

Start of Campaign

III

BOOK II

LIBER II

1 CVM esset Caesar in citeriore Gallia [~~in hibernis~~], ita uti supra demonstravimus, crebri ad eum rumores adferebantur litterisque item Labieni certior fiebat omnes Belgas, quam tertiam esse Galliae partem dixeramus, contra populum Romanum coniurare obsidesque inter se dare. ^{Belgae} Coniurandi has esse causas: primum, quod vererentur ne omni pacata Gallia ad eos exercitus noster adduceretur; deinde, quod ab nonnullis Gallis³ sollicitarentur, ^{ab eis} partim¹ qui, ut Germanos diutius in Gallia versari noluerant, ita populi Romani exercitum hiemare atque ^{in Gallia} inveterascere in Gallia moleste ferebant,⁴ partim² qui mobilitate et levitate animi novis imperiis studebant,⁵ ab nonnullis etiam, quod in Gallia a potentioribus⁷ atque eis qui ad conducendos homines facultates⁸ habebant vulgo regna⁹ occupabantur, qui minus facile eam rem imperio nostro consequi poterant.

2 His nuntiis litterisque commotus Caesar duas legiones in citeriore Gallia novas conscripsit et in ita aestate in interiorem Galliam qui deduceret Quintum Pedium legatum misit. Ipse, cum primum pabuli

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WHILE Caesar was wintering in Hither Gaul, as has been shown above, frequent rumours were brought to him, and despatches also from Labienus informed him, that all the Belgae (whom I have already described as a third of Gaul) were conspiring against Rome and giving hostages each to other. The causes of their conspiracy, it was said, were as follow. In the first place, they feared that when all Gaul was pacified¹ they might themselves be brought face to face with a Roman army; in the second, they were being stirred up by certain of the Gauls, who had either been unwilling that the Germans should stay longer in Gaul, and were now no less distressed that a Roman army should winter and establish itself in Gaul, or who for sheer fickleness and inconstancy were set upon a change of rule. ¹⁰ in certain cases, too, the agitation was due to the fact that in Gaul the more powerful chiefs, and such as had the means to hire men, commonly endeavoured to make themselves kings, and this they could not so readily effect under our empire.

These reports and despatches prompted Caesar to enrol two new legions in Hither Gaul, and at the beginning of summer he sent Quintus Pedius, lieutenant-general, to lead them into Inner² Gaul. He himself, as soon as there began to be a supply of

¹ *i.e.* the Celtic portion of Gaul.

² *i.e.* Further Gaul.

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copia esse inciperet, ad exercitum venit. Dat negotium Senonibus reliquisque Gallis qui finitimi Belgis erant, uti ea quae apud eos gerantur cognoscant seque de his rebus certiore faciant. Hi constanter omnes nuntiaverunt manus cogi, exercitum in unum locum conduci. Tum vero dubitandum non existimavit quin ad eos proficisceretur. Re frumentaria comparata castra movet diebusque circiter quindecim ad fines Belgarum pervenit.

3 Eo cum ~~de improvise~~ celeriusque omni opinione venisset, Remi, qui proximi Galliae ex Belgis sunt, ad eum legatos Iccium et Andecumborium, primos civitatis, miserunt, qui dicerent se suaque omnia in fidem atque in potestatem populi Romani permittere, neque se cum Belgis reliquis consensisse neque contra populum Romanum coniurasse, paratosque esse et obsides dare et imperata facere et oppidis recipere et frumento ceterisque rebus iuvare; reliquos omnes Belgas in armis esse, Germanosque qui cis Rhenum incolant sese cum his coniunxisse, ~~tantumque esse eorum omnium furorem, ut ne Suessiones quidem, fratres consanguineosque suos, qui eodem iure et isdem legibus utantur, unum imperium unumque magistratum cum ipsis habeant, deterrere potuerint~~ quin cum his consentirent.

4 Cum ab his quaereret, quae civitates quantaque in armis essent et quid in bello possent, sic reperiebat: plerosque Belgas esse ortos ab Germanis Rhenumque antiquitus traductos propter loci fertilitatem

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forage, came to the army. He charged the Senones and the rest of the Gauls who were neighbours of the Belgae to find out what the latter were about and to keep him informed thereof. They all with one consent reported that bands were being collected, and an army assembled in one place. Then accordingly he determined that he must no longer hesitate about moving against them. He secured his corn-supply, struck his camp, and in about a fortnight reached the borders of the Belgae.

He arrived there unexpectedly, and with more speed than anyone had looked for. The Remi, the Belgic tribe nearest to Gaul, sent as deputies to him Iccius and Andecumborius, the first men of the community, to tell him that they surrendered themselves and all their stuff to the protection and power of Rome; that they had neither taken part with the rest of the Belgae, nor conspired against Rome; and that they were ready to give hostages, to do his commands, to receive him in their towns, and to assist him with corn and everything else. All the rest of the Belgae, they said, were under arms, and the Germans dwelling on the hither side of the Rhine had joined with them; and the infatuation of them all was so great that the Remi had not been able to dissuade even the Suessiones from taking part with them, though these were their own brethren and kinsfolk, observing the same law and ordinances, and sharing one government, one ruler with themselves.

Caesar asked them what states were under arms, what was their size and their war-strength. He discovered that most of the Belgae were of German origin, and had been brought over the Rhine a long while ago, and had settled in their present abode by reason of the fruitfulness of the soil, having driven

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ibi consedissee Gallosque qui ea loca incolerent expulsiise, solosque esse, qui patrum nostrorum memoria omni Gallia vexata Teutonos Cimbrosque intra fines suos ingredi prohibuerint; qua ex re fieri, uti earum rerum memoria magnam sibi auctoritatem magnosque spiritus in re militari sumerent. De numero eorum omnia se habere explorata Remi dicebant, propterea quod propinquitatibus adfinitatibusque coniuncti, quantam quisque multitudinem in communi Belgarum concilio ad id bellum pollicitus sit cognoverint. Plurimum inter eos Bellovacos et virtute et auctoritate et hominum numero valere; hos posse conficere armata milia centum, pollicitos ex eo numero electa sexaginta totiusque belli imperium sibi postulare. Suessiones suos esse finitimos; latissimos feracissimosque agros possidere. Apud eos fuisse regem nostra etiam memoria Diviciacum, totius Galliae potentissimum, qui cum magnae partis harum regionum, tum etiam Britanniae imperium obtinuerit: nunc esse regem Galbam: ad hunc propter iustitiam prudentiamque suam totius belli summam omnium voluntate deferri; oppida habere numero XII, polliceri milia armata quinquaginta; totidem Nervios, qui maxime feri inter ipsos habeantur longissimeque absint; quindecim milia Atrebates, Ambianos decem milia, Morinos xxv milia, Menapios vii milia, Caletos x milia, Veliocasses et Viromandos totidem, Aduaticos decem et novem milia; Condrusos, Eburones,

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out the Gauls who inhabited the district. The Belgae, they said, were the only nation who, when all Gaul was harassed in the last generation, had prevented the Teutoni and Cimbri from entering within their borders; and for this cause they relied on the remembrance of those events to assume great authority and great airs in military matters. As concerning their numbers, the Remi affirmed that they had exact information in all particulars, because, as they were closely connected by relationship and intermarriage, they had learnt how large a contingent each chief had promised for the present campaign in the general council of the Belgae. Among these the Bellovaci had a predominant influence by courage, by authority, by numbers; they could furnish a hundred thousand men-at-arms, and of that number had promised sixty thousand picked men, demanding for themselves the command of the whole campaign. The Suessiones, the Remi said, were their own immediate neighbours; they occupied lands as extensive as they were productive. Among them, even within living memory, Diviciacus had been king, the most powerful man in the whole of Gaul, who had exercised sovereignty alike over a great part of these districts, and even over Britain. Galba was now king; to him, by reason of his justice and sagacity, the supreme charge of the campaign was delivered by general consent; he had twelve towns, and promised fifty thousand men-at-arms. An equal number were promised by the Nervii, accounted the fiercest among the Belgae, and dwelling farthest away; fifteen thousand by the Atrebates, ten by the Ambiani, five-and-twenty by the Morini, seven by the Menapii, ten by the Caleti, as many by the Vellocasses and the Viromandui, nineteen by the Aduatuci. The Condrusi, Eburones,

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Caeroesos, Paemanos, qui uno nomine Germani appellantur, arbitrari ad XL milia.

