ered as the shadows of ancient virtue, after the substance had long perished. Such was the case with regard to the ceremonies we have mentioned. They still continued in observance after luxury and debauchery had reached their utmost height; but all those ideas of religion which had been interwoven with them were gone for ever.

It would be a task at once disagreeable and unprofitable to describe minutely those excesses which are painted in the strongest and often the most disgusting colors by the ancient writers, both satirists and historians, or to dwell on the intemperance of those degraded times when, as Livy tells us, "a cook, who by their frugal ancestors was looked upon as the vilest and meanest of slaves, was considered as an officer of high importance, and that trade dignified by the name of an art, which before was regarded as the most servile drudgery."

It was a general custom, in preparing for a luxurious meal, to take a vomit a short time before sitting down to table. This was not regarded as a mark either of gluttony or epicurism, but was held to be done in compliment to the entertainer, that his guests might be enabled to carry off a greater quantity of his good fare. When Julius Cæsar paid a visit of reconcilement to Cicero by inviting himself to sup with him, he took care to let Cicero know that he had taken a vomit before hand, and was resolved to make a most enormous meal — and Cicero tells us he kept his word, which, for his own part, he took very kindly, and as a mark of Cæsar's high politeness. (Cic. Epist. ad Attic. 13, 52.)

Compared with that of the Romans, the luxury of the moderns would scarcely deserve the name of intemperance. Before the principal meal was placed on the table, it was customary to present an *antecœnium* or collation, which consisted of pickles and spices, to provoke and sharpen the appetite. The thirst excited by this prelude to more serious occupation was allayed by a mixture of wine and honey, which they termed *promulsio*, and the stomach being thus prepared, the supper itself was presented, after a short interval. The expense ridiculously bestowed on these entertainments, and the labor employed in collecting the rarest and most costly articles of food, exceed all belief. In this, as indeed in every other species of luxury, there was the most capricious refinement of extravagance. Suetonius mentions a supper given to Vitellius by his brother, in which, among other articles, there were 2000 of the choicest fishes (*lectissimorum piscium*,) 7000 of the most delicate birds—one dish, from its size and capacity, was named the *ægis*, or *shield of Minerva*. It was filled chiefly with the livers of *scari* (a delicate species of fish,) the brains of pheasants and peacocks, the tongues of parrots (imagined, probably, to be tender from their much chattering,) and the bellies of lampreys, brought from most distant provinces. This may serve as some specimen of the luxury of the Roman suppers.

Their entertainments were accompanied with every thing fitted to flatter the senses and to gratify the appetite. Musicians, male and female dancers, players of farce and pantomime, jesters and buffoons, and even gladiators exhibited whilst the guests sat at table. In order, if possible, to restrain such extreme luxury, a variety of sumptuary laws were promulgated from time to time, some of them limiting the number of dishes, others the number of guests, and others the expense to be bestowed on an entertainment, but all these attempts were completely unsuccessful. How, in effect, could it have been possible to bring back ancient simplicity, unless they could have also recalled ancient poverty? When a state has once become generally opulent, the expenses of the rich must keep pace with their fortunes, otherwise the poor would want employment and subsistence. It is luxury that is silently levelling that inequality, or at least keeping fortunes in a constant fluctuation, giving vigor in this manner to all those various parts of the political machine, which would be otherwise apt to lose their strength and pliability for want of motion. We may wish that Rome had remained poor and virtuous, but, being once great and opulent, it was to have required an impossibility that she should not have been luxurious.

CHAPTER V.

On the Art of War among the Romans.

We have seen the Romans engaged for many ages in continual wars, first with the petty states of Italy, and afterwards with foreign nations. From the prodigious success which attended the arms of this remarkable people, and from the dominion which they accomplished, at length, over almost the whole of the known world, it is a necessary inference that they must have carried the knowledge of the art military to a higher degree of perfection than any other of the ancient nations: to whatever collateral or partial causes we may attribute the success of some of their warlike enterprises, the great and leading cause of those rapid and extensive conquests could have been nothing else than the excellence of their military discipline, compared to that of the nations whom they subdued. "It was not," says Vegetius, "to the superiority of numbers,

nor to superior courage in the field, that the Romans owed their victories; but it was by art and by discipline that they defeated those immense hosts of Gauls which poured down upon Italy; that they subdued the Spaniards, a hardier and more warlike race than themselves; the Africans, whose wealth furnished inexhaustible armies; and conquered even the Greeks, whose military abilities were for many ages superior to their own."

The nature of this military discipline, by which the Romans became masters of the world, is, therefore, an object extremely deserving of attention; and I shall endeavor here to give some idea of the state of the art of war, such as we find it to have been in the latter ages of the commonwealth, and in the first period of the history of the empire.

