

BOOK IV

LIBER IV

1 EA quae secuta est hieme, qui fuit annus Gnaeo Pompeio Marco Crasso consulibus, Vsipetes Germani et item Tencteri magna cum multitudine hominum flumen Rhenum transierunt, non longe a mari quo Rhenus influit. Causa transeundi fuit quod ab Suebis complures annos exagitati bello premebantur et agricultura prohibebantur. Sueborum gens est longe maxima et bellicosissima Germanorum omnium. Hi centum pagos habere dicuntur, ex quibus quotannis singula milia armatorum bellandi causa ex finibus educunt. Reliqui, qui domi manserunt, se atque illos alunt. Hi rursus in vicem anno post in armis sunt, illi domi remanent. Sic neque agricultura nec ratio atque usus belli intermittitur. Sed privati ac separati agri apud eos nihil est, neque longius anno remanere uno in loco incolendi causa licet. Neque multum frumento, sed maximam partem lacte atque pecore vivunt multumque sunt in venationibus; quae res et cibi genere et cotidiana exercitatione et libertate vitae, quod a pueris nullo officio aut disciplina adsuefacti nihil omnino contra voluntatem faciant, et vires alit et immani corporum

BOOK IV

IN the following winter—the year in which Gnaeus Pompeius and Marcus Crassus were consuls¹—the Usipetes from Germany, and likewise the Tencteri, crossed the Rhine with a large host of men, not far from the sea into which it flows. The reason for their crossing was that for several years they had been much harassed by the Suebi, who pressed on them by force of arms and prevented them from husbandry. The Suebi are by far the largest and the most warlike nation among the Germans. It is said that they have a hundred cantons, from each of which they draw one thousand armed men yearly for the purpose of war outside their borders. The remainder, who have stayed at home, support themselves and the absent warriors; and again, in turn, are under arms the following year, while the others remain at home. By this means neither husbandry nor the theory and practice of war is interrupted. They have no private or separate holding of land, nor are they allowed to abide longer than a year in one place for their habitation. They make not much use of corn for food, but chiefly of milk and of cattle, and are much engaged in hunting; and this, owing to the nature of the food, the regular exercise, and the freedom of life—for from boyhood up they are not schooled in a sense of duty or discipline, and do nothing what-

¹ 55 B.C.

magnitudine homines efficit. Atque in eam se consuetudinem adduxerunt ut locis frigidissimis neque vestitus praeter pelles haberent quidquam, quarum propter exiguitatem magna est corporis pars aperta, et lavantur in fluminibus.

2 Mercatoribus est aditus magis eo, ut quae bello ceperint quibus vendant habeant, quam quo ullam rem ad se importari desiderent. Quin etiam iumentis, quibus maxime Galli delectantur quaeque impenso parant pretio, Germani importatis non utuntur, sed quae sunt apud eos nata, prava atque deformia, haec cotidiana exercitatione summi ut sint laboris efficiunt. Equestribus proeliis saepe ex equis desiliunt ac pedibus proeliantur, equosque eodem remanere vestigio adsuefecerunt, ad quos se celeriter, cum usus est, recipiunt; neque eorum moribus turpius quidquam aut inertius habetur, quam ephippiis uti. Itaque ad quemvis numerum ephippiatorum equitum quamvis pauci adire audent. Vinum ad se omnino importari non sinunt, quod ea re ad laborem ferendum remollescere homines atque effeminari arbitrantur.

3 Publice maximam putant esse laudem, quam latissime a suis finibus vacare agros: hac re significari magnum numerum civitatum suam vim sustinere non posse. Itaque una ex parte a Suebis circiter milia passuum sescenta agri vacare dicuntur. Ad alteram partem succedunt Vbii, quorum fuit civitas ampla atque florens, ut est captus Germanorum, et

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

ever against their wish—nurses their strength and makes men of immense bodily stature. Moreover, they have regularly trained themselves to wear nothing, even in the coldest localities, except skins, the scantiness of which leaves a great part of the body bare, and they bathe in the rivers.

They give access to traders rather to secure purchasers for what they have captured in war than to satisfy any craving for imports. And, in fact, the Germans do not import for their use draught-horses, in which the Gauls take the keenest delight, procuring them at great expense; but they take their home-bred animals, inferior and ill-favoured, and by regular exercising they render them capable of the utmost exertion. In cavalry combats they often leap from their horses and fight on foot, having trained their horses to remain in the same spot, and retiring rapidly upon them at need; and their tradition regards nothing as more disgraceful or more indolent than the use of saddles. And so, however few in number, they dare approach any party, however large, of saddle-horsemen. They suffer no importation of wine whatever, believing that men are thereby rendered soft and womanish for the endurance of hardship.

As a nation, they count it the highest praise to have the land on their borders untenanted over as wide a tract as may be, for this signifies, they think, that a great number of states cannot withstand their force. Thus it is said that on one side for about six hundred miles from the territory of the Suebi the land is untenanted. On the other side the Ubii come nearest, a state which was once extensive and prosperous, according to German standards. Its inhabitants are somewhat more civilised than the other folk

paulo sunt eiusdem generis ceteris humaniores, propterea quod Rhenum attingunt multumque ad eos mercatores ventitant, et ipsi propter propinquitatem quod Gallicis sunt moribus adsuefacti. Hos cum Suebi multis saepe bellis experti propter amplitudinem gravitatemque civitatis finibus expellere non potuissent, tamen vectigales sibi fecerunt ac multo humiliores infirmioresque redegerunt.

4 In eadem causa fuerunt Vsipetes et Tencteri, quos supra diximus, qui complures annos Sueborum vim sustinuerunt; ad extremum tamen agris expulsi et multis locis Germaniae triennium vagati ad Rhenum pervenerunt; quas regiones Menapii incolebant et ad utramque ripam fluminis agros, aedificia vicosque habebant, sed tantae multitudinis aditu perterriti ex eis aedificiis quae trans flumen habuerant demigraverunt et cis Rhenum dispositis praesidiis Germanos transire prohibebant. Illi omnia experti, cum neque vi contendere propter inopiam navium neque clam transire propter custodias Menapiorum possent, reverti se in suas sedes regionesque simulaverunt et tridui viam progressi rursus reverterunt atque omni hoc itinere una nocte equitatu confecto inscios inopinantesque Menapios oppresserunt, qui de Germanorum discessu per exploratores certiores facti sine metu trans Rhenum in suos vicos remigraverant. His interfectis navibusque eorum occupatis, prius-

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

of the same race, because their borders touch the Rhine and traders visit them frequently, and, further, because the Ubii themselves by close neighbourhood have grown accustomed to Gallic fashions. Upon this people the Suebi had made frequent attempts in many wars, but had proved unable to drive them from their territory because the state was populous and powerful: however, they made the Ubii tributary to themselves, and greatly diminished their strength and importance.

The Usipetes and the Tencteri, mentioned above, were in the same case. For several years they withstood the force of the Suebi, but at last they were driven out of their lands, and after wandering for three years in many districts of Germany they reached the Rhine. The localities thereabout were inhabited by the Menapii, who possessed lands, buildings, and villages on both banks of the river; but, being alarmed by the approach of so great a host, they removed from the buildings which they had possessed beyond the river, and, setting garrisons at intervals on the near side of the Rhine, sought to prevent the Germans from crossing. The Germans tried every expedient, but when they found that they could neither force their way because of their lack of vessels nor cross privily because of the Menapian piquets, they pretended to retire to their own homes and districts. They proceeded for a three days' journey, and then returned; and their cavalry, having completed the whole of this distance in a single night, caught the Menapii uninformed and unawares, for, having learnt through their scouts of the departure of the Germans, they had moved back without fear over the Rhine into their own villages. So they were put to the sword and their vessels

quam ea pars Menapiorum quae citra Rhenum erat certior fieret, flumen transierunt atque omnibus eorum aedificiis occupatis reliquam partem hiemis se eorum copiis aluerunt.

5 His de rebus Caesar certior factus et infirmitatem Gallorum veritus, quod sunt in consiliis capiendis mobiles et novis plerumque rebus student, nihil his committendum existimavit. Est enim hoc Gallicae consuetudinis, uti et viatores etiam invitos consistere cogant et quod quisque eorum de quaque re audierit aut cognoverit quaerant, et mercatores in oppidis vulgus circumstant quibusque ex regionibus veniant quasque ibi res cognoverint pronuntiare cogant. His rebus atque auditionibus permoti de summis saepe rebus consilia ineunt, quorum eos in vestigio poenitere necesse est, cum incertis rumoribus serviant, et plerique ad voluntatem eorum ficta respondeant.

