annihilation of a Roman army.

To such language there could be but one reply. Any difficulty, he told them, he might otherwise have felt in coming to a decision, had been dispelled by his own vivid recollection of the events they had been good enough to mention; events which only stirred his deeper resentment, because so utterly unmerited by his own nation. Had Rome been conscious of any act of past injustice committed on her side, she could, by being forewarned, have been forearmed; in point of fact she had been betrayed by her own conscious innocence of any grounds for fear, and by her refusal to entertain fears that seemed groundless. Assuming, however, on his part a willingness to forget their truculent attitude in the past, it was quite impossible to rid his mind of their more recent deeds of violence—their attempt to force a passage through the Province in defiance of his orders, and their pillaging of the Aedui, Ambarri, and Allobroges. Their presumptuous boasting of their earlier victory, and their wonder at the dispensation of Providence which had allowed them to go so long unpunished, was, he told them, but one more indication of their impending doom. When Heaven was preparing vengeance for past crime, she not infrequently gave the guilty a longer lease of prosperity and impunity, simply to deepen the remorse raised by a contrast with their previous lot. In spite of all, however, one way still lay open. If the Helvetii would give hostages as a guarantee of their desire loyally to abide by their compact, then, provided they also indemnified the Aedians for the damage done to them and their allies, and similarly reimbursed the Allobroges, Rome would also, on her side, conclude a lasting peace. To these terms of Caesar's Divico replied that it was a tradition of the Helvetians, and one always observed by them, never to give hostages, but only to take them; and in proof of that statement he haughtily referred him to the experience of Rome herself. This ended the conference.

The next day the enemy broke up their encampment, and was followed in so doing by Caesar. To ascertain the precise route taken by the Gauls, the native cavalry, four thousand strong, were all ordered to the front: they were a mixed body of horse, recently raised in the Roman Province and from the Aedui and their allies. With an ardor all too impetuous, these now pressed the enemy's rear so closely, that

soon they became engaged with the Helvetian horse on ground that was much to their disadvantage. The consequence was that a few of their number fell in the encounter. Greatly elated by this action, the Helvetian leaders, finding that their slender force of cavalry, not exceeding five hundred sabres, had completely routed the large number of mounted troops opposed to them, now began more boldly to halt their column, and with their rearguard threaten the advancing Romans. Caesar, however, declined to be drawn into a conflict, and for the present was contented to repress the enemy's acts of brigandage, to bar them from forage, and prevent the wholesale plundering of the country. Under these conditions both sides continued marching for above a fortnight, the distance between the rearmost portion of the Helvetii and the advanced guard of the Romans never exceeding five or six miles.

Throughout this period the Aedui were continually pressed by Caesar to deliver the corn publicly promised him by their government. Such supplies were all the more necessary to him since, owing to the rigorous climate of Central Gaul, due, as explained above, to its high northern latitude, not only were there no crops yet ripe in the fields, but even fresh grass was still exceedingly scarce. And though corn had been brought up the Arar (*Saône*) by barges, its use was rendered very difficult by the fact that the Helvetii had lately left the neighborhood of the river, and Caesar naturally was most loath to relinquish his pursuit. Day after day the Aedui procrastinated: now the corn, the story went, was being collected, now the convoy had actually started, now it was just arriving. Perceiving at last that he was being trifled with, and knowing the day to be all but due when rations must next be distributed to the army, he called a meeting of their chiefs. These were present in large numbers in his camp, and included both Divitiacus and Liscus, the latter being the holder of the principal Aeduan magistracy, known as the "Vergobret,"³ an annual office with capital jurisdiction over all classes. Upon their assembling, Caesar delivered a very sharp reprimand for their failure to support him at so critical a time, when, being in the near neighborhood of the enemy, it was impossible for him either to buy in the open market, or to live upon the country as he went. Reminding them that

the campaign had to a large extent been undertaken in deference to their own appeal, he expressed in still stronger language the indignation that he felt at so base a desertion by their leaders.

Such a reproof wrung from Liscus a full and frank confession on a matter he had hitherto studiously avoided mentioning. The truth was, he explained to Caesar, that there existed in his nation certain individuals of immense influence with the people, whose private authority more than outweighed the collective powers of the government. These individuals were at that very moment engaged in a seditious and unscrupulous propaganda among the uneducated classes of the people, and were so terrorizing over them that they dared not deliver the corn demanded. The argument used by these agitators was that, if the Aedui, as they must, had now to abandon their old supremacy in the country, then at least Gallic rule was preferable to Roman; for, they added, it should be clearly understood that the destruction of the Helvetian power by Rome would be quickly followed by the loss of Aeduan independence, and would open the way to the universal subjugation of Gaul. Moreover, continued Liscus, these men were at that moment playing the part of spies; and there was not a plan formed or an incident that passed in the Roman lines which was not instantly reported to the enemy. These intrigues he as a magistrate felt himself powerless to thwart, and in speaking out as he did from sheer necessity, he was well aware that he carried his life in his hand, and for that reason had kept silent as long as possible.

It was not difficult to identify the subject of these insinuations, and to see that Dumnorix, brother of Divitiacus, was meant. Being, however, averse to a public discussion of such topics before a large audience, Caesar hastily dismissed the assembly, but detaining Liscus with him, pressed for an explanation of his language at the meeting. Thus urged, Liscus spoke with greater confidence and without his former reticence; and the other chieftains being next admitted to audience in turn, all were closely cross-examined by Caesar. From this it appeared that the charges were substantially true, and that Dumnorix was the real author of all the mischief. A man of boundless ambition, he had used his great popularity with the masses, acquired by princely liberality, to further his own private schemes for a *coup*

d'état. For many years past, it seemed, he had been allowed to buy up the tolls and other sources of public revenue at a ridiculously low price, for the simple reason that, when he was a candidate, no one else dared to bid against him. With the monopoly so gained he had largely increased his private fortune, besides providing himself with ample means of corruption; and a powerful cavalry force maintained at his own charges was always about his person. Nor was his ascendancy confined merely to his own country; it extended abroad among many of the surrounding nations. To foster it, he had contrived various matrimonial alliances. His widowed mother he had bestowed upon a chieftain of the Bituriges (*Bourges*), a prince of noble blood and assured position; his own consort had been selected from the Helvetii; whilst for a half-sister on his mother's side, as well as for several other near kinswomen, he had procured husbands from equally powerful states. His alliance with a Helvetian house had naturally identified him with the interests of that people, though apart from that he had his own reasons for disliking Caesar and the Romans; for their arrival had not only checked his own aggrandizement, but had also restored to his former position and influence his brother Divitiacus. Should disaster befall the Romans, his prospects of seizing the scepter through the help of his Helvetian friends were of the brightest; on the other hand, were Rome now to take over the country, he might bid goodbye not merely to his chances of a crown, but even to that measure of personal popularity which he then enjoyed. In further investigation it came out that, in the unsuccessful cavalry engagement a few days earlier, the Roman repulse had in the first instance been due to Dumnorix and his troopers. The command of the mounted contingent furnished by the Aeduan authorities to Caesar had been given to him; and apparently it was their flight which created the subsequent panic in the rest of the force.

The story thus unfolded threw grave suspicions on the conduct of Dumnorix; suspicions which were only too strikingly confirmed by the incontestable facts already known. There was the part he had played in bringing the Helvetii through Aeduan territory; his arrangements for an interchange of hostages; the general air of secrecy he had given the affair, in acting not merely without the

permission, but even without the knowledge of Caesar and the Aedui; and last, but not least, there was the damning fact that he was now impeached by his own chief magistrate. So serious a list of charges seemed to warrant either direct proceedings against the accused by Caesar in person, or an order to the native authorities to take such for him. The sole consideration which yet stayed his hand was the eminent position and lofty character enjoyed by his brother Divitiacus; for in this prince he had discovered an unwavering attachment to the cause of Rome, a genuine devotion to himself, and a sense of honor, an uprightness, and a dignified self-restraint that were alike remarkable. To wound the feelings of such an ally, were it necessary now to proceed against the brother, was a contingency not lightly to be faced; and prior therefore to moving in the matter, he determined to call Divitiacus before him. Dismissing the regular interpreters, he conducted the interview through a personal friend of his own, Caius Valerius Procllus, a distinguished native from the southern Province, implicitly trusted by himself on all matters of importance. After reminding Divitiacus of the language used about his brother in his own hearing before the assembled Gauls, Caesar informed him of the private communications subsequently made by each, and finished by a strong appeal to allow him, without straining their sense of mutual regard, either to try the case himself, and so settle the man's punishment, or else to hand him over to the Aeduan authorities.

At these words Divitiacus completely broke down, and falling at Caesar's knees pleaded passionately for mercy to be extended to his brother. The substantial truth of the charges made against him he fully admitted, and dwelt upon the peculiar mortification that they had caused himself. Dumnorix, it seemed, had risen to power by simply trading on his brother's name; for at the time when the position of Divitiacus stood unrivalled, both with the outside Gallic world and in his own country, that of Dumnorix, owing to his youth, was still insignificant. The considerable resources thus acquired by the younger man were now being turned against the elder, who found himself threatened, not merely with loss of prestige, but even with actual political extinction. He had no wish, however, to appear insensible either to the claims of brotherly affection, or to the public

opinion of his tribe; and he assured Caesar that any severe penalty now visited on his brother would, from his intimate relations with the Roman governor, be universally regarded as having his approval, and as a consequence he would most certainly lose the sympathies of every man in Gaul. This appeal he continued to urge with steady persistence and even with tears, until at last Caesar, taking him by the hand, begged him to calm his fears and to say no more, assuring him that the high value he attached to his good opinion would, after this earnest expression of his wishes, lead him to forget both the slight put upon his government and his own just resentment at it. After this Dumnorix was summoned to his presence, and was then informed before his brother of the indictment against him, including both those incriminating facts that were known to Caesar and the further complaints of the Aeduan authorities. A caution to avoid for the future all grounds for suspicion was then administered; but this time he was told, out of respect for his brother Divitiacus, the past would be overlooked. By Caesar's orders the man was afterwards cut under surveillance, and a constant report was made both of the way he spent his time and of the company he kept.

On the day of this incident the scouts reported that the enemy had bivouacked at the foot of some hills eight miles distant from the Roman camp. A careful reconnaissance having been made of the heights, and of the possibility of turning them in flank, the operation was found to present no difficulties. Shortly after midnight, therefore, T. Labienus, a general of division holding praetorian rank, was directed to take two legions with those who had reconnoitred the road as guides, and to scale the summit from the rear; the general scheme of operations being first carefully detailed. Some two hours later the main body under Caesar, preceded by the cavalry in full force, rapidly advanced on the Helvetian camp by the same road as the enemy had traversed earlier in the day. With the advanced scouts was sent an officer of some considerable reputation as a soldier of experience, viz. Publius Considius, who had served in the army of Lucius Sulla, and later under Marcus Crassus.

