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CÆSAR'S COMMENTARIES

OF

HIS WARS IN GAUL.

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CÆSAR'S COMMENTARIES

OF

HIS WARS IN GAUL.

BOOK II.

I. In the winter, while Cæsar was in hither Gaul, as we have intimated above, he was alarmed by frequent reports, which were also confirmed by letters from Labienus, that all the Belgians, who, as has been said, possessed one of the three divisions of Gaul, had joined in a league against the people of Rome, and ratified it by an exchange of hostages. The causes of this confederacy were: First, their fear lest the Romans, having subdued all the rest of Gaul, should next turn their arms against them; and then the persuasions and importunity of some among the Celtæ, many of whom, as they had greatly disliked the neighbourhood of the Germans in Gaul, so were they no less displeased to see a Roman army take up winter-quarters and grow habitual in the country; others, from a levity and inconstancy of temper, were fond of every project that tended to a revolution. In fine, some were influenced by ambitious views, it being usual in Gaul for such as were most powerful in their several states, and had men and money at command, to exercise a kind of sovereignty over their fellow-subjects, which they foresaw would be greatly checked by the authority and credit of the Romans in Gaul.

II. Cæsar, roused by these messages and reports, levied two new legions in hither Gaul, and early in the spring, sent Q. Pedius, his lieutenant, to conduct them over the Alps. Himself, as soon as there began to be forage in the fields, came to the army; he commissioned the Senones, and other Gauls who bordered on the Belgians, to inform themselves

of the motions and designs of the confederates, and send him from time to time an exact account. They all agreed in their reports, that they were levying troops, and drawing their forces to a general rendezvous; whereupon, thinking he ought no longer to delay marching against them, and having settled the necessary supplies for his army, he decamped, and in fifteen days arrived on the confines of the Belgians.

III. As his approach was sudden, and much earlier than had been expected, the Rhemi, who, of all the Belgians, lay the nearest to Celtic Gaul, despatched Iccius and Autobrigius, the two principal men of their state, to represent to Cæsar: "That they put themselves and fortunes under the power and protection of the Romans, as having neither approved of the designs of the rest of the Belgians, nor had any share in their confederacy against the people of Rome: that on the contrary, they were ready to give hostages, to execute his commands, to receive him into their towns, and to furnish him with corn and other supplies for his army; that indeed, the rest of the Belgians were all in arms, and that the Germans on this side the Rhine had associated with them: nay, that so universal and prevalent was the infatuation, they had not even been able to draw off the Suessiones, a people united to them by the nearest ties of blood and friendship, who were subject to the same laws, lived under the same form of government, and acknowledged but one common magistrate."

IV. Cæsar inquiring of the ambassadors

what states had taken up arms, of what name and consideration, and what forces they could bring into the field, found that the Belgians were for the most part Germans originally, who having formerly crossed the Rhine, had been drawn by the fertility of the country to settle in those parts, after driving out the ancient inhabitants; that in the late eruption of the Teutones and Cimbri, when all the other provinces of Gaul were overrun, they alone had ventured to stand upon their defence, nor suffered the barbarians to set foot in their territories; whence it happened, that presuming on so well known an instance of their bravery, they laid claim to great authority, and challenged high military renown. As to their numbers, the Rhemi told him they could give him the most exact information, because in consequence of their affinity and neighbourhood, they had opportunities of knowing what quota of men each particular state had promised to furnish in the common council of Belgium. "That the Bellovaci held the most distinguished rank, as surpassing all the other states in prowess, authority, and number of forces; that they were able to muster a hundred thousand fighting men, and had promised out of that number sixty thousand chosen troops, in consideration of which they demanded the whole administration of the war. That next to them in dignity were the Suessiones, a people bordering upon their own territories, and possessed of a very large and fruitful country, over which, even of late years, Divitiacus had been king, one of the most powerful princes of all Gaul, and who, besides his dominions in those parts, reigned also over Britain; that their present sovereign was Galba, whose singular prudence and justice had procured him, by the consent of all the confederates, the supreme command in the war: that these had within their territories twelve fortified towns, and promised to bring into the field fifty thousand men: that the like number had been stipulated by the Nervians, who, inhabiting the remotest provinces of Gaul, were esteemed the most fierce and warlike of all the Belgian nations: that the Atrebatians were to furnish fifteen thousand, the Ambiani ten thousand, the Morini twenty-five thousand, the Menapians nine thousand, the Caletes ten thousand, the Velocassians and Veromandians the like number; the Atuatici twenty nine thousand; and the Condrusians, Eburones, Ceresians, and Pæmani, all comprehend-

