

Module 9

Readings:

The Founding of Rome

Livy



P E N G U I N



C L A S S I C S

LIVY

The Early History of Rome

The Early History of Rome

Books I-V of
The History of Rome from Its Foundations

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PENGUIN BOOKS

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Published by the Penguin Group

Penguin Books Ltd, 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL,
England

Penguin Putnam Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, New
York 10014, USA

Penguin Books Australia Ltd, 250 Camberwell Road,
Camberwell, Victoria 3124, Australia

Penguin Books Canada Ltd, 10 Alcorn Avenue, Toronto,
Ontario, Canada M4V 3 B2

Penguin Books India (P) Ltd, 11 Community Centre,
Panchsheel Park, New Delhi - 110 017, India

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Roads, Albany, Auckland, New Zealand

Penguin Books (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd, 24 Sturdee Avenue,
Rosebank 2196, South Africa

Penguin Books Ltd, Registered Offices: 80 Strand,
London WC2R 0RL, England

www.penguin.com

This translation first published 1960

Reprinted with a new introduction 1971

Reprinted with additional material 2002

I

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BOOK ONE

Rome under the Kings

The task of writing a history of our nation from Rome's earliest days fills me, I confess, with some misgiving, and even were I confident in the value of my work, I should hesitate to say so. I am aware that for historians to make extravagant claims is, and always has been, all too common: every writer on history tends to look down his nose at his less cultivated predecessors, happily persuaded that he will better them in point of style, or bring new facts to light. But however that may be, I shall find satisfaction in contributing - not, I hope, ignobly - to the labour of putting on record the story of the greatest nation in the world. Countless others have written on this theme and it may be that I shall pass unnoticed amongst them; if so, I must comfort myself with the greatness and splendour of my rivals, whose work will rob my own of recognition.

My task, moreover, is an immensely laborious one. I shall have to go back more than seven hundred years, and trace my story from its small beginnings up to these recent times when its

ramifications are so vast that any adequate treatment is hardly possible. I am aware, too, that most readers will take less pleasure in my account of how Rome began and in her early history; they will wish to hurry on to more modern times and to read of the period, already a long one, in which the might of an imperial people is beginning to work its own ruin. My own feeling is different; I shall find antiquity a rewarding study, if only because, while I am absorbed in it, I shall be able to turn my eyes from the troubles which for so long have tormented the modern world, and to write without any of that over-anxious consideration which may well plague a writer on contemporary life, even if it does not lead him to conceal the truth.

Events before Rome was born or thought of have come to us in old tales with more of the charm of poetry than of a sound historical record, and such traditions I propose neither to affirm nor refute. There is no reason, I feel, to object when antiquity draws no hard line between the human and the supernatural: it adds dignity to the past, and, if any nation deserves the privilege of claiming a divine ancestry, that nation is our own; and so great is the glory won by the Roman people in their wars that, when they declare that Mars himself was their first parent and father of the man who founded their city, all the nations of the world might well allow the claim as readily as they accept Rome's imperial

dominion.

These, however, are comparatively trivial matters and I set little store by them. I invite the reader's attention to the much more serious consideration of the kind of lives our ancestors lived, of who were the men, and what the means both in politics and war by which Rome's power was first acquired and subsequently expanded; I would then have him trace the process of our moral decline, to watch, first, the sinking of the foundations of morality as the old teaching was allowed to lapse, then the rapidly increasing disintegration, then the final collapse of the whole edifice, and the dark dawning of our modern day when we can neither endure our vices nor face the remedies needed to cure them. The study of history is the best medicine for a sick mind; for in history you have a record of the infinite variety of human experience plainly set out for all to see; and in that record you can find for yourself and your country both examples and warnings; fine things to take as models, base things, rotten through and through, to avoid.

I hope my passion for Rome's past has not impaired my judgement; for I do honestly believe that no country has ever been greater or purer than ours or richer in good citizens and noble deeds; none has been free for so many generations from the vices of avarice and luxury; nowhere have thrift and plain living been for so long held in such esteem.

Indeed, poverty, with us, went hand in hand with contentment. Of late years wealth has made us greedy, and self-indulgence has brought us, through every form of sensual excess, to be, if I may so put it, in love with death both individual and collective.

But bitter comments of this sort are not likely to find favour, even when they have to be made. Let us have no more of them, at least at the beginning of our great story. On the contrary, I should prefer to borrow from the poets and begin with good omens and with prayers to all the host of heaven to grant a successful issue to the work which lies before me.

It is generally accepted that after the fall of Troy the Greeks kept up hostilities against all the Trojans except Aeneas and Antenor. These two men had worked consistently for peace and the restoration of Helen, and for that reason, added to certain personal connections of long standing, they were allowed to go unmolested. Each had various adventures: Antenor joined forces with the Eneti, who had been driven out of Paphlagonia and, having lost their king, Pylaemenes, at Troy, wanted someone to lead them as well as somewhere to settle. He penetrated to the head of the Adriatic and expelled the Euganei, a tribe living between the Alps and the sea, and occupied that territory with a mixed population of Trojans and Eneti. The spot where they landed is called Troy and the neighbouring country the Trojan district. The combined peoples

came to be known as Venetians.