At dawn the position revealed was as follows. The mountain ridge had been safely occupied by Labienus; the bulk of the Roman

army under Caesar was within one and a half miles of the enemy's encampment; and, as shown by the subsequent evidence of prisoners, the approach of neither force had as yet been detected. At that moment was seen furiously galloping towards the Roman commander a single horseman, who turned out to be Cansidius, bearing the tidings that the hills, whose seizure by Labienus had formed part of Caesar's design, were actually in possession of the enemy. Of this fact he had made sure from the Gallic arms and banners seen upon the heights. Upon this announcement Caesar at once moved up towards the nearest high ground, and there made all dispositions for battle. In the meanwhile Labienus, acting upon his instructions not to begin an engagement until he saw the principal Roman column within striking distance of the enemy's laager, so that the combined attack might be delivered simultaneously, after successfully occupying the summit, was now anxiously awaiting his chief's arrival, without venturing to offer battle. Late in the day the true position of affairs was reported by the scouts; and the Roman commander then learnt that not only was the hill in the hands of his own detachment, but that the Helvetii had since struck camp and moved on, and that Cansidius had been betrayed by nervousness to report as a fact what only existed in his own imagination. Once more, on the afternoon of the same day, the pursuit was taken up with the usual distance between the two parties, and that night the Romans camped three miles from the Helvetian position.

A period of only two days had now to run before the next issue of rations to the army would be due. At this critical stage of the operations, the Roman force found itself within eighteen miles of the important town of Bibracte,⁴ by far the largest and wealthiest of those belonging to the Aedui. So favorable a conjuncture of circumstances for securing his supplies could not, in Caesar's opinion, be safely disregarded; and accordingly, on the morning of the incident just narrated, the immediate pursuit of the Helvetii was broken off, and the march turned in the direction of that city. The new movement was at once reported to the enemy, through some runaway slaves in the service of Lucius Aemilius, a squadron leader in the Gallic horse, and quickly produced a change of plans among the Helvetian leaders. In

their minds this sudden deflection of the Roman force was probably mistaken for an admission of fear; a view which would naturally be confirmed by Caesar's strange neglect on the previous day to give decisive battle after successfully occupying the higher ground; on the other hand, it is quite possible that they felt themselves strong enough to dispute the way with the Romans towards a place that must replenish their supplies. Be that as it may, their strategy was now completely changed, and wheeling round, they began to follow up the Roman column by hanging on its rear, thus openly challenging a combat.

Perceiving their intentions, Caesar withdrew from the lower ground, and while moving with all his infantry to the nearest hills, threw forward his cavalry to check for the moment the enemy's hostile advance, in order to form for battle. The formation adopted was as follows. Midway up the hill in three parallel lines were posted the four veteran legions. In rear of these, and resting on the extreme summit, came the two recently raised in Italy, along with the auxiliaries; and the whole of the hill being by these measures closely occupied with men, the marching kits of the troops were piled on a single corner of the ground, which was then hastily entrenched by those stationed in the topmost line. Meanwhile the Helvetii had been steadily advancing, still accompanied by their train of wagons; but as soon as they had deposited these and all their heavy baggage on a separate part of the field, their fighting men, after brushing aside the weak resistance of the cavalry, rapidly formed into battle squares, and in deep serried ranks swept on towards the slope where the first line of Roman infantry stood awaiting them.

To reduce all ranks to the same level as regards risk, and to banish once and for good the thought of flight, Caesar first sent his own charger to the rear and then those of his officers; after that, having briefly addressed his men, he gave the signal to engage. The legionaries had little difficulty with the advantage of position that they held in breaking up the solid phalanx of the enemy by the swift and deadly discharge of their heavy spears; and the main formation once shattered, they quickly drew their swords and charged. In the hand-to-hand conflict which followed, the Gauls were sorely handicapped by a curious result of this first volley. In many instances single

Roman javelins had cut their way through two or more Helvetic bucklers, locking them together; and as the soft iron heads had bent before the blow, the Gauls could neither wrench them out, nor fight with any freedom with the left hand so impeded. Eventually many of them, after vainly trying to shake their arms clear, had no alternative but to fling away their shields and to fight with the body exposed. Under the rapid exhaustion caused by wounds the enemy's line at last gave way, and fell back towards the protection of some hills about a mile distant from the field of battle. This object they successfully attained, but on the Romans once more advancing to dislodge them, there suddenly appeared upon the scene a new division altogether, consisting of some fifteen thousand Boii and Tulingi, who closed the enemy's column when on march and regularly acted as its rear-guard, and now arrived in time to fall upon the exposed flank of the legions and to threaten them in the rear. Perceiving this, the Helvetii who had retreated to the hill once more descended to the attack, and a fresh battle ensued. Rapidly changing front, the Romans broke into two divisions; and while their first and second lines advanced to meet those who had already once been defeated and driven from the field, the third turned to receive the new assailants.

Along both fronts a long and fiercely disputed battle then raged. When at last Roman determination had beaten down all further resistance, the main division once more retreated to the hills, while the other drew off in the direction of the wagons; for though fighting had lasted uninterruptedly from one in the afternoon until sunset, no one that day ever saw the back of an enemy. At the baggage trains the struggle was extended far into the night. The Gauls had pushed out their carts all round to serve as a rampart, and from this post of vantage poured in their volleys of spears upon the Romans as they came up; while in many cases pikes and javelins were thrust up at the men from beneath the wheels and wagons, inflicting serious wounds. A long sustained conflict ended at last with the capture of both camp and convoy, among the prisoners here taken being a daughter and son of the late chief Orgetorix. Through the rest of the night the survivors, still numbering about a hundred and thirty thousand souls, pursued their unbroken flight, and aided by this uninterrupted

marching, succeeded in reaching, on the third day after the battle, the country of the Lingones (*Langres*). On the Roman side pursuit had been impossible, since the care of the wounded and the burial of the dead had necessitated a delay of three days. Caesar, however, had sent on at once to the ruling authorities of the Lingones an imperative order to give no assistance, either by food or other means, to the fugitives; such action, he warned them, would render them liable to precisely the same treatment as that meted out to the Helvetii. Three days thus having elapsed, the entire Roman army once more took up the pursuit.

Meanwhile the retreating host had reached a state of such utter destitution that envoys to arrange for its capitulation soon appeared. These met the Roman army whilst still in full pursuit, and after prostrating themselves at Caesar's feet, in the attitude and tones of suppliants begged him to grant them peace. His answer was a command to await his arrival at the place where they were then encamped, a command they faithfully obeyed; and the army having arrived here, he demanded of them hostages for their future good conduct, the surrender of all arms, and the restoration of all slaves who had deserted from the Roman camp. During the work of collecting and delivering these, night fell upon the scene; whereupon under cover of darkness some six thousand of the prisoners of the canton known as the Verbigenus, secretly left camp and made off for the Rhine and the distant German territories. They apparently calculated that in so vast a crowd of captives their surreptitious flight could either be hushed up or else escape notice altogether: it is also possible they had genuine fears lest the surrender of their arms might be only the prelude to some horrible act of vengeance from their captors.

On hearing of this treachery, Caesar at once sent peremptory orders to those tribes that lay along the route that if they wished to be acquitted of complicity they must immediately hunt down the fugitives and fetch them back to camp. On their reappearance, they suffered the legitimate penalty of enemies; though all the rest, who had surrendered at discretion, after hostages, arms, and deserters had been delivered, had their rights respected to the full. There remained the question of their future. The Helvetii, Tulingi,

less by their own strong arm than by the honored friendship they enjoyed with Rome, had been forced to yield their noblest sons as hostages to the Segunani, and solemnly to bind their government never to ask them back, nor appeal to Rome for aid, but humbly to acquiesce in a state of permanent dependence upon their rivals. Alone of all the Aedui he, the speaker, had steadily refused this oath, and for this reason being forced to quit the country, had used the freedom which his own exemption from oath and hostage permitted to go to Rome and there to lay his country's cause before the Senate. But the policy of the Segunani had recoiled upon its authors, and though victorious, their lot was now even worse than that of the conquered Aedui. Ariovistus, the German king, had permanently settled in their country, exacting as his payment a full third of all their land (which was the very best in Gaul), and was at the present moment actually demanding their withdrawal from another third: for in the last few months a swarm of twenty-four thousand roving Harudes had joined him, for whom he had to find new lands and homes. A few more years of such a process, and the whole of Gaul must inevitably be denuded of its present population, and the German migration across the Rhine would be complete; for just as there was no comparison between the German and Gallic soil, so the standards of living enjoyed by the two peoples differed absolutely. Coming next to the actual rule of Ariovistus, which he had exercised since the day on which he overthrew the Gallic confederacy in a great battle fought at Admagetobriga, the speaker described it as cruel and insolent to a degree. The young sons of all their noblest families were constantly demanded as hostages; and on these, should anything occur to cross his humor, he would inflict every outrage that fiendish ingenuity could devise. The man was an untutored savage, of a capricious and ungovernable temper, and it was impossible to endure his domination further. If help of some kind were not forthcoming from Caesar and the Romans, every Gaul would have to follow the example lately set them by the Helvetii, and leaving their ancestral settlements, take fortune in both hands and seek out new homes in new lands, far removed from the German terror. Once more they begged Caesar to understand that should a word of this come to the tyrant's ear, the hostages now in his hands would

beyond a doubt suffer terribly; and concluded by saying that in him alone lay their hope; since he, either by his personal influence and that of his army, or by the moral effect of his recent victory, or by the magic name of Rome, could now stop the further influx of the German tribes, as well as make himself the common champion of Gaul against the tyrannous oppression of Ariovistus.

On the conclusion of this speech, all present burst into tears, and implored Caesar to come to their aid. The latter observed that hitherto the representatives of the Segunani had adopted an attitude in striking contrast to that of all the other chiefs, and with head bowed and eyes riveted on the ground, had remained throughout in deepest gloom. At a loss to account for such strange behavior, Caesar turned for an explanation to the delegates themselves. But the Segunani still continued speechless, with no change of expression on their mute, unhappy faces; and it was only after repeated questionings had failed to elicit any reply, that Divitiacus the Aeduan again undertook to answer for them. The condition of the Segunani, he explained, was one of peculiar pathos and hardship. Unlike their fellow sufferers, they dared not, even in the secrecy of the audience-chamber, utter a syllable either of complaint or of appeal, for even in his absence the cruel menace of Ariovistus was always before their eyes. Others at least had the remedy of flight; the wretched Segunani, having opened their arms to the invader and allowed him to seize upon all their towns, were now exposed to every horror that cruelty could inflict.