ed under the common name of Germans, forty thousand.

V. Cæsar exhorting the men of Rheims to continue firm in their alliance, and promising amply to reward their fidelity, ordered the whole body of their senate to repair to his camp, and the sons of their principal nobility to be brought him as hostages, all which was accordingly performed by the day appointed. He then addressed himself to Divitiacus, the Æduan, representing, in the warmest manner, of what consequence it was to the common cause, to divide the forces of the enemy, that he might not be reduced to the necessity of encountering so great a multitude at once. This he told him, might easily be effected, if the Æduans would march their forces into the territories of the Bellovaci, to plunder and lay waste the country. With these instructions he dismissed them.

VI. Meantime, being informed by his scouts, and the people of Rheims, that all the forces of the Belgians were marching towards him in a body, and that they were even advanced within a few miles, he made all the haste he could to pass his army over the Axona, which divides the Rhemi from the rest of the Belgians, and encamped on the farther side of that river. By this situation he secured all behind him, covered one side of his camp with the river, and rendered the communication with the Rhemi, and those other states, whence he expected to be supplied with provisions, safe and easy. Adjoining to his camp was a bridge over the river; there he placed a strong guard, and left Q. Titurius Sabinus, his lieutenant, on the other side, with six cohorts. He then drew round his camp a ditch eighteen feet broad, strengthened with a rampart twelve feet high.

VII. The Belgians, in their march, fell furiously upon Bibrax, a town belonging to the Rhemi, about eight miles distant from Cæsar's camp. The inhabitants, with great difficulty, held out against that day's assault. The manner of storming a town is the same among the Belgians as among the Gauls; for having surrounded the walls with the whole body of their army, and by a continual discharge from their slings, cleared the ramparts, they approach the gates under covert of their bucklers, and undermine the walls. This was easy in the present case, because the multitude employed in throwing stones and darts was so great, that none of the garrison durst

appear upon the walls. When night had put an end to the assault, Iccius, who then commanded in the town, a man of principal rank and authority among the Rhemi, and one of those who had come ambassadors to Cæsar to treat about a peace, despatched messengers to acquaint him, that unless he was speedily relieved, it would be impossible for him to hold out any longer.

VIII. Hereupon Cæsar, making use of those for guides who had come express to his camp from Iccius, detached about midnight a party of Cretan and Numidian archers, with some Balearean slingers, to the assistance of the garrison. Their arrival encouraged the besieged to stand upon their defence, and inspired them with hopes of repulsing the enemy, who now began to despair of success, when they heard that a reinforcement had entered the town. Wherefore, after a short stay before the place, having plundered all the country round about, and burnt the houses and villages wherever they came, they marched in a body towards Cæsar's camp, and posted themselves within two miles of his army, inclosing a space of more than eight thousand paces in circumference, as near as could be computed from the smoke and fires of their camp.

IX. Cæsar at first resolved to avoid coming to a battle, as well on account of the numbers of the enemy, as the high opinion entertained of their courage. He suffered the horse, however, to engage daily in small skirmishes, that he might the better judge of the valour of the Belgian troops, and the resolution and bravery of his own men. Finding that the Romans were nothing inferior to the enemy in courage, he resolved to wait for them before his camp; the ground being very commodious, and as it were formed by nature for the reception of an army. For the hill on which the camp stood, rising with an easy ascent from the plain, was but just of a sufficient breadth on the side facing the enemy to receive the several lines of the army, drawn up in order of battle. On the right hand and on the left the descent was steep, whereby the mountain swelling in front, but gradually abating its declivity as you advanced towards the bottom, came at last to a plain. Along each side of the hill Cæsar dug a trench of about four hundred paces in length, and built forts at the extremities, where he placed engines to repulse the

enemy, should they offer to attack him in flank, or endeavour, during the fight, to surround him with their numbers. These dispositions being made, and having left the two new levied legions in his camp, as a body of reserve in case of need, he drew up the other six in order of battle. The Belgians likewise drew up their troops, and stood fronting our army.