6 Qua consuetudine cognita Caesar, ne graviori bello occurreret, maturius quam consuevit ad exercitum proficiscitur. Eo cum venisset, ea quae fore suspicatus erat facta cognovit: missas legationes ab nonnullis civitatibus ad Germanos invitatosque eos uti ab Rheno discederent, omniaque quae postulassent ab se fore parata. Qua spe adducti Germani latius vagabantur et in fines Eburonum et Condrusorum, qui sunt Treverorum clientes, pervenerant. Principibus Galliae evocatis Caesar ea, quae cognoverat, dissimulanda sibi existimavit, eorumque animis permulsis et confirmatis

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

seized; then the Germans crossed the river before the section of the Menapii on the near side of the Rhine could learn of it, seized all their buildings, and for the remainder of the winter sustained themselves on the supplies of the Menapii.

Caesar was informed of these events; and fearing the fickleness of the Gauls, because they are capricious in forming designs and intent for the most part on change, he considered that no trust should be reposed in them. It is indeed a regular habit of the Gauls to compel travellers to halt, even against their will, and to ascertain what each of them may have heard or learnt upon every subject; and in the towns the common folk surround traders, compelling them to declare from what districts they come and what they have learnt there. Such stories and hearsay often induce them to form plans upon vital questions of which they must forthwith repent; for they are the slaves of uncertain rumours, and most men reply to them in fictions made to their taste.

Caesar was aware of this their habit, and, for fear that otherwise he might have to face a more serious campaign, set out for the army earlier than was his wont. When he reached headquarters he learnt that his suspicions had been realised; deputations had been sent by some states to the Germans, inviting them to leave the Rhine, and promising to furnish all things demanded of them. The hope thus inspired encouraged the Germans to range more widely, and they had already reached the borders of the Eburones and the Condrusi, dependents of the Treveri. Thereupon Caesar summoned the chiefs of Gaul from their homes; but, thinking it best to conceal the information in his possession, he comforted and encouraged them, and, having

equitatuque imperato bellum cum Germanis gerere constituit.

- 7 Re frumentaria comparata equitibusque delectis iter in ea loca facere coepit, quibus in locis esse Germanos audiebat. A quibus cum paucorum dierum iter abesset, legati ab eis venerunt, quorum haec fuit oratio: Germanos neque priores populo Romano bellum inferre neque tamen recusare, si lacesantur, quin armis contendant, quod Germanorum consuetudo haec sit a maioribus tradita, quicumque bellum inferant, resistere neque deprecari. Haec tamen dicere, venisse invitos, eictos domo; si suam gratiam Romani velint, posse eis utiles esse amicos; vel sibi agros attribuant vel patiantur eos tenere, quos armis possederint: sese unis Suebis concedere, quibus ne di quidem immortales pares esse possint; reliquum quidem in terris esse neminem quem non superare possint.
- 8 Ad haec quae visum est Caesar respondit; sed exitus fuit orationis: Sibi nullam cum his amicitiam esse posse, si in Gallia remanerent; neque verum esse, qui suos fines tueri non potuerint, alienos occupare; neque ullos in Gallia vacare agros, qui dari tantae praesertim multitudini sine iniuria possint; sed licere, si velint, in Vbiorum finibus considerare, quorum sint legati apud se et de Sueborum iniuriis querantur et a se auxilium petant: hoc se Vbiis imperaturum.

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

made requisition of cavalry, determined to make war on the Germans.

Having secured his corn-supply and selected his cavalry, he began to march into the localities in which the Germans were reported to be. When he was a few days' march away deputies arrived from them, whose address was to the following effect: The Germans did not take the first step in making war on the Roman people, nor yet, if provoked, did they refuse the conflict of arms, for it was the ancestral custom of the Germans to resist anyone who made war upon them, and not to beg off. They declared, however, that they had come against their will, being driven out of their homes: if the Romans would have their goodwill, they might find their friendship useful. Let the Romans either grant them lands, or suffer them to hold the lands their arms had acquired. They yielded to the Suebi alone, to whom even the immortal gods could not be equal; on earth at any rate there was no one else whom they could not conquer.

To this Caesar replied as seemed good; but the conclusion of his speech was as follows: He could have no friendship with them, if they remained in Gaul. On the one hand, it was not just that men who had not been able to defend their own territories should seize those of others; on the other hand, there was no land in Gaul which could be granted without injustice, especially to so numerous a host. However, they had permission, if they pleased, to settle in the territories of the Ubii, whose deputies were in his camp, complaining of the outrages of the Suebi and seeking his assistance: he would give orders to the Ubii to this effect.

- 9 Legati haec se ad suos relatores dixerunt et re deliberata post diem tertium ad Caesarem reversuros : interea ne propius se castra moveret, petierunt. Ne id quidem Caesar ab se impetrari posse dixit. Cognoverat enim magnam partem equitatus ab eis aliquot diebus ante praedandi frumentandique causa ad Ambivaritos trans Mosam missam : hos exspectari equites atque eius rei causa moram interponi arbitrabatur.
- 10 Mosa profluit ex monte Vosego, qui est in finibus Lingonum, et parte quadam ex Rheno recepta, quae appellatur Vacalus, insulam efficit Batavorum, neque longius ab Oceano milibus passuum LXXX in Rhenum influit. Rhenus autem oritur ex Lepontiis, qui Alpes incolunt, et longo spatio per fines Nantuatum, Helvetiorum, Sequanorum, Mediomatricum, Tribocorum, Treverorum citatus fertur et, ubi Oceano appropinquavit, in plures defluit partes multis ingentibusque insulis effectis, quarum pars magna a feris barbarisque nationibus incolitur, ex quibus sunt, qui piscibus atque ovis avium vivere existimantur, multisque capitibus in Oceanum influit.
- 11 Caesar cum ab hoste non amplius passuum XII milibus abesset, ut erat constitutum, ad eum legati revertuntur ; qui in itinere congressi magnopere ne longius progrediretur orabant. Cum id non impetrassent, petebant uti ad eos equites, qui agmen antecessissent, praemitteret eosque pugna prohiberet, sibi que ut potestatem faceret in Vbios legatos mittendi ; quorum si principes ac senatus sibi iure-

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

The envoys said that they would report this to their people and, after deliberation upon the matter, return to Caesar in three days: they asked him not to move his camp nearer in the meanwhile. Caesar replied that he could not even grant that request. He knew, in fact, that they had sent a large detachment of cavalry some days before to the country of the Ambivariti across the Meuse, to get booty and corn: he supposed that they were waiting for this cavalry, and for that reason sought to interpose delay.

The Meuse flows from the range of the Vosges, in the territory of the Lingones, and, receiving from the Rhine a certain tributary called the Waal, forms the island of the Batavi; then, no more than eighty miles from the Ocean, it flows into the Rhine. The Rhine rises in the land of the Lepontii, who inhabit the Alps; in a long, swift course it runs through the territories of the Nantuates, Helvetii, Sequani, Mediomatrices, Triboci, and Treveri, and on its approach to the Ocean divides into several streams, forming many large islands (a great number of which are inhabited by fierce barbaric tribes, believed in some instances to live on fish and birds' eggs); then by many mouths it flows into the Ocean.

When Caesar was no more than twelve miles away from the enemy, the deputies returned to him as agreed: they met him on the march, and besought him earnestly not to advance further. When their request was not granted, they asked him to send forward to the cavalry in advance of his column and to prevent them from engaging, and to grant themselves an opportunity of sending deputies into the land of the Ubii. They put forward the hope that, if the chiefs and the senate of the Ubii pledged their

iurando fidem fecisset, ea condicione quae a Caesare ferretur se usuros ostendebant: ad has res conficiendas sibi tridui spatium daret. Haec omnia Caesar eodem illo pertinere arbitratur, ut tridui mora interposita equites eorum qui abessent revertentur; tamen sese non longius milibus passuum quattuor a quationis causa processurum eo die dixit; huc postero die quam frequentissimi convenirent, ut de eorum postulatis cognosceret. Interim ad praefectos, qui cum omni equitatu antecesserant, mittit qui nuntiarent ne hostes proelio lacesserent et, si ipsi lacesserentur, sustinerent quoad ipse cum exercitu propius accessisset.

12 At hostes, ubi primum nostros equites conspexerunt, quorum erat v milium numerus, cum ipsi non amplius octingentos equites haberent, quod ei qui frumentandi causa ierant trans Mosam nondum redierant, nihil timentibus nostris, quod legati eorum paulo ante a Caesare discesserant atque is dies indutiis erat ab his petitus, impetu facto celeriter nostros perturbaverunt; rursus resistentibus consuetudine sua ad pedes desiluerunt, suffossis equis compluribusque nostris deiectis reliquos in fugam coniecerunt atque ita perterritos egerunt, ut non prius fuga desisterent quam in conspectum agminis nostri venissent. In eo proelio ex equitibus nostris interficiuntur quattuor et septuaginta, in his vir fortissimus Piso Aquitanus, amplissimo genere natus, cuius avus in civitate sua regnum obtinuerat, amicus

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

faith on oath, they (the Germans) would accept the terms which Caesar offered; and they asked him to give them an interval of three days to settle these affairs. Caesar supposed that all these pleas had the same object as before, to secure by a three days' interval the return of their absent cavalry; however, he said that on that day he would advance no further than four miles, in order to get water. He instructed them to meet him there next day with as large a number as they could, in order that he might take cognisance of their demands. Meanwhile he sent instructions to the commanders who had gone forward with all the cavalry not to provoke the enemy to an engagement, and, if provoked themselves, to hold their ground until he himself with the army had come up nearer.