With this important information before him, Caesar first made it his business to restore the drooping spirits of the Gauls, and assured them that the matter should certainly have his best attention, though he was glad to think that Ariovistus, both from motives of gratitude and policy, would soon cease from his aggressions. With this he dismissed the assembly. Following on their withdrawal, various reasons suggested themselves to his mind why, in the highest interests of Rome, the situation thus revealed should be met by a policy at once clearly defined and vigorously executed. First and foremost was the picture of the Aedui in helpless bondage to German suzerainty—those same Aedui who had so often been distinguished by the Roman Senate with the honored title of "Brothers and Kinsmen." Hostages from this

people, he now learned, were actually at the present moment in the custody of Ariovistus and the Segunani; and such a state of things, under a great empire like that of Rome, was a deep disgrace both to himself and the country he represented. Secondly, it was perfectly clear that for the Germans to be allowed to pass the Rhine as a matter of course, till large bodies of that people were settled in Gaul, must eventually create an imperial danger of the greatest magnitude. It was highly improbable, again, that a nation of their wild and lawless instincts would so curb their natural inclinations as to rest content merely with the acquisition of Gaul. Like the Cimabri and Teutoni of an earlier date, they would most assuredly overflow into the Province, and from there press on into Italy; especially as the only barrier between the Segunani and the Province was the river Rhone. And apart from all other considerations, he could not help feeling sensible that the insolent pretensions of Ariovistus had now become intolerable.

Deciding therefore to dispatch commissioners to the king, he invited him to select some spot midway between their two camps for the purpose of a conference, as it was, he declared, his earnest desire to discuss certain important matters of state of deep interest to them both. To this embassy Ariovistus replied as follows:

Tell Caesar that if I had wanted anything from him, I should have come to him for it. In the same way I expect that any requests he may have to make of me may be made in person. Besides, in that part of Gaul which is now occupied by your master I dare not trust myself without an army, and an army is a costly and complicated thing to mobilize. I must, however, be allowed to express my wonder at what business either Caesar or the Roman Government can possibly have in my part of Gaul, which I hold by the right of the sword.

On receipt of this answer, Caesar again sent his delegates to the German monarch, this time with his clear demands. After a reference to the king's great obligation both to himself and the Roman Government, which during his administration had, through the

Senate, formally recognized his title and added that of "Friend to the Republic"; he went on to state that, since the only acknowledgment he had made was to decline on the score of excessive trouble Caesar's invitation to meet him in a conference, and since he considered it superfluous either to give or to receive information on matters touching their common interests, Caesar must insist upon the following stipulations. In the first place, Ariovistus must bring no more Germans across the Rhine into Gaul; secondly he must restore to the Aedui their hostages, and likewise allow the Segunani to restore all they held themselves; and lastly, he must abstain from all unprovoked attacks on the Aeduan people, and from all hostilities against either them or their allies. So long as these conditions were observed, cordial relations might still continue without interruption between the king and Rome: in the event of their rejection, Caesar had ample authority to carry the matter further. Three years ago, in the consulship of Messala and Piso, the Senate had empowered the Governor of Gaul for the time being, so far as might be consistent with Imperial interests, to protect the Aedui and any other people friendly to Rome; and on those instructions he was prepared now to act.

To these proposals Ariovistus rejoined that by the rights and usages of war the treatment of conquered peoples rested entirely with the conqueror. In accordance with this principle, Rome had always administered her dependencies, not at the dictation of an outside Power, but solely by what she conceived to be her own interests. If he did not dream of prescribing to Rome the terms on which she should exercise a right which was undoubtedly her own, then, in common fairness, Rome ought not to interpose between him and his prerogative. The Aedui had appealed to the arbitrament of war; they had met on the tented field, and had there been overthrown: by natural consequence, they now paid tribute as his vassals. Indeed, he might justly complain that by his presence in the country Caesar was materially diminishing the value of his revenues. Therefore, to the demand that he should restore his hostages, he returned an emphatic negative. As to making wanton attacks upon them or their allies, they were perfectly safe as long as they observed their compact, and annually

paid the tribute. Should they, however, fail in this, then the vaunted title of "Brothers to the Roman People" would prove but a broken reed. With regard to Caesar's threat not to overlook any so-called outrages against the Aedui, nobody, he might remind the Roman general, had ever met himself on the field without going to his own destruction. Caesar had only to name a day for the encounter, and he would quickly learn the true mettle of those Germans who had never tasted defeat, who had been trained from infancy to arms, and who for fourteen years had never slept beneath a roof.

Side by side with the delivery of this answer, there appeared in the Roman camp two separate bodies of delegates from the Aedui and the Treveri (*Treves*) respectively. Of these the Aedui came to complain that the new swarm of immigrants were engaged in plundering their lands, so that they had failed to secure peace from Ariovistus even at the price of the hostages surrendered. The Treveri, on the other hand, brought the alarming intelligence that the hundred cantons of the Suebi had just camped at the banks of the Rhine, which they were then endeavoring to pass, under the two brothers Nasua and Cimberius. These two reports, taken in conjunction, caused Caesar the liveliest alarm, and it was now clear to his mind that nothing but the swiftest action could save the situation. Should this fresh band of Suebi be allowed to form a junction with the existing forces under Ariovistus, the difficulty of coping with the invaders would be increased fourfold. Rapidly organizing his supplies, therefore, with all the speed of which he was capable, he began his march in the direction of Ariovistus.

At the end of three days he was met by the news that the German monarch, at the head of all his forces, was moving rapidly upon the town of Vesontio (*Besançon*), the capital of the Seguanii, with the intention of making it his base, and was already three days advanced from his own territory. Such a *coup* was one to be prevented at all hazards. Not only was the place richly supplied with all kinds of munitions of war, but by the peculiar strength of its position it afforded admirable facilities for prolonging a campaign; for with the exception of one tiny gap, the entire circumference of the town is, as though drawn with a pair of compasses, surrounded by the river Dubis (*Doubs*); and

even this section that is left by the break in the river (no more than 500 yards across), is completely dominated by a lofty hill, so placed that on either side its spurs descend straight to the river banks. Girt by a fortified wall, this hill is virtually transformed into a citadel, and is itself connected with the main defenses of the town. Towards this stronghold Caesar now pushed rapidly forward, making long marches day and night alike, until having secured possession, he had placed it in the hands of a sufficient garrison.

A few days' halt outside Vesontio, required for the better organization of supplies, was the occasion of a remarkable incident in the Roman army. Inquiries were naturally made in course of conversation as to the character of the enemy about to be engaged, and no less naturally the Gauls and resident traders had much to say upon the matter. The Germans were depicted as men of gigantic stature, whose courage was something more than human, and who used their weapons as no other soldiers could; and though often encountering them on the field of battle, they always found it impossible not to quail before their fierce flashing eyes. The effect of listening to such idle tales was quickly apparent. A palsied fear crept over the entire army, paralysing to a strange degree the energy and courage of all ranks. The mischief began with the young commissioned officers lately gazetted to their regiments, the attaches, and various members of the suite, who for reasons of personal friendship had accompanied Caesar from the Capital to his province, and whose military experience was not therefore large. One by one, each of these now discovered some urgent reason for his departure, and came to Caesar requesting leave of absence. A few, from motives of shame, and to avoid the imputation of cowardice, decided to stay on. These last, failing to look the part, and unable at times even to refrain from tears, gradually withdrew to the privacy of their tents; where in gloomy solitude, or in the company of friends, they either brooded over their own fate or bewailed the danger impending over all. In every part of the camp wills were being freely signed. The language used by these under the influence of their fears gradually infected even old and tried campaigners; viz. the rank and file of the legions, the non-commissioned officers, and the commanders

of irregular horse. Those who were anxious still to preserve some shreds of self-respect, now declared that it was not the enemy they were afraid of, but the difficulties of the road and the vast forests lying between themselves and Ariovistus; or else they were concerned about the question of supplies, and feared the transport would break down under the heavy strain imposed upon it. A few, indeed, even ventured to predict that the troops would refuse to obey orders, when commanded to strike camp and resume the march, and that in their present state of demoralization they would flatly decline to advance.

Resolved to arrest such a state of things before it proceeded further, Caesar summoned a council of war, admitting to it the non-commissioned officers of every company throughout the army. In tones of sharp reprimand, he sternly rebuked their presumption in daring to question or discuss either the scene or plan of any operations they might be called upon to carry out in the field. With regard specially to Ariovistus, only as late as the preceding year, he told them, during his own consular administration, that monarch had gone out of his way to solicit Roman friendship, and it was therefore unreasonable to suppose he would lightly repudiate the obligations he then incurred. Indeed, his own conviction in the matter was that the German king had only to understand the true nature of the demands addressed to him, and the inherent fairness of the conditions proposed, and he would cease to contemplate the dissolution of that friendship which he had so recently contracted with himself and the Roman government. In the event, however, of his proving such a fool and madman as to issue a declaration of war, what, he asked his officers, was there so very terrible in all that, or why should it lead them to lose both their own courage and their belief in the ability of their general. It was not the first time that Romans had encountered these redoubtable warriors. Many were still alive who could recall the day when Marius broke the power of the Cimbri and Teutoni;¹ and that great fight, as he went on to remind them, was as much a soldiers' victory as it was due to the genius of the man who led them. Quite recently again, at the last great rising of their slaves,² they had fought the same foe on Italian soil; though on that occasion these had been

in no small degree aided by the science and discipline adopted from their masters. Than this last rebellion, no better example of the value of cool self-possession in the hour of danger could be imagined; for, beginning with unreasoning dread of bands of unarmed insurgents, it had ended with the complete overthrow of formidable armies after these had been flushed with the tide of victory. And finally, the enemy now before them, he pointed out, had been constantly encountered by the Helvetii, both on Helvetian and on German soil, and almost as constantly defeated; yet the Helvetii, as they well knew, had proved no match for Roman troops. Then turning to those who professed to be much impressed by the disasters incurred by the Gauls, and by their flight before the invader, he showed the hollowness of all such fears. Examination would prove that the true reason for the Gauls' defeat was weariness at the interminable length of the war; and that having long lost hope of obtaining a pitched battle, as month after month went by and Ariovistus still clung to his camp and marches, they had allowed their forces to become scattered, and so exposed themselves to a sudden attack from their adversary, who had snatched a victory that was far more due to clever artifice than to any merit of his own. But a trick that might be played upon levies of raw natives, not even the German king could expect would succeed against the disciplined armies of Rome. So much then for honest doubts, for which he had some respect. But, he continued, there were others of his audience who endeavored to conceal their faint-heartedness under the cloak of pretended anxiety for the commissariat, or the obstacles attending the advance. Such conduct, he told them, was nothing less than impertinent, for it implied that the commander-in-chief did not know his business, and that it was their duty to teach him it. These matters were, as a fact, then engaging his attention. Corn would be provided during the campaign by the Segunni, the Leuci, and the Lingones, (*Langres*) and in addition there were the crops already ripe in the fields: whilst as to the route, they should quickly have an opportunity of testing the wisdom of his methods for themselves. One last word on the rumor that the men would refuse obedience when ordered to advance. Such a rumor, he declared, left him perfectly unmoved. In all cases of mutiny recorded of an army, the true explanation, as

he read history, had invariably been either the want of success that attends on incapacity, or the detection of such misconduct in a general as showed evidence of personal greed: and that his own hands were clean was attested by the whole of his career: whilst that he knew how to command success was proved by the Helvetian campaign. Resting, therefore, on that assurance, he would now proceed to do what it had been his intention for a time to defer; and on that very night, somewhere between the last watch and the dawn, the order would be given to strike camp. That at least would enable him to learn the worst; whether honor and the sense of duty still weighed with them most, or the base promptings of fear. If no one else were found to follow, then he would go with the Tenth legion alone; for at least he was sure of their loyalty, and they should act as his bodyguard.