Aeneas was forced into exile by similar troubles; he, however, was destined to lay the foundations of a greater future. He went first to Macedonia, then in his search for a new home sailed to Sicily, and from Sicily to the territory of Laurentum. This part of Italy too, like the spot where Antenor landed, is known as Troy. Aeneas's men in the course of their almost interminable wanderings had lost all they possessed except their ships and their swords; once on shore, they set about scouring the countryside for what they could find, and while thus engaged they were met by a force of armed natives who, under their king Latinus, came hurrying up from the town and the surrounding country to protect themselves from the invaders. There are two versions of what happened next: according to one, there was a fight in which Latinus was beaten; he then came to terms with Aeneas and cemented the alliance by giving him his daughter in marriage. According to the other, the battle was about to begin when Latinus, before the trumpets could sound the charge, came forward with his captains and invited the foreign leaders to a parley. He then asked Aeneas who his men were and where they had come from, why they had left their homes and what was their object in landing on Laurentian territory. He was told in reply that the men were Trojans, their leader Aeneas, the son of Anchises and Venus; that their native town

had been burnt to the ground and now they were fugitives in search of some place where they could build a new town to settle in. Latinus, hearing their story, was so deeply impressed by the noble bearing of the strangers and by their leader's high courage either for peace or war, that he gave Aeneas his hand in pledge of friendship from that moment onward. A treaty was made; the two armies exchanged signs of mutual respect; Aeneas accepted the hospitality of Latinus, who gave him his daughter in marriage, thus further confirming the treaty of alliance by a private and domestic bond solemnly entered into in the presence of the Gods of his hearth.

The Trojans could no longer doubt that at last their travels were over and that they had found a permanent home. They began to build a settlement, which Aeneas named Lavinium after his wife Lavinia. A child was soon born of the marriage: a boy, who was given the name Ascanius.

The Trojans and the Latins were soon jointly involved in war. Turnus, prince of the Rutuli, to whom Latinus's daughter Lavinia had been pledged before Aeneas's arrival, angered by the insult of having to step down in favour of a stranger, attacked the combined forces of Aeneas and Latinus. Both sides suffered in the subsequent struggle: the Rutuli were defeated, but the victors lost their leader Latinus. Turnus and his people, in their anxiety for the future, then looked for help to Mezentius, king

of the rich and powerful Etruscans, whose seat of government was at Caere, at that time a wealthy town. Mezentius needed little persuasion to join the Rutuli, as from the outset he had been far from pleased by the rise of the new settlement, and now felt that the Trojan power was growing much more rapidly than was safe for its neighbours. In this dangerous situation Aeneas conferred the native name of Latins upon his own people; the sharing of a common name as well as a common polity would, he felt, strengthen the bond between the two peoples. As a result of this step the original settlers were no less loyal to their king Aeneas than were the Trojans themselves. Trojans and Latins were rapidly becoming one people, and this gave Aeneas confidence to make an active move against the Etruscans, in spite of their great strength. Etruria, indeed, had at this time both by sea and land filled the whole length of Italy from the Alps to the Sicilian strait with the noise of her name; none the less Aeneas refused to act on the defensive and marched out to meet the enemy. The Latins were victorious, and for Aeneas the battle was the last of his labours in this world. He lies buried on the river Numicus. Was he man or god? However it be, men call him Jupiter Indiges - the local Jove.

Aeneas's son Ascanius was still too young for a position of authority; Lavinia, however, was a woman of great character, and acted as regent until

Ascanius came of age and was able to assume power as the successor of his father and grandfather. There is some doubt - and no one can pretend to certainty on something so deeply buried in the mists of time - about who precisely this Ascanius was. Was it the one I have been discussing, or was it an elder brother, the son of Creusa, who was born before the sack of Troy and was with Aeneas in his escape from the burning city - the Iulus, in fact, whom the Julian family claim as their eponym? It is at any rate certain that Aeneas was his father, and - whatever the answer to the other question may be - it can be taken as a fact that he left Lavinium to found a new settlement. Lavinium was by then a populous and, for those days, a rich and flourishing town, and Ascanius left it in charge of his mother (or stepmother, if you will) and went off to found his new settlement on the Alban hills. This town, strung out as it was along a ridge, was named Alba Longa. Its foundation took place about thirty years after that of Lavinium; but the Latins had already grown so strong, especially since the defeat of the Etruscans, that neither Mezentius, the Etruscan king, nor any other neighbouring people dared to attack them, even when Aeneas died and the control of things passed temporarily into the hands of a woman, and Ascanius was still a child learning the elements of kingship. By the terms of the treaty between the Latins and Etruscans the river Albula (now the

Tiber) became the boundary between the two territories.