X. Between Cæsar and the enemy there was a small morass. The Belgians waited to see if we would pass it; our men, on the other hand, were ready in arms, that, should the enemy attempt to come over, they might fall upon them, and take advantage of their confusion. Meantime the cavalry on both sides engaged; but as neither army would hazard the passage of the morass, Cæsar, who had the better in the skirmish of the horse, led back his men to their camp. The Belgians marched directly towards the Axona, which, as we have said, lay behind our camp, and having found a ford, endeavoured to pass over part of their army. Their design was, if possible, to make themselves masters of the fort where Q. Titurius commanded, and break down the bridge, or, should they fail in that attempt, to ravage and lay waste the territories of the Rhemi, whence our army was supplied with provisions.

XI. Cæsar being informed of these things by Titurius, crossed the bridge with his cavalry, light-armed Numidians, archers, and slingers, and marched to attack the enemy. A very sharp conflict ensued; for the Romans falling upon them while they were yet passing the river, and by reason of their disorder unable to defend themselves, slew great numbers. The rest, who with undaunted courage advanced upon the bodies of their companions, were repulsed by the multitude of darts from our men; and the cavalry surrounding those that were already got over, put them all to the sword. The Belgians being thus disappointed, both in their design upon Bibrax, and the passage of the Axona, finding too that provisions began to be scarce, and that our army could not be drawn to fight them at a disadvantage, called a council of war. It was there judged most expedient to separate, and return every man to his own country, with a resolution, however, to assemble from all parts, in defence of that state whose territories should be first invaded by the Romans: for they concluded it much safer to carry on the war at

home, where they might have provisions and every thing at command, than venture a battle within the confines of a foreign state. These reasons were at the same time backed by a still more powerful consideration: for the Bellovaci having intelligence that Divitiacus and the Æduans were advancing towards their territories, could not be restrained from marching directly homewards, to defend their own country.

XII. This resolution being taken; about the second watch of the night, they left their camp with great noise and tumult, regarding neither the order of their march, nor the due subordination of command, but each man pressing for the foremost rank, that he might get the sooner home, insomuch that their retreat had all the appearance of a precipitate flight. Cæsar, who had immediate notice of this from his spies, apprehending some stratagem, because he as yet knew nothing of the reason of their departure, would not stir out of his trenches. But early in the morning, upon more certain intelligence of their retreat, he detached all the cavalry, under Q. Pedius and L. Arunculeius Cotta, his lieutenants, to harass and retard them in their march. T. Labienus had orders to follow with three legions. These falling upon their rear, and pursuing them many miles, made a dreadful slaughter of the flying troops. Whilst the rear, upon finding themselves attacked, faced about, and valiantly sustained the charge of our men, the vanguard, as fancying themselves out of danger, were not to be restrained either by necessity or the voice of their commanders, but upon hearing the alarm behind them, broke their ranks, and betook themselves to flight. Thus the Romans, with little or no loss on their side, continued the slaughter all the remaining part of the day. About sunset, they gave over the pursuit, and, in obedience to the orders they had received, returned to their camp.