This regiment, it should be explained, was a special favorite of Caesar's, and owing to its fine soldierlike qualities he trusted it implicitly.

The speech produced an extraordinary revulsion of feeling, and in all ranks alike there was now an eager desire to proceed to the front. The lead was taken by the Tenth legion, who expressed through their officers their deep sense of gratitude to Caesar for the high compliment he had paid them, and assured him that they were ready for action at a moment's notice. The other regiments quickly followed suit, and the men, going to their officers and senior sergeants, requested them publicly to apologize to Caesar, and to explain to him that they had never harbored either doubts or fears, or imagined that it lay with themselves, rather than with their commander, to decide on the conduct of a campaign. This apology Caesar graciously accepted, and then consulted with Divitiacus, whose sincerity he could trust more than that of all others, as to the best line of advance. Upon his advice, he decided to make a detour of fully fifty miles in order to take the army through open country, and in the last watch of the night, as he had already stated, he struck camp. At the end of a week's continuous marching, the scouts reported that Ariovistus and the Germans were twenty-four miles from the Roman force.

This rapid advance on the part of his opponent drew a message from the king, in which he explained that having now brought his

own position nearer, there were no longer the obstacles there had originally been to the conference desired by Caesar, and that therefore he thought he might now safely grant it without risk to himself. This somewhat tardy concession Caesar took no exception to, but gladly welcomed it as a sign of returning sanity in the monarch. For when the king was found spontaneously to offer what formerly he had refused to do upon request, there was good ground for believing that further acquaintance with the tenour of the Roman demands, when fortified by the sense of his own obligations to Caesar and the Roman Government, might lead to some abatement of his present uncompromising attitude. Accordingly a meeting was arranged—the date fixed being four days hence. In the meanwhile the diplomatic agents of both parties passed freely to and fro, and it was in the course of these preliminaries that Ariovistus suddenly raised the demand that Caesar should on no account bring infantry with him to the conference; the reason alleged being his fear of finding himself trapped or ambushed. Both, he declared, must come with cavalry alone; on no other terms would he consent to appear. This new turn to the negotiations raised a serious difficulty. Though unwilling to sacrifice the projected meeting to a petty obstacle of this nature, Caesar yet felt that to trust himself solely to the protection of his Gallic horse would be to incur a very grave risk; and he had therefore to contrive some other expedient that would best meet the case. He decided to dismount all his native irregulars, and to put up in their places the men of the Tenth legion, knowing well that on these he could rely: should any emergency then arise, he would have round him an absolutely devoted bodyguard. While the transformation was being effected, one of the privates of the Tenth remarked, not without a touch of humor, that Caesar was proving better than his word. "He had promised to make the regiment a corps of Footguards: in future they would appear on the roll of the Knights."

A wide open plain separated the two camps, broken at one point by a hill of soft material, which formed a conspicuous landmark. This spot was nearly equidistant from the positions occupied by Caesar and Ariovistus, and to it both, as previously arranged, now proceeded

to the interview. Arrived on the ground, Caesar stationed the legion, which had so recently been converted into mounted infantry, at a point three or four hundred yards in the rear of the hill, whilst Ariovistus' cavalry likewise drew up at a similar distance. The German leader then asked that the conversation should be conducted from the saddle, and that the escort accompanying either should be limited to ten troopers. At last the two being face to face, Caesar opened the discussion by enumerating the various distinctions which at his instance had been conferred on Ariovistus by the Roman Government. His title of king had been publicly recognized by the Senate, the friendship of Rome had been formally extended to him, and the gifts of the Republic had been conveyed to his court with all the ceremony proper to such occasions. Few indeed, he reminded him, had been honored by such great compliments, which were generally reserved as a reward for eminent services rendered by their recipients. In the case of the king, there had been nothing either to suggest or to warrant even a claim to such distinctions: if they had been bestowed, it was solely by Caesar's kind intervention on his behalf, and by the goodwill of the government which he represented. He next proceeded to explain how ancient and indisputable were the ties uniting Rome with the people of the Aedui. The Senate's numerous resolutions in their favor and the honorable nature of their contents were severally recounted, and Ariovistus was reminded that, even before the Aedui appealed to Roman friendship, they had from long antiquity enjoyed an undisputed ascendancy over Central Gaul. Rome, the king must understand, whenever she bestowed on a people her friendship or alliance, not only saw that these were not losers by the bargain, but endeavored to promote, as far as in her lay, the prestige, dignity, and respect paid to her protégés. That she should permit any of these actually to be despoiled of what they had originally brought into the alliance, was a contingency that could not be contemplated for a moment. In conclusion, the conditions were reaffirmed which had been originally conveyed by Caesar's envoys, viz. that hostilities must cease against both the Aedui and their allies; that that people's hostages must be restored them; and that, even if it proved impracticable to send back any portion of the Germans

already settled on Gallic soil, yet at least no further bands should be permitted to cross the Rhine.

To these demands, Ariovistus' reply contained little that was relevant or satisfactory, but dilated at large on the subject of his own admirable virtues.

He had crossed the Rhine, it seemed, not at all in self-interest, but solely on the urgent summons of the Gauls; and it was only the great expectations held out to him, and the considerable sums paid him by way of installment, that had induced him to leave his ancestral home and to part from kith and kindred. In strict accordance with these terms, his new home in his adopted country had been provided by the Gauls themselves, with whose free consent also the hostages had been given; while, as to the tribute, he levied that by right of conquest, as the recognized burden always laid by the victor on the vanquished. In common fairness it should be remembered that it was not he who began hostilities with the Gauls, but they with him. They had gathered in their thousands, with the avowed object of crushing him and his people, every state in Celtic Gaul contributing its share of warriors: they had proudly planted their camp right over against his own as a direct challenge to combat; and in a single battle the whole mighty host had been shattered and driven from the field. If they wanted to repeat the experiment, he was ready to abide by the result of a second encounter: if they wished to continue living in peace, then it was unreasonable to raise difficulties about the tribute, which up to that moment they had regularly and ungrudgingly paid.

A reference had been made to his own request for Roman friendship. It was true he had taken some pains to acquire that gift, but it was under the impression that such a tie would materially enhance his reputation and increase his safety, not, as was now proving the case, seriously damage both. If the loss of his tribute and surrender of his prisoners were made a condition of its retention, then he would as gladly decline

the proffered friendship of Imperial Rome as formerly he had sought it. With regard to Caesar's third demand, he admitted he was still bringing Germans across the Rhine, but it was solely to safeguard his own position, not for the purpose of raiding Gaul. That this was his true motive was clear from what had already been explained, viz. that his presence in the country at the first had been wholly unsolicited, and that the hostilities which had ensued had been, on his part, purely defensive. Yet he had a better claim than Rome to decide the destinies of Gaul, for it rested on priority of tenure, and Rome found him already in possession. Indeed, this was the first time in history that a Roman force had crossed the boundary of her southern Province. He was therefore entitled to ask for an explanation of its presence in his preserves, for this part of Gaul was as much a province of his kingdom, as the other was of the Republic. Just, then, as he would not be tolerated, were he to lead a hostile invasion into Roman territory, so the Romans were clearly in the wrong in interfering with his established rights. It might please Caesar to describe the Aedui as the adopted brothers of his own countrymen, but he was not such a rude savage, or so entirely ignorant of affairs, as not to be aware that neither in the recent war of the Romans against the Allobroges had any help been given by the Aedui to their newly found relatives, nor in the numerous struggles of the Aedui with himself and the Seguanii had they ever received one atom of support from Rome. He was therefore driven to the conclusion that, under the veil of pretended friendship, Caesar's presence in the country did but conceal a fixed intention to compass his destruction: and unless he at once retired, and withdrew his military forces from the district they then occupied, he would be compelled to treat him, not as a friend, but as an open and avowed enemy. Should Caesar fall by his sword, it would be welcome news to many of the first nobility in Rome—so much he had learnt from their own lips, communicated through their agents; and he was well aware that, at the price of Caesar's head, he could purchase the interest

and friendship of the entire oligarchical party. On the other hand, Caesar had only to retire, and to leave him in undisturbed possession of Celtic Gaul, and he would find a rich compensation for his compliance; whilst any further wars he might desire to carry out he might safely leave to him and his Germans, without risk or trouble to himself.

In reply to this, many arguments were adduced by Caesar to show how impossible it was for him to recede from the position he had already taken up. In the first place, to abandon allies whose loyalty had stood the test of time, was to be false both to his own character and to the best traditions of his race. And on the wider issue, he did not admit the claims of Ariovistus to the country to be superior to those of Rome. Rome, too, he reminded his hearer, could point to a verdict given by arms. Many years ago,² Quintus Fabius Maximus had reduced the Arverni (*Auvergne*) and the Ruteni (*Rodaz*): though afterwards the Roman Government of the day had generously refrained from forming them into a province, or imposing a tribute. But that argument he need not pursue further. If they must scrutinize the records of ancient history, it was obvious that the position of Rome in Gaul rested on a firm basis of justice: if, on the contrary, the decision of the Senate was to be upheld, then Gaul had every right to be free; for, after being fairly conquered, she had been allowed by her conqueror to retain her independence.

In the midst of the discussion, word was sent to Caesar that Ariovistus' horsemen were advancing nearer to the hill and threatening the Roman escort, whom indeed they were already attacking with stones and spears. At once terminating his speech, Caesar galloped back to his men and ordered them on no account to return the fire; for though he had no misgiving as to the result of a contest between his own picked regiment of footguards and the cavalry of the enemy, yet it was undesirable to take any step which could afterwards be interpreted by the beaten party as a betrayal of confidence or an abuse of the rights of parity. On returning to camp, the news quickly spread amongst the men of the studied insolence the German king had shown throughout the interview, and how he

had even warned the Romans off the whole of Central Gaul; and when to this was added the treacherous attack made by his horsemen, and the consequent interruption of the negotiations, a most remarkable increase of enthusiasm and desire to engage the enemy was perceptible in all ranks.