5 Caesar Remos cohortatus liberaliterque oratione prosecutus omnem senatum ad se convenire principumque liberos obsides ad se adduci iussit. Quae omnia ab his diligenter ad diem facta sunt. Ipse Diviciacum Aeduum magnopere cohortatus docet quanto opere rei publicae communisque salutis intersit manus hostium distineri, ne cum tanta multitudine uno tempore configendum sit. Id fieri posse, si suas copias Aedui in fines Bellovacorum introduxerint et eorum agros populari coeperint. His mandatis eum ab se dimittit. ^{Caesar} Postquam omnes Belgarum copias ~~in~~ ~~unum locum~~ coactas ad se venire vidit neque iam longe abesse ~~ab eis quos miserat exploratoribus~~ et ab Remis cognovit, flumen Axonam, quod est in extremis Remorum finibus, exercitum traducere¹ maturavit atque ibi castra posuit. ^R Quae res² et latus unum castrorum ripis fluminis muniebat, et post eum quae essent³ tuta ab hostibus reddebat, et com meatus ab Remis reliquisque civitatibus ut sine periculo ad eum portari posset⁴ efficiebat. In⁵ eo flumine pons erat. Ibi praesidium ponit et in altera parte fluminis Quintum Titurium Sabinum legatum cum sex cohortibus relinquit; castra in altitudinem pedum XII vallo fossaque duodeviginti pedum munire iubet. |

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Caeroesi, and Paemani (who are indiscriminately called Germans), had promised, it was thought, some forty thousand men.

Caesar addressed the Remi in a speech of generous encouragement; then he commanded their whole senate to assemble at his headquarters, and the children of their chieftains to be brought thither as hostages. All these commands were punctiliously and punctually performed. He made a powerful and a personal appeal to Diviciacus the Aeduan, showing him how important an advantage it was for the Roman state, and for the welfare of both parties, to keep the contingents of the enemy apart, so as to avoid the necessity of fighting at one time against so large a host. This could be done if the Aedui led their own forces into the borders of the Bellovaci and began to lay waste their lands. With these instructions he dismissed him. **I** So soon as he perceived that all the forces of the Belgae had been concentrated and were coming against him, and learnt from the scouts he had sent and from the Remi that they were now not far distant, he made haste to lead his army across the river Axona (Aisne), which is upon the outermost borders of the Remi, and there pitched camp. By so doing, he had the banks of the river to protect one side of the camp, rendered his rear safe from the enemy, and made it possible for supplies to be brought up to him from the Remi and the rest of the states without danger. There was a bridge over the river; he set a guard there, and on the other side of the river he left Quintus Titurius Sabinus, lieutenant-general, with six cohorts. He ordered him to entrench a camp, with a rampart twelve feet high and a ditch eighteen feet broad.

6 Ab his castris oppidum Remorum nomine Bibrax aberat milia passuum octo. Id ex itinere magno impetu Belgae oppugnare coeperunt. Aegre eo die sustentatum est.

~~Gallorum eadem atque Belgarum oppugnatio est haec. Vbi circumiecta multitudine hominum totis moenibus undique in murum lapides iaei coepti sunt murusque defensoribus nudatus est, testudine facta portas succedunt murumque subruunt. Quod tum facile fiebat.~~

Nam cum tanta multitudo lapides ac tela conicerent, in muro consistendi potestas erat nulli.¹⁴ Cum finem oppugnandi nox fecisset, Iccius Remus,¹⁵ summa nobilitate et gratia inter suos, qui tum oppido praefuerat, ~~unus ex eis qui legati de pace ad Caesarem venerant,~~ nuntium ¹⁶ ad ~~eum~~ ^{Caesarem} mittit, nisi subsidium sibi submittatur, se ~~se~~ diutius sustinere non posse.

7 ~~Bo~~ de media nocte Caesar, ~~isdem duobus~~ usus qui ~~nuntii ab Iccio venerant,~~ Numidas et Cretas sagittarios¹⁷ et funditores Baleares subsidio oppidanis mittit, ¹⁸ quorum adventu ~~et~~ Remis cum spe defensionis studium propugnandi accessit,¹⁸ et hostibus eadem de causa spes potiundi oppidi discessit.¹⁹ Itaque paulisper apud oppidum morati agrosque Remorum ~~de~~ populati, omnibus vicis aedificiisque quos²⁰ adire potuerant incensis, ad castra Caesaris omnibus copiis ²¹ contenderunt et ab milibus passuum minus duobus castra posuerunt; quae castra, ut

¹ *ex itinere oppugnare* (cf. ch. 12 *infra*) seems to mean "to assault direct from the march"—to storm a town by a *coup de main* without interrupting the main advance.

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From this camp a town of the Remi called Bibrax was eight miles distant. The Belgae turned direct from their march to attack¹ this town with great violence. The defence was with difficulty maintained on that day. The Gauls and the Belgae use one method of attack. A host of men is set all round the ramparts, and when a rain of stones from all sides upon the wall has begun, and the wall is stripped of defenders, the attackers form a "toroise,"² move up to the gates, and undercut the wall. This was easily done on the present occasion for when so vast a host hurled stones and missiles, no man might stand firm on the wall. When night made an end of the assault, Iccius of the Remi, pre-eminent among his tribesmen in rank and favour, who was the officer in charge of the town at this time, and one of those who had come as deputies to Caesar to treat of peace, sent a report to him to the effect that unless a reinforcement were sent up to him he could no longer hold his position.

Using again as guides the men who had come from Iccius to report, Caesar sent off to Bibrax in the middle of the night Numidian and Cretan archers and Balearic slingers, to reinforce the townsfolk. Their arrival brought the Remi not only hope of defence but heart for counter-attack, and for the same reason dissipated the enemy's hope of gaining the town. Therefore, halting for a short space near the town, they laid waste the lands of the Remi and set fire to all the hamlets and farm-buildings they could come nigh unto, and then with all their forces sped on to the camp of Caesar and pitched their own less than two miles from it. Their camp, as smoke

² *i.e.* lock their shields together over their heads. See Appendix A.

fumo atque ignibus significabatur, amplius milibus

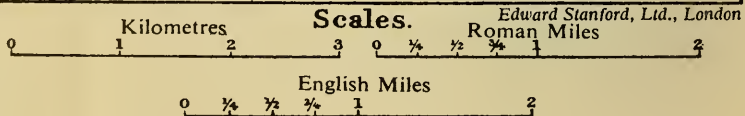
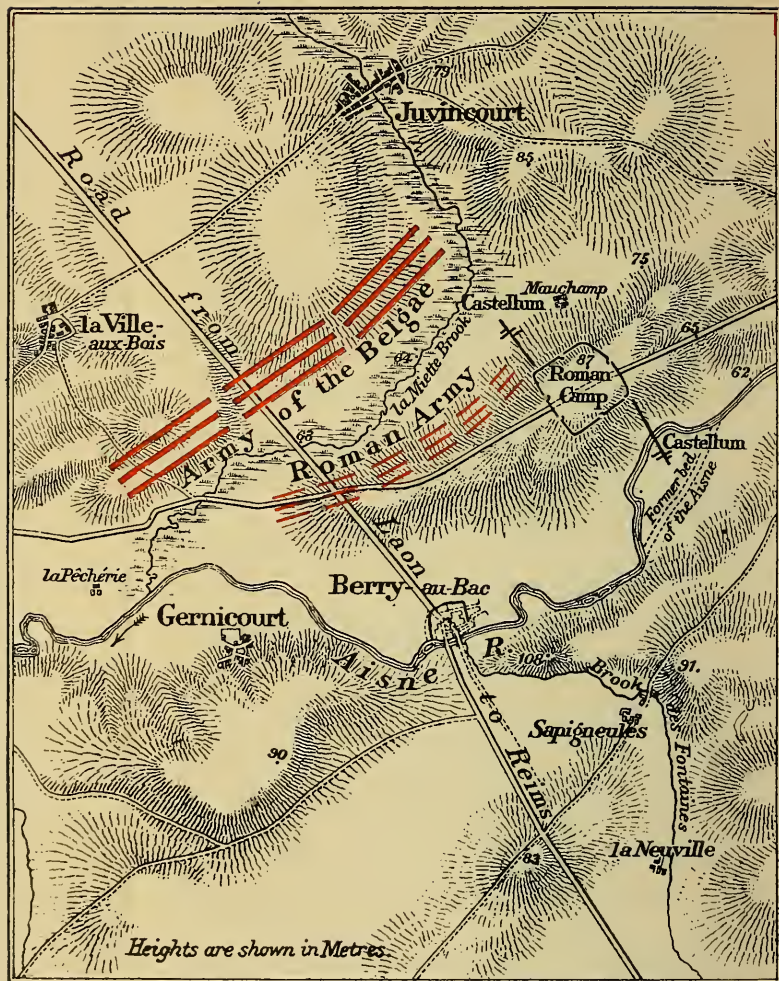
line 34 passuum octo in latitudinem patebant.