Ascanius was succeeded by his son Silvius - 'born in the woods' - and he by his son Aeneas Silvius, whose heir was Latinius Silvius. By him several new settlements were made, and given the name of Old Latins. All the kings of Alba subsequently kept the cognomen Silvius. Next in succession to Latinius was Alba; then Atys, then Capys, then Capetus, then Tiberinus - who was drowned crossing the Albula and gave that river the name by which succeeding generations have always known it. Tiberinus was succeeded by Agrippa, Agrippa by his son Romulus Silvius, who was struck by lightning and bequeathed his power to Aventinus. Aventinus was buried on the hill, now a part of the city of Rome, and still bearing his name. Proca, the next king, had two sons, Numitor and Amulius, to the elder of whom, Numitor, he left the hereditary realm of the Silvian family; that, at least, was his intention, but respect for seniority was flouted, the father's will ignored and Amulius drove out his brother and seized the throne. One act of violence led to another; he proceeded to murder his brother's male children, and made his niece, Rhea Silvia, a Vestal, ostensibly to do her honour, but actually by condemning her to perpetual virginity to preclude the possibility of issue.

But (I must believe) it was already written in the

book of fate that this great city of ours should arise, and the first steps be taken to the founding of the mightiest empire the world has known - next to God's. The Vestal Virgin was raped and gave birth to twin boys. Mars, she declared, was their father - perhaps she believed it, perhaps she was merely hoping by the pretence to palliate her guilt. Whatever the truth of the matter, neither gods nor men could save her or her babes from the savage hands of the king. The mother was bound and flung into prison; the boys, by the king's order, were condemned to be drowned in the river. Destiny, however, intervened; the Tiber had overflowed its banks; because of the flooded ground it was impossible to get to the actual river, and the men entrusted to do the deed thought that the flood-water, sluggish though it was, would serve their purpose. Accordingly they made shift to carry out the king's orders by leaving the infants on the edge of the first flood-water they came to, at the spot where now stands the Ruminant fig-tree - said to have once been known as the fig-tree of Romulus. In those days the country thereabouts was all wild and uncultivated, and the story goes that when the basket in which the infants had been exposed was left high and dry by the receding water, a she-wolf, coming down from the neighbouring hills to quench her thirst, heard the children crying and made her way to where they were. She offered them her teats to

suck and treated them with such gentleness that Faustulus, the king's herdsman, found her licking them with her tongue. Faustulus took them to his hut and gave them to his wife Larentia to nurse. Some think that the origin of this fable was the fact that Larentia was a common whore and was called Wolf by the shepherds.

Such, then, was the birth and upbringing of the twins. By the time they were grown boys, they employed themselves actively on the farm and with the flocks and began to go hunting in the woods; their strength grew with their resolution, until not content only with the chase they took to attacking robbers and sharing their stolen goods with their friends the shepherds. Other young fellows joined them, and they and the shepherds would fleet the time together, now in serious talk, now in jollity.

Even in that remote age the Palatine hill (which got its name from the Arcadian settlement Pallanteum) is supposed to have been the scene of the gay festival of the Lupercalia. The Arcadian Evander, who many years before held that region, is said to have instituted there the old Arcadian practice of holding an annual festival in honour of Lycean Pan (afterwards called Inuus by the Romans), in which young men ran about naked and disported themselves in various pranks and fooleries. The day of the festival was common knowledge, and on one occasion when it was in full

swing some brigands, incensed at the loss of their ill-gotten gains, laid a trap for Romulus and Remus. Romulus successfully defended himself, but Remus was caught and handed over to Amulius. The brigands laid a complaint against their prisoner, the main charge being that he and his brother were in the habit of raiding Numitor's land with an organized gang of ruffians and stealing the cattle. Thereupon Remus was handed over for punishment to Numitor.

Now Faustulus had suspected all along that the boys he was bringing up were of royal blood. He knew that two infants had been exposed by the king's orders, and the rescue of his own two fitted perfectly in point of time. Hitherto, however, he had been unwilling to declare what he knew, until either a suitable opportunity occurred or circumstances compelled him. Now the truth could no longer be concealed, so in his alarm he told Romulus the whole story; Numitor, too, when he had Remus in custody and was told that the brothers were twins, was set thinking about his grandsons; the young men's age and character, so different from the lowly born, confirmed his suspicions; and further inquiries led him to the same conclusion, until he was on the point of acknowledging Remus. The net was closing in, and Romulus acted. He was not strong enough for open hostilities, so he instructed a number of the herdsmen to meet at the king's house by different

routes at a preordained time; this was done, and with the help of Remus, at the head of another body of men, the king was surprised and killed. Before the first blows were struck, Numitor gave it out that an enemy had broken into the town and attacked the palace; he then drew off all the men of military age to garrison the inner fortress, and, as soon as he saw Romulus and Remus, their purpose accomplished, coming to congratulate him, he summoned a meeting of the people and laid the facts before it: Amulius's crime against himself, the birth of his grandsons, and the circumstances attending it, how they were brought up and ultimately recognized, and, finally, the murder of the king for which he himself assumed responsibility. The two brothers marched through the crowd at the head of their men and saluted their grandfather as king, and by a shout of unanimous consent his royal title was confirmed.

