

31. The plebs were won over by this distribution of land and put up no resistance to holding consular elections. Chosen consuls were Lucius Valerius Potitus and Marcus Manlius, who later received the cognomen Capitolinus. These consuls celebrated the Great Games that the dictator Marcus Furius had vowed in the war with Veii. In the same year the temple of Queen Juno, vowed by this same dictator in this same war, was dedicated, and tradition says the ceremony was attended with great enthusiasm by the married women.

A minor war was fought against the Aequi at Algidus, for the enemy scattered in flight almost before battle was joined. A triumph was decreed to Valerius because he had shown greater persistence in slaughtering them as they fled; Manlius was allowed to enter the city in an ovation.* In the same year a new war broke out with the people of Volsinii;* but troops could not be mustered because of famine and pestilence in Roman territory from excessive heat and lack of rain. Accordingly, the Volsinians, joined by the Sapienates and arrogantly confident, even invaded the Roman countryside; war was then voted against the two peoples.

Gaius Iulius, the censor, died; in his place Marcus Cornelius was chosen, which later was viewed as a religious transgression because Rome was captured in this *lustrum*.* Thereafter no censor who died in office has ever been replaced. The consuls, moreover, were stricken by the sickness, and it was decided that the auspices be renewed through an interregnum.* And so, after the consuls resigned their office in accordance with a decree of the senate, Marcus Furius Camillus was made interrex; he was succeeded first by Publius Cornelius Scipio and then by Lucius Valerius Potitus. The latter presided over the election of six military tribunes with consular power, the aim being that if even some should fall ill, the state would still have enough magistrates at the helm.

32. The following entered office on 1 July: Lucius Lucretius, Servius Sulpicius, Marcus Aemilius, Lucius Furius Medullinus for the seventh time, Agrippa Furius, and Gaius Aemilius for the second. Of these, the war against Volsinii fell to Lucius Lucretius and Gaius Aemilius, that against the Sapienates to Agrippa Furius and Servius Sulpicius. The first conflict was with Volsinii. A huge number of the enemy took part, but the war was not difficult to fight. The battleline gave way at the first clash; eight thousand armed men were put to flight and cut off by the cavalry; they then laid down

their arms and surrendered unconditionally. When the Sapienates heard of the result they did not venture to engage in battle, but stayed behind their walls under arms. The Romans gathered booty everywhere in the territory of the Sapienates and Volsinii because no one opposed them; finally, with Volsinii exhausted from the war, a twenty-year truce was granted the city on the condition that it return the property it had taken from Roman territory and furnish the army's pay for that year.

In that same year Marcus Caedicius, a plebeian, reported to the tribunes that in New Street, where the shrine now stands above the temple of Vesta,* he had heard in the dead of night a voice that was more than human; it bade him tell the magistrates that the Gauls were coming. This warning was disregarded, as happens when the author is of humble status, and also because the Gauls were a people who were far off and therefore quite unknown. Not only were the warnings of the gods disregarded, as destiny began to run her course, but the only human that could save the city, Marcus Furius, was driven out. For he was indicted by Lucius Apuleius, tribune of the plebs, because of the way he had handled the booty at Veii. In these same days he had also lost a young son and, when he summoned to his house his clients and tribe members, who constituted a sizeable portion of the plebs, and asked what their feelings were in the matter, they told him that they would contribute as much as needed to pay his fine, but could not vote to acquit him. So he went into exile, but not before he prayed to the immortal gods that, if they judged him innocent of the injustice that had befallen him, they make his ungrateful country want him back at the first opportunity. In his absence he was fined fifteen thousand pounds of heavy bronze.