8 Caesar primo et propter multitudinem hostium et propter eximiam opinionem virtutis²² proelio supersedere statuit: cotidie tamen equestribus proeliis, quid hostis virtute posset et quid nostri auderent, periclitabatur.²³ Vbi nostros non esse inferiores intellexit, loco pro castris ad aciem instruendam natura opportuno atque idoneo, quod is collis, ubi castra posita erant, paululum ex planitie editus tantum adversus in latitudinem patebat quantum loci acies instructa occupare poterat, atque ex utraque parte lateris deiectus habebat et in frontem leniter fastigatus paulatim ad planitiem redibat, ab utroque latere eius collis transversam fossam²⁴ obduxit circiter passuum quadringentorum, et ad extremas fossas castella constituit ibique tormenta collocavit, ne, cum aciem instruxisset, hostes, quod tantum multitudine poterant, ab lateribus pugnantes suos circumvenire possent.²⁵ Hoc facto duabus legionibus quas proxime conscripserat in castris relictis, ut, si quo opus esset, subsidio duci possent, reliquas sex legiones pro castris in acie constituit. Hostes item suas copias ex castris eductas instruxerant.

51 9 Palus erat non magna inter nostrum atque hostium exercitum. Hanc si nostri transirent, hostes exspectabant; nostri autem, si ab illis initium transeundi fieret, ut impeditos aggrederentur parati in armis erant. Interim proelio equestri inter duas

THE BATTLE OF THE AISNE

(after Colonel Stoffel)



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and watch-fires showed, extended for more than eight miles in breadth.

At first Caesar determined, because of the vast numbers of the enemy and their excellent reputation for valour, to avoid an engagement. By cavalry combats, however, he sought daily to prove what the valour of the enemy could do and what our men could dare. Then, perceiving that our men were not inferior, he chose a ground before the camp naturally suitable and appropriate for forming line of battle; for the hill where the camp had been pitched, standing up but a little from the plain, offered to the front as broad a space as a line deployed could occupy; on either flank it fell away, while in front by a gentle slope it came down gradually to the level of the plain. On either flank of that hill he dug at right angles ¹ a protecting trench of about four hundred paces, and at the ends of the trenches he constructed forts and there posted his artillery, so that, when he had formed line, the enemy might not be able, because of their great superiority of numbers, to surround the Romans fighting on the flanks. This done, he left in camp the two legions he had last enrolled, that they might be brought up in support wherever needed, and he put the remaining six in line of battle before the camp. The enemy likewise had led their forces out of camp and drawn them up.

51 Between our own and the enemy's army was a marsh of no great size. The enemy waited to see whether our men would cross it; but our men stood to arms, ready to attack them when in difficulties, should they be the first to attempt the crossing. Meanwhile a cavalry combat was taking place

¹ *i.e.* to his line.

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acies contendebatur.² Vbi neutri transeundi initium faciunt, secundiore equitum proelio nostris³ Caesar suos in castra reduxit. Hostes protinus ex eo loco ad flumen Axonam contenderunt, quod esse post nostra castra demonstratum est. Ibi vadis repertis partem suarum copiarum traducere conati sunt, eo consilio ut, si possent, castellum, cui praeerat Quintus Titurius legatus, expugnarent pontemque interscinderent; si minus potuissent, agros Remorum popularentur, qui magno nobis usui ad bellum gerendum erant, commeatuque nostros prohiberent.

- 10 <Caesar> certior factus ab Titurio omnem equitatum et levis armaturae Numidas, funditores sagittariosque pontem traducit atque ad eos contendit. Acriter in eo loco pugnatum est. Hostes impeditos nostri in flumine adgressi magnum eorum numerum occiderunt: per eorum corpora reliquos audacissime transire conantes multitudine telorum reppulerunt; primos qui transierant equitatu circumventos interfecerunt. Hostes ubi et de expugnando oppido et de flumine transeundo spem se fefellisse intellexerunt neque nostros in locum iniquiorem progredi pugnandi causa viderunt, atque ipsos res frumentaria deficere coepit, concilio convocato constituerunt optimum esse domum suam quemque reverti et, quorum in fines primum Romani exercitum introduxissent, ad eos defendendos undique convenire, ut potius in suis quam in alienis finibus decertarent et domesticis copiis rei frumentariae uterentur. Ad eam

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between the two lines. Neither army began to cross the marsh, and the cavalry combat tended to favour our side; so Caesar led his troops back to camp. The enemy hurried immediately from their station to the river Aisne, which, as has been shown, was behind our camp. There they found fords, and endeavoured to throw part of their forces across, intending if they could to storm the fort commanded by the lieutenant-general, Quintus Titurius, and break down the bridge; or, if they found that impossible, to lay waste the lands of the Remi, which were of great service to us for the conduct of the campaign, and so to cut off our supplies.

This was reported by Titurius, and Caesar led all the cavalry and the light-armed Numidians, slingers and archers, across the bridge, and hastened against the enemy. Fierce was the engagement fought there. Our troops attacked the enemy while in difficulties in the river, and slew a great number of them; the remainder, as they endeavoured with the utmost gallantry to cross over the bodies of their comrades, they drove back with a cloud of missiles; the first party, who were already across, the cavalry surrounded and slew. The enemy were now aware that they had been deceived in their hope of storming the town and of crossing the river, and saw that our men did not advance to unfavourable ground for the sake of a battle; moreover, their own corn-supply began to fail. They summoned a council, therefore, and decided that it was best for each man to return home, and to assemble from all quarters to the defence of the tribe into whose territory the Romans should first introduce their army, in order that they might fight in their own rather than in others' territory, and use native resources for their corn-supply.

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sententiam cum reliquis causis haec quoque ratio eos deduxit, quod Diviciacum atque Aeduos finibus Bellovacorum appropinquare cognoverant. His persuaderi ut diutius morarentur neque suis auxilium ferrent non poterat.

- 11 Ea re constituta, secunda vigilia magno cum strepitu ac tumultu castris egressi nullo certo ordine neque imperio, cum sibi quisque primum itineris locum peteret et domum pervenire properaret, fecerunt ut consimilis fugae profectio videretur. Hac re statim Caesar per speculatores cognita insidias veritus, quod qua de causa discederent nondum perspexerat, exercitum equitatumque castris continuit. Prima luce confirmata re ab exploratoribus omnem equitatum, qui novissimum agmen moraretur, praemisit. His Quintum Pedium et Lucium Aurunculeium Cottam legatos praefecit; Titum Labienum legatum cum legionibus tribus subsequi iussit. Hi novissimos adorti et multa milia passuum prosecuti magnam multitudinem eorum fugientium conciderunt, cum ab extremo agmine, ad quos ventum erat, consisterent fortiterque impetum nostrorum militum sustinerent, priores, quod abesse a periculo viderentur neque ulla necessitate neque imperio continerentur, exaudito clamore perturbatis ordinibus omnes in fuga sibi praesidium ponerent. Ita sine ullo periculo tantam eorum multitudinem nostri interfecerunt quantum fuit diei spatium, sub occasumque solis destiterunt seque in castra, ut erat imperatum, receperunt.