Forty-eight hours after this incident representatives from Ariovistus again appeared in the Roman camp, bringing with them a message from the king to the effect that, wishing to continue the discussion of those matters which had been broached between them but not yet definitely settled, he would be obliged to Caesar if he would either appoint a day for a second interview, or, if adverse to that, would send some member of his staff. The first of these proposals, viz. that for an interview, Caesar now held to be superfluous, especially as on the previous day it had been impossible to restrain the Germans from firing on his troops. On the other hand, to send one of his higher officers was to run a very grave risk, as it would be placing him at the mercy of a lot of savages. The most satisfactory solution appeared to be to employ the services of a young Gallic nobleman named Caius Valerius Procellus, a son of that Caius Valerius Caburus, who had received Roman citizenship under the governor, Caius Valerius Flaccus.¹ Of gallant and courteous bearing, he combined with undoubted trustworthiness the further advantage of speaking the Gallic tongue, with which Ariovistus from long habit was tolerably familiar; while in his case there could scarcely be the same temptation to treachery on the part of the Germans. He was accompanied by Marcus Meritius, a man who enjoyed rights of hospitality with Ariovistus. Their instructions were to listen to any further statement the German had to make, and to bring back word to Caesar. As soon as his eyes fell upon these visitors to his camp, the German monarch, with all his army standing by and looking on, fiercely exclaimed, "What is your business here? To play the spy, I suppose"; and on their attempting to explain, brutally cut them short and ordered them off to prison.

The same day he moved a little nearer to Caesar and encamped at the foot of a hill six miles from the Roman position. On the day following he made a further movement across the flank of his opponent and established himself at a point well beyond Caesar's

entrenchments, with the object of cutting the latter's communications with the Sequani and Aedui, from whom the army drew its provisions and stores. For five successive days after this Caesar regularly showed himself in the open, and marshalling his line immediately in front of camp gave Ariovistus the opportunity of either accepting or declining battle. His answer on all occasions was to confine the bulk of his army to camp, but to engage in daily skirmishes with his cavalry.

The German method of fighting with this arm, which by long training they had brought to perfection, merits some description. Their cavalry proper numbered six thousand sabres; but with these there was combined an equal force of infantry; all of them picked men, taken from the whole army for their exceptional strength and stamina. Each trooper was then associated with a single footman, to whom he looked for personal assistance, and in battle the two forces always acted together. As occasion demanded, these runners could form a retiring support for the mounted men, or could concentrate rapidly upon any point of special danger: they would rally round a wounded comrade who had been unhorsed, and should the progress of the action require either a lengthened advance or a quick retreat, so surprising was the pace developed in them by constant practice, that merely by holding on to the horses' manes, they could keep their places in the movement.

Ariovistus now clearly intending to shelter behind his laager, in order to restore his own threatened communications, Caesar selected a spot suitable for his purpose, a thousand yards or more beyond the German camp, and marshalled in three embattled lines, advanced towards the place; his first and second lines then stood to arms, whilst the third proceeded to entrench a camp. As already stated, the position chosen lay about a thousand yards distant from the enemy, and to it Ariovistus now dispatched some sixteen thousand of his lighter infantry, supported by his entire division of cavalry; with the evident intention of so menacing the Romans at their work as to prevent the fortification of their lines. His action did not affect the dispositions of Caesar, who simply continued his orders that the first and second lines were to repel the enemy, while the third and rearmost went on with the work. The new camp was at length rendered secure,

whereupon a force of two legions, with a section of auxiliaries, was left in garrison, while the remaining four returned to the old site.

The next day Caesar repeated his previous tactics, and the Roman forces, emerging simultaneously from both camps and taking up a position in line a little advanced from the larger of the two, gave Ariovistus his chance of fighting. Even this elicited no responsive movement from the enemy, and the recall had been sounded and the men were back in quarters, when suddenly, about the hour of noon, Ariovistus detached a portion of his forces for an assault upon the smaller of the two camps, where a fierce action, obstinately contested on either side, lasted till evening. At sunset the German leader called off his troops, both sides having suffered heavily. On inquiring from prisoners why Ariovistus showed such a marked reluctance to hazard a decisive combat, Caesar received the answer that by German custom their women first investigated, by means of incantations and lots, the amount of success likely to attend any pitched battle; and that these now reported that no victory could be expected if they fought before the new moon.

The accuracy of this statement Caesar resolved to test, and leaving a sufficient force behind him in either camp, and massing in front of the smaller the whole of his native auxiliaries, forming a conspicuous object to the enemy—a device by which he compensated for his relative weakness in legionary troops when compared with the large numbers of the Germans—with his main body drawn up in three parallel lines he marched boldly up to the laager. The enemy had now nothing left but to fight, and issuing in force, they formed for battle, ranged in order of tribes, with regular intervals separating each. There were Harudes and Marcomani, Triboces and Vangiones, Nemetes, Sedusii, and Suebi. The whole line rested on a huge semicircle of wagons and carts which had been dragged into position so as to preclude all thought of flight, and were now filled with masses of wildly excited women, who, as their fighting men moved out to battle, waved their arms in passionate entreaty that they might be saved from Roman slavery.

In order that every man might realize that his conduct on that day was under observation from a responsible officer, Caesar first

appointed his staff-officers and paymaster to the command of his separate legions; then noticing that the enemy's line was weakest on his own right, he opened the battle at that point. The Roman infantry, on receiving the signal, charged with impetuous fury; but finding themselves encountered by an equally swift advance on the part of the enemy, they had no means of using their javelins, and so throwing these away, they at once went to work with the sword. With a lightning-like movement, of which long experience had made them masters, the Germans threw themselves into solid squares, and with shields thrust out like a wall, caught the descending swords of the Romans. To break up this formation, many of the troops did not hesitate to leap boldly on the living mass, where, tearing the interlocked shields aside with their hands, they drove their swords downwards. Before long the Roman right was plainly victorious; the enemy had been routed, and was now in full retreat. On the other hand, upon the left, the superior numbers of the Germans had borne down all before them, and the Roman line at this moment was in course of giving way. Observing the critical nature of the position, P. Crassus, the young officer commanding the cavalry brigade, who was better placed than those actually engaged in the fighting line to give the necessary orders, at once assumed the responsibility of sending up the third line to reinforce the threatened wing.

This action restored the battle, and the Germans from one end of the line to the other now turned and fled, their flight continuing uninterrupted till they reached the Rhine, some five miles distant from the field. There just a handful who trusted to their powers of swimming plunged into the water, or finding a few small rowing-boats, pulled out into safety. Among these last was Ariovistus, who, lighting upon a little vessel that was tied up to the shore, made good his escape by its means. The rest were all ridden down and killed by the cavalry. Of Ariovistus' two wives both perished in the pursuit, the one a Suebian, who had accompanied him on his leaving home, the other a Norican princess, a sister to King Vöccio, who had been sent by her brother to the German king and married to him whilst in Gaul. Of his daughters one was killed and one captured. Most remarkable was the fate that overtook the young Gallic nobleman

C. Valerius Proculus. In the midst of the pursuit, as he was being dragged along by his keepers heavily manacled in three chains, he stumbled right upon Caesar himself, who was riding with the cavalry. His unlooked-for reappearance brought no less pleasure to the Roman commander-in-chief than the victory itself; and the sight of this distinguished chieftain so unexpectedly rescued from the enemy and safely restored to himself (a man who not only belonged to one of the most aristocratic families in the Province, but was an intimate friend of his own, whose hospitality he had often shared), did but complete the satisfaction proper to the occasion, by the knowledge that Fortune had not tinged it with any cloud of regret for the loss of such a comrade. He used afterwards to tell the story that on three separate occasions in his own presence lots were cast to determine whether he should be forthwith burnt to death or held over for a future date, and that he owed his life to the lucky throw of the lots. His companion, M. Mettius, was discovered under similar circumstances and brought back to Caesar.

The news of this battle quickly made its way on the farther side of the Rhine, and the Suebi, who had camped at the river, at once broke up and started to return home. They were closely followed by the Ubii, a neighboring people whose lands lie along the banks, and in their state of trepidation suffered severely. Thus in a single summer Caesar had completed two campaigns of more than ordinary importance, and though the season of the year did not necessitate it, he yet determined to send his army into winter quarters without further delay, choosing for this purpose the country of the Segunani. The command of the various camps was entrusted to Labienus, after which he himself left Gaul to return to Northern Italy, there to conduct the civil administration of the courts.

BOOK II

THE CONQUEST OF THE BELGAE

In the midst of these occupations south of the Alps, tidings reached the Roman governor of fresh disturbances in Further Gaul. At first nothing more than vague rumors, the unwelcome news was presently confirmed by a dispatch received from Labienus, reporting that the entire Belgic confederacy, or in other words one of the three principal divisions of Gaul, was combining in a hostile movement against Rome, and that to ensure mutual loyalty hostages were already being freely interchanged. The rising was due to various contributory causes, chief among which was the fear lest the advance of Roman arms should not be stayed with the recently effected pacification of Central Gaul, but would next be made to embrace the northern divisions of the country. These misgivings were, moreover, sedulously fostered and exploited by interested agitators from without. Appeals were made to the Belgae from three classes of disappointed Celts. Many of these, though glad enough to see an end put to the long residence of the German invader in the land, were now chafing on the other hand at the sight of the Roman army wintering in their midst, to all appearances in permanent occupation of the country. Others again, with the easy-going light-heartedness of their race, were for trying any change of masters, provided only it were a change; whilst with others the motive was frankly selfish. In the Gaul of those days kingdoms and thrones were as often as not the prize of any more prominent chief who could

afford to gather round him a large mercenary force; and this practice, it was felt, under Roman rule, would be considerably curtailed.

Such news was too serious to be ignored, and as a first precaution Caesar determined to increase his military establishment by raising two new legions in his Italian province. About the time of the spring equinox these were sent over the Alps under a staff-officer, Q. Pedius, and as soon as there was grass enough to make military operations practicable, he himself rejoined his army. The Senones (*Seni*) and other tribes skirting the Belgic frontier were made responsible for discovering the real state of things within the suspected area, and for reporting this at once to the commander-in-chief. In every case the answer was the same: the tribal levies were massing, and the confederate army was rapidly being gathered. Satisfied at length with the nature of the evidence, Caesar no longer hesitated about an armed invasion of their land, but waiting only till his supplies were properly organized, he broke up from winter quarters, and within a fortnight was upon the Belgic border.

