erably perished. Many petty wars ensued which Livy minutely describes, but which are now unworthy of mention.

The Roman law in favor of the patrician creditor and against the plebeian debtor, was, as we have before narrated, atrocious in the extreme. M. Manlius, the same man who had dashed the Gaul over the precipice with his shield, and had thus saved the capitol, and who by this act had gained great honor and renown, was one day walking through the streets of Rome, when he saw a captain who had served under him, and who had been a distinguished soldier, seized by a patrician for debt, and dragged through the forum as a slave, to toil in his creditor's work-shop. Manlius indignantly protested against the outrage, legal though it was, and paying the debt upon the spot himself, emancipated the debtor. This deed greatly added to his popularity, and the masses of the people began to proclaim him loudly as their protector. Manlius sold a portion of his property at auction to raise ready money, and declared he would never again see a fellow-citizen made a slave for debt, so long as he had the means of preventing it. In a short time he saved four hundred debtors from