XIII. The next day, before the enemy had time to rally, or recover out of their consternation, Cæsar led his army into the territories of the Suessiones, which join to those of the Rhemi; and after a long march reached Noviodunum. He was in hopes of carrying the town by assault, because he understood it was destitute of a garrison; but as the ditch was broad, and the wall very high, the defenders, though few in number, withstood all his

efforts; wherefore, having fortified his camp, he began to provide engines, and get every thing in readiness for a siege. Meantime such of the Suessiones as had escaped the late slaughter, threw themselves during the night into the town. But Cæsar advancing his preparations with great expedition, and approaching under cover of his mantlets to the very walls, where he cast up a mount, and planted his battering towers, the Gauls, astonished at the greatness of the works, as having never seen nor heard of any such before, and at the despatch wherewith they were carried on, sent deputies to treat about a surrender, and by the mediation of the Rhemi, obtained conditions of peace.

XIV. Cæsar having received the principal men of their state as hostages, amongst whom were the two sons of Galba, their king; and obliged them to deliver up all their arms, admitted the Suessiones to a surrender, and led his army against the Bellovaci. These, retiring with their effects into Bratuspantium, their capital city, and understanding that Cæsar was advanced within five miles of the town, sent a deputation of all their old men, who came forth in venerable procession to meet him, signifying, by out-stretched hands, and in the most submissive terms, that they put themselves under his power and protection, nor pretended to appear in arms against the people of Rome: and when he approached still nearer the city, and encamped within view of the walls, the women and children from the ramparts, with extended arms, according to the custom of their country, besought the Romans for peace.

XV. Hereupon Divitiacus, who, after the retreat of the Belgian army, had dismissed the Æduans and returned to Cæsar's camp, interposed in their behalf, representing: "That the Bellovaci had always lived in strict friendship and alliance with the Æduans: that the artful insinuations of their chiefs, who misrepresented Cæsar, as one that had enslaved the Æduan state, and held it under an ignominious tyranny and oppression, had alone induced them to forsake their ancient allies, and take up arms against the people of Rome: that the authors of this advice, seeing its pernicious effects, and the ruin they had brought upon their country, were retired into Britain: that not only the Bellovaci themselves, but the Æduans too, in their behalf, implored his

clemency and forgiveness: that in granting their request, he would greatly enlarge the credit and authority of the Æduans among the Belgian states; which was of so much the greater moment, as in all their wars they were wont to have recourse to them for assistance." Cæsar, out of regard to Divitiacus and the Æduans, promised to grant them pardon and protection; but as they were possessed of very extensive territories, and surpassed in power and number of forces all the other Belgian states, he demanded six hundred hostages.

XVI. These being accordingly delivered, together with all their arms, Cæsar left their city, and advanced into the country of the Ambiani; who submitted immediately upon his approach. Adjoining to them were the Nervians; of whose manners and genius Cæsar inquiring, found: "That they suffered no resort of merchants into their cities, nor would allow of the importation of wine, or other commodities tending to luxury; as imagining that thereby the minds of men were enfeebled, and their martial fire and courage extinguished: that they were men of a warlike spirit; but altogether unacquainted with the refinements of life; that they continually inveighed against the rest of the Belgians, for ignominiously submitting to the Roman yoke, and abandoning the steady bravery of their ancestors. In fine, that they had openly declared their resolution, of neither sending ambassadors to Cæsar, nor accepting any terms of peace." Cæsar, after a march of three days across their territories, understood from some prisoners, "That he was now advanced within ten miles of the Sambre, on the other side of which the enemy had posted themselves, and there waited the coming up of the Romans: that they had been joined by the Atrebatians and Veromanduans, neighbouring nations, whom they had persuaded to take part in, and share the fortune of the war: that they expected also to be reinforced by the Atuatici, who were already on their march: and that all their women, and such as on account of their age were unfit to bear arms, had been conveyed to a place of safety, inaccessible by reason of the marshes that surrounded it."