In a former chapter, in treating of the system of Roman education, we have taken notice of those exercises of the body to which all the youth of the republic were accustomed from their earliest infancy. By the constant practice of wrestling, boxing, launching the javelin, running, and swimming, they were inured from their cradle to that species of life which a soldier leads in the most active campaign in the field. They were accustomed to the military pace, that is, to walk twenty miles, and sometimes twenty-four, in *four* hours. During these marches they carried burdens of sixty pounds' weight; and the weapons with which they were armed were double the weight of those which were used in the actual field of battle.*

Every year after the election of the consuls, twenty-four military tribunes were chosen; fourteen from the order of the *Equites*, and ten from the body of the citizens. The people were then assembled by an edict of the consuls, commanding all who had attained the age of seventeen to appear in the area before the capitol on an appointed day. According to the number of legions which were to be formed, they appointed to each legion a certain number of tribunes. The tribes were then called out and divided into their proper centuries, and each century presented by rotation as many soldiers as there were legions intended to be raised. If there were four legions, each century took its turn in presenting four soldiers; and of these four, the tribunes of the first legion had the first choice of a man, the second the next, and so on: then four more were drawn out, and the second legion had the first choice. In the next selection, the third legion chose first, and in the following the fourth. Thus there was the utmost equality in the distribution of the citizens in the several legions.

The number of soldiers in the legion was various at different periods. At earlier times it consisted of 3000, of 4000, of 5000,

* Vegetius de Re Militari, c. 2.; and Josephus, de Bello Judaico, has given some very curious details of the Roman discipline.

and 6000; but under the emperors it might amount to even 10,000 or 11,000 men.

Among the ancient nations there were in general but two different arrangements of the troops in order of battle. The one was that of the *phalanx*, commonly used by the Greeks; the other was the disposition of the troops by *manipuli*, or companies, arranged in the form of a *chequer* or *quincunx*, which, after the war with Pyrrhus, became the ordinary arrangement of the Roman army, and was probably then first tried as the most commodious disposition against the attack of the elephants. In the order of the *phalanx*, the heavy-armed infantry were all ranged upon one continued line, with no other intervals than those which distinguished the great divisions. In the *quincunx* order, a number of small companies or platoons were ranged in three straight lines, one behind the other, with alternate spaces between them, equal to the front of each company.

In the first line were the *Hastati*, heavy-armed troops, who at first used long spears, but afterwards laid them aside for the *pilum*, or great javelin, and the sword and buckler. In the second line were the *Principes*, likewise armed with the pilum and sword and buckler; and in the third line were the *Triarii*, armed with the long spear, formerly used by the *hastati*, and chiefly intended to sustain the shock of the enemy's cavalry. On the flanks of the line of the hastati were placed the cavalry, likewise in detached *manipuli* or companies, armed only with a lance and javelin, pointed at the end, and a small buckler. Immediately before the hastati, and in the front of the line, were placed the *Velites*, or light-armed troops, who usually began the engagement, and, after maintaining a skirmishing fight for awhile, drew off to the rear, and retired behind the *triarii*, leaving the main body to come into action. After the *velites* had withdrawn, the *hastati* usually began the attack, by throwing the pilum, or great javelin, which was a ponderous spear of seven feet in length, and of such thickness as barely to be grasped in the hand. It could not be used at a distance, from its immense weight; but within the space of twenty or thirty yards its effect was dreadful. After the discharge of the pila, the *hastati* rushed on with the sword and buckler, which were now their only weapons. The Roman sword was about a foot and a half in length, two-edged, with a broad blade, tapering to a point, so as to serve both for cutting and thrusting.* What

* The kind and quality of weapons is of very great consequence in war. The Roman sword was a weapon of great power and efficacy. The Romans owned themselves inferior to the Cimbri in courage and martial heroism; and confessed that even their superior discipline could not have availed them against the prodigious impetuosity of the attacks of this people; but, on the other hand, the swords of the Cimbri were of bad temper compared to theirs. They often bent at the first stroke; and the soldier was obliged to straighten his sword with his foot before he could make a second stroke.

is singular is, that it was made of brass, but of so hard a composition as to shiver like steel. The sword and buckler were common to all the ranks of the infantry.*

The advantage of the chequer or quincunx arrangement of the legion was, that the Roman army could *three* times form the line of battle with fresh troops. Supposing the hastati to be foiled in their first onset, and even put to flight, the enemy found a new line of battle presented by the principes, who, using the same arms, first began with the terrible discharge of the pila, and then fought with the short sword. Meantime the hastati had time to rally, and to form a new line behind the triarii.