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To this opinion they were brought, among the other reasons, by this particular consideration, that they had learnt of the approach of Diviciacus and the Aedui to the borders of the Bellovaci. The latter could not be induced to tarry longer, and thereby to fail in bringing assistance to their own tribe.

This, then, being determined, they decamped in the second watch with great uproar and commotion, in no definite order, under no command, each seeking for himself the first place on the road, and hurrying to reach home, so that they made their departure seem like to a flight. Caesar learnt this at once through his scouts; and fearing an ambush, because he had not yet perceived the cause of their departure, he kept the army and the cavalry in camp. At break of day, when the information had been confirmed by reconnoissance, he sent forward all the cavalry to delay the rearguard. He appointed the lieutenant-generals Quintus Pedius and Lucius Aurunculeius Cotta to command the cavalry; and ordered the lieutenant-general Titus Labienus to follow in support with three legions. The cavalry attacked the rearguard, and, pursuing for many miles, they struck down a great host of them as they fled; for while the men at the end of the main column, which had been overtaken, stood at bay, bravely sustaining the attack of our troops, the men in front, thinking themselves clear of danger and restrained by no compulsion or command, broke ranks as soon as they heard the shouting, and all sought safety in flight. Thus without any danger our men slew as great a host of them as daytime allowed, and, ceasing at sunset, retired according to orders into camp.

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12 Postridie eius diei Caesar, priusquam se hostes ex terrore ac fuga reciperent, in fines Suessionum, qui proximi Remis erant, exercitum duxit et magno itinere confecto ad oppidum Noviodunum contendit. Id ex itinere oppugnare conatus, quod vacuum ab defensoribus esse audiebat, propter latitudinem fossae murique altitudinem paucis defendentibus expugnare non potuit. Castris munitis vineas agere quaeque ad oppugnandum usui erant comparare coepit. Interim omnis ex fuga Suessionum multitudo in oppidum proxima nocte convenit. Celeriter vineis ad oppidum actis, aggere iacto turribusque constitutis magnitudine operum, quae neque viderant ante Galli neque audierant, et celeritate Romanorum permoti legatos ad Caesarem de deditioe mittunt et petentibus Remis ut conservarentur impetrant.

13 Caesar, obsidibus acceptis primis civitatis atque ipsius Galbae regis duobus filiis armisque omnibus ex oppido traditis, in deditioem Suessiones accepit exercitumque in Bellovacos ducit. Qui cum se suaque omnia in oppidum Bratuspantium contulissent, atque ab eo oppido Caesar cum exercitu circiter milia passuum quinque abesset, omnes maiores natu ex oppido egressi manus ad Caesarem tendere et voce significare coeperunt sese in eius fidem ac potestatem

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The next day, or ever the enemy could recover from their panic and rout, Caesar led the army into the borders of the Suessiones, next the Remi, and making a forced march pressed on to the town of Noviodunum. He endeavoured to assault it direct from the march,¹ hearing that it was undefended; but, by reason of the breadth of its trench and the height of its wall he was not able to take it by storm, though there were few men to defend it. He entrenched his camp, therefore, and began to move up mantlets and to make ready the appliances needed for assault. Meanwhile all the host of the Suessiones returned from the rout and concentrated next night in the town. When the mantlets were speedily moved up to the town, a ramp cast up,² and towers constructed, the Gauls were prevailed on by the size of the siege-works, which they had not seen nor heard of before, and by the rapidity of the Romans, to send deputies to Caesar to treat of surrender; and upon the Remi interceding for their salvation, they obtained their request.

The leading men of the state and the two sons of King Galba himself were accepted as hostages, and all arms were delivered up from the town; then Caesar admitted the Suessiones to surrender, and led the army into the territory of the Bellovaci. These had collected themselves and all their stuff in the town of Bratuspantium; and when Caesar with his army was about five miles from the place, all the older men came out of the town. They began to stretch out their hands to Caesar, and with loud voice to declare that they would come into his

¹ See note on ch. 6.

² Or, according to others, "earth was cast," *i.e.* into the fosse.

venire neque contra populum Romanum armis contendere. Item, cum ad oppidum accessisset castraque ibi poneret, pueri mulieresque ex muro passis manibus suo more pacem ab Romanis petierunt.

- 14 Pro his Diviciacus (nam post discessum Belgarum dimissis Aeduorum copiis ad eum reverterat) facit verba: Bellovacos omni tempore in fide atque amicitia civitatis Aeduae fuisse; impulsos ab suis principibus, qui dicerent Aeduos ab Caesare in servitum reductos omnes indignitates contumeliasque perferre, et ab Aeduis defecisse et populo Romano bellum intulisse. Qui eius consili principes fuissent, quod intellexerent quantam calamitatem civitati intulissent, in Britanniam profugisse. Petere non solum Bellovacos, sed etiam pro his Aeduos, ut sua clementia ac mansuetudine in eos utatur. Quod si fecerit, Aeduorum auctoritatem apud omnes Belgas amplificaturum; quorum auxiliis atque opibus, si qua bella inciderint, sustentare consuerint.

- 15 Caesar honoris Diviciaci atque Aeduorum causa sese eos in fidem recepturum et conservaturum dixit; quod erat civitas magna inter Belgas auctoritate atque hominum multitudine praestabat, sescentos obsides poposcit. His traditis omnibusque armis ex oppido collatis ab eo loco in fines Ambianorum pervenit, qui se suaque omnia sine mora dederunt. Eorum fines Nervii attingebant; quorum de natura moribusque

GALLIC WAR, BOOK II

protection and power, and were making no armed effort against Rome. Likewise, when he was come up to the town and was pitching camp, the women and children, with hands outstretched from the wall, after their fashion, besought peace from the Romans.

On their behalf Diviciacus (who, after the departure of the Belgae, had disbanded the forces of the Aedui and returned to Caesar) spake as follows: "The Bellovaci have always enjoyed the protection and friendship of the Aeduan state. They have been incited by their chiefs, who declared that the Aedui have been reduced to slavery by Caesar and are suffering every form of indignity and insult, both to revolt from the Aedui and to make war on the Roman people. The leaders of the plot, perceiving how great a disaster they have brought on the state, have fled to Britain. Not only the Bellovaci, but the Aedui also on their behalf, beseech you to show your wonted mercy and kindness towards them. By so doing you will enlarge the authority of the Aedui among all the Belgae, for it is by the succours and the resources of the Aedui that they have been used to sustain the burden of any wars that may have occurred."

Caesar replied that for the respect he had towards Diviciacus and the Aedui he would receive them into his protection and save them alive. As their state was possessed of great authority among the Belgae and was largest in population, he demanded six hundred hostages. These were delivered, and all the arms were collected from the town. Then he left the place, and came into the borders of the Ambiani, who surrendered themselves and all their stuff without delay. Their next neighbours were the Nervii, and

CAESAR

Caesar cum quaereret, sic reperiebat: nullum aditum esse ad eos mercatoribus; nihil pati vini reliquarumque rerum inferri, quod eis rebus relanguescere animos eorum et remitti virtutem existimarent: esse homines feros magnaque virtutis: increpitare atque incusare reliquos Belgas, qui se populo Romano dedidissent patriamque virtutem proiecissent; confirmare sese neque legatos missuros neque ullam condicionem pacis accepturos.

16 Cum per eorum fines triduum iter fecisset, inveniebat ex captivis Sabim flumen ab castris suis non amplius milia passuum x abesse: trans id flumen omnes Nervios consedissee adventumque ibi Romanorum exspectare una cum Atrebatis et Viromanduis, finitimis suis (nam his utrisque persuaserant, uti eandem belli fortunam experirentur); exspectari etiam ab his Aduatucorum copias atque esse in itinere: mulieres quique per aetatem ad pugnam inutiles viderentur in eum locum coniecisse, quo propter paludes exercitui aditus non esset.