The enemy had no more than eight hundred cavalry, for the party which was gone across the Meuse to get corn was not yet returned. Our own men, five thousand strong, had nothing to fear, for the deputies of the Germans had left Caesar but a short while before, having asked for a truce that day. However, directly they saw our cavalry, the enemy charged, and speedily threw our men into confusion. When our men turned to resist, the enemy, according to their custom, dismounted, and, by stabbing our horses and bringing down many of our troopers to the ground, they put the rest to rout, and indeed drove them in such panic that they did not desist from flight until they were come in sight of our column. In that engagement were slain seventy-four of our cavalry, and among them the gallant Piso of Aquitania, the scion of a most distinguished line, whose grandfather had held the sovereignty in his own state, and had been saluted as Friend by the Roman

ab senatu nostro appellatus. Hic cum fratri intercluso ab hostibus auxilium ferret, illum ex periculo eripuit, ipse equo vulnerato deiectus quoad potuit fortissime restitit: cum circumventus multis vulneribus acceptis cecidisset, atque id frater, qui iam proelio excesserat, procul animadvertisset, incitato equo se hostibus obtulit atque interfectus est.

- 13 Hoc facto proelio Caesar neque iam sibi legatos audiendos neque condiciones accipiendas arbitratur ab eis, qui per dolum atque insidias petita pace ultro bellum intulissent: expectare vero, dum hostium copiae auferentur equitatusque reverteretur, summae dementiae esse iudicabat, et cognita Gallorum infirmitate, quantum iam apud eos hostes uno proelio auctoritatis essent consecuti sentiebat; quibus ad consilia capienda nihil spati dandum existimabat. His constitutis rebus et consilio cum legatis et quaestore communicato, ne quem diem pugnae praetermitteret opportunissima res accidit, quod postridie eius diei mane eadem et perfidia et simulatione usi Germani frequentes omnibus principibus maioribusque natu adhibitis ad eum in castra venerunt, simul, ut dicebatur, sui purgandi causa, quod contra atque esset dictum et ipsi petissent, proelium pridie commisissent, simul ut, si quid possent, de induitiis fallendo impetrarent. Quos sibi Caesar oblatos gavisus illos retineri iussit: ipse omnes copias castris

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

Senate. Piso went to the assistance of his brother, who had been cut off by the enemy, and rescued him from danger, but was thrown himself, his horse having been wounded. He resisted most gallantly as long as he could; then he was surrounded, and fell after receiving many wounds. His brother, who had escaped from the fight, saw him fall from a distance; then spurred his horse, flung himself upon the enemy, and was slain.

After this engagement was over, Caesar felt that he ought no longer to receive deputies nor to accept conditions from tribes which had sought for peace by guile and treachery, and then had actually begun war. Further, he judged it the height of madness to wait till the enemy's forces should be increased and their cavalry returned. Knowing as he did the fickleness of the Gauls, he apprehended how much influence the enemy had already acquired over them by a single engagement; and he considered that no time to form plans should be given them. Thus determined, he communicated to the lieutenant-generals and the quartermaster-general his purpose not to lose a day in giving battle. Then, most fortunately, a certain thing occurred. The next morning, as treacherous and as hypocritical as ever, a large company of Germans, which included all the principal and senior men, came to his quarters, with a double object—to clear themselves (so they alleged) for engaging in a battle the day before, contrary to the agreement and to their own request therein, and also by deceit to get what they could in respect of the truce. Caesar rejoiced that they were delivered into his hand, and ordered them to be detained; then in person he led all his troops out of camp, commanding the cavalry, which he judged to be

CAESAR

eduxit equitatumque, quod recenti proelio perterritum esse existimabat, agmen subsequi iussit.

14 Acie triplici instituta et celeriter octo milium itinere confecto prius ad hostium castra pervenit quam quid ageretur Germani sentire possent. Qui omnibus rebus subito perterriti, et celeritate adventus nostri et discessu suorum, neque consili habendi neque arma capiendi spatio dato perturbantur, copiasne adversus hostem ducere, an castra defendere, an fuga salutem petere praestaret. Quorum timor cum fremitu et concursu significaretur, milites nostri pristini diei perfidia incitati in castra irruperunt. Quo loco qui celeriter arma capere potuerunt paulisper nostris restiterunt atque inter carros impedimentaue proelium commiserunt: at reliqua multitudo puerorum mulierumque (nam cum omnibus suis domo excesserant Rhenumque transierant) passim fugere coepit; ad quos consecrandos Caesar equitatum misit.

15 Germani post tergum clamore audito, cum suos interfici viderent, armis abiectis signisque militaribus relictis se ex castris eiecerunt, et cum ad confluentem Mosae et Rheni pervenissent, reliqua fuga desperata magno numero interfecto reliqui se in flumen praecipitaverunt atque ibi timore, lassitudine, vi fluminis oppressi perierunt. Nostri ad unum omnes incolumes perpaucis vulneratis ex tanti belli timore, cum hostium

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

shaken by the recent engagement, to follow in the rear.

Triple line of columns ¹ was formed, and the eight-mile march was so speedily accomplished that Caesar reached the enemy's camp before the Germans could have any inkling of what was toward. They were struck with sudden panic by everything—by the rapidity of our approach, the absence of their own chiefs; and, as no time was given them to think, or to take up arms, they were too much taken aback to decide which was best—to lead their forces against the enemy, to defend the camp, or to seek safety by flight. When their alarm was betrayed by the uproar and bustle, our troops, stung by the treachery of the day before, burst into the camp. In the camp those who were able speedily to take up arms resisted the Romans for a while, and fought among the carts and baggage-wagons; the remainder, a crowd of women and children (for the Germans had left home and crossed the Rhine with all their belongings), began to flee in all directions, and Caesar despatched the cavalry in pursuit.

Hearing the noise in rear, and seeing their own folk slain, the Germans threw away their arms, abandoned their war-standards, and burst out of the camp. When they reached the junction of the Meuse and the Rhine, they gave up hope of escaping further; a large number were already slain, and the rest hurled themselves into the river, there to perish, overcome by terror, by exhaustion, by the force of the stream. The Romans, with not a man lost and but few wounded, freed from the fear of a stupendous war—with an enemy whose numbers had been

¹ The army advanced, not in column of route (*agmen*), but in line of columns, ready to form up into line of battle (*acies*). Cf. VIII. 8.

numerus capitum ccccxxx milium fuisset, se in castra receperunt. Caesar eis quos in castris retinuerat discedendi potestatem fecit. Illi supplicia cruciatuque Gallorum veriti quorum agros vexaverant remanere se apud eum velle dixerunt. His Caesar libertatem concessit.

- 16 Germanico bello confecto multis de causis Caesar statuit sibi Rhenum esse transeundum; quarum illa fuit iustissima, quod, cum videret Germanos tam facile impelli ut in Galliam venirent, suis quoque rebus eos timere voluit, cum intellegerent et posse et audere populi Romani exercitum Rhenum transire. Accessit etiam, quod illa pars equitatus Vsipectum et Tencterorum, quam supra commemoravi praedandi frumentandique causa Mosam transisse neque proelio interfuisse, post fugam suorum se trans Rhenum in fines Sugambrorum receperat seque cum eis coniunxerat. Ad quos cum Caesar nuntios misisset, qui postularent eos qui sibi Galliaeque bellum intulissent sibi dederent, responderunt: Populi Romani imperium Rhenum finire: si se invito Germanos in Galliam transire non aequum existimaret, cur sui quidquam esse imperi aut potestatis trans Rhenum postularet? Vbii autem, qui uni ex Transrhenanis ad Caesarem legatos miserant, amicitiam fecerant, obsides dederant, magnopere orabant ut sibi auxilium ferret, quod graviter ab Suebis premerentur; vel, si id facere occupationibus rei publicae prohiberetur, exercitum modo Rhenum transportaret: id sibi ad auxilium spemque reliqui temporis satis futurum.

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

430,000 souls—returned to camp. Caesar gave to the Germans detained in camp permission to depart; but they, fearing punishments and tortures at the hand of the Gauls whose land they had harassed, said that they would stay in his company, and he gave them liberty so to do.