Romulus and Remus, after the control of Alba had passed to Numitor in the way I have described, were suddenly seized by an urge to found a new settlement on the spot where they had been left to drown as infants and had been subsequently brought up. There was, in point of fact, already an excess of population at Alba, what with the Albans themselves, the Latins, and the addition of the herdsmen: enough, indeed, to justify the hope that Alba and Lavinium would one day be small places compared with the proposed new settlement.

Unhappily the brothers' plans for the future were marred by the same source which had divided their grandfather and Amulius - jealousy and ambition. A disgraceful quarrel arose from a matter in itself trivial. As the brothers were twins and all question of seniority was thereby precluded, they determined to ask the tutelary gods of the countryside to declare by augury which of them should govern the new town once it was founded, and give his name to it. For this purpose Romulus took the Palatine hill and Remus the Aventine as their respective stations from which to observe the auspices. Remus, the story goes, was the first to receive a sign - six vultures; and no sooner was this made known to the people than double the number of birds appeared to Romulus. The followers of each promptly saluted their master as king, one side basing its claim upon priority, the other upon number. Angry words ensued, followed all too soon by blows, and in the course of the affray Remus was killed. There is another story, a commoner one, according to which Remus, by way of jeering at his brother, jumped over the half-built walls of the new settlement, whereupon Romulus killed him in a fit of rage, adding the threat, 'So perish whoever else shall overleap my battlements.'

This, then, was how Romulus obtained the sole power. The newly built city was called by its founder's name.

Romulus's first act was to fortify the Palatine,

the scene of his own upbringing. He offered sacrifice to the gods, using the Alban forms except in the case of Hercules, where he followed the Greek ritual as instituted by Evander. According to the old tale, Hercules after killing Geryon came into these parts driving his oxen. The oxen were exceedingly beautiful, and close to the Tiber, at the spot where he had swum across with them, he came upon a grassy meadow; here, weary with walking, he lay down to rest and allowed the beasts to refresh themselves with the rich pasture. Being drowsy with food and drink he fell asleep, and, while he slept, a shepherd of that region, a fierce giant named Cacus, saw the oxen and was instantly taken by their beauty. Purposing to steal them, he was aware that, if he drove them in the ordinary way into his cave, their tracks could not fail to guide their master thither as soon as he began his search; so choosing the finest from the herd he dragged them backwards by their tails and hid them in his cavern. Hercules awoke at dawn, and casting his eye over the herd noticed that some of the animals were missing. He went at once to the nearest cave on the chance that there were tracks leading into it, but found that they all led outwards, apparently to nowhere. It was very odd; so full of vague misgivings he started driving the remainder of his herd away from this eerie spot. Some of the beasts, naturally enough, missed their companions and began to low, and there came an

answering low from the cave. Hercules turned. He walked towards the cave, and Cacus, when he saw him coming, tried to keep him off. But all in vain; Hercules struck him with his club, and the robber, vainly calling upon his friends for help, fell dead.

In those days Evander held sway over that part of the country. He was an exile from the Peloponnese and his position depended less upon sovereign power than upon personal influence; he was revered for his invention of letters - a strange and wonderful thing to the rude uncultivated men amongst whom he dwelt - and, still more, on account of his mother Carmenta, who was supposed to be divine and before the coming of the Sibyl into Italy had been revered by the people of those parts as a prophetess.

On the occasion of which I am writing Evander could not but observe the shepherds who were excitedly mobbing the unknown killer. He joined them, and upon being informed of the crime and its cause, directed his gaze upon the stranger. Seeing him to be of more than human stature and of a preternatural dignity of bearing, he asked him who he was, and, hearing his name and parentage and country, cried: 'Hercules, son of Jupiter, I bid you welcome. You are the subject of my mother's prophecy; for she, a true prophet, declared that you would increase the number of the Gods, and that here an altar would be dedicated to you, and the

nation destined to be the mightiest in the world would one day name it Greatest of Altars and serve it with your own proper rites.’

Hercules gave him his hand and replied that he accepted the inspired words and would himself assist the course of destiny by building and consecrating an altar. A splendid beast was chosen from the herd, and on the new altar sacrifice, for the first time, was offered to Hercules; the rite itself, and the subsequent feast, being administered by members of the two most distinguished local families, the Potitii and Pinarii.

It so happened that the Pinarii were late for the feast. The Potitii were there in time, and were served in consequence with the entrails of the victim; the Pinarii came in only for the remainder. From this circumstance the custom became established that no member of the Pinarian family, throughout its history, was ever served with his portion of entrails at a sacrifice to Hercules. The Potitii were taught by Evander, and furnished the priests of this cult for many generations, until the solemn duty they had so long performed was delegated to public slaves and the family became extinct. This was the only foreign religious rite adopted by Romulus; by so doing he showed, even then, his respect for that immortality which is the prize of valour. His own destiny was already leading him to the same reward.