17 His rebus cognitis exploratores centurionesque praemittit, qui locum idoneum castris deligant. Cum ex dediticiis Belgis reliquisque Gallis complures Caesarem secuti una iter facerent, quidam ex his, ut postea ex captivis cognitum est, eorum dierum consuetudine itineris nostri exercitus perspecta, nocte ad Nervios pervenerunt atque his demonstrarunt inter singulas legiones impedimentorum magnum numerum

GALLIC WAR, BOOK II

when Caesar inquired as touching the nature and character of these, he discovered as follows. Traders had no means of access unto them, for they allowed no wine nor any of the other appurtenances of luxury to be imported, because they supposed that their spirit was like to be enfeebled and their courage relaxed thereby. Fierce men they were, of a great courage, denouncing and accusing the rest of the Belgae for that they had surrendered to Rome and cast away the courage of their sires. For themselves they affirmed that they would send no deputies and accept no terms of peace.

After a three days' march through their borders Caesar found out from prisoners that the river Sabis (Sambre) was not more than ten miles from his camp, and that across the river all the Nervii were in position, awaiting there the coming of the Romans, along with the Atrebatas and the Viromandui, their neighbours (for the Nervii had persuaded both of these tribes to try with them the chance of war); further, that they were awaiting forces of the Aduatuci, already on the march, and that the women and all who by reason of age were deemed useless for battle had been collected together in a district to which there was no approach for an army by reason of the marshes.

Upon this information Caesar sent forward scouts and centurions to choose a fit place for the camp. Now a considerable number of the surrendered Belgae and of the other Gauls were in the train of Caesar and marched with him; and certain of these, as was afterwards learnt from prisoners, having remarked the usual order of our army's march during those days, came by night to the Nervii and showed to them that between legion and legion a great quantity of baggage

intercedere, neque esse quidquam negoti, cum prima legio in castra venisset reliquaeque legiones magnum spatium abessent, hanc sub sarcinis adoriri; qua pulsa impedimentisque direptis, futurum ut reliquae contra consistere non auderent. Adiuuabat etiam eorum consilium, qui rem deferebant, quod Nervii antiquitus, cum equitatu nihil possent (neque enim ad hoc tempus ei rei student, sed, quidquid possunt, pedestribus valent copiis), quo facilius finitimorum equitatum, si praedandi causa ad eos venissent, impedirent, teneris arboribus incisis atque inflexis crebrisque in latitudinem ramis enatis et rubis sentibusque interiectis effecerant, ut instar muri hae saepes munimenta praeberent, quo non modo non intrari, sed ne perspici quidem posset. His rebus cum iter agminis nostri impediretur, non omittendum sibi consilium Nervii existimaverunt.

- 18 Loci natura erat haec, quem locum nostri castris delegerant. Collis ab summo aequaliter declivis ad flumen Sabim, quod supra nominavimus, vergebat. Ab eo flumine pari acclivitate collis nascebatur adversus huic et contrarius, passus circiter ducentos infimus apertus, ab superiore parte silvestris, ut non facile introrsus perspici posset. Intra eas silvas hostes in occulto sese continebant; in aperto loco secundum flumen paucae stationes equitum videbantur. Fluminis erat altitudo pedum circiter trium.
- 19 Caesar equitatu praemisso subsequebatur omnibus copiis; sed ratio ordoque agminis aliter se habebat

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was interposed, and that it was an easy matter, when the first legion had reached camp and the rest were a great space away, to attack it while it was in heavy marching order; if it were driven back, and the baggage plundered, the rest would not dare to withstand. The plan proposed by those who brought the information was further assisted by an ancient practice of the Nervii. Having no strength in cavalry (for even to this day they care naught for that service, but all their power lies in the strength of their infantry), the easier to hamper the cavalry of their neighbours, whenever these made a raid on them, they cut into young saplings and bent them over, and thus by the thick horizontal growth of boughs, and by intertwining with them brambles and thorns, they contrived that these wall-like hedges should serve them as fortifications which not only could not be penetrated, but not even seen through. As the route of our column was hampered by these abatis, the Nervii considered that the proposed plan should be tried.

The character of the ground selected by our officers for the camp was as follows. There was a hill, inclining with uniform slope from its top to the river Sambre above mentioned. From the river-side there rose another hill of like slope, over against and confronting the other, open for about two hundred paces at its base, wooded in its upper half, so that it could not easily be seen through from without. Within those woods the enemy kept themselves in hiding. On open ground along the river a few cavalry posts were to be seen. The depth of the river was about three feet.

Caesar had sent on the cavalry, and was following up with all his forces; but the arrangement and order of the column was different from the report

CAESAR

ac Belgae ad Nervios detulerant. Nam quod ad hostes appropinquabat, consuetudine sua Caesar sex legiones expeditas ducebat; post eas totius exercitus impedimenta collocarat; inde duae legiones quae proxime conscriptae erant totum agmen claudebant praesidioque impedimentis erant. Equites nostri cum funditoribus sagittariisque flumen transgressi cum hostium equitatu proelium commiserunt. Cum se illi identidem in silvas ad suos reciperent ac rursus ex silva in nostros impetum facerent, neque nostri longius quam quem ad finem porrecta loca aperta pertinebant cedentes insequi auderent, interim legiones sex, quae primae venerant, opere dimenso castra munire coeperunt. Vbi prima impedimenta nostri exercitus ab eis, qui in silvis abditi latebant, visa sunt, quod tempus inter eos committendi proeli convenerat, ut intra silvas aciem ordinesque constituerant atque ipsi sese confirmaverant, subito omnibus copiis provolaverunt impetumque in nostros equites fecerunt. His facile pulsus ac proturbatus incredibili celeritate ad flumen decurrerunt, ut paene uno tempore et ad silvas et in flumine et iam in manibus nostris hostes viderentur. Eadem autem celeritate adverso colle ad nostra castra atque eos qui in opere occupati erant contenderunt.

20 Caesari omnia uno tempore erant agenda: vexillum proponendum, quod erat insigne cum ad arma concurrere oporteret, signum tuba dandum, ab opere revocandi milites, qui paulo longius aggeris petendi causa processerant arcessendi, acies instruenda,

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given by the Belgae to the Nervii. For, as he was approaching an enemy, Caesar, according to his custom, was moving with six legions in light field order; after them he had placed the baggage of the whole army; then the two legions which had been last enrolled brought up the rear of the whole column and formed the baggage-guard. Our cavalry crossed the river along with the slingers and archers, and engaged the enemy's horsemen. The latter retired repeatedly upon their comrades in the woods, and, issuing thence, again charged our men; nor did our men dare to follow in pursuit farther than the extent of level open ground. Meanwhile the six legions first to arrive measured out the work, and began to entrench camp. The moment that the first baggage-detachments of our army were seen by the enemy, who were lurking hidden in the woods—the moment agreed upon among them for joining battle—they suddenly dashed forth in full force, having already in the woods ordered their line in regular ranks and encouraged one another for the conflict; and so charged down upon our cavalry. These were easily beaten and thrown into disorder, and with incredible speed the enemy rushed down to the river, so that almost at the same moment they were seen at the edge of the woods, in the river, and then at close quarters. Then with the same speed they hastened up-hill against our camp and the troops engaged in entrenching it.

Caesar had everything to do at one moment—the flag to raise, as signal of a general call to arms;¹ the trumpet-call to sound; the troops to recall from entrenching; the men to bring in who had gone somewhat farther afield in search of stuff for the

¹ See Appendix A.

milites cohortandi, signum dandum. Quarum rerum magnam partem temporis brevitatis et successus hostium impediens. His difficultatibus duae res erant subsidio, scientia atque usus militum, quod superioribus proeliis exercitati, quid fieri oporteret, non minus commode ipsi sibi praescribere quam ab aliis doceri poterant, et quod ab opere singulisque legionibus singulos legatos Caesar discedere nisi munitis castris vetuerat. Hi propter propinquitatem et celeritatem hostium nihil iam Caesaris imperium exspectabant, sed per se quae videbantur administrabant.

21 Caesar necessariis rebus imperatis ad cohortandos milites, quam in partem fors obtulit, decucurrit et ad legionem decumam devenit. Milites non longiore oratione cohortatus, quam uti suae pristinae virtutis memoriam retinerent ne perturbarentur animo hostiumque impetum fortiter sustinerent, quod non longius hostes aberant quam quo telum adici posset, proeli committendi signum dedit. Atque in alteram partem item cohortandi causa profectus pugnantibus occurrit. Temporis tanta fuit exiguitas hostiumque tam paratus ad dimicandum animus, ut non modo ad insignia accommodanda, sed etiam ad galeas induendas scutisque tegimenta detrudenda tempus defuerit. Quam quisque ab opere in partem casu devenit quaeque prima signa conspexit, ad haec constitit, ne in quaerendis suis pugnandi tempus dimitteret.