XVII. Cæsar, upon this intelligence, sent his scouts and centurions before, to choose out a convenient place for his camp. Meantime, as many of the Belgians who had lately

submitted, and also not a few Gauls, followed the Roman army, some of these, as was afterwards known from the prisoners, observing the order and disposition of our march, deserted in the night to the enemy, and informed them: "That the several legions were separated from one another, by a number of carriages posted between them: that they would therefore have a favourable opportunity, as soon as the first legion was arrived in the camp, and while the rest were yet a great way behind, of falling upon it encumbered with the baggage, and obtaining an easy victory; by which, and the plunder of the carriages, they would strike such a terror through the whole army, as must necessarily draw after it a total defeat." This advice was the more readily listened to, because of old, the Nervians, being very weak in horse, (nor even as yet have they greatly increased their strength this way, placing their whole confidence in their foot,) in order to secure themselves against the inroads of the cavalry of the neighbouring nations, had every where fortified the country with barricadoes of young trees; which being split in the middle, and bent down on both sides, the void spaces were so closely interwoven with brambles, thorns, and a multitude of boughs, issuing from the trees themselves, that they formed a fence not only impossible to be passed, but even to be seen through. As these, therefore, must greatly impede and perplex the march of the Roman army, they thought the advice given them by the Belgians was by no means to be neglected.

XVIII. The place chosen by our men for their camp was a hill, running with an even descent from the summit till it reached the banks of the Sambre. Directly opposite to this, on the farther side of the river, and at the distance of about two hundred paces, was another hill, of a like acclivity with the former, plain and open round the bottom, but covered on the top with woods, so thick that they hindered the prospect. Among these woods the enemy lay concealed, and only a few squadrons of horse appeared on the open ground by the river side, whose depth in that place did not exceed three feet.

XIX. Cæsar having sent the cavalry before, followed himself with the rest of the army. But the order and disposition of his march differed from the account given in to the ene-

my by the Belgians. For knowing that the Nervians were near, he led up six legions, in front, ready equipped for battle, according to his usual custom. After them followed the baggage of the whole army; and then the two new legions, who closed the march, and served as guard to the carriages. Meantime the Roman cavalry, with the slingers and archers, having passed the river, engaged the enemy's horse: but as they retired from time to time into the woods, and again sallied upon our men, who durst not pursue them beyond the open ground; the six legions that formed the van, coming up during these successive rencounters, began to intrench themselves. When the first line of our carriages appeared within sight of those that lay concealed in the woods, which was the time previously concerted by the enemy for giving the onset, the Nervians, who stood ready drawn up within the thicket, and had mutually exhorted one another to a resolute behaviour, rushed suddenly forward with all their forces, and fell furiously upon our cavalry. These being easily repulsed and broken, they ran down with incredible speed to the Sambre, inasmuch, that at one and the same instant, they seemed to be in the woods, in the river, and charging our men on the other side. Nor were they less expeditious in mounting the hill, and attacking those who were employed in fortifying the camp.

XX. Now had Cæsar all the parts of a general upon his hands at once; to erect the standard, which was the signal for the men to fly to arms; to proclaim the battle by sound of trumpet; to draw off the soldiers from the works; to recall those that were gone to fetch materials for the rampart; to draw up the army in order of battle; to encourage his men; and give the word of onset: in most of which he was prevented by the shortness of the time, and the sudden assault of the enemy. In this emergency, two things chiefly contributed to the preservation of the Romans: one, the ability and experience of the soldiers, who, practised in former battles, knew their duty and what was expedient in the present conjuncture, no less than the officers themselves; the other, the orders given by Cæsar to his several lieutenants, not to quit the works, and the legions where they commanded, till the fortifications of the camp were finished. For these, upon seeing the danger,

and sudden approach of the enemy, waited not for new instructions from the general, but gave forth such orders, as their own prudence and the present necessity suggested.

XXI. Cæsar, having made the necessary dispositions, ran to encourage his men; and, as chance ordered it, fell in with the tenth legion. When exhorting them in few words to exert their wonted bravery, and manfully sustain the assault without terror or dismay, as he saw the enemy within reach of dart, he gave the signal to engage. Hastening thence to another quarter of the field, he found the battle already begun. So short was the time allowed us to prepare ourselves, and such the resolution and impetuosity of the Nervians in rushing to the encounter, that neither could the officers find leisure to regulate the ensigns, nor the soldiers to put on their helmets, or uncase their targets. Each man, as he arrived from the works, joined himself to the first standard that came in his way, that he might not lose that time in looking for his own company, which was to be employed in fighting the enemy.