The German campaign thus finished, Caesar decided for many reasons that he must cross the Rhine. The most cogent reason was that, as he saw the Germans so easily induced to enter Gaul, he wished to make them fearful in turn for their own fortunes, by showing them that a Roman army could and durst cross the Rhine. Moreover, that section of the cavalry of the Usipetes and Tencteri which, as I have mentioned above, had crossed the Meuse to get booty and corn, and had taken no part in the battle, had now, after the rout of their countrymen, withdrawn across the Rhine into the territory of the Sugambri, and joined them. To them Caesar sent envoys to demand the surrender of the men who had made war upon himself and Gaul. They replied that the Rhine marked the limit of the Roman empire: if he thought it unfair that the Germans should cross into Gaul against his will, why did he claim any imperial power across the Rhine?

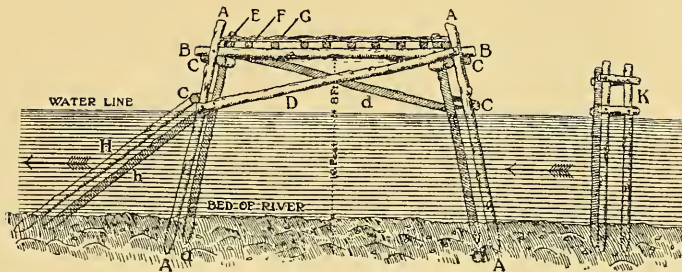
The Ubii, on the other hand, the only tribe beyond the Rhine which had sent deputies to Caesar, made friendly terms, and given hostages, earnestly besought him to assist them, as they were grievously hard pressed by the Suebi; or, if the urgent concerns of state prevented that, only to transport his army across the Rhine: that would suffice for their present help and future hope. So great, they said, even among the farthest tribes of

Tantum esse nomen atque opinionem eius exercitus Ariovisto pulso et hoc novissimo proelio facto etiam ad ultimas Germanorum nationes, uti opinione et amicitia populi Romani tuti esse possint. Navium magnam copiam ad transportandum exercitum pollicebantur.

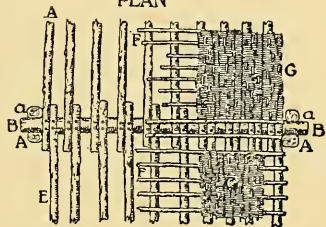
- 17 Caesar his de causis quas commemoravi Rhenum transire decreverat; sed navibus transire neque satis tutum esse arbitrabatur, neque suae neque populi Romani dignitatis esse statuebat. Itaque, etsi summa difficultas faciendi pontis proponebatur propter latitudinem, rapiditatem altitudinemque fluminis, tamen id sibi contendendum aut aliter non traducendum exercitum existimabat. Rationem pontis hanc instituit. Tigna bina sesquipedalia paulum ab imo praeacuta dimensa ad altitudinem fluminis intervallo pedum duorum inter se iungebat. Haec cum machinationibus immissa in flumen defixerat fistucisque adegerat, non sublicae modo directe ad perpendiculum, sed prone ac fastigate, ut secundum naturam fluminis procumberent, his item contraria duo ad eundem modum iuncta intervallo pedum quadragenum ab inferiore parte contra vim atque impetum fluminis conversa statuebat. Haec utraque insuper bipedibus trabibus immissis, quantum eorum tignorum iunctura distabat, binis utrimque fibulis ab extrema parte distinebantur; quibus disclusis atque in con-

¹ See Plan. The bridge is believed to have been thrown across between Andernach and Coblenz.

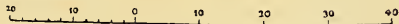
SECTION OF A TRESTLE



PLAN



SCALE OF FEET



THE BRIDGE OVER THE RHINE

(iv. 17)

NOTES

The present breadth of the Rhine at Coblenz is about 400 yards; the depth thereabout varies from 5 to 25 feet. In the section given 16 feet is taken as an average depth. The width of roadway shown is 36 feet. The space (40 feet) between the pairs of balks (A, A) is reckoned along the water-line—i.e. the lowest visible part (*cf. ab inferiori parte*). If it were reckoned along the river-bed, it would mean that the successive pairs of balks would incline inwards at different angles as the bridge approached mid-stream from each bank: for it is not to be supposed that the width of the roadway varied. We are not told at what angle the balks inclined, nor at what height above the water-line the transoms were, nor how far each pier or trestle was from the next. It is highly probable that, in a military bridge of this kind, for the sake of rapidity in construction, a uniform profile was followed for the part of each pier or trestle visible above the water-line.

It is not clear what is meant by the *fibulae* mentioned by Caesar. Some authorities have thought that these are the diagonal ties (D, d), which are certainly required for the stability of the bridge, and which are probably implied by the phrase *quibus disclusis atque in contrariam partem revinctis*. The triangle formed by balk, transom, and the resembles the shape, and performs the function, of a brooch (*fibula*). Other authorities hold that the *fibulae* were iron "dogs" (—), driven in to clamp each transom to its two pairs of balks at the points of juncture.

- A, a. Balks, *tigna bina sesquipedalia*.
- B, B. Transom, *trabs bipedalis*.
- C, C. Cross-bars, *iuncturae*, between A, a.
- D, d. Ties, one on each side (*utrimque*) of the trestle, fastened at the ends (*ab extrema parte*).
- E. Timbers laid on at right angles as road-bearers.
- F. Poles (*longurii*).
- G. Wattle-work (*crates*), as flooring.
- H, h. Piles (*sublicae*) driven in aslant as buttresses, and closely connected with A, a, by a cross-bar or otherwise, probably as near the water-line as possible.
- K. Piles driven in as fenders (*defensores*) a little above the bridge.

CAESAR "Gallic War," to face page 201

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

Germany was the renown and reputation of his army, after the defeat of Ariovistus and the success of this last action, that their own safety was secure in the prestige and the friendship of Rome. They promised a large supply of boats for the transport of his army.

For the reasons above mentioned Caesar had decided to cross the Rhine; but he deemed it scarcely safe, and ruled it unworthy of his own and the Romans' dignity, to cross in boats. And so, although he was confronted with the greatest difficulty in making a bridge, by reason of the breadth, the rapidity, and the depth of the river, he still thought that he must make that effort, or else not take his army across. He proceeded to construct a bridge on the following plan.¹ He caused pairs of balks eighteen inches thick, sharpened a little way from the base and measured to suit the depth of the river, to be coupled together at an interval of two feet. These he lowered into the river by means of rafts, and set fast, and drove home by rammers; not, like piles, straight up and down, but leaning forward at a uniform slope, so that they inclined in the direction of the stream. Opposite to these, again, were planted two balks coupled in the same fashion, at a distance of forty feet from base to base.² of each pair, slanted against the force and onrush of the stream. These pairs of balks had two-foot transoms let into them atop, filling the interval at which they were coupled, and were kept apart by a pair of braces on the outer side at each end. So, as they were held apart and contrariwise clamped together,

² That is to say, the actual roadway of the bridge was narrower than forty feet by the inward slant of each pair of balks. Or *ab inferiore parte* may mean "on the side down stream."

CAESAR

trariam partem revinctis tanta erat operis firmitudo atque ea rerum natura, ut, quo maior vis aquae se incitavisset, hoc artius illigata tenerentur. Haec directa materia iniecta contexebantur ac longuriis cratibusque consternebantur; ac nihilo setius sublicae et ad inferiorem partem fluminis oblique agebantur, quae pro ariete subiectae et cum omni opere coniunctae vim fluminis exciperent, et aliae item supra pontem mediocri spatio, ut, si arborum trunci sive naves deiciendi operis essent a barbaris missae, his defensoribus earum rerum vis minueretur neu ponti nocerent.

18 Diebus decem, quibus materia coepta erat comportari, omni opere effecto exercitus traducitur. Caesar ad utramque partem pontis firmo praesidio relicto in fines Sugambrorum contendit. Interim a compluribus civitatibus ad eum legati veniunt; quibus pacem atque amicitiam petentibus liberaliter respondit obsidesque ad se adduci iubet. Sugambri ex eo tempore quo pons institui coeptus est fuga comparata, hortantibus eis quos ex Tencteris atque Vsipetibus apud se habebant, finibus suis excesserant suaque omnia exportaverant seque in solitudinem ac silvas abdiderant.

19 Caesar paucos dies in eorum finibus moratus omnibus vicis aedificiisque incensis frumentisque succisis se in fines Vbiorum recepit atque eis auxilium suum pollicitus, si ab Suebis premerentur, haec ab eis cog-

¹ *i.e.* each set of balks and transoms.

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

the stability of the structure was so great and its character such that, the greater the force and thrust of the water, the tighter were the balks held in lock. These trestles¹ were interconnected by timber laid over at right angles, and floored with long poles and wattlework. And further, piles were driven in aslant on the side facing down stream, thrust out below like a buttress and close joined with the whole structure, so as to take the force of the stream; and others likewise at a little distance above the bridge, so that if trunks of trees, or vessels, were launched by the natives to break down the structure, these fenders might lessen the force of such shocks, and prevent them from damaging the bridge.