22 Instructo exercitu, magis ut loci natura deiectusque collis et necessitas temporis, quam ut rei militaris

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ramp; the line to form; the troops to harangue; the signal to give. A great part of these duties was prevented by the shortness of the time and the advance of the enemy. The stress of the moment was relieved by two things: the knowledge and experience of the troops—for their training in previous battles enabled them to appoint for themselves what was proper to be done as readily as others could have shown them—and the fact that Caesar had forbidden the several lieutenant-generals to leave the entrenching and their proper legions until the camp was fortified. These generals, seeing the nearness and the speed of the enemy, waited no more for a command from Caesar, but took on their own account what steps seemed to them proper.

Caesar gave the necessary commands, and then ran down in a chance direction to harangue the troops, and came to the Tenth Legion. His harangue to the troops was no more than a charge to bear in mind their ancient valour, to be free from alarm, and bravely to withstand the onslaught of the enemy; then, as the enemy were no farther off than the range of a missile, he gave the signal to engage. He started off at once in the other direction to give like harangue, and found them fighting. The time was so short, the temper of the enemy so ready for conflict, that there was no space not only to fit badges in their places, but even to put on helmets and draw covers from shields. In whichever direction each man chanced to come in from the entrenching, whatever standard each first caught sight of, by that he stood, to lose no fighting time in seeking out his proper company.

The army was drawn up rather as the character of the ground, the slope of the hill, and the exigency

ratio atque ordo postulabat, cum diversis legionibus aliae alia in parte hostibus resisterent, saepibusque densissimis, ut ante demonstravimus, interiectis prospectus impediretur neque certa subsidia collocari neque quid in quaque parte opus esset provideri neque ab uno omnia imperia administrari poterant. Itaque in tanta rerum iniquitate fortunae quoque eventus varii sequebantur.

23 Legionis nonae et decimae milites, ut in sinistra parte acie constiterant, pilis emissis cursu ac lassitudine exanimatos vulneribusque confectos Atrebates (nam his ea pars obvenerat) celeriter ex loco superiore in flumen compulerunt et transire conantes insecuti gladiis magnam partem eorum impeditam interfecerunt. Ipsi transire flumen non dubitaverunt et in locum iniquum progressi rursus resistentes hostes redintegrato proelio in fugam coniecerunt. Item alia in parte diversae duae legiones, undecima et octava, profligatis Viromanduis, quibuscum erant congressi, ex loco superiore in ipsis fluminis ripis proeliabantur. At totis fere a fronte et ab sinistra parte nudatis castris, cum in dextro cornu legio duodecima et non magno ab ea intervallo septima constitisset, omnes Nervii confertissimo agmine duce Boduognato, qui summam imperi tenebat, ad eum

THE BATTLE OF THE SAMBRE

(after Colonel Stoffel)



Heights are shown in Metres.

Edward Stanford, Ltd., London

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of the moment required than according to regular tactical formation. The legions were separated, and each was resisting the enemy in a different quarter; while the view to the front was interrupted, as above shown, by a barrier of very thick fences. Supports, therefore, could not be posted with certainty, nor could it be foreseen what would be needed anywhere, nor could all the commands be controlled by one man. Thus, with affairs in so grievous a difficulty, the issues of the day came likewise in varying sequence.

The troops of the Ninth and the Tenth Legion, who had formed up on the left flank, discharged their pikes, and, as they possessed the higher ground, speedily drove the Atrebates (the section which happened to face them) into the river, breathless as they were with running and weakened with wounds; and, pursuing them with the sword as they endeavoured to cross, they slew a great part of them while in difficulties. They did not hesitate to cross the river themselves, and, advancing with the ground against them, when the enemy turned to resist, renewed the fight and put them to rout. Likewise in another quarter two detached legions, the Eleventh and the Eighth, having broken the Viromandui with whom they had engaged, left the higher ground, and continued the fight on the very banks of the river. But thereby—though on the right wing the Twelfth were stationed, and at no great distance from them the Seventh—almost all the front and the left face of the camp were laid bare; and to this point¹ all the Nervii, led by Boduognatus, their commander-in-

¹ *i.e.* the exposed angle of the camp. Part of the Nervii attacked this, part tried to push round the right flank of the Twelfth and the Seventh. The two legions were thus in danger of being surrounded and cut off.

CAESAR

locum contenderunt; quorum pars aperto latere legiones circumvenire, pars summum castrorum locum petere coepit.

24 Eodem tempore equites nostri levisque armaturae pedites, qui cum eis una fuerant, quos primo hostium impetu pulsos dixeram, cum se in castra reciperent, adversis hostibus occurrebant ac rursus aliam in partem fugam petebant, et calones, qui ab decumana porta ac summo iugo collis nostros victores flumen transisse conspexerant, praedandi causa egressi, cum respexissent et hostes in nostris castris versari viderent, praecipites fugae sese mandabant. Simul eorum qui cum impedimentis veniebant clamor fremitusque oriebatur, aliique aliam in partem perterriti ferebantur. Quibus omnibus rebus permoti equites Treveri, quorum inter Gallos virtutis opinio est singularis, qui auxilii causa ab civitate ad Caesarem missi venerant, cum multitudine hostium castra compleri, legiones premi et paene circumventas teneri, calones, equites, funditores, Numidas diversos dissipatosque in omnes partes fugere vidissent, desperatis nostris rebus domum contenderunt; Romanos pulsos superatosque, castris impedimentisque eorum hostes potitos civitati renuntiaverunt.

25 Caesar ab decimae legionis cohortatione ad dextrum cornu profectus, ubi suos urgeri signisque in unum locum collatis duodecimae legionis confertos milites sibi ipsos ad pugnam esse impedimento vidit, quartae cohortis omnibus centurionibus occisis sig-

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chief, pressed forward in a dense column, part of which began to envelop the legions on their exposed flank, part to attack the highest ground, where was the camp.

At the same moment our cavalry and the light-armed infantry who had accompanied them, having been beaten back, as I related, by the first onslaught of the enemy, were retiring on to the camp, when they met the enemy face to face and again tried to flee in another direction. The sutlers too, who from the rear gate on the crest of the hill had remarked the passage of the river by our victorious troops, and had gone out to plunder, when they looked back and beheld the enemy moving about in our camp, betook themselves headlong to flight. At the same time there arose a confusion of shouting among the detachments coming up with the baggage-train, and they began to rush terror-stricken in all directions. All these events alarmed certain horsemen of the Treveri, whose reputation for valour among the Gauls is unique. Their state had sent them to Caesar as auxiliaries; but when they saw our camp filled with the host of the enemy, our legions hard pressed and almost surrounded in their grip, the sutlers, horsemen, slingers, Numidians, sundered, scattered, and fleeing in all directions, in despair of our fortunes they made haste for home, and reported to their state that the Romans were repulsed and overcome, and that the enemy had taken possession of their camp and baggage-train.

After haranguing the Tenth Legion Caesar started for the right wing. There he beheld his troops hard driven, and the men of the Twelfth Legion, with their standards collected in one place, so closely packed that they hampered each other for fighting. All the centurions of the fourth cohort had been slain, and the

niferoque interfecto, signo amisso, reliquarum cohortium omnibus fere centurionibus aut vulneratis aut occisis, in his primipilo P. Sextio Baculo, fortissimo viro, multis gravibusque vulneribus confecto, ut iam se sustinere non posset, reliquos esse tardiores et nonnullos ab novissimis deserto proelio excedere ac tela vitare, hostes neque a fronte ex inferiore loco subeuntes intermittere et ab utroque latere instare et rem esse in angusto vidit neque ullum esse subsidium, quod summitti posset, scuto ab novissimis uni militi detracto, quod ipse eo sine scuto venerat, in primam aciem processit centurionibusque nominatim appellatis reliquos cohortatus milites signa inferre et manipulos laxare iussit, quo facilius gladiis uti possent. Cuius adventu spe illata militibus ac redintegrato animo, cum pro se quisque in conspectu imperatoris etiam in extremis suis rebus operam navare cuperet, paulum hostium impetus tardatus est.