XXII. The army being drawn up, rather according to the nature of the place, the declivity of the hill, and the particular necessity of the time, than agreeable to order and the rules of war; as the legions were forced to engage separately, some in one place, some in another, and the view of the fight was every where interrupted by the thick hedges described above; it was not possible in these circumstances, to distinguish, with any certainty, where to send the necessary supplies; how to provide against the exigencies of the field; nor indeed for one man to have an eye to all the occurrences that called for notice and redress. In such an unequal situation of things, therefore, much room was left for the various events and interposition of fortune.

XXIII. The soldiers of the ninth and tenth legions, who were upon the left of the army, having cast their darts, advanced against the Atrebatians, with whom it was their fortune to engage. These now weary, breathless, and overpowered with wounds, were quickly driven from the higher ground quite back to the Sambre, where the Romans, still pressing them sword in hand, slew great numbers as they endeavoured to pass the river. Nor did our men decline pursuing

them to the other side : but following too far, till they were drawn into a place of disadvantage, the enemy suddenly faced about, and renewed the charge ; yet were a second time obliged to betake themselves to flight. So likewise, in another quarter of the field, the eleventh and eighth legions, having overthrown the Veromanduans, against whom they fought, drove them from the higher ground to the very banks of the river.

XXIV. As by this means the front and left side of the Roman camp lay in a manner quite exposed, for the twelfth legion, and not far from that, the seventh were posted in the right wing ; the Nervians, headed by Boduognatus, their king, advanced thither in a close body ; and whilst one party endeavoured to surround the legions, by taking them in flank, the rest mounted the hill, in order to get possession of the camp. At the same time our cavalry, with the light-armed infantry, who in the very beginning of the engagement had been repulsed and broken, as we have related above, returning to the camp, and meeting the enemy in front, again betook themselves to flight. The servants too of the army, who from the top of the hill had beheld our men victorious, and pursuing the enemy across the river, having sallied out for the sake of plunder, when they now looked back, and saw the Nervians in possession of the camp, fled with the utmost precipitation. This confusion was still more increased by the clamour and uproar of those that attended the carriages ; insomuch that the panic spreading on all sides, each man thought of providing for his safety by flight. The cavalry of Treves, who were in the highest esteem among the Gauls for their valour, and had been sent by the state to reinforce Cæsar's army, alarmed by these several appearances, when they saw our camp filled with multitudes of the enemy, the legions overpowered, and in a manner quite surrounded ; the horse, archers, slingers, and Numidians, routed, dispersed, and flying on all hands ; imagining all was lost, returned to their own country, and reported, that the Romans were utterly overthrown, and their camp and baggage in possession of the enemy.

XXV. Cæsar, having encouraged the tenth legion, hastened to the right wing of the army. He there found his men overpowered by the enemy ; the ensigns of the twelfth legion all crowded into one place, and the soldiers them-

selves standing so close together, that they had not room to use their arms ; all the centurions of the fourth cohort slain, the standard-bearer killed, and the standard taken ; the centurions of the other cohorts almost all either killed or dangerously wounded ; among these P. Sextius Baculus, the first centurion of the legion, a man of great courage, so weakened by the multitude of his wounds, that he was hardly able to support himself ; the rest discouraged and avoiding the fight, and some even running away, because abandoned by the troops that were to sustain them ; the enemy pressing vigorously in front from the lower ground, and at the same time flanking the legions on either side with great fury : in a word, things reduced to the last extremity, and no body of reserve to restore the battle. Whereupon, snatching a buckler from a soldier, who stood in the rear of the legion, for he himself was come thither without one, and pressing to the front of the battle, he called the centurions by name, encouraged the rest, and commanded the soldiers to advance the ensigns, and widen their ranks, that they might be the more at liberty to use their swords. His arrival inspiring the men with hope, and reviving their courage, as every one was ambitious of distinguishing himself in the presence of his general, and even in his greatest extremity, redoubled his efforts, the progress of the enemy was a little checked.