The whole work was completed in ten days from that on which the collecting of timber began, and the army was taken across. Leaving a strong post at either end of the bridge, Caesar pressed on into the territory of the Sugambri. Meanwhile from several states deputies came to him, to whose request for peace and friendship he replied in generous fashion, and ordered hostages to be brought to him. But from the moment when the bridge began to be constructed the Sugambri, at the instigation of the Tencteri and Usipetes among them, had been preparing for flight; and now they had evacuated their territory, carried off all their stuff, and hidden themselves in the remote part of the forests.

Caesar tarried for a few days in their territory, until he had burnt all the villages and buildings, and cut down the corn-crops. Then he withdrew into the territory of the Ubii; and, after a promise of his help to them, if they were hard pressed by the Suebi, he received the following information

CAESAR

novit: Suebos, posteaquam per exploratores pontem fieri comperissent, more suo concilio habito nuntios in omnes partes dimisisse, uti de oppidis demigrarent, liberos, uxores suaque omnia in silvis deponerent, atque omnes qui arma ferre possent unum in locum convenirent: hunc esse delectum medium fere regionum earum, quas Suebi obtinerent: hic Romanorum adventum expectare atque ibi decertare constituisse. Quod ubi Caesar comperit, omnibus rebus eis confectis, quarum rerum causa traducere exercitum constituerat, ut Germanis metum iniceret, ut Sugambros ulcisceretur, ut Vbios obsidione liberaret, diebus omnino decem et octo trans Rhenum consumptis satis et ad laudem et ad utilitatem profectum arbitratus se in Galliam recepit pontemque rescidit.

20 Exigua parte aestatis reliqua Caesar, etsi in his
54 locis, quod omnis Gallia ad septentriones vergit, maturae sunt hiemes, tamen in Britanniam proficisci contendit, quod omnibus fere Gallicis bellis hostibus nostris inde sumministrata auxilia intellegebat et, si tempus anni ad bellum gerendum deficeret, tamen magno sibi usui fore arbitrabatur, si modo insulam adisset et genus hominum perspexisset, loca, portus, aditus cognovisset; quae omnia fere Gallis erant incognita. Neque enim temere praeter mercatores illo adit quisquam, neque eis ipsis quidquam praeter oram maritimam atque eas regiones quae sunt contra

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

from them. The Suebi, when they had discovered by means of their scouts that a bridge was being built, held a convention according to their custom, and despatched messengers to all quarters, ordering the people to remove from their towns, to lodge their children and all their stuff in the woods, and to assemble in one place all men capable of bearing arms. The place chosen was about the middle of the districts occupied by the Suebi; here they were awaiting the approach of the Romans, having determined to fight the decisive battle on this spot. By the time when Caesar learnt this he had accomplished all the objects for which he had determined to lead his army across the Rhine—to strike terror into the Germans, to take vengeance on the Sugambri, to deliver the Ubii from a state of blockade. So, having spent in all eighteen days across the Rhine, and advanced far enough, as he thought, to satisfy both honour and expediency, he withdrew into Gaul and broke up the bridge.

Only a small part of the summer was left, and in these regions, as all Gaul has a northerly aspect, the winters are early; but for all this Caesar was intent upon starting for Britain. He understood that in almost all the Gallic campaigns succours had been furnished for our enemy from that quarter; and he supposed that, if the season left no time for actual campaigning, it would still be of great advantage to him merely to have entered the island, observed the character of the natives, and obtained some knowledge of the localities, the harbours, and the landing-places; for almost all these matters were unknown to the Gauls. In fact, nobody except traders journeys thither without good cause; and even traders know nothing except the sea-coast and

CAESAR

Gallias notum est. Itaque vocatis ad se undique mercatoribus neque quanta esset insulae magnitudo, neque quae aut quantae nationes incolerent, neque quem usum belli haberent aut quibus institutis uterentur, neque qui essent ad maiorum navium multitudinem idonei portus, reperire poterat.

21 Ad haec cognoscenda, priusquam periculum faceret, idoneum esse arbitratus Gaium Volusenum cum navi longa praemittit. Huic mandat ut exploratis omnibus rebus ad se quam primum revertatur. Ipse cum omnibus copiis in Morinos proficiscitur, quod inde erat brevissimus in Britanniam traiectus. Huc naves undique ex finitimis regionibus et quam superiore aestate ad Veneticum bellum effecerat classem iubet convenire. Interim consilio eius cognito et per mercatores perlato ad Britannos a compluribus insulae civitatibus ad eum legati veniunt qui polliceantur obsides dare atque imperio populi Romani obtemperare. Quibus auditis liberaliter pollicitus hortatusque, ut in ea sententia permanerent, eos domum remittit et cum eis una Commium, quem ipse Atrebatibus superatis regem ibi constituerat, cuius et virtutem et consilium probabat et quem sibi fidelem esse arbitrabatur cuiusque auctoritas in his regionibus magni habebatur, mittit. Huic imperat, quas possit, adeat civitates horteturque ut populi Romani fidem sequantur, seque celeriter eo venturum nuntiet. Volusenus perspectis regionibus omnibus, quantum ei facultatis dari potuit qui navi egredi

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

the districts opposite Gaul. Therefore, although he summoned to his quarters traders from all parts, he could discover neither the size of the island, nor the number or the strength of the tribes inhabiting it, nor their manner of warfare, nor the ordinances they observed, nor the harbours suitable for a number of large ships.

To gain such knowledge before he made the venture, Caesar thought Gaius Volusenus a proper person to send on in advance with a ship of war. His orders were to spy out everything and to return to him at once. He himself with all his forces started for the territory of the Morini, from which was the shortest passage across to Britain. He commanded the general concentration here of ships from the neighbouring districts, and of the fleet which he had built in the previous summer for the Venetian campaign. Meanwhile his purpose had become known and had been reported through traders to the Britons, and deputies came to him from several states in the island with promises to give hostages and to accept the empire of Rome. He heard them, and made them a generous promise, encouraging them to keep their word; then he sent them back home, and along with them he sent Commius, whom he himself, after subduing the Atrebates, had made king over them. Caesar approved his courage and discretion, and believed him loyal to himself; and his influence was reckoned to be of great account in those parts.¹ Him he commanded to visit what states he could, to exhort them to seek the protection of Rome, and to announce his own speedy advent thither. Volusenus observed all the country so far as was possible for an officer who did not dare to

¹ *i.e.* in Britain.

CAESAR

ac se barbaris committere non auderet, quinto die ad Caesarem revertitur quaeque ibi perspexisset renuntiat.

22) Dum in his locis Caesar navium parandarum causa moratur, ex magna parte Morinorum ad eum legati venerunt, qui se de superioris temporis consilio excusarent, quod homines barbari et nostrae consuetudinis imperiti bellum populo Romano fecissent, seque ea quae imperasset facturos pollicerentur. Hoc sibi Caesar satis opportune accidisse arbitratus, quod neque post tergum hostem relinquere volebat neque belli gerendi propter anni tempus facultatem habebat neque has tantularum rerum occupationes Britanniae anteponendas iudicabat, magnum eis numerum obsidum imperat. Quibus adductis eos in fidem recepit. Navibus circiter LXXX onerariis coactis contractisque quot³ satis esse ad duas transportandas legiones existimabat, quod praeterea navium longarum habebat quaestori, legatis praefectisque distribuit. Huc accedebant⁵ XVIII onerariae naves, quae ex eo loco ab milibus passuum octo vento tenebantur quo minus in eundem portum venire possent: has equitibus distribuit. Reliquum exercitum Quinto Titurio Sabino et Lucio Aurunculeio Cottae legatis in Menapios atque in eos pagos Morinorum ab quibus ad eum legati non venerant ducendum dedit; Publium Sulpicium Rufum legatum cum eo praesidio, quod satis esse arbitrabatur, portum tenere iussit.

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

disembark and entrust himself to the rough natives, and on the fifth day returned to Caesar, and reported his observations in Britain.

While Caesar tarried where he was to fit out his ships, deputies came to him from a great part of the Morini to make excuse for their policy of the previous season, when in their barbarism and ignorance of our usage they had made war against Rome, and to promise that they would carry out his commands. Caesar thought this overture exceedingly opportune. He did not wish to leave an enemy in his rear, nor had he a chance of carrying out a campaign because of the lateness of the season; nor did he think the settlement of such trivialities should take precedence of Britain. He therefore ordered them to furnish a large number of hostages; and when they brought these he received them under his protection. When about eighty transports—enough, in his opinion, to carry two legions across—had been collected and concentrated, he distributed all the ships of war he had over between his quartermaster-general, lieutenant-generals, and commandants.¹ To the total stated eighteen transports should be added, which were detained eight miles off by the wind, and prevented from entering the port of concentration;² these he allotted to the cavalry. The rest of the army he handed over to Quintus Titurius Sabinus and Lucius Aurunculeius Cotta, lieutenant-generals, to be led against the Menapii and against those cantons of the Morini from which no deputies had come to him. He commanded Publius Sulpicius Rufus, lieutenant-general, with a garrison he considered sufficient, to hold the port.