- 26 Caesar, cum septimam legionem, quae iuxta constiterat, item urgeri ab hoste vidisset, tribunos militum monuit ut paulatim sese legiones coniungerent et conversa signa in hostes inferrent. Quo facto cum alius alii subsidium ferret, neque timerent, ne aversi ab hoste circumvenirentur, audacius resistere ac fortius pugnare coeperunt. Interim milites legionum

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standard-bearer likewise, and the standard was lost; almost all the centurions of the other cohorts were either wounded or killed, among them the chief centurion, Publius Sextius Baculus, bravest of the brave, who was overcome by many grievous wounds, so that he could no longer hold himself upright. The rest of the men were tiring, and some of the rearmost ranks, abandoning the fight, were retiring to avoid the missiles; the enemy were not ceasing to move upwards in front from the lower ground, and were pressing hard on either flank. The condition of affairs, as he saw, was critical indeed, and there was no support that could be sent up. Taking therefore a shield from a soldier of the rearmost ranks, as he himself was come thither without a shield, he went forward into the first line, and, calling on the centurions by name, and cheering on the rank and file, he bade them advance and extend the companies, that they might ply swords more easily. His coming brought hope to the troops and renewed their spirit; each man of his own accord, in sight of the commander-in-chief, desperate as his own case might be, was fain to do his utmost. So the onslaught of the enemy was checked a little.

Perceiving that the Seventh Legion, which had formed up near at hand, was also harassed by the enemy, Caesar instructed the tribunes to close the legions gradually together, and then, wheeling,¹ to advance against the enemy. This was done; and as one soldier supported another, and they did not fear that their rear would be surrounded by the enemy, they began to resist more boldly and to fight more bravely. Meanwhile the soldiers of the two legions which had acted as baggage-guard at the rear of the

¹ See Appendix A.

duarum, quae in novissimo agmine praesidio impedimentis fuerant, proelio nuntiato cursu incitato in summo colle ab hostibus conspiciebantur, et Titus Labienus castris hostium potitus et ex loco superiore, quae res in nostris castris gererentur, conspiciatus decimam legionem subsidio nostris misit. Qui cum ex equitum et calonum fuga quo in loco res esset, quantoque in periculo et castra et legiones et imperator versaretur, cognovissent, nihil ad celeritatem sibi reliqui fecerunt.

27 Horum adventu tanta rerum commutatio est facta, ut nostri etiam qui vulneribus confecti procubuissent, scutis innixi proelium redintegrarent; tum calones perterritos hostes conspicati etiam inermes armatis occurrerunt; equites vero, ut turpitudinem fugae virtute delerent, omnibus in locis pugnant quo se legionariis militibus praeferrent. At hostes etiam in extrema spe salutis tantam virtutem praestiterunt, ut, cum primi eorum cecidissent, proximi iacentibus insisterent atque ex eorum corporibus pugnarent; his deiectis et coacervatis cadaveribus, qui superessent, ut ex tumulo, tela in nostros conicerent et pila intercepta remitterent: ut non nequiquam tantae virtutis homines iudicari deberet ausos esse transire latissimum flumen, ascendere altissimas ripas, subire iniquissimum locum; quae facilia ex difficillimis animi magnitudo redegerat.

28 Hoc proelio facto et prope ad interneccionem gente ac nomine Nerviorum redacto maiores natu, quos una

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column heard news of the action. Pressing on with all speed, they became visible to the enemy on the crest of the hill; and Titus Labienus, having taken possession of the enemy's camp, and observed from the higher ground what was going forward in our own camp, sent the Tenth Legion to support our troops. When these learnt from the flight of cavalry and sutlers the state of affairs, and the grave danger in which the camp, the legions, and the commander-in-chief were placed, they spared not a tittle of their speed.

Their arrival wrought a great change in the situation. Even such of our troops as had fallen under stress of wounds propped themselves against their shields and renewed the fight; then the sutlers, seeing the panic of the enemy, met their armed assault even without arms; finally, the cavalry, to obliterate by valour the disgrace of their flight, fought at every point in the effort to surpass the legionaries. The enemy, however, even when their hope of safety was at an end, displayed a prodigious courage. When their front ranks had fallen, the next stood on the prostrate forms and fought from them; when these were cast down, and the corpses were piled up in heaps, the survivors, standing as it were upon a mound, hurled darts on our troops, or caught and returned our pikes. Not without reason, therefore, was it to be concluded that these were men of a great courage, who had dared to cross a very broad river, to climb very high banks, and to press up over most unfavourable ground. These were tasks of the utmost difficulty, but greatness of courage had made them easy.

This engagement brought the name and nation of the Nervii almost to utter destruction. Upon report

CAESAR

cum pueris mulieribusque in aestuaria ac paludes coniectos dixeramus, hac pugna nuntiata, cum victoribus nihil impeditum, victis nihil tutum arbitrarentur, omnium qui supererant consensu legatos ad Caesarem miserunt seque ei dediderunt, et in commemoranda civitatis calamitate ex sescentis ad tres senatores, ex hominum milibus LX vix ad quingentos, qui arma ferre possent, sese redactos esse dixerunt. Quos Caesar, ut in miseros ac supplices usus misericordia videretur, diligentissime conservavit suisque finibus atque oppidis uti iussit et finitimis imperavit ut ab iniuria et maleficio se suosque prohiberent.

29 Aduatuci, de quibus supra scripsimus, cum omnibus copiis auxilio Nervii venirent, hac pugna nuntiata ex itinere domum reverterunt; cunctis oppidis castellisque desertis sua omnia in unum oppidum egregie natura munitum contulerunt. Quod cum ex omnibus in circuitu partibus altissimas rupes despectusque haberet, una ex parte leniter acclivis aditus in latitudinem non amplius ducentorum pedum relinquebatur; quem locum duplici altissimo muro munierant: tum magni ponderis saxa et praeacutas trabes in muro collocabant. Ipsi erant ex Cimbris Teutonisque prognati, qui, cum iter in provinciam nostram atque Italiam facerent, eis impedimentis quae secum agere ac portare non poterant citra flumen Rhenum depositis custodiam ex suis ac praesidium sex milia hominum una reliquerunt. Hi post eorum

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of the battle, the older men, who, as above mentioned, had been gathered with the women and children in the creeks and marshes, supposed that there was nothing to hinder the victors, nothing to save the vanquished; and so, with the consent of all the survivors, they sent deputies to Caesar and surrendered to him. In relating the disaster which had come upon their state, they declared that from six hundred senators they had been reduced to three, and from sixty thousand to barely five hundred that could bear arms. To show himself merciful towards their pitiful supplication, Caesar was most careful for their preservation; he bade them keep their own territory and towns, and commanded their neighbours to restrain themselves and their dependents from outrage and injury.

The Aduatuci, of whom I have written above, were coming with all their forces to the assistance of the Nervii, but upon report of this battle they left their march and returned home; and, abandoning all their towns and forts, they gathered all their stuff in one stronghold, which was admirably fortified by Nature. On every side of its circumference it looked down over the steepest rocks, and on one side only was left a gently sloping approach, not more than two hundred feet in breadth. This place they had fortified with a double wall of great height, and at this time they were setting stones of great weight and sharpened beams upon the wall. The tribe was descended from the Cimbri and Teutoni, who, upon their march into our Province and Italy, set down such of their stock and stuff as they could not drive or carry with them on the near (*i.e.* west) side of the Rhine, and left six thousand men of their company therewith as guard and garrison. This party, after

obitum multos annos a finitimis exagitati, cum alias bellum inferrent, alias illatum defenderent, consensu eorum omnium pace facta hunc sibi domicilio locum delegerunt.

30 Ac primo adventu exercitus nostri crebras ex oppido excursiones faciebant parvulisque proeliis cum nostris contendebant; postea vallo pedum [XII] in circuitu quindecim milium crebrisque castellis circummuniti oppido sese continebant. Vbi vineis actis aggere exstructo turrim procul constitui viderunt, primum irridere ex muro atque increpitare vocibus, quod tanta machinatio ab tanto spatio instrueretur: quibusnam manibus aut quibus viribus praesertim homines tantulae staturae (nam plerumque hominibus Gallis prae magnitudine corporum suorum brevitatis nostra contemptui est) tanti oneris turrim in muro <posse> sese collocare confiderent?