Having performed with proper ceremony his

religious duties, he summoned his subjects and gave them laws, without which the creation of a unified body politic would not have been possible. In his view the rabble over whom he ruled could be induced to respect the law only if he himself adopted certain visible signs of power; he proceeded, therefore, to increase the dignity and impressiveness of his position by various devices, of which the most important was the creation of the twelve lictors to attend his person. Some have fancied that he made the lictors twelve in number because the vultures, in the augury, had been twelve; personally, however, I incline to follow the opinion which finds for this an Etruscan origin. We know that the State Chair - the 'curule' chair - and the purple-bordered toga came to us from Etruria; and it is probable that the idea of attendants, as well as, in this case, of their number, came across the border from Etruria too. The number twelve was due to the fact that the twelve Etruscan communities united to elect a king, and each contributed one lictor.

Meanwhile Rome was growing. More and more ground was coming within the circuit of its walls. Indeed, the rapid expansion of the enclosed area was out of proportion to the actual population, and evidently indicated an eye to the future. In antiquity the founder of a new settlement, in order to increase its population, would as a matter of course shark up a lot of homeless and destitute folk and pretend that

they were 'born of earth' to be his progeny; Romulus now followed a similar course: to help fill his big new town, he threw open, in the ground - now enclosed - between the two copses as you go up the Capitoline hill, a place of asylum for fugitives. Hither fled for refuge all the rag-tag-and-bobtail from the neighbouring peoples: some free, some slaves, and all of them wanting nothing but a fresh start. That mob was the first real addition to the City's strength, the first step to her future greatness.

Having now adequate numbers, Romulus proceeded to temper strength with policy and turned his attention to social organization. He created a hundred senators - fixing that number either because it was enough for his purpose, or because there were no more than a hundred who were in a position to be made 'Fathers', as they were called, or Heads of Clans. The title of 'fathers' (patres) undoubtedly was derived from their rank, and their descendants were called 'patricians'.

Rome was now strong enough to challenge any of her neighbours; but, great though she was, her greatness seemed likely to last only for a single generation. There were not enough women, and that, added to the fact that there was no intermarriage with neighbouring communities, ruled out any hope of maintaining the level of population. Romulus accordingly, on the advice of his senators, sent representatives to the various peoples across his

borders to negotiate alliances and the right of intermarriage for the newly established state. The envoys were instructed to point out that cities, like everything else, have to begin small; in course of time, helped by their own worth and the favour of heaven, some, at least, grow rich and famous, and of these Rome would assuredly be one: Gods had blessed her birth, and the valour of her people would not fail in the days to come. The Romans were men, as they were; why, then, be reluctant to intermarry with them?

Romulus's overtures were nowhere favourably received; it was clear that everyone despised the new community, and at the same time feared, both for themselves and for posterity, the growth of this new power in their midst. More often than not his envoys were dismissed with the question of whether Rome had thrown open her doors to female, as well as to male, runaways and vagabonds, as that would evidently be the most suitable way for Romans to get wives. The young Romans naturally resented this jibe, and a clash seemed inevitable. Romulus, seeing it must come, set the scene for it with elaborate care. Deliberately hiding his resentment, he prepared to celebrate the Consualia, a solemn festival in honour of Neptune, patron of the horse, and sent notice of his intention all over the neighbouring countryside. The better to advertise it, his people lavished upon their preparations for the spectacle all the resources

- such as they were in those days - at their command. On the appointed day crowds flocked to Rome, partly, no doubt, out of sheer curiosity to see the new town. The majority were from the neighbouring settlements of Caenina, Crustumium, and Antennae, but all the Sabines were there too, with their wives and children. Many houses offered hospitable entertainment to the visitors; they were invited to inspect the fortifications, layout, and numerous buildings of the town, and expressed their surprise at the rapidity of its growth. Then the great moment came; the show began, and nobody had eyes or thoughts for anything else. This was the Romans' opportunity: at a given signal all the able-bodied men burst through the crowd and seized the young women. Most of the girls were the prize of whoever got hold of them first, but a few conspicuously handsome ones had been previously marked down for leading senators, and these were brought to their houses by special gangs. There was one young woman of much greater beauty than the rest; and the story goes that she was seized by a party of men belonging to the household of someone called Thalassius, and in reply to the many questions about whose house they were taking her to, they, to prevent anyone else laying hands upon her, kept shouting, 'Thalassius, Thalassius!' This was the origin of the use of this word at weddings.

By this act of violence the fun of the festival

broke up in panic. The girls' unfortunate parents made good their escape, not without bitter comments on the treachery of their hosts and heartfelt prayers to the God to whose festival they had come in all good faith in the solemnity of the occasion, only to be grossly deceived. The young women were no less indignant and as full of foreboding for the future.

Romulus, however, reassured them. Going from one to another he declared that their own parents were really to blame, in that they had been too proud to allow intermarriage with their neighbours; nevertheless, they need not fear; as married women they would share all the fortunes of Rome, all the privileges of the community, and they would be bound to their husbands by the dearest bond of all, their children. He urged them to forget their wrath and give their hearts to those to whom chance had given their bodies. Often, he said, a sense of injury yields in the end to affection, and their husbands would treat them all the more kindly in that they would try, each one of them, not only to fulfil their own part of the bargain but also to make up to their wives for the homes and parents they had lost. The men, too, played their part: they spoke honeyed words and vowed that it was passionate love which had prompted their offence. No plea can better touch a woman's heart.