Such a movement, in itself quite unexpected, had by the rapidity of its execution overthrown all calculations. As a consequence the Remi (*Rheimi*), the nearest tribe of all to Central Gaul, hastened to send in a deputation to the Roman general, consisting of their two leading chieftains, Iccius and Andecomborius. These, speaking on behalf of their government, announced their unconditional surrender to the Roman people, whose supremacy they acknowledged, and whose protection they craved. They further declared that from the first beginning the Remi had held aloof from the other Belgic states, and were innocent of all complicity in the movement against Rome. To support this contention, they assured the Roman commander of their willingness to deliver hostages, to execute any orders he might impose, to open their gates to his army, and to furnish it with corn and anything else in their power. Continuing their information, they declared that the rest of the Belgic states were, to a man, in arms, and were aided and abetted by the German tribes settled west of the Rhine. To give some idea of the wave of fanaticism then sweeping the country, the envoys cited the case of the Suesiones (*Soissons*). This people was of the same stock and lineage

as themselves, enjoyed community both of public and private rights, and owned the same legislative and executive authority; yet every effort on their part to restrain them from joining the national cause had been consistently rebuffed.

Inquiry by Caesar into the nature, number, and military efficiency of the tribes who had taken the field elicited the following information. The vast majority of the Belgic people were of German origin, having crossed the Rhine in very early ages, through the allurement exercised by the rich lands on its western bank; where, after first expelling the existing Gallic occupants, they had permanently settled. More recently, at the great irruption of Cimbric and Teutonic hordes, a time which many living could still remember, whilst the rest of Gaul lay prostrate before the invaders, they alone had preserved the inviolability of their frontiers. Of this feat of arms they were inordinately proud, and on it founded a claim to exceptional authority among their neighbors. With regard to numbers, the Remian representatives, owing to their geographical and racial affinity with the tribes concerned, professed to have most accurate information, based on the exact figures promised by each confederate at the general assembly called to discuss the war. From this it appeared that the most formidable were beyond doubt the Bellovaci (*Beauvais*), regarded from the point of view of their fine military qualities, the great influence they exercised over others, or the density of their population. Able to put one hundred thousand men into the field, with a promise of a picked contingent of sixty thousand they had coupled a demand for the exclusive conduct of the war. Next in order came the Suesiones (*Soissons*), those neighbors of the Remi who have been already mentioned, whose country, the envoys declared, both for fertility and extent, to be superior to all. Only a few years ago this tribe had produced a king who stood unrivalled among the princes of Gaul, and whose dominions included not only most of the neighboring territories, but even parts of Britain. Their present ruler was a king named Gæka, whose disinterested and far-sighted character had procured for him by common consent the supreme direction of the war. They possessed twelve regular towns, and had engaged to furnish fifty thousand fighting men. The same

contribution was made by the Nervii, who were generally regarded as the fiercest of the tribesmen, and lived at the greatest distance. Then followed a long list of smaller contingents: fifteen thousand from the Atrebares (*Aras*), ten thousand from the Ambiani (*Amiens*), twenty-five thousand from the Morini (*Boulgne-Calais*), seven thousand from the Menapii (*Mas* and *Scheldt*), ten thousand from the Caleti, ten thousand also from the combined Veliocasses and Viromandui, nineteen thousand from the Aduatici; and lastly, as far as the Remian ambassadors could estimate, another forty thousand supplied from the Condrusi, Eburones, Caerеси, and Pacemani, tribes collectively known as Germans.

This concluded the information of the envoys, who after a courteous reception by Caesar and an assurance of his warmest sympathy, were dismissed with the message that their tribal council must appear in person, bringing with them as hostages the sons of their leading chiefs. This order they punctually and scrupulously obeyed, and meanwhile he himself once more took into his confidence the Aeduan prince Divitiacus. Addressing to him an earnest appeal for cooperation and support, he pointed out how much it would conduce from a military point of view to the ultimate success of the campaign, if they could first break up the various combinations of the enemy, and so avoid the necessity of fighting with such dense masses of tribesmen at once. This object, he explained, the Aeduan government now had it in its power to secure, by ordering its military forces to invade the country of the Bellovaci, and to begin devastating that country. Thus instructed, the Aeduan chieftain took his departure. It soon became evident that the enemy had succeeded in their concentration, and were already marching to the attack; and accordingly very soon afterwards their near approach was reported to head-quarters, both by the Remi and by the Roman scouts. On receipt of this intelligence, Caesar hastened to transfer his army to the right bank of the Axona (*Aisne*), which here forms the northern boundary of the Remi, and to take up an entrenched position on its further side. These advantages accrued from this movement. In the first place, it gave him the natural defense of a riverbank for one side of his camp; in the second it effectually secured all the country in his rear; and in the third, it

enabled supplies to be transported by the Remi and other friendly tribes without fear of molestation to the convoys. The river itself being spanned by a bridge, a detachment was posted at the northern end to command the approach, whilst on the southern side a force of six battalions was left in a strong position under the divisional officer, Q. Titurius Sabinus. The camp itself by Caesar's orders had a rampart twelve feet high, and a ditch fully eighteen feet in width.

Eight miles north of the Roman position lay a town called Bibrax. A desperate attempt to capture this on the march was made by the united Belgae in their movement southwards; so fierce indeed was the attack, that on the day it took place the garrison barely held its own. The Belgian method of assaulting walled towns, it may here be explained, differs in nowise from that commonly followed by the Gauls. The enemy's defenses are first surrounded by force of overpowering numbers, whose object is by a devastating fire of stones to sweep the battlements bare of defenders; this done, locking their shields, above their heads, and so forming a tortoise, they advance to fire the gates and to breach the walls. Such a method on the present occasion was peculiarly easy of execution, for in face of the deadly discharge of stones and spears from so numerous a foe, not a man among the defenders could keep his footing on the walls. Night at length brought a respite to the assault, and an urgent summons for help was at once sent off by the garrison commander to Caesar. The former was a distinguished and highly influential chief of the Remi named Iccius, being in fact one of the two envoys who had lately come to Caesar to ask for peace with their own people, and the message he sent was that, unless reinforced, he could not possibly hold out longer.

Though it was now past midnight, Caesar at once, in answer to this summons, dispatched to the relief of the townspeople, under the guidance of Iccius' messengers, a force of Numidian and Cretan archers with some Balearic slingers. Their timely arrival infused fresh life into the defense, as the prospects of saving the town improved, whilst in the assailants it created a corresponding depression, as they saw their hopes of capture now finally vanish. After a short stay, therefore, in the environs of the town, which they spent in plundering and wasting the lands, and in burning every village and homestead

anywhere within range, they once more swept on in undiminished volume towards the Roman camp, haling for the night within two miles of the position. Their bivouac, as estimated by the smoke and flare of their campfires, covered a front of more than eight miles.

Dangerously outnumbered as he was, and that, too, by an enemy whose reputation for fighting was quite remarkable, Caesar at first resolved to defer decisive action. The interval he employed in testing, by means of daily cavalry skirmishes, the real quality of their mettle, as well as the amount of resistance that might be expected from his own men; until, on discovering that these were in no sense inferior to their redoubtable opponents, he hastened his preparations for the final conflict. The ground immediately in front of camp was from its natural conformation admirably adapted for a line of battle. The Roman position lay on a hill but slightly raised above the level of the surrounding plain, presenting a front just wide enough to accommodate the army when fully extended for battle; and though its flanks fell away in sharp lateral slopes, on the side facing the enemy the inclination was gentle and ran down by a uniform descent to the plain. The sole danger of such a position was the chance that during the battle it might be turned in flank by a numerically superior foe; and to prevent this, a ditch, 700 yards long, was now run out at right angles at either end of the hill, terminated by redoubts armed with artillery. These preparations completed, the two legions lately raised in Italy were left to hold the camp and to form a reserve wherever needed, whilst the other six took up their position in line before the camp. In the meanwhile the enemy also had moved out of laager and were now in battle order.

The two hostile lines were parted by a fair-sized swamp, which the enemy waited for the Romans to cross; while they, on the other hand, stood steadily to arms, ready to attack their opponents directly they became disorganized, should they be the first to attempt the crossing. During this period of waiting the mounted forces on either side were hotly engaged. When at last it became evident that neither side would risk the passage, Caesar, satisfied with the successful issue to the cavalry engagement, withdrew to camp. This was at once the signal for the enemy to turn aside towards the Axona (*Aisne*), which

flowed, it will be remembered, in the rear of the Roman lines. Finding the fords, they endeavored to pass a portion of their force across to the opposite bank, their main object being to storm the block-house there held by Q. Titurius, and afterwards to cut the bridge; or, failing that, to devastate the country belonging to the Remi, which was so invaluable to the Romans in their prosecution of the war, and the loss of which would sever their communications.

The movement was at once reported by Titurius to Caesar, who immediately took the whole of his cavalry, with a force of Numidians, archers, and slingers from the light-armed contingent, and hastened across the bridge. On the opposite bank a fierce struggle ensued. The Roman sharpshooters came up with the enemy whilst these were still in the stream, battling with the water, and were thus enabled to inflict upon them heavy slaughter. With a magnificent contempt for death, however, others quickly took their places, and strove to fight their way across over the bodies of the slain; but before the withering volleys from the shore they too were forced to beat a retreat, and their overthrow was finally completed when those who at first had succeeded in crossing were hunted down and cut to pieces by the cavalry. Thus the attack upon the town of Bibrax and the attempt to cross the Axona had equally ended in disappointment. The enemy's hopes of fighting a big battle were daily growing fainter before the obvious determination of the Romans not to engage upon unfavorable ground; whilst to crown their discomfiture, their supplies of food already showed signs of running out. A council of war was summoned, and it was resolved that their best course was for each contingent now to return home: there they could wait and see which of their territories the Romans selected for the theater of war, and could then renew their concentration for its defense. Such strategy, they argued, would allow them to fight the final battle on friendly instead of on hostile soil, and would also put at their disposal the home supplies of corn. Among the causes contributing to this decision, not the least potent had been the news that Divitiacus with the Aedui was approaching the borders of the Bellovaci. Nothing would now persuade that people to remain out any longer with the allies, instead of hurrying back to defend their homes.

The decision once taken, no time was lost in carrying it out. Towards midnight a loud and confused murmur was heard proceeding from their camp, showing that its evacuation by the unwieldy host had begun. But their departure, destitute alike of orderly arrangement or central control, with each tribe bent on securing for itself the leading place in the column and on reaching home as fast as possible, gave the impression of nothing but a wild stampede. His spies at once reported the movement to Caesar, but, unable at the time to account for so precipitate a retreat, the natural fear of ambush forced him for the moment to keep both infantry and cavalry strictly to camp. Dawn having enabled his scouts to confirm the truth of the midnight report, the cavalry in force was at once dispatched to the front under two generals of division, Quintus Pedius and Lucius Aurunculeius Cotta, with orders to harass the rearguard: a force of three legions, under Titus Labienus, another leading staff-officer, was to follow immediately behind. Delivering a joint attack on the rearmost portion of the column, the pursuers kept in close attendance on it over many miles of country, killing as they went large numbers of the fugitives. The Belgic leaders made no real attempt to stay this process. The rearguard, indeed, finding itself always the special object of attack, would from time to time wheel and boldly face the advancing Romans, but it was left to fight alone. The van and intervening ranks, feeling themselves secure from all immediate peril, and under no obligation to fight either from the necessities of their own position or from allegiance to any superior orders, heeded the shout of battle in their rear just enough to lose whatever formation they still possessed, and to strain every nerve to outdistance their pursuers. Under such circumstances the work of slaughter was restricted only by the length of daylight available for the troops; and when sunset at last put an end to the carriage, the Romans were able according to previous instructions, to return to camp, without having encountered any appreciable risk or danger.