XXVI. Cæsar observing that the seventh legion, which fought at some distance from the other, was likewise very much pressed by the enemy, commanded the military tribunes to draw the two legions together by degrees, and joining them back to back oppose the enemy with a double front. This being done ; as they were now in a condition to support each other, and no longer feared being surrounded, they began to make a more vigorous opposition, and fight with greater courage. Meantime the two new legions that formed the rear of our army, and had been appointed to guard the baggage ; hearing of the battle, advanced with all possible speed, and were seen by the Nervians from the top of the hill ; and T. Labienus, who had made himself master of the enemy's camp, observing from the higher ground how matters went on our side, detached the tenth legion to our assistance. These understanding, by the flight of our cavalry and servants, the distress we were in,

and the danger that threatened the camp, the legions, and the general, made all the haste they could to join us.

XXVII. The arrival of this detachment produced so great a change in our favour, that many of the soldiers, who before lay oppressed with wounds, now resuming courage, and supporting themselves with their shields, renewed the fight. Nay, the very servants of the camp, observing the consternation of the enemy, unarmed as they were, rushed amongst their armed battalions. The cavalry too, striving by extraordinary efforts of valour to wipe away the ignominy of their late flight, charged the enemy in all places where the void spaces between the legions suffered them to advance. Meantime the Nervians, though now reduced to the last extremity, exerted themselves with such determined courage, that their front ranks being cut off, those who stood behind mounted the bodies of the slain, and thence continued to maintain the fight; and when these too by their fall had raised a mountain of carcases, such as remained ascending the pile, poured their javelins upon us as from a rampart, and even returned the darts thrown at them by our men. Fame therefore deceived not, in proclaiming so loudly the bravery of a people, who thus adventured to cross a very broad river, climb the steepest banks, and rush upon an enemy possessed of all the advantages of ground: difficulties, which, though seemingly insurmountable, appeared yet as nothing to men of their resolution and magnanimity.

XXVIII. The battle being ended, and the name and nation of the Nervians in a manner quite extinguished, the old men, who, with the women and children, as we have related above, had been conveyed into a place surrounded with bogs and marshes, hearing of this terrible overthrow, and judging that nothing would be able to stop the progress of the conquerors, or protect the conquered from their victorious arms, resolved, with the consent of all that survived the late disaster, to send ambassadors to Cæsar and surrender themselves. These, in reciting the calamities of their country, represented, that of six hundred senators, there remained only three; and that from sixty thousand fighting men, they were reduced to five hundred. Cæsar, as a proof of his compassion towards this brave and unfortunate people, readily took them

under his protection, allowing them free and full possession of their towns and territories, and strictly commanding all the neighbouring nations to abstain from injuries and wrongs.

XXIX. The Atuatici, of whom mention has been made above, being upon their march with all their forces to join the Nervians, and hearing of their defeat, immediately returned home; when abandoning all their other towns and castles, they conveyed themselves and their riches into a place of great strength, which nature had fortified with uncommon care; for it was on every side surrounded with high rocks and precipices, having only one avenue of about two hundred feet broad, that approached the town with a gentle rising. Here they raised a double wall of prodigious height, whereon, as a further security, they laid great numbers of huge stones, and strong pointed beams. This people were descended from the Teutones and Cimbri, who, in their march towards the Alps and Italy, left their heavy baggage on this side the Rhine, with a detachment of six thousand men to guard it. These, after the final overthrow of their countrymen, being for many years harassed and persecuted by the neighbouring states, sometimes invading others, sometimes defending themselves, at last, with the consent of all the bordering nations, obtained peace, and chose this place for a habitation.

XXX. On the first arrival of the Roman army, they made frequent sallies from the town, and engaged our men in small skirmishes. But Cæsar having drawn a line of contravallation, twelve feet high, fifteen miles in circumference, and every where well fortified with redoubts, they kept themselves within their walls. When we had now finished our approaches, cast up a mount, and were preparing a tower of assault behind the works, they began at first to deride us from the battlements, and in reproachful language ask the meaning of that prodigious engine raised at such a distance! With what hands or strength, men of our size and make, (for the Gauls, who are for the most part very tall, despise the small stature of the Romans,) could hope to bring forward so unwieldy a machine against their walls?