The women in course of time lost their

resentment; but no sooner had they learned to accept their lot than their parents began to stir up trouble in earnest. To excite sympathy they went about dressed in mourning and pouring out their grief in tears and lamentations. Not content with confining these demonstrations within the walls of their own towns, they marched in mass to the house of Titus Tatius the Sabine king, the greatest name in that part of the country. Official embassies, too, from various settlements, waited upon him.

It seemed to the people of Caenina, Crustumium, and Antemnae, who had been involved in the trouble, that Tatius and the Sabines were unduly dilatory, so the three communities resolved to take action on their own. Of the three, however, Crustumium and Antemnae proved too slow to satisfy the impatient wrath of their partner, with the result that the men of Caenina invaded Roman territory without any support. Scattered groups of them were doing what damage they could, when Romulus, at the head of his troops, appeared upon the scene. A few blows were enough and defeat soon taught them that angry men must also be strong, if they would achieve their purpose. The Romans pursued the routed enemy; Romulus himself cut down their prince and stripped him of his arms, then, their leader dead, took the town at the first assault. The victorious army returned, and Romulus proceeded to dispose of the spoils.

Magnificent in action, he was no less eager for popular recognition and applause; he took the armour which he had stripped from the body of the enemy commander, fixed it on a frame made for the purpose, and carried it in his own hands up to the Capitol, where, by an oak which the shepherds regarded as a sacred tree, he laid it down as an offering to Jupiter. At the same time he determined on the site of a plot of ground to be consecrated to the God, and uttered this prayer: 'Jupiter Feretrius (such was the new title he bestowed), to you I bring these spoils of victory, a king's armour taken by a king; and within the bounds already clear to my mind's eye I dedicate to you a holy precinct where, in days to come, following my example, other men shall lay the "spoils of honour", stripped from the bodies of commanders or kings killed by their own hands.' Such was the origin of the first temple consecrated in Rome. The gods ordained that Romulus, when he declared that others should bring their spoils thither, should not speak in vain; it was their pleasure, too, that the glory of that offering should not be cheapened by too frequent occurrence. The distinction of winning the 'spoils of honour' has been rare indeed: in the countless battles of succeeding years it has been won on two occasions only.

These proceedings on the Capitol had temporarily drawn the Romans from their farms,

and a force from Antemnae took the opportunity of making a raid. Once again Roman troops pounced. The scattered groups of raiders were taken by surprise; a single charge sufficed to put them to flight, their town was taken, and Romulus had a double victory to his credit. His wife Hersilia had long been pestered by the young women who had been carried off at the festival, so she took this opportunity, when he was congratulating himself on his success, to ask him to pardon the girls' parents and allow them to come and live in Rome. It would, she urged, form a strong and valuable bond of union. The request was readily granted.

Romulus's next move was against the men of Crustumium, who were on the march against him; but the defeat of their neighbours had already undermined their confidence, and they were even more easily broken up. Settlers were sent out both to Antemnae and Crustumium, the fertility of the soil in the latter attracting the greater number of volunteers. On the other hand a number of people, chiefly parents or relatives of the captured women, moved from Crustumium to Rome. The last to attack Rome were the Sabines, and the ensuing struggle was far more serious than the previous ones. The enemy gave no notice of their intentions and acted upon no hasty impulse of revenge or cupidity. Their plans were carefully laid, and backed by treachery. Spurius Tarpeius, the commander of the

Roman citadel, had a daughter, a young girl, who, when she had gone outside the walls to fetch water for a sacrifice, was bribed by Tatius, the king of the Sabines, to admit a party of his soldiers into the fortress. Once inside, the men crushed her to death under their shields, to make it look as if they had taken the place by storm - or, it may be, to show by harsh example that there must be no trusting a traitor. There is also a story that this girl had demanded as the price of her services 'What they had on their shield-arms'. Now the Sabines in those days used to wear on their left arms heavy gold bracelets and fine jewelled rings - so they kept their bargain: paying, however, not, as the girl hoped, with golden bracelets, but with their shields. Some say that after bargaining for what they 'had on their left arms' she did actually demand their shields, and, being proved a traitor, was killed, as it were, by the very coin that paid her.