Resolved to follow up this initial blow before the enemy could recover from the severe mauling just received, Caesar on the next day crossed the frontiers of the Suessiones (*Soissons*), and marched rapidly upon the town of Noviodunum. As this was reported to be

without a garrison, the Roman commander hoped to capture it without checking his advance. In this he was disappointed, since a ditch of great width and a wall of imposing height, even when manned by nothing more than a skeleton force, proved quite sufficient to defy all attempts to carry it by assault. A camp had therefore to be entrenched before the place, battery sheds to be carried up, and every preparation made for regular siege. During the night the town was entered by the whole rabble of defeated tribesmen, coming hot from their flight. The Roman works made rapid progress, and the inhabitants soon saw rising before their eyes the great siege-mound with its crown of artillery towers. Such works and such rapidity of execution surpassed anything in their experience: in their alarm they decided to capitulate, and, aided by the intercession of the Remi, obtained the grant of their lives and liberties.

Caesar's terms included the surrender of all the national leaders as hostages (among them two sons of King Galba himself), and the production of all arms contained within the town; and these orders being complied with, he once more set out against the Bellovaci. That people had collected all its movable property and retreated in a body to a stronghold called Bratuspanium (*Beauvais?*); but as soon as the Roman army was within five miles of this city, it was met on the march by all the greybeards belonging to the tribe, who with hands uplifted in token of submission, began to express to Caesar their wish to throw themselves unreservedly on his mercy, without any thought of measuring themselves against the might of Rome. A similar incident occurred a little later, on his actual arrival before the town and the laying out of the Roman camp, when from the walls there could be seen the helpless women and children stretching out their hands to the Romans in mute appeal for quarter.

They found a spokesman in the Aeduan leader Divitiacus, who, having sent home his own tribal levies after the successful dispersal of the confederate host, had now rejoined headquarters. The Bellovaci, he declared, had from time immemorial been staunch friends and allies of the Aeduan people, though lately they had become the dupes of unprincipled mischiefmongers. Their own chiefs had betrayed them into revolt from the Aeduan alliance, and into open war with

caused to the Roman advance by such a series of entanglements, the Nervian leaders resolved that the plan suggested should have a trial. The site selected by the Roman officers for the camp was of the following description. A hill, connected by a uniform slope with the Sambre below (the river already mentioned), stood faced on the opposite side by another height, which rose at a similar inclination. The lower courses of this second hill for the first three or four hundred yards up were open ground: the higher parts were so thickly wooded that the eye could hardly penetrate them. Within these woods the main body of the enemy was known to be in hiding: all, however, that could be made out were a few horsemen patrolling the open space along the stream, the depth of which was about three feet.

Towards this position the Roman army was now approaching, the cavalry thrown well forward in advance; but its order of march differed widely from the description given of it to the Nervii by the Belgae. Following his invariable practice when nearing an enemy, Caesar had six of his legions massed in one division, with every man accounted solely for battle. Behind these came the baggage trains now closed the column, and acted as escort to the convoy. Arrived upon the ground, the cavalry, supported by slingers and bowmen, at once crossed the stream, and was soon hotly engaged with the mounted portion of the enemy. The action, however, was rendered futile by the constant recurrence of the enemy's perplexing tactics. At one moment they would fall back hastily to their supports within the wood; only at the next, however, suddenly to re-emerge and deliver a spirited charge upon the Roman horse, who on their side never dared to press their pursuit beyond the limits of the open ground. These indecisive skirmishes were still in progress when the six regiments of infantry forming the head of the Roman column proceeded to their task of cutting the trenches for the camp, each on its allotted length. A few moments later, and the eyes of those waiting in the opposite woods were rewarded by the sight of the Roman baggage trains slowly laboring towards camp. This was the signal agreed upon for battle. Forming their line behind the trees, and completing there all their dispositions, after briefly rallying

one another to the work before them, they suddenly swept out from cover, and at full strength charged down upon the Roman horse. These they scattered like chaff, and then with lightning speed raced on towards the river, in so impetuous a torrent that to a spectator it seemed that at one and the same moment they were up in the wood, down in the river-bed, and actually exchanging blows with our men. Maintaining the same furious pace, they next breasted the hill in front of them on the Roman side of the stream, and making for the camp, dashed at the infantry while these were still busily engaged upon the work of fortification.

The Roman commander-in-chief had to take all his measures at once. The flag, which was the usual signal for action, had to be unfurled; the bugle-call to be sounded, the men to be summoned from the trenches, and a warning to return sent after those who in quest of entrenching material had strayed further afield; the line had to be formed, the troops to be addressed, the signal to commence action to be given. Many of these orders, from the little time available and from the rapid onrush of the enemy, were necessarily left imperfectly executed. But, critical as the position was, two circumstances combined to mitigate its appalling difficulties. The first was the splendid power of initiative shown by the troops themselves, who, from the training they had acquired in previous battles, knew instinctively how to meet such a crisis just as well as their officers could direct them: the second lay in the instructions previously issued to his divisional commanders by Caesar, not to leave their respective legions and that portion of the entrenchments for which each was responsible, until the fortifications of the camp were complete. Perceiving, therefore, how near the enemy already were and how rapidly they were coming on, these no longer waited for orders to arrive from Caesar, but at once took upon themselves the responsibility of making the necessary preparations for battle.

Caesar himself in the meanwhile had merely paused to give such directions as the occasion rendered absolutely necessary, and then hurrying down the hill to rally the troops for the approaching struggle, found himself, as chance would have it, in the midst of the Tenth legion. The time was barely enough to exhort the men to remain

true to the ancient traditions of their corps, to keep a cool head and hand, and to stand firm against the enemy's rush; and then seeing they were now within javelin's throw, without more ado he gave the signal to engage. Hastening on with similar object to another quarter of the field, he found the action already briskly proceeding. So short, indeed, had been the warning, and so determined was the fighting spirit shown by the foe, that not only was there no time for fastening on military badges and distinctions, but the Romans had even to go helmetless into action, with their shields still inside their leather coverings. As the troops came pouring down from the trenches, each man, without looking for his own company, at once formed up round whatever standard first caught his eye, eager to lose no time before plunging into the fight.

The Roman line of battle was thus to a large extent dependent upon the special circumstances of the moment: in other words, the peculiar features of the ground, the steep slope of the hill, and above all, the lack of time had far more to do with its formation than any system of military rules or science. The legions were drawn up on several fronts and fought in detached groups, parcelled out over a wide field of action. Another grave disadvantage was that, owing to the dense hedgerows which everywhere, as previously described, broke the line of vision, from no single point was it possible to obtain a comprehensive view of the operations; for which reason no regular reserves could be posted, nor provision be made for the various exigencies of the battle as they arose, nor could the action be directed and controlled by a single mind. Accordingly, where circumstances differed so widely, results also showed similar fluctuations of fortune.

To begin with the extreme left of the line, where the Ninth and Tenth legions were in position. The particular division of the enemy opposed to these was that of the Atrebares, who, arriving breathless and exhausted with their charge, had to meet the galling delivery of the two regiments' heavy spears, which still further added to their confusion, and were then driven headlong down the slope into the river. This they tried to cross, but in their crippled state suffered heavily at the hands of their pursuers, who were now freely

using their swords. Indeed the two corps did not hesitate to ford the stream, and though the enemy again turned at bay, with the ground now in their favor, the legions yet once more engaged them and finally drove them from the field. Success no less decisive had likewise crowned the center of the Roman line, where the Eleventh and Eighth legions on a somewhat different front had encountered the forces of the Viromandui, and after rolling back their attack, had carried the tide of battle right down to the banks of the river, taking full advantage of the ground. But the inevitable result of this double success was to expose to a most dangerous degree almost the entire front and left flank of the Roman camp: a situation of which the Nervii, who formed the third and last division of the enemy, were not slow to avail themselves. The Roman right was held by the Twelfth and, separated from it by a slight interval, by the Seventh legion. Towards this point the entire Nervian contingent in dense serried ranks now advanced under Boduognatus, the acting commander for the day; until, breaking into two divisions, one half turned off to outflank the infantry on their unshielded side, and the other passed on to seize the summit of the hill and camp.

At this particular moment the Roman cavalry and light-armed skirmishers, after being routed in the manner described at the opening of the engagement, were making their way back to camp, and coming now full upon the advancing Nervii, once more bolted in the opposite direction. A second and similar stampede was caused by the camp-followers. Watching the fortunes of the fight from a position near the postern gate and crest of the hill, they had witnessed the victorious passage of the Sambre by the Roman infantry, and emboldened by this result, had sallied out from camp in quest of plunder; but, on looking now behind them, they saw to their dismay that the camp was in the hands of the enemy, and at the astounding sight fled precipitately. To complete the scene of wild confusion reigning at the moment, the air was rent with the shouts of the mule-drivers coming up with the convoy, whose helpless state of panic carried them to every quarter of the field. Upon one portion of the Roman auxiliaries this bewildering succession of disasters told with fatal effect. No branch of the Gallic race has a higher name for courage than the

Treveri, a corps of whose famous cavalry had been sent by their local government in support of Caesar: yet on perceiving that the camp was now swarming with the enemy, that the legions were struggling to hold their own and were all but mastered in the masses of enclosing tribesmen, that camp-followers, cavalymen, slingers, and Numidians were all broken and shattered and flying in every quarter, these gave up the day as lost beyond retrieve, and rode off the field to their home. There they reported that the Roman army had been routed and hopelessly beaten, and that camp and baggage had alike fallen into the hands of the enemy.

Meanwhile Caesar had passed, after rallying the men of the Tenth to the extreme right of the line, where the peril was now most urgent. There the Twelfth legion had been driven in upon itself, and with the standards of its different companies all crowded together, had lost so much of its formation that the men were hampering one another in the free play of their weapons. One battalion, the 4th, had lost all its six centurions, a standard-bearer had been killed, and his standard lost; in the others a large majority had been either killed or wounded. Amongst these was a very Gallian soldier named Publius Sexlius Baculus, one of the first centurions of the legion, who, wounded severely in several places, was now so exhausted that he could no longer keep his feet. Disheartened by this loss of officers, the rank and file already showed signs of wavering, and there were even cases in the rear of men leaving the ranks in their efforts to avoid the hail of spears. And all the while the attack never weakened; but round the center thick masses of the enemy were still surging upward from the lower slopes, and on either wing the pressure was constantly maintained. It was the moment of supreme crisis: for of reserves that might have been pushed up to the front there were none. Snatching a shield from one of those in the rear (having come up himself without one) Caesar hurried forward into the fighting line, where calling on his officers by name, with cheering words to the rest, he ordered the whole regiment to advance, and at the same time to extend, so that the men might use their swords with more effect. The sight of their commander-in-chief inspired the weary troops with fresh hopes, and revived their drooping courage; desperate as their situation might be,

each man was now determined to surpass himself, and soon there was a perceptible lull in the attack.