XXXI. But when they saw it removed and approaching near the town, astonished at the new and unusual appearance, they sent ambassadors to Cæsar to sue for peace.

These being accordingly introduced, told him: "That they doubted not but the Romans were aided in their wars by the gods themselves, it seeming to them a more than human task to transport with such facility an engine of that amazing height, by which they were brought upon a level with their enemies, and enabled to engage them in close fight. That they therefore put themselves and fortunes into his hands, requesting only, that if his clemency and goodness, of which they had heard so much from others, had determined him to spare the Atuatici, he would not deprive them of their arms: that the neighbouring nations were almost all their enemies, as envying their superior valour, nor would it be possible for them to defend themselves from their attacks, if their arms were taken away: in fine, that if such must be their fate, they would rather choose to undergo any fortune from the hands of the Romans, than expose themselves to be cruelly butchered by those over whom they had been wont to exercise dominion.

XXXII. To this Cæsar replied: "That in regard of his usual conduct on these occasions, rather than for any merit of theirs, he was willing to grant them terms of peace, provided they submitted before the battering-ram touched their walls; but that no surrender would be accepted unless they agreed to deliver up their arms: that he would take the same care of them as he had done before of the Nervians, and lay his express commands upon the neighbouring nations to abstain from all injuries towards a people who had put themselves under the protection of the Romans." The ambassadors returning with this answer to their countrymen, they accepted in appearance the conditions offered them by Cæsar, and threw so vast a quantity of arms into the ditch before the town, that the heap almost reached to the top of the wall. Nevertheless, as was afterwards known, they retained about a third part, and concealed them privately within the town. The gates being thrown open, they enjoyed peace for the remaining part of that day.

XXXIII. In the evening Cæsar ordered the gates to be shut, and the soldiers to quit the town, that no injury might be offered to the inhabitants during the night. Whereupon, the Atuatici, in consequence of a design they had before concerted, imagining that the Ro-

mans, after a surrender of the place, would either set no guard at all, or at least keep watch with less precaution; partly arming themselves with such weapons as they had privately retained, partly with targets made of bark or wicker, and covered over hastily with hides, made a furious sally about midnight with all their forces, and charged our works on that side where they seemed to be of easiest access.

XXXIV. The alarm being immediately given, by lighting fires, as Cæsar before commanded, the soldiers ran to the attack from the neighbouring forts. A very sharp conflict ensued, for the enemy now driven to despair, and having no hope but in their valour, fought with all possible bravery, though the Romans had the advantage of the ground, and poured their javelins upon them both from the towers and the top of the rampart. About four thousand were slain upon the spot, and the rest obliged to retire into the town. Next day the gates were forced, no one offering to make the least resistance, and the army having taken possession of the place, the inhabitants, to the number of fifty-three thousand, were sold for slaves.

XXXV. About the same time P. Crassus, whom Cæsar had sent with a legion against the Venetians, Unellians, Osismians, Curiosolitæ, Sesuvians, Aulerici, and Rhedones, maritime states inhabiting along the sea coast, despatched messengers to acquaint him, that all these nations had submitted to the dominion and authority of the Romans.

XXXVI. The campaign being ended, and all the provinces of Gaul subdued, such was the opinion conceived of this war amongst all the barbarians round about, that even the nations beyond the Rhine sent ambassadors to Cæsar, offering to give hostages, and submit to his commands. But he being then in haste to return to Italy and Illyricum, ordered them to attend him the next spring. Meantime, having disposed his army into winter quarters in the territories of the Andes, Turones and Carnutes, which states lay the nearest to the provinces that had been the seat of the war, he himself set out for Italy. The senate being informed of these successes by Cæsar's letters, decreed a thanksgiving of fifteen days; a number never allowed to any general before.