¹ See Appendix A.

² Probably Boulogne.

23 His constitutis rebus nactus idoneam ad navigandum tempestatem tertia fere vigilia solvit equitesque in ulteriorem portum ⁷progredi et naves conscendere et se sequi iussit. A quibus cum paulo tardius esset administratum, ipse hora circiter diei quarta ⁸cum primis navibus Britanniam attigit atque ibi in omnibus collibus expositas hostium copias armatas conspexit. Cuius loci haec ⁹erat natura, atque ita montibus angustis mare continebatur, ¹⁰uti ex locis superioribus in litus telum adigi posset. Hunc ad egrediendum nequaquam idoneum locum arbitratus, dum reliquae naves eo convenirent, ¹¹ad horam nonam in ancoris ¹²expectavit. ¹³Interim legatis tribunisque militum convocatis et quae ex Voluseno cognosset et quae fieri vellet ostendit; monuitque, ut rei militaris ratio, maxime ut maritimae res postulerent, ut quae celerem atque instabilem motum haberent, ad nutum et ad tempus omnes res ab eis administrarentur. ¹⁴His dimissis et ventum et aestum uno tempore nactus secundum dato signo et sublatis ancoris circiter milia passuum septem ab eo loco progressus aperto ac plano litore naves constituit.

36 24 At barbari, consilio Romanorum cognito praemisso equitatu et essedariis, quo plerumque genere in proeliis uti consuerunt, reliquis copiis subsecuti nostros navibus egredi prohibebant. Erat ob has

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

These arrangements made, he caught a spell of fair weather for sailing, and weighed anchor about the third watch: he ordered the cavalry to proceed to the further harbour,¹ embark, and follow him. They took somewhat too long to despatch the business; he himself reached Britain about the fourth hour of the day, and there beheld the armed forces of the enemy displayed on all the cliffs.² Such was the nature of the ground, so steep the heights which banked the sea, that a missile could be hurled from the higher levels on to the shore. Thinking this place to be by no means suitable for disembarkation, he waited at anchor till the ninth hour for the rest of the flotilla to assemble there. Meanwhile he summoned together the lieutenant-generals and tribunes, to inform them what he had learnt from Volusenus, and what he wished to be done; and he warned them that, to meet the requirements of tactics and particularly of navigation—with its liability to movements as rapid as they were irregular—they must do everything in the nick of time at a hint from him. He then dismissed them; and catching at one and the same moment a favourable wind and tide, he gave the signal, and weighed anchor, and, moving on about seven miles from that spot, he grounded his ships where the shore was even and open.³

The natives, however, perceived the design of the Romans. So they sent forward their cavalry and charioteers—an arm which it is their regular custom to employ in fights—and, following up with the rest of their forces, they sought to prevent our troops from disembarking. Disembarkation was a matter

¹ Probably Ambleteuse.

² About Dover.

³ Probably between Walmer and Deal.

CAESAR

causas summa difficultas, quod naves propter magnitudinem nisi in alto constitui non poterant, militibus autem ignotis locis, impeditis manibus, magno et gravi onere armorum oppressis, simul et de navibus desiliendum et in fluctibus consistendum et cum hostibus erat pugnandum, cum illi aut ex arido aut paulum in aquam progressi omnibus membris expeditis, notissimis locis audacter tela conicerent et equos insuefactos incitarent. Quibus rebus nostri perterriti atque huius omnino generis pugnae imperiti non eadem alacritate ac studio quo in pedestribus uti proeliis consueverant nitebantur.

25 Quod ubi Caesar animadvertit, naves longas, quarum et species erat barbaris inusitatio et motus ad usum expeditior, paulum removeri ab onerariis navibus et remis incitari et ad latus apertum hostium constitui atque inde fundis, sagittis, tormentis hostes propelli ac summoveri iussit; quae res magno usui nostris fuit. Nam et navium figura et remorum motu et inusitato genere tormentorum permoti barbari constiterunt ac paulum modo pedem rettulerunt. Atque nostris militibus cunctantibus, maxime propter altitudinem maris, qui decimae legionis aquilam ferebat, contestatus deos, ut ea res legioni feliciter eveniret, "Desilite," inquit, "milites, nisi vultis aquilam hostibus prodere: ego certe meum rei publicae atque imperatori officium praestitero." Hoc cum

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

of extreme difficulty, for the following reasons. The ships, on account of their size, could not be run ashore, except in deep water; the troops—though they did not know the ground, had not their hands free, and were loaded with the great and grievous weight of their arms—had nevertheless at one and the same time to leap down from the vessels, to stand firm in the waves, and to fight the enemy. The enemy, on the other hand, had all their limbs free, and knew the ground exceeding well; and either standing on dry land or advancing a little way into the water, they boldly hurled their missiles, or spurred on their horses, which were trained to it. Frightened by all this, and wholly inexperienced in this sort of fighting, our troops did not press on with the same fire and force as they were accustomed to show in land engagements.

When Caesar remarked this, he commanded the ships of war (which were less familiar in appearance to the natives, and could move more freely at need) to remove a little from the transports, to row at speed, and to bring up on the exposed flank of the enemy; and thence to drive and clear them off with slings, arrows, and artillery. This movement proved of great service to our troops; for the natives, frightened by the shape of the ships, the motion of the oars, and the unfamiliar type of the artillery, came to a halt, and retired, but only for a little space. And then, while our troops still hung back, chiefly on account of the depth of the sea, the eagle-bearer of the Tenth Legion, after a prayer to heaven to bless the legion by his act, cried: "Leap down, soldiers, unless you wish to betray your eagle to the enemy; it shall be told that I at any rate did my duty to my country and my general." When he had

CAESAR

voce magna dixisset, se ex navi proiecit atque in hostes aquilam ferre coepit. Tum nostri cohortati inter se, ne tantum dedecus admitteretur, universi ex navi desiluerunt. Hos item ex proximis¹ navibus cum conspexissent, subsecuti hostibus appropinquantur.

26 Pugnatum est ab utrisque acriter. Nostri tamen, quod neque ordines servare neque firmiter insistere neque signa subsequi poterant, atque alius alia ex navi quibuscumque signis occurrerat se adgregabat, magnopere perturbabantur. Hostes vero notis omnibus vadis, ubi ex litore aliquos singulares ex navi egredientes conspexerant, incitatis equis impeditos adoriebantur, plures paucos circumstebant, alii ab latere aperto in universos tela coniciebant. Quod cum animadvertisset Caesar, scaphas longarum navium, item speculatoria navigia militibus compleri iussit et, quos laborantes conspexerat, his subsidia submittebat. Nostri, simul in arido constiterunt, suis omnibus consecutis in hostes impetum fecerunt atque eos in fugam dederunt; neque longius prosequi potuerunt, quod equites cursum tenere atque insulam capere non potuerant. Hoc unum ad pristinam fortunam Caesari defuit.

27 Hostes proelio superati, simul atque se ex fuga receperunt, statim ad Caesarem legatos de pace miserunt, obsides daturus quaeque imperasset sese facturos polliciti sunt. Vna cum his legatis Commius

¹ Or, reading *primi* after *proximis*, "on the nearest ships first."

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

said this with a loud voice, he cast himself forth from the ship, and began to bear the eagle against the enemy. Then our troops exhorted one another not to allow so dire a disgrace, and leapt down from the ship with one accord. And when the troops on the nearest ships saw them, they likewise followed on, and drew near to the enemy.

The fighting was fierce on both sides. Our troops, however, because they could not keep rank, nor stand firm, nor follow their proper standards—for any man from any ship attached himself to whatever standard he chanced upon—were in considerable disorder. But the enemy knew all the shallows, and as soon as they had observed from the shore a party of soldiers disembarking one by one from a ship, they spurred on their horses and attacked them while they were in difficulties, many surrounding few, while others hurled missiles into a whole party from the exposed¹ flank. Caesar noticed this; and causing the boats of the warships, and likewise the scout-vessels, to be manned with soldiers, he sent them to support any parties whom he had observed to be in distress. The moment our men stood firm on dry land, they charged with all their comrades close behind, and put the enemy to rout; but they could not pursue very far, because the cavalry had not been able to hold on their course and make the island. This one thing was lacking to complete the wonted success of Caesar.

So the enemy were overcome in the fight; and as soon as they had recovered from the rout they at once sent deputies to Caesar to treat for peace, promising that they would give hostages and do what he commanded. Together with these deputies came

¹ *i.e.* the right, or unshielded, side.