The Sabines were now in possession of the citadel. Next day the Roman troops occupied all the ground between the Palatine and Capitoline hills and there waited till they could tolerate the situation no longer. Fiercely determined to recover the citadel, they pressed forward to the attack. This was the signal for the enemy to move down to meet them. The first blows were struck by the rival champions Mettius Curtius, the Sabine, and Hostius Hostilius of Rome. The Romans were in the worse

position, but they were kept going for a time by the great gallantry of Hostius; when he fell, their resistance at once collapsed and they retreated in disorder to the Palatine Old Gate. Romulus himself was swept along by the fugitive rabble, but, as he rode, he waved his sword above his head and shouted, 'Hear me, O Jupiter! At the bidding of your eagles I laid the foundations of Rome here on the Palatine. Our fortress is in Sabine hands, basely betrayed - thence are they coming sword in hand across the valley against us. Father of Gods and men, suffer them not to set foot on the spot where now we stand. Banish fear from Roman hearts and stop their shameful retreat. I vow a temple here - to you, O Jupiter, Stayer of Flight - that men may remember hereafter that Rome in her trouble was saved by your help.' It was almost as if he felt that his prayer was granted: a moment later, 'Turn on them, Romans,' he cried, 'and fight once more. Jupiter himself commands it.' The Romans obeyed what they believed to be the voice from heaven. They rallied, and Romulus thrust his way forward to the van.

Metius Curtius had led the Sabine advance down the slope from the citadel. He had driven the Roman troops back in disorder over the ground today occupied by the Forum, and nearly reached the gate of the Palatine. 'Comrades,' he cried, 'we have beaten our treacherous hosts - our feeble foes.

They know now that catching girls is a different matter from fighting against men!’ The boast had hardly left his lips when Romulus, with a handful of his best and most courageous troops, was on him. The fact that Mettius was mounted proved a disadvantage to him; he turned and galloped off, the Romans in pursuit, and this bold stroke on the part of their leader inspired the Roman troops elsewhere on the field to make a fresh effort and to rout their opponents.

The yells of the pursuers so scared Mettius’s horse that he took the bit between his teeth and plunged with his rider into the swamps. The Sabines were aghast; the imminent threat to their champion for the moment diverted them from the work in hand, and they tried to help him by shouting advice and signalling, until at last by a supreme effort he struggled out to safety. The battle was then renewed in the valley between the two hills, and this time the Romans had the best of it.

This was the moment when the Sabine women, the original cause of the quarrel, played their decisive part. The dreadful situation in which they found themselves banished their natural timidity and gave them courage to intervene. With loosened hair and rent garments they braved the flying spears and thrust their way in a body between the embattled armies. They parted the angry combatants; they besought their fathers on the one side, their husbands

on the other, to spare themselves the curse of shedding kind red blood. 'We are mothers now,' they cried; 'our children are your sons - your grandsons: do not put on them the stain of parricide. If our marriage - if the relationship between you - is hateful to you, turn your anger against us. We are the cause of strife; on our account our husbands and fathers lie wounded or dead, and we would rather die ourselves than live on either widowed or orphaned.' The effect of the appeal was immediate and profound. Silence fell and not a man moved. A moment later the rival captains stepped forward to conclude a peace. Indeed, they went further: the two states were united under a single government, with Rome as the seat of power. Thus the population of Rome was doubled, and the Romans, as a gesture to the Sabines, called themselves Quirites, after the Sabine town of Cures. In memory of the battle the stretch of shallow water where Curtius and his horse first struggled from the deep swamps into safety, was named Curtius's Lake.

This happy and unlooked-for end to a bitter war strengthened the bond between the Sabine women and their parents and husbands. Romulus moreover marked his own special awareness of this deepened feeling by giving the women's names to the thirty wards into which he then divided the population. No doubt there were more than thirty of the women; but it is not known on what principle

they were selected to give their names - whether it was by lot, or age, or their own or their husbands' rank. At the same time three centuries of knights were created, the Rammenses named after Romulus, the Titienses after Tatius, and the Luceres, the origin of whose name is uncertain. As a result of these measures the joint rule of the two kings was brought into harmony.

Some years later the kinsmen of Tatius offered violence to some Laurentian envoys. The Laurentian people claimed redress under what passed in those days for international law, and Tatius allowed the ties of blood to influence his decision. The result of this was that he drew their revenge upon himself: he was murdered in a riot at Lavinium, whither he had gone to celebrate the annual sacrifice. Romulus is said to have felt less distress at his death than was strictly proper: possibly the joint reign was not, in fact, entirely harmonious; possibly he felt that Tatius deserved what he got. But whatever the reason, he refused to go to war, and, to wipe out the double stain of Tatius's murder and the insult to the envoys, renewed the pact between Rome and Lavinium.

Thus there was peace with Lavinium, as welcome as it was unexpected; all the same, Rome was at once involved in hostilities with an enemy almost at the city gates. This time it was the men of Fidenae, who, in alarm at the rapid growth of a rival

on their very doorstep, decided to take the offensive and to nip its power in the bud. They dispatched a force to devastate the country between the two towns; then, turning left (the other way was barred by the river), carried on their work amongst the farms. The men working on the farms fled in sudden alarm and confusion to the protection of the town, and the arrival of this mob brought the first news of the raid. Romulus acted promptly. With the enemy so close delay was dangerous. He marched out at the head of his troops and took up a position about a mile from Fidenae, where he left a small holding force. Of his main body he ordered a part to lie in ambush where dense undergrowth afforded cover, while with the rest, the greater number, and all his mounted troops he challenged the enemy with a feint attack, riding with his cavalry right up to the gates of Fidenae. The ruse succeeded; the enemy were drawn, and the cavalry skirmish lent an air of genuineness to the subsequent Roman withdrawal of their mounted troops, which deliberately broke discipline as if undecided whether to fight or run. Then, when the Roman foot also began to give way, the deluded enemy came pouring en masse from behind their defences, flung themselves with blind fury upon their retreating enemy, and were led straight into the ambush. Their flanks were promptly attacked by the Roman troops there concealed. At the same moment the standards of the holding force left