In close proximity to the Twelfth the Seventh legion was being equally hard pressed, and as some alleviation therefore to the difficulties of the position, Caesar directed the tribunes of both corps gradually to manoeuvre towards a junction between the two till they were locked back to back, when a combined advance, front and rear, was to be made against the enemy. This movement was successfully carried out; and the men, no longer in dread of being surrounded on their defenseless rear, where mutual protection was now assured, began to offer a more spirited resistance to the attack and to fight with better heart. Meanwhile from two opposite directions help was rapidly approaching. From the far end of the Roman column the two regiments of recruits escorting the convoy had by this time received news of the fighting, and breaking into a double, could already be discerned by the enemy coming over the hill. From beyond the river also Titus Labienus, after capturing the enemy's laager, had seen from his elevated position the state of things on the opposite side of the valley, and at once sent back the Tenth as reinforcements. As the regiment passed on its way, it learnt the true position of affairs from the flying rabble of native horse and sutlers which it everywhere encountered; and, realizing the deadly nature of the peril in which the legions and their commander must be placed, they strained, it need scarcely be added, every nerve to reach the scene of action in time.

The arrival of these twin succours caused a complete revolution in the fortunes of the day. Men who had sunk to the ground in sheer exhaustion from their wounds, now raised themselves upon their shields to strike another blow. The crowd of followers, seeing the panic everywhere pervading the enemy, now flung themselves upon the opposing ranks, all heedless of the fact that these were armed and they were not. Last, but not least, the cavalry, eager to atone for their earlier disgrace by deeds of present valor, could now be seen offering battle to the enemy in every quarter of the field, bent on surpassing in courage their comrades of the legions. But the enemy's resistance was not yet broken. Though all hope of saving the day had gone, they yet continued to fight on with a spirit worthy of all admiration.

When their first ranks were mown down, their second line mounting on their prostrate bodies fought from thence: when these in their turn had been swept away, leaving great heaps of slain to mark where they had stood, the survivors, standing defiant on what was now a hillock of human flesh, drove their spears down upon their assailants, and catching the Roman javelins on their shields, sent them back at their owners. In presence of a courage so exalted, we may hesitate to condemn the special tactics they had adopted for the battle. To cross an exceptionally broad stream in face of an enemy, to scale banks of peculiar steepness, and to advance up ground than which none could have been more trying, are doubtless operations of the very greatest military difficulty: yet all these were made to appear easy before the intrepid spirit they had displayed.

The result of this battle was the virtual extermination of the Nervii and the temporary disappearance of even the very name.¹ When the news reached the elders of the tribe, gathered together, it will be remembered, with their women and children in the low flats of the river estuaries, a council of war was summoned to discuss the situation. Nothing, it was there felt, could now stay the further advance of the victors, just as nothing could disclose any door of safety to the vanquished; and by the universal consent of the survivors, delegates were sent to Caesar and formal submission made. In describing the extent of the disaster that had overwhelmed their people, they declared that their governing council had been reduced from six hundred members to three, and that out of a total fighting population of sixty thousand, barely five hundred remained alive. Their surrender afforded Caesar a welcome opportunity for publicly showing his sympathy towards a prostrate and a suppliant foe. Every care was taken to protect them: their territory and their fortified towns were restored to them intact, and strict injunctions laid on neighboring tribes to refrain from all acts of violence or depredation at their expense, and to see that their vassals did the same.

With regard to the Aduatuci who, as will be remembered, were at the time marching to support the Nervii in full military strength, on hearing of the issue to the decisive battle, they had turned back homewards, and after evacuating all towns and villages, had thrown

themselves with all their belongings into a single stronghold of their country, of extraordinary natural strength. On all sides it looked down on sheer rock and sharp precipices, broken only at one point by a gently inclined plane some seventy yards in width. This too had been strongly fortified by a doubly scarped wall of great height, on the summit of which the garrison were now engaged in placing large stone projectiles and in fixing a ring of bristling stakes. The tribe itself was descended from the famous Cimbri and Teutoni in the following manner. At the time of the great migration of these peoples into Provence and Italy, all movables which they could not either carry or drive with them had been left behind on the western bank of the Rhine under an armed escort of six thousand of their number, specially detached for that purpose. On the overthrow of the invaders, this body had for years continued living in a state of constant warfare with their Gallic neighbors, until, finally, all parties consenting to make peace, they had been allowed to choose their present territories as their permanent abode.

Arrived before the town, the Roman army had at first to meet a number of sallies from the garrison, and numerous petty skirmishes were fought with the troops; but as soon as the besiegers' lines (nearly three miles in circumference and intersected by frequent redoubts) were completed, the townsmen showed a preference for the shelter of their walls. From these they could watch the sappers' huts being dragged into position, and could see a beginning made to the great siege-mound, already terminated by its lofty artillery tower, though as yet very far from its final objective: and the sight at first provoking their merriment, plentiful was the satire lavished on the legionaries for raising so pretentious an edifice at so absurd a distance. Where, they asked, were the hands, and where the muscles which would enable anyone, let alone such little dwarf men as they, to plant a tower of that magnitude against their city walls? (The Gauls, it should be explained, are usually highly contemptuous of the diminutive stature of the Romans compared with their own *large* bulk).

But when they saw it moving, and slowly bearing down upon their ramparts, the strange and unprecedented sight so filled them with amazement, that, sending out envoys to Caesar, they begged him to

Grant them peace. The powers of heaven must indeed, said they, be on the side of the Romans, if these could move engines of that weight at so astonishing a pace, and no alternative was left them but to surrender unconditionally to so wonderful a people. Yet they had heard of the kindly heart possessed by Caesar, and that encouraged them now to proffer one petition. Should his generous nature lead him to grant them their lives and liberties, they begged he would not insist on their disarmament. Powerful and hostile tribes surrounded them, jealous of their military preeminence, and disarmament would leave them wholly at their mercy. Indeed, were this the fate in store for them, they would far sooner accept any degree of humiliation at the hands of their Roman conquerors, than be tortured to death by those whose acknowledged sovereigns they had long continued.

To these representations Caesar's reply was that, provided they made submission before the Roman battering-ram actually touched the walls, they would be allowed to retain their independence; though it was more as an act of grace on his own part than any concession to their merits. On the question of arms he was obdurate; and any fears they might entertain about their neighbors, might, he assured them, be dismissed, since what he had done in the case of the Nervii, he would also do in theirs, i.e., solemnly warn them against offering any violence to those who had formally surrendered to Rome. With this answer the envoys departed, but soon afterwards returned to announce the acceptance by their people of the terms imposed. Accordingly the arms of the garrison began to be thrown over the ramparts into the ditch below; and though the heaps rose almost to the level of the battlements and the adjacent siege-embankment, yet, as was discovered afterwards, not less than a third were artfully kept behind and concealed within the town. After this the gates were thrown open, and throughout the remainder of that day the privileges of peace were openly enjoyed by the inhabitants.

Towards evening, with the object of sparing the townspeople any ill-treatment during the night at the hands of the soldiery, by order of Caesar the gates were closed, and the troops withdrawn from the town. What followed is inexplicable, except on the hypothesis of preconceived design. They had, it would seem, calculated

that on their surrender the Roman military posts would either be withdrawn altogether or else maintained with diminished vigilance. Bringing out of hiding, therefore, the arms which they had treacherously retained and secreted, and replenishing these by shields rapidly improvised from bark or wattlework woven with skins, they chose a point where the scaling of the Roman lines seemed to offer fewest difficulties, and a little after midnight suddenly dashed from the town. In conformity with the previously issued orders of Caesar, the alarm was quickly conveyed by a line of fire-signals, and soon from all the nearest redoubts troops were hurrying up to the threatened quarter. The assailants fought as desperately as their cause was desperate. It was a case of brave men making their last effort, where all the advantages of position were against them, where from the security of fortified entrenchments their enemy could pour down volleys of spears, and where nothing but naked courage stood between them and certain destruction. After four thousand had fallen at the trenches, the rest were hurled back upon the town; and with the morning the legionaries, having smashed in the gates without encountering the least show of resistance, once more entered the place, which by Caesar's orders was then put up to auction, with all that it contained, and sold. The returns made by the purchasers showed a total population of 53,000 souls.

Contemporaneously with these events, the expeditionary force of one legion under Publius Crassus among the tribes of the Atlantic seaboard had been completely successful; and its commander was now able to report that the Veneti, Venelli, Osismi, Curiosolite, Esubii, Auleri, and Redones had all tendered their submission and accepted the suzerainty of Rome.

From one end to the other Gaul was now quiet. The military operations of this summer had made a profound impression upon the native mind, the effects of which reached even beyond the Rhine. From various German tribes envoys now appeared in the Roman camp with offers to give hostages to Caesar and to accept his authority. Anxious as he was, however, to proceed to Northern Italy and Illyricum, the other districts of his government, he contented himself for the moment with directing his visitors to return at the opening

of the next spring; and having stationed the troops for the winter among the Carnutes, Andes, and Turones, with others that lay nearest to the scene of the recent operations, he set out for Italy. When the dispatches reporting these various victories reached Rome, a public thanksgiving of fifteen days was formally declared by the Senate, surpassing in extent anything ever yet voted to a successful general.

BOOK III

SECTION I. CHASTISEMENT OF ALPINE TRIBES

On leaving for Italy, Cæsar had been detained with a matter of much difficulty and annoyance which had grown up in the southeastern corner of his Transalpine Province. The Nantuates, Veragri, and Seduni are three mountain tribes inhabiting the district stretching southwards from the Allobroges and the line formed by Lake Geneva and the Rhone valley, to the highest summits of the Italian Alps. Through their territories runs an important trade route, upon which merchants had for long been subjected to grave personal risks, as well as the most extortionate tolls, and which therefore Cæsar was now determined to have cleared. An expedition for the purpose was accordingly fitted out, consisting of one legion (the Twelfth) and a section of native cavalry, all under command of Servius Galba, who was given full discretion about wintering in the district. Galba, after fighting a number of successful actions, and storming and capturing many of their mountain fastnesses, succeeded in winning the submission of the entire neighborhood; hostages were given, and peace concluded. He then decided to stay through the winter, and with this object detached two of his battalions to hold the Nantuates, while with the remaining eight he took up his position in the principal village of the Veragri, named Octodurus (*Martigny*). This place lies in a sheltered valley, which after broadening out into a moderate plain, is then completely shut