31 Vbi vero moveri et appropinquare moenibus viderunt, nova atque inusitata specie commoti legatos ad Caesarem de pace miserunt, qui ad hunc modum locuti: Non existimare Romanos sine ope divina bellum gerere, qui tantae altitudinis machinationes tanta celeritate promovere possent; se suaque omnia eorum potestati permittere dixerunt. Vnum petere ac deprecari: si forte pro sua clementia ac mansuetudine, quam ipsi ab aliis audirent, statuisset Aduaticos esse conservandos, ne se armis despoliaret.

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the destruction of the others, were harassed for many years by their neighbours, and fought sometimes on the offensive, sometimes on the defensive; then by general agreement among them peace was made, and they chose this place to be their habitation.

And now, upon the first arrival of our army, they made frequent sallies from the stronghold, and engaged in petty encounters with our troops. Afterwards, when they had round them a fortified rampart of fifteen thousand feet in circumference, with forts at close interval, they kept within the town. When our mantlets had been pushed up and a ramp constructed, and they saw a tower set up in the distance, they first of all laughed at us from the wall, and loudly railed upon us for erecting so great an engine at so great a distance. By what handiwork, said they, by what strength could men, especially of so puny a stature (for, as a rule, our stature, short by comparison with their own huge physique, is despised of the Gauls), hope to set so heavy a tower on the wall?

But when they saw that it was moving and approaching the walls, they were alarmed at the novel and extraordinary sight, and sent deputies to Caesar to treat of peace, who spake after this fashion: They supposed that the Romans did not wage war without divine aid, inasmuch as they could move forward at so great a speed engines of so great a height; they therefore submitted themselves and all they had to the power of Rome. In one matter only did they seek indulgence: that if haply of his mercy and kindness, whereof they heard from others, Caesar decided to save the Aduatuci alive, he would not despoil them of their arms. Almost all their

Sibi omnes fere finitimos esse inimicos ac suae virtuti invidere; a quibus se defendere traditis armis non possent. Sibi praestare, si in eum casum deducerentur, quamvis fortunam a populo Romano pati, quam ab his per cruciatum interfici, inter quos dominari consuessent.

32 Ad haec Caesar respondit: Se magis consuetudine sua quam merito eorum civitatem conservaturum, si priusquam murum aries attigisset se dedidissent: sed deditiois nullam esse condicionem nisi armis traditis. Se id quod in Nervii fecisset facturum finitimisque imperatorum ne quam dediticiis populi Romani iniuriam inferrent. Re nuntiata ad suos, quae imperarentur facere dixerunt. Armorum magna multitudine de muro in fossam quae erat ante oppidum iacta, sic ut prope summam muri aggerisque altitudinem acervi armorum adaequarent, et tamen circiter parte tertia, ut postea perspectum est, celata atque in oppido retenta, portis patefactis eo die pace sunt usi.

33 Sub vesperum Caesar portas claudi militesque ex oppido exire iussit, ne quam noctu oppidani ab militibus iniuriam acciperent. Illi ante inito, ut intellectum est, consilio, quod deditioe facta nostros praesidia deducturos aut denique indiligentius servaturos crediderant, partim cum eis quae retinuerant et celaverant armis, partim scutis ex cortice factis aut viminibus intextis, quae subito, ut temporis exiguitas postulabat, pellibus induxerant, tertia

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neighbours were at enmity with them and envied their courage; and from such, if they delivered up their arms, they could not defend themselves. If they were to be brought into such case, it were better for them to suffer any fortune at the hand of Rome than to be tortured and slain by men among whom they were accustomed to hold mastery.

To this Caesar replied that he would save their state alive rather because it was his custom than for any desert on their part, if they surrendered before the battering-ram touched the wall; but there could be no terms of surrender save upon delivery of arms. He would do, he said, what he had done in the case of the Nervii, and command the neighbours to do no outrage to the surrendered subjects of Rome. They reported this to their tribesmen, and agreed to perform his commands. A great quantity of arms was cast from the wall into the trench which was before the town, so that the heaps of weapons were well-nigh level with the top of the wall and the height of the ramp; and for all this about a third part, as was afterwards seen, was concealed and kept back in the town. So they threw open their gates, and on that day enjoyed the benefit of peace.

At eventide Caesar ordered the gates to be closed and the troops to leave the town, in order that the townsfolk might suffer no outrage at their hands in the night. In the belief that after the surrender our troops would withdraw their posts or would at least look after them less carefully, the townsfolk, it appeared, had previously formed a plan. Part of them had the weapons which they had kept back and concealed, part had shields made of bark or plaited osiers and hastily (as the shortness of time necessitated) spread over with hides. In the third

vigilia, qua minime arduus ad nostras munitiones ascensus videbatur, omnibus copiis repentino ex oppido eruptionem fecerunt. Celeriter, ut ante Caesar imperarat, ignibus significatione facta ex proximis castellis eo concursum est, pugnatumque ab hostibus ita acriter est, ut a viris fortibus in extrema spe salutis iniquo loco contra eos qui ex vallo turribusque tela iacerent pugnari debuit, cum in una virtute omnis spes salutis consisteret. Occisis ad hominum milibus quattuor reliqui in oppidum reiecti sunt. Postridie eius diei refractis portis, cum iam defenderet nemo, atque intromissis militibus nostris sectionem eius oppidi universam Caesar vendidit. Ab eis qui emerant capitem numerus ad eum relatus est milium quinquaginta trium.

34 Eodem tempore a Publio Crasso, quem cum legione una miserat ad Venetos, Venellos, Osismos, Curiosolitas, Esubios, Aulercos, Redones, quae sunt maritimae civitates Oceanumque attingunt, certior factus est omnes eas civitates in dicionem potestatemque populi Romani esse redactas.

35 His rebus gestis omni Gallia pacata tanta huius belli ad barbaros opinio perlata est, uti ab eis nationibus quae trans Rhenum incolerent mitterentur legati ad Caesarem, qui se obsides daturas, imperata facturas pollicerentur. Quas legationes Caesar, quod in Italiam Illyricumque properabat, inita proxima

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watch they made a sudden sally from the town in full force, on the side where the ascent to our field-works seemed least steep. Speedily, as Caesar had ordered beforehand, the signal was given by flares, and the detachments from the nearest forts doubled in to the point. The enemy fought fiercely, as was to be expected of brave men in desperate case, where all hope of safety lay in valour alone, contending on unfavourable ground against troops who could hurl missiles at them from rampart and towers. Some four thousand men were slain, and the rest were flung back into the town. On the morrow the gates were broken open, for there was no more defence, and our troops were sent in; then Caesar sold as one lot the booty of the town. The purchasers furnished a return to him of three-and-fifty thousand persons.

At the same season Publius Crassus, whom he had despatched with one legion against the Veneti, Venelli, Osismi, Curiosolitae, Esubii, Aulerci, and Redones, the maritime states which border upon the Ocean, reported that all those states had been brought into subjection to the power of Rome.

These achievements brought peace throughout Gaul, and so mighty a report of this campaign was carried to the natives that deputies were sent to Caesar from the tribes dwelling across the Rhine, to promise that they would give hostages and do his commands. As Caesar was for hastening to Italy and Illyricum, he bade these deputations return to him

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aestate ad se reverti iussit. Ipse in Carnutes, Andes, Turones, quaeque civitates propinquae eis locis erant ubi bellum gesserat, legionibus in hibernacula deductis in Italiam profectus est. Ob easque res ex litteris Caesaris dies quindecim supplicatio decreta est, quod ante id tempus accidit nulli.

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at the beginning of the next summer. As soon as the legions had been withdrawn to winter quarters among the Carnutes, the Andes, the Turones, and such states as were near the scenes of the recent campaign, he himself set out for Italy. And for those achievements, upon receipt of Caesar's despatches, a fifteen days' thanksgiving was decreed, an honour that had previously fallen to no man.