33. After Rome had expelled the one citizen whose presence would, if anything in this life is certain, have prevented her capture, and with the fateful disaster bearing down upon the city, envoys from Clusium came seeking aid against the Gauls. Tradition says that these peoples, attracted by the produce and especially by the wine, which was an indulgence then new to them, had crossed the Alps and had taken over lands previously occupied by the Etruscans; that Arruns of Clusium had exported wine into Gaul with the express purpose of encouraging them to come, in anger that Lucumo, whose guardian he was, had committed adultery with his wife and knowing that Lucumo was a most influential young man whom he could not

punish without outside help; and that Arruns was the one who led them over the Alps and exhorted them to attack Clusium. Now I do not dispute that Arruns or some other man from Clusium brought the Gauls to that city. But historians are in general agreement that the Gauls who fought at Clusium were not the first to cross the Alps. Indeed, the Gauls had come into Italy two hundred years before they attacked Clusium and before they captured Rome, nor were the people of Clusium the first Etruscans the Gallic armies attacked, for they had fought many times before with those who lived between the Apennines and the Alps.

Prior to Roman rule the power of the Etruscans extended far over land and sea. The names given to the upper and lower seas that surround Italy like an island are proof of how powerful they were, for the peoples of Italy call one the Tuscan Sea from the nation as a whole, the other the Adriatic from Atria, an Etruscan colony, while the Greeks call them the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic. And they populated the lands adjacent to both seas, founding twelve cities in each area, first settling the one on the near side of the Apennines facing the lower sea and later the one on the far side of the Apennines, sending out as many colonies as there were mother cities; these colonies occupied the entire area across the Po with the exception of the Veneti, who inhabit a corner of the Adriatic. They were undoubtedly also the founders of the Alpine peoples, especially the Raeti, whose location subsequently made them quite uncivilized, retaining nothing save their language, although that too became debased.

34. This is what we are told about the crossing of the Gauls into Italy: during the reign of Tarquinius Priscus at Rome, the chief power among the Celts, whose country comprises a third of Gaul, lay with the Bituriges, who used to supply the Celtic nation with its king. At that time his name was Ambigatus, pre-eminent for courage and the blessings of good fortune in private life and as a public figure. The population was so large and the soil so fertile that it scarcely seemed possible to keep such large numbers under control. When Ambigatus grew old and wished to unburden his kingdom of so many people, he announced that he would send forth Bellovesus and Segovesus, the adventurous sons of his sister, to settle in those lands the gods gave them by augury; they were instructed to take as many men as they liked so that none might withstand their coming.

To Segovesus the Hercynian forests then fell by lot,* to Bellovesus the gods gave the more promising road to Italy. He took the surplus population of the Celtic tribes: from the Bituriges, Arverni, Senones, Aedui, Amboni, Carnutes, and Aulerci.* Setting out with a great force of infantry and cavalry he came to the Tricastini. There the Alps confronted him. I do not wonder that they appeared impassable, since no one had as yet crossed them, as far back as memory goes, unless one chooses to believe in the fables concerning Hercules' exploits. The high mountains held the Gauls back, penned up, so to speak, and they looked for a route that would lead over the summits that touched the sky to another world beyond. A religious scruple also restrained them, when they heard that strangers seeking a place to settle were under attack by the tribe of the Salvi. These were the people of Massilia, who had come by ship from Phocaea.* This the Gauls thought an omen of their own aspirations, and so they gave help in order that the Massiliotes might, without interference by the Salvi, fortify the site they had first occupied on landing.

They themselves then passed through the Taurini and crossed the passes of the Julian Alps. After defeating the Etruscans in battle not far from the Ticinus River and on hearing that the land which they now occupied belonged to the Insubres, the same name as a tribe in the territory of the Aedui, they took this as an omen and founded a city, naming it Mediolanium.* 35. Then another band consisting of Cenomani, under the leadership of Elitovius, using the same pass as their predecessors and with the encouragement of Bellovesus, crossed the Alps and occupied the sites where the cities of Brixia and Verona now stand. The Libui were the next settlers, followed by the Salvi, in the territory around the Ticinus River near the ancient people of the Laevi Ligures. Then came the Boii and Lingones, who crossed over the Poenine Pass.* By this time, holding everything between the Po and the Alps, they crossed the Po by rafts, driving out not only the Etruscans but even the Umbri, but stopping on the far side of the Apennines. The Senones were the latest to arrive, settling in the territory between the Utens and Aesis rivers.* I find it was this tribe that came to Clusium and then to Rome, but it is uncertain whether they were alone or were helped by all the Gallic peoples of the Cisalpine region.