Atrebas venit, quem supra demonstraveram a Caesare in Britanniam praemisum. Hunc illi e navi egressum, cum ad eos oratoris modo Caesaris mandata deferret, comprehenderant atque in vincula coniecerant: tum proelio facto remiserunt, et in petenda pace eius rei culpam in multitudinem coniecerunt et propter imprudentiam ut ignosceretur petiverunt. Caesar questus quod, cum ultro in continentem legatis missis pacem ab se petissent, bellum sine causa intulissent, ignoscere imprudentiae dixit ob-sidesque imperavit; quorum illi partem statim dederunt, partem ex longinquiore locis arcessitam paucis diebus sese daturus dixerunt. Interea suos remigrare in agros iusserunt, principesque undique convenire et se civitatesque suas Caesari commendare coeperunt.

28 His rebus pace confirmata, post diem quartum quam est in Britanniam ventum, naves xviii, de quibus supra demonstratum est, quae equites sustulerant, ex superiore portu leni vento solverunt. Quae cum appropinquarent Britanniae et ex castris viderentur, tanta tempestas subito coorta est ut nulla earum cursum tenere posset, sed aliae eodem unde erant profectae referrentur, aliae ad inferiorem partem insulae, quae est propius solis occasum, magno sui cum periculo deicerentur; quae tamen ancoris iactis cum fluctibus complerentur, necessario adversa nocte in altum provectae continentem petierunt.

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

Commius the Atrebatian, who, as shown above, had been sent forward by Caesar into Britain. When Commius disembarked and delivered Caesar's messages to the Britons in the character of an ambassador, they had seized him and thrown him into chains; but now, after the fight, they sent him back. In their entreaty for peace they cast the blame of the misdeed upon the multitude, and sought pardon in consideration of their ignorance. Caesar complained that, though of their own motion they had sent deputies on to the Continent to seek peace from him, they had now begun war on him without cause; but he agreed to pardon their ignorance, and required hostages. Part of these they gave at once, part they said they would summon from the more distant parts and give in a few days. Meanwhile they ordered their own folk to get back to their fields; and the chiefs began to assemble from every quarter, and to deliver themselves and their states to Caesar.

Peace was thus established. Four days after the arrival in Britain the eighteen ships above mentioned, which had embarked the cavalry, weighed anchor, in a gentle breeze, from the upper¹ port. When they were nearing Britain, and in view of the camp, so fierce a storm suddenly arose that none of them could hold on its course; some were carried back to the selfsame port whence they had started, others were driven away, with great peril to themselves, to the lower, that is, to the more westerly, part of the island. None the less, they cast anchor; but when they began to fill with the waves they were obliged to stand out to sea in a night of foul weather, and made for the Continent.

¹ *i.e.* the more northerly : see ch. 23, and note.

29 / Eadem nocte accidit ut esset luna plena, qui dies maritimos aestus maximos in Oceano efficere consuevit, nostrisque id erat incognitum. Ita uno tempore et longas naves, quibus Caesar exercitum transportandum curaverat quasque in aridum subduxerat, aestus compleverat et onerarias, quae ad ancoras erant deligatae, tempestas adflictabat, neque ulla nostris facultas aut administrandi aut auxiliandi dabatur. Compluribus navibus fractis reliquae cum essent funibus, ancoris reliquisque armamentis amissis ad navigandum inutiles, magna, id quod necesse erat accidere, totius exercitus perturbatio facta est. Neque enim naves erant aliae quibus reportari possent, et omnia deerant quae ad reficiendas naves erant usui, et, quod omnibus constabat hiemari in Gallia oportere, frumentum his in locis in hiemem provisum non erat. |

30 4 Quibus rebus cognitis principes Britanniae, qui
5 post proelium ad Caesarem convenerant, inter se collocuti, cum equites et naves et frumentum Romanis deesse intellegerent et paucitatem militum ex castrorum exiguitate cognoscerent, quae hoc erant etiam angustiora, quod sine impedimentis Caesar legiones transportaverat, optimum factu esse duxerunt rebellionem facta frumento commeatuque nostros prohibere et rem in hiemem producere, quod his superatis aut reditu interclusis neminem postea belli inferendi causa in Britanniam transiturum confidebant. Itaque rursus coniuratione facta paulatim ex castris discedere ac suos clam ex agris deducere coeperunt.

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

That same night, as it chanced, the moon was full, the day of the month which usually makes the highest tides in the Ocean, a fact unknown to our men. Therefore the tide was found to have filled the war-ships, in which Caesar had caused his army to be conveyed across, and which he had drawn up on dry land; and at the same time the storm was buffeting the transports, which were made fast to anchors. Nor had our troops any chance of handling them or helping. Several ships went to pieces; and the others, by loss of cordage, anchors, and the rest of their tackle, were rendered useless for sailing. This, as was inevitable, caused great dismay throughout the army. For there were no other ships to carry them back; everything needful for the repair of ships was lacking; and, as it was generally understood that the army was to winter in Gaul, no corn had been provided in these parts against the winter.

When they became aware of this, the British chiefs who had assembled at Caesar's headquarters after the fight took counsel together. As they knew that the Romans lacked cavalry, ships, and corn, and perceived the scantiness of the army from the smallness of the camp (it was straitened even more by the fact that Caesar had brought the legions over without baggage), they thought that the best thing to do was to renew the war, cut off our corn and other supplies, and prolong the business into the winter; for they were confident that when the present force was overcome or cut off from return no one thereafter would cross over into Britain to make war upon them. Therefore they conspired together anew, and, departing a few at a time from the camp, they began secretly to draw in their followers from the fields.

31 At Caesar, etsi nondum eorum consilia cognoverat, tamen et ex eventu navium suarum et ex eo, quod obsides dare intermiserant, fore id quod accidit suspicabatur. Itaque ad omnes casus subsidia comparabat. Nam et frumentum ex agris cotidie in castra conferebat et, quae gravissime afflictæ erant naves, earum materia atque aere ad reliquas reficiendas utebatur et quae ad eas res erant usui ex continenti comportari iubebat. Itaque, cum summò studio a militibus administraretur, XII navibus amissis, reliquis ut navigari commode posset effecit.

32 Dum ea geruntur, legione ex consuetudine una frumentatum missa, quae appellabatur septima, neque ulla ad id tempus belli suspicione interposita, cum pars hominum in agris remaneret, pars etiam in castra ventitaret, ei qui pro portis castrorum in statione¹² erant Caesari nuntiaverunt pulverem maiorem quam consuetudo ferret in ea parte videri, quam in partem legio iter fecisset.¹³ Caesar id quod erat suspicatus, aliquid novi a barbaris initum consili, cohortes quae in stationibus erant secum in eam partem proficisci, ex reliquis duas in stationem cohortes succedere, reliquas armari et confestim sese subsequi iussit. Cum paulo longius a castris processisset, suos ab hostibus premi atque aegre sustinere et conferta legione ex omnibus partibus tela conici animadvertit. Nam quod omni ex reliquis partibus demesso fru-

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

Although Caesar had not yet learnt their designs, yet the misfortune of his ships and the fact that the chiefs had broken off the surrender of hostages led him to suspect that events would turn out as they did; and therefore he prepared means to meet any emergency. He collected corn daily from the fields into the camp, and he utilised the timber and bronze of the ships which had been most severely damaged to repair the rest, and ordered the necessary gear for that purpose to be brought from the Continent. The work was most zealously carried out by the troops; and thus, though twelve ships had been lost, he was able to render the rest tolerably seaworthy.

Meanwhile one legion, called the Seventh, had been sent as usual to collect corn; nor as yet had any suspicion of hostilities intervened, since part of the people remained in the fields, and part were actually frequent visitors to the camp. Then the outposts on duty before the gates of the camp reported to Caesar that a greater dust than usual was to be seen in that quarter to which the legion had marched. Caesar suspected the truth—that some fresh design had been started by the natives—and ordered the cohorts which were on outpost to proceed with him to the quarter in question, two of the others to relieve them on outpost, and the rest to arm and follow him immediately. When he had advanced some little way from the camp, he found that his troops were being hard pressed by the enemy and were holding their ground with difficulty: the legion was crowded together, while missiles were being hurled from all sides. The fact was that when the corn had been cut from the rest of the neighbourhood one part remained,

mento pars una erat reliqua, suspicati hostes huc nostros esse venturos noctu in silvis delituerant; tum dispersos depositis armis in metendo occupatos subito adorti paucis interfectis reliquos incertis ordinibus perturbaverant, simul equitatu atque essedis circumdederant.