behind by Romulus were seen to be advancing, and these combined threats proved too much for the Fidenates, who began a hurried retreat before Romulus and his mounted men even had time to wheel to the attack. A moment before, the Fidenates had been following up a feigned withdrawal; now, in good earnest and far greater disorder, they were themselves on the run for the protection of their own walls. But they were not destined to escape: the Romans in hot pursuit burst into the town close on their heels, before the gates could be shut against them.

The war fever soon spread to Veii, which, like Fidenae, was an Etruscan town. It was also a close neighbour of Rome, and the danger of such propinquity in the event of Rome proving hostile to all her neighbouring communities was a further exacerbation. Accordingly she sent a raiding force into Roman territory. It was not an organized movement; the raiders took up no regular position, but simply picked up what they could from the countryside and returned without waiting for countermeasures from Rome. The Romans, however, on finding them still in their territory, crossed the Tiber fully prepared for a decisive struggle, and assumed a position with a view to an assault upon the town. At the news of their approach the Veientes took the field, to fight it out in the open rather than be shut up within their walls and forced

to stand a siege. In the fight which ensued Romulus used no strategy; the sheer power of his veteran troops sufficed for victory, and he pursued the retreating enemy to the walls of Veii. The town itself was strongly fortified and well sited for defence; Romulus, accordingly, made no attempt to take it, but contented himself on the return march with wasting the cultivated land, more by way of revenge than for what he could take from it. The loss the Veientes suffered from the devastation did as much as their defeat in the field to secure their submission and they sent envoys to Rome to treat for peace. They were mulcted of a part of their territory and granted a truce for a hundred years.

Such is the story of Rome's military and political achievements during the reign of Romulus. All of them chime well enough with the belief in his divine birth and the divinity ascribed to him after his death. One need but recall the vigour he displayed in recovering his ancestral throne; his wisdom in founding Rome and bringing her to strength by the arts of both war and peace. It was to him and no one else that she owed the power which enabled her to enjoy untroubled tranquillity for the next forty years.

Great though Romulus was, he was better loved by the commons than by the senate, and best of all by the army. He maintained, in peace as well as in war, a personal armed guard of three hundred men, whom he called *Celeres* - 'the Swift'.

Such, then, were the deeds of Romulus, and they will never grow old. One day while he was reviewing his troops on the Campus Martius near the marsh of Capra, a storm burst, with violent thunder. A cloud enveloped him, so thick that it hid him from the eyes of everyone present; and from that moment he was never seen again upon earth.

The troops, who had been alarmed by the sudden storm, soon recovered when it passed over and the sun came out again. Then they saw that the throne was empty, and, ready though they were to believe the senators, who had been standing at the king's side and now declared that he had been carried up on high by a whirlwind, they none the less felt like children bereft of a father and for a long time stood in sorrowful silence. Then a few voices began to proclaim Romulus's divinity; the cry was taken up, and at last every man present hailed him as a god and son of a god, and prayed to him to be for ever gracious and to protect his children. However, even on this great occasion there were, I believe, a few dissentients who secretly maintained that the king had been torn to pieces by the senators. At all events the story got about, though in veiled terms; but it was not important, as awe, and admiration for Romulus's greatness, set the seal upon the other version of his end, which was, moreover, given further credit by the timely action of a certain Julius Proculus, a man, we are told,

honoured for his wise counsel on weighty matters. The loss of the king had left the people in an uneasy mood and suspicious of the senators, and Proculus, aware of the prevalent temper, conceived the shrewd idea of addressing the Assembly. ‘Romulus,’ he declared, ‘the father of our City, descended from heaven at dawn this morning and appeared to me. In awe and reverence I stood before him, praying for permission to look upon his face without sin. “Go,” he said, “and tell the Romans that by heaven’s will my Rome shall be capital of the world. Let them learn to be soldiers. Let them know, and teach their children, that no power on earth can stand against Roman arms.” Having spoken these words, he was taken up again into the sky.’

Proculus’s story had a most remarkable effect; the army and commons, cruelly distressed at the loss of their king, were much comforted once they were assured of his immortality.

The senators were soon quarrelling over the succession to the throne. It was a rivalry of factions, not of individuals, for Rome was still too young to have produced any men of outstanding eminence. The Sabine element wanted a king of Sabine blood; for there had not been one since the death of Tattius and they were afraid that in consequence, and in spite of their equal political rights, they might lose their title to the sovereignty; the Roman element regarded the prospect of a foreigner on the throne