No form could be so admirably adapted as that of the quincunx for changing movements according to the disposition of the enemy's line. On advancing, for example, to meet such an army as the Gauls, ranged in the order of the phalanx, nothing was easier than to form a great front like that of the enemy, without any intervals, by bringing up the *principes* to fill the spaces betwixt the companies of the *hastati*. When, again, they had to do with an enemy less active, but to whom they did not wish to give an opportunity of insinuating themselves between the *manipuli*, they filled up the intervals with the *velites*, and kept the *principes* in the second line with the *triarii*, as a *corps de reserve*. In those engagements where the enemy had in their front a train of elephants, upon the advance of those animals, nothing more was requisite than for the *principes* to march to a side, and form themselves in a line with the *hastati* and *triarii;* in other words, to form themselves into columns, with open spaces between each column. Thus the elephants, persecuted and driven on by the *velites* found an entrance by these spaces between the columns, and passed through the legion without doing any mischief. This manœuvre was practised by Scipio at the battle of Zama, and by Regulus, in his engagement in Africa with Xantippus.

The *quincunx* disposition was for some ages the characteristic of the Roman legion, which scarcely used any other method of arrangement; but the Romans afterwards made many innovations upon the ancient tactic.† From the time of Marius the *quincunx* had gone into disuse, and Cæsar describes the legions in his wars as under a quite different form. The three manipuli of hastati, principes, and triarii composed a *cohort*, and were ranged not by intervals, but in a line behind each other—or in columns;—the triarii, armed with the long spears, being usually placed in the front. It is not easy to see in what respects this disposition excelled the former. From this period the tactic of the Romans

* For an account of the arms of the Roman legion, see Lipsius de Militia Romana, c. 3.

† See a very good account of the state of the art military under the emperors in Gibbon's history, vol. i., c. 1.

was perpetually changing, and, in the opinion of the ablest judges, growing worse from age to age.*

At no time was the tactic of the Romans more excellent than during the Punic wars, and to that cause we may attribute their successes against an enemy so formidable as the Carthaginians, and commanded by such able generals. The chief talent of Hannibal lay in varying and adapting the arrangement of his army according to circumstances of local situation; and often striking out some new and unexpected disposition formed in the instant of action, which disconcerted all the uniform and regular plans of the Romans. Such was that most remarkable disposition of the Carthaginian army at the battle of Cannæ, which decided the fate of that important day, by the utter destruction of the Roman army. I shall endeavour to give an idea of this very curious disposition, of which Polybius has left a full account; and I select it for this reason, that it has been misunderstood and misrepresented by the Chevalier Folard, a very able writer on the art military, but who, from his ignorance of the Greek language, was obliged to rely on the Latin translation of a monk who knew nothing of the art of war. The errors of Folard have been fully pointed out in the *Mémoires Militaires* of M. Guichard.

Hannibal having passed the winter and spring in quarters, began the campaign by ravaging the whole country; and finding his army in want of provisions, he marched towards Cannæ, situated in a mountainous part of Apulia; a village where the Romans had established their magazines, and where they had brought all the military stores and provisions they had carried from Canusium. Hannibal took Cannæ by surprise; which, depriving the Romans of their stores, disconcerted their whole plan of operations. They could no longer pretend to harass and weary out the Carthaginians, but were obliged to think of giving them battle. The senate, in this emergency, sent a powerful reinforcement to the army, which now amounted to 80,000 men under two consuls, Varro and Æmilius; the latter a general of great experience, but cool and deliberate; the former rash, impetuous, and extremely obstinate.

* We may learn from Vegetius the constitution of the Romans legion under Trajan and Hadrian. The heavy-armed infantry was then divided into ten cohorts, or fifty-five companies, under a correspondent number of tribunes and centurions. The first cohort, which had the post of honor and the custody of the eagle, consisted of 1105 soldiers, the remaining nine consisted each of 555. The number of infantry in the whole legion was, therefore, 6100 men. Their offensive arms were, 1st, the pilum; 2d, a light spear; 3d, the sword. The legion was usually drawn up eight deep, with a distance of three feet both between the files and ranks. The cavalry of the legion was divided into ten squadrons; the first, in proportion to the first cohort, consisting of 132 men, the rest only of 66—in all 726 horse. The horses of the cavalry were bred chiefly in Spain and Cappadocia. The arms of the men consisted of a helmet, an oblong shield, light boots, a coat of mail, a javelin, and a long broadsword. They borrowed afterwards from the barbarians the use of lances and iron maces.