33 Genus hoc est ex essedis pugnae. Primo per omnes partes perequitant et tela coniciunt atque ipso terrore equorum et strepitu rotarum ordines plerumque perturbant, et cum se inter equitum turmas insinuaverunt, ex essedis desiliunt et pedibus proeliantur. Aurigae interim paulatim ex proelio excedunt atque ita currus collocant, ut, si illi a multitudine hostium premantur, expeditum ad suos receptum habeant. Ita mobilitatem equitum, stabilitatem peditum in proeliis praestant, ac tantum usu cotidiano et exercitatione efficiunt uti in declivi ac praecipiti loco incitatos equos sustinere et brevi moderari ac flectere et per temonem percurrere et in iugo insistere et se inde in currus citissime recipere consuerint.

34 Quibus rebus ³ perturbatis nostris ²⁴ novitate pugnae tempore opportunissimo Caesar auxilium tulit: namque eius adventu hostes constiterunt, nostri se ex timore receperunt. Quo facto ad lacessendum et ad committendum proelium alienum esse tempus arbitratus suo se loco continuit et brevi tempore inter-

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

and the enemy, supposing that our troops would come hither, had hidden by night in the woods; then, when the men were scattered and, having grounded arms, were engaged in cutting corn, they had suddenly attacked them. They had killed a few, throwing the rest into confusion before they could form up. and at the same time surrounding them with horsemen and chariots.

Their manner of fighting from chariots is as follows. First of all they drive in all directions and hurl missiles, and so by the mere terror that the teams inspire and by the noise of the wheels they generally throw ranks into confusion. When they have worked their way in between the troops of cavalry, they leap down from the chariots and fight on foot. Meanwhile the charioteers retire gradually from the combat, and dispose the chariots in such fashion that, if the warriors are hard pressed by the host of the enemy, they may have a ready means of retirement to their own side. Thus they show in action the mobility of cavalry and the stability of infantry; and by daily use and practice they become so accomplished that they are ready to gallop their teams down the steepest of slopes without loss of control. to check and turn them in a moment, to run along the pole, stand on the yoke, and then, quick as lightning, to dart back into the chariot.

When our troops were thrown into confusion in this fashion by the novel character of the fighting, Caesar brought assistance in the very nick of time; for his arrival caused the enemy to halt, and enabled our men to recover from their fear. This done, he deemed the moment unsuitable for provoking and engaging in a combat; he therefore stood to his own ground and, after a brief interval. led the legions

CAESAR

misso in castra legiones reduxit. Dum haec geruntur, nostris omnibus occupatis qui¹⁵ erant in agris reliqui discesserunt. ~~¶~~ Secutae sunt continuos complures dies tempestates, quae et nostros in castris continerent et hostem a pugna prohiberent.¹⁶ Interim barbari nuntios in omnes partes dimiserunt paucitatemque nostrorum militum suis praedicaverunt et, quanta praedae faciendae atque in perpetuum sui liberandi¹⁷ facultas daretur, si Romanos castris expulissent, demonstraverunt. His rebus celeriter magna multitudine pediatatus equitatusque coacta ad castra venerunt.

35 ~~6~~ Caesar, etsi idem quod superioribus diebus acciderat fore videbat, ut, si essent hostes pulsi, celeritate periculum effugerent,² tamen nactus equites circiter xxx, quos Commius Atrebas, de quo ante dictum est, secum transportaverat, legiones in acie pro castris constituit. Commisso proelio diutius nostrorum militum impetum hostes ferre non potuerunt ac terga verterunt. Quos tanto spatio secuti quantum³ cursu et viribus efficere potuerunt, complures ex eis occiderunt, deinde omnibus longe lateque aedificiis incensis se in castra receperunt.

36 Eodem die legati ab hostibus missi ad Caesarem de pace venerunt. His Caesar numerum obsidum quem ante imperaverat duplicavit eosque in continentem adduci iussit, quod propinqua die aequinocti⁴ infirmis navibus hiemi navigationem subiciendam⁵ non existimabat. ~~¶~~ Ipse idoneam tempestatem nactus paulo post mediam noctem naves solvit; quae omnes incolumes ad continentem pervenerunt,

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

back to camp. In the course of these events all our troops were busily occupied, and the natives who remained in the fields withdrew. Then for several days on end storms ensued, severe enough to keep our men in camp and to prevent the enemy from fighting. Meanwhile the natives despatched messengers in every direction, to tell of the scanty numbers of our troops and to show how great a chance was given of getting booty and of liberating themselves for ever by driving the Romans out of their camp. By this means they speedily collected a great host of footmen and horsemen, and came on towards the camp.

Caesar saw that the result would be the same as on the previous days—that the enemy, if repulsed, would use their speed to escape from danger; nevertheless, as he had got about thirty horsemen, whom Commius, the Atrebatian before mentioned, had brought over with him, he formed the legions in line before the camp. When battle was joined the enemy, unable to endure for long the attack of our troops, turned and fled. The Romans followed after, as far as their speed and strength enabled, and slew not a few of them; then, after setting on fire all buildings far and wide, they retired to camp.

On the same day deputies sent by the enemy came to Caesar to treat of peace. For them Caesar doubled the number of hostages previously commanded, and ordered them to be brought to the Continent, because the equinox was close at hand, and with a damaged flotilla he did not think it right to subject his crossing to the hazard of winter storms. He himself, taking advantage of a spell of fair weather, weighed anchor a little after midnight, and all the ships came safe to the Continent; but

CAESAR

sed ex eis onerariae duae eosdem, quos reliqui, ⁶
~~portus capere~~ ⁷ non potuerunt et paulo infra delatae
¹⁸ sunt.

²⁰ 37 Quibus ex navibus cum essent expositi milites
circiter trecenti atque in castra contenderent,
Morini, quos Caesar in Britanniam proficiscens
pacatos reliquerat, spe praedae adducti primo non
ita magno ⁸ suorum numero circumsteterunt ac, si
sese interfici nollent, ⁹ arma ponere iusserunt. Cum
illi orbe facto sese defenderent, ¹⁰ celeriter ad clamorem
hominum circiter milia sex convenerunt. Qua re
nuntiata Caesar omnem ex castris equitatum suis
auxilio misit. Interim nostri milites impetum
hostium sustinuerunt atque amplius horis quattuor
fortissime pugnauerunt et paucis vulneribus acceptis
complures ex his occiderunt. Postea vero ¹¹ quam
equitatus noster in conspectum venit, hostes abiectis
armis terga verterunt magnusque eorum numerus
est occisus.

38 Caesar postero die Titum Labienum legatum cum
eis legionibus quas ex Britannia reduxerat in Morinos,
qui rebellionem fecerant, misit. Qui cum propter
siccitates ¹² paludum quo se recipere non haberent, ¹³
quo per fugio superiore anno erant usi, omnes fere in
potestatem L. Labieni pervenerunt. At Q. Titurius
et L. Cotta legati, qui in Menapiorum fines legiones
duxerant, omnibus eorum agris vastatis, frumentis
succisis, aedificiis incensis, quod Menapii se omnes
in densissimas silvas abdiderant, se ad Caesarem

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

two of the transports were unable to make the same port as the rest, and were carried a little lower down the coast.

When about three hundred men had been landed from these vessels and were marching rapidly to camp, the Morini, who had been left by Caesar in a state of peace when he set out for Britain, were fired by the hope of booty, and surrounded the troops, at first with no very large number of their own folk, bidding them lay down their arms if they did not wish to be killed. The Romans formed square and defended themselves, and at the noise of shouting some six thousand men speedily came about them. Upon report of this Caesar sent the whole of the cavalry from the camp to assist his men. Meanwhile our troops withstood the enemy's assault, and fought with the greatest gallantry for more than four hours: they received but a few wounds, and slew a good many of the enemy. Howbeit, as soon as our cavalry came in sight, the enemy threw down their arms and fled, and a great number of them were slain.

The next day Caesar sent Titus Labienus, the lieutenant-general, with the legions which he had brought back from Britain, against the Morini, who had renewed hostilities. The enemy had no place of retreat, by reason of the dryness of the marshes, their refuge in the previous year; almost all of them, therefore, came and surrendered to Labienus. As for Quintus Titurius and Lucius Cotta, the lieutenant-generals who had led legions into the territory of the Menapii, they did not return to Caesar until they had laid waste all the fields of the natives, cut down the corn-crops, and burnt the buildings. because the Menapii had all hidden in

CAESAR

receperunt. ^PCaesar in Belgis omnium legionum
hiberna constituit. Eo duae omnino civitates ex
Britannia obsides miserunt, reliquae neglexerunt.
His rebus ^Vgestis, ex litteris Caesaris dierum viginti
supplicatio a senatu decreta est.

GALLIC WAR, BOOK IV

their densest forests. Then Caesar established the winter quarters of all the legions in Belgic territory. Thither no more than two of the British states sent hostages; the remainder omitted to do so. And for these achievements, upon receipt of Caesar's despatches, the Senate decreed a public thanksgiving of twenty days.