The people of Clusium were thoroughly frightened by the new war they faced, particularly the large numbers of the foe, their strange

appearance, and the kind of weapons they used—and they had heard of the frequent defeats suffered by the Etruscans living on both sides of the Po. And so, although they enjoyed no right of alliance or friendship with the Romans (except that they had not defended their kinsmen at Veii against the Romans), they sent envoys to Rome to seek help from the senate. They received no direct aid, but three envoys, the sons of Marcus Fabius Ambustus, were dispatched, who were instructed to urge the Gauls in the name of the senate and the Roman people not to attack the allies and friends of the Roman people, by whom they had not been injured; further, the Romans would be bound to come to their defence if the situation required; but it seemed better not to resort to arms, if this was possible, and as a new people to make the acquaintance of the Gauls in peace rather than in war.

36. It would have been a peaceable embassy had not the bellicose envoys behaved more like Gauls than Romans. After delivering their message in a meeting of the Gauls, they received the following response: although they were now learning of Rome for the first time, they were yet ready to believe that those whom the people of Clusium had called on in their hour of need were brave men; and because the Romans preferred to defend their allies against themselves by sending an embassy than resorting to arms, they would assuredly not reject the peace that was offered—provided that the people of Clusium ceded a part of their territory to the Gauls, who were in need of land, which the people of Clusium possessed in greater quantity than they could cultivate. Otherwise a peaceful solution was not possible. Furthermore, they wished to receive a response while the Romans were present and, should the land be denied them, they would fight in the presence of these same Romans, who could then report back how much the Gauls surpassed all other mortals in martial prowess. When the Romans asked what right they had to demand land belonging to others or to threaten war, and what business the Gauls had in Etruria in the first place, they received the menacing reply that right consisted in the weapons they carried and that all things belonged to those who had the courage to use them. And so, with feelings running high on both sides, they rushed to arms and battle was joined.

There the envoys took up arms, contrary to the law of nations, and the fates began to bring down ruin on the city of Rome. Nor

could what they did escape notice, since three of the noblest and bravest young Romans were fighting in the front ranks of the Etruscans, so conspicuous was the valour of the strangers. What is more, Quintus Fabius, riding far forward of the battleline, killed the Gallic commander by stabbing his lance through his side as he was charging ferociously into the very standards of the Etruscans. The Gauls recognized him as he gathered the spoils, and word was passed from one end of the battleline to the other that the envoy was the one responsible. Their anger against Clusium vanished; sounding the trumpet for retreat, they turned their menace upon the Romans. Some thought they should march on Rome at once, but the older men persuaded them first to dispatch envoys to complain of the injuries and demand that the Fabii be bound over to them, in accordance with the law of nations. After the Gallic envoys had set forth their complaints as instructed, the senators viewed what the Fabii had done with disapproval and thought the barbarians' demands were just, but favouritism kept them from issuing a decree embodying their true sentiments in opposition to men of such great nobility and influence. And so, in order that the blame for a possible defeat in a war with the Gauls not lay with themselves, they referred the decision concerning the Gauls' demands to the people, among whom wealth and popularity had so much more effect than those whose punishment they were asked to decide were elected military tribunes with consular power for the coming year. When the Gallic envoys heard this, they reacted with justifiable anger. Openly threatening war, they returned to their own people. Elected military tribunes along with the three Fabii were Quintus Sulpicius Longus, Quintus Servilius for the fourth time, and Publius Cornelius Maluginensis.

37. In face of the looming catastrophe—so completely does fortune blind us mortals when she wants to remove all obstacles to her growing power—the state that against Fidenae, Veii, and other nearby peoples named in many a crisis a dictator as a last resource looked on this occasion to no extraordinary command or safeguard, although they were facing an enemy hitherto unseen and unheard-of—one that had stirred up war from the ocean and the ends of the earth. The tribunes whose reckless behaviour had ignited the war were the heads of state; in conducting the levy they were no more thorough than if this had been an ordinary conflict, even making