Æmilius, sensible that the great superiority of Hannibal's army lay in his cavalry, wished to delay coming to an action till his situation should afford the best opportunity for the operations of infantry. Varro was for an immediate attack, and it being his turn to command, a pretty smart engagement ensued, which terminated doubtfully, but rather to the advantage of the Romans. Encouraged by this first success, they brooked with great impatience the cautious delays of Æmilius, who was still averse to a general engagement. The day following, when it was again the turn of Varro to command in chief, he ordered the army to take the field early in the morning, and to pass the river Aufidus, which lay between them and the Carthaginians. They passed without opposition, as Hannibal chose to rest every thing upon a very artful manœuvre, which he had planned, to be discovered only in the moment of engagement.

The usual disposition of the Carthaginians was that of the phalanx. Varro resolved to imitate this disposition, and to give his army a front similar to it. His ignorance of the art of war here led him into a great error. He neglected the advantages which the legion derived from the ordinary disposition of the quincunx, and endeavored to give a solidity and depth to his line, equal to that of the Carthaginians, not attending to this circumstance, that the arms of the legion were not suited to the close and compressed position, on which depended the strength of the phalanx; for the hastati and the principes could neither throw their pila with effect, nor manage their swords for want of room: and the triarii, ranged immediately behind and close upon the manipuli of the hastati, could not, with their long spears, be of the smallest service. Such, however, was Varro's disposition: he brought up the principes to fill the spaces between the companies of the hastati, and advanced the triarii, so as to join their companies to those of the hastati. On the right and left wing were the Roman cavalry, greatly inferior, as we have already observed, to those of the Carthaginians; and the velites or light infantry were ranged as usual in the front of the line.

Hannibal, whose army amounted to 40,000 foot and 10,000 horse, arranged the main body of his infantry in the close order of the *phalanx;* placing the best of his African heavy-armed troops to the right and left of the line, and in the centre the Gauls and Spaniards, armed only with the sword and buckler. On the right and left wings of his phalanx he posted the cavalry, immediately opposite to those of the enemy; and in the front of his line were ranged the Carthaginian light troops, in the same manner as those of the Romans. Having thus formed the great line of the phalanx, Hannibal ordered the Gauls and Spaniards in the centre to extend themselves forward from the main body in a semi-circular curve. This movement was concealed from the Romans, by the line of the Carthaginian light troops, and was not perceived till

after the skirmishing of the velites, when these troops as was usual, fell back behind the main body.

The action began by these light troops, and continued pretty long and obstinate, while in the meantime the Carthaginian cavalry attacked the Roman horse on both wings, and being infinitely superior to them in number, broke, dispersed, and cut them all to pieces. The signal was now given for the velites on both sides to fall back, and the Romans then, for the first time, perceived the curve in the Carthaginian front, which, being far advanced, came in contact with, and was immediately attacked by, the centre of the Roman line. The Gauls and Spaniards who formed the curve, unable to sustain the impetuosity of this onset, gave way, as Hannibal had expected; while that part of the Roman line, impetuously pursuing its advantage, pushed forward in proportion as the enemy retreated, by which means the Roman line was bent in the middle into an angular form. This position was what Hannibal foresaw and wished for. The Gauls and Spaniards, supported behind by the velites, formed a sort of new concave curve; and the heavy-armed infantry, the strength of the Carthaginian army, who had hitherto remained inactive, were now marched up, so as to come in contact with the opposite part of the Roman line, which was hurrying on to pursue the advantage gained by the centre, but which, now that the Africans were advanced, found themselves inclosed like a wedge.

In the meantime the Carthaginian cavalry under the command of Asdrubal, having entirely cut to pieces the horse of the enemy, doubled the flanks of the Roman army, and poured down upon the rear. They were now inclosed and furiously attacked on every quarter. The contest was not of long duration. The Romans, pressed together, had no space to use their arms. It was, upon the part of the Carthaginians, an absolute massacre and butchery; 70,000 of the Romans were killed upon the spot, and 10,000 taken prisoners. Such was the celebrated battle of Cannæ, according to the idea given by M. Guichard, which is supported, in every particular, by the text of Polybius.

The disposition of the quincunx would in all probability have saved the Roman army, and disappointed the effect of Hannibal's artful manœuvre; which it is probable he had conceived only upon seeing the enemy in the order of the phalanx: for had the legions been formed in the order of the quincunx, only the first line of the hastati could have given into the snare which was laid for them, and the principes and triarii, entire and unbroken, must have been an overmatch for all that was opposed to them.

The quincunx, notwithstanding its great advantages, was, as I have already observed, disused in the times of the emperors, and consequently the arms of the soldiers must likewise have undergone considerable changes. In the time of Vegetius, that is to say, under Valentinian, and probably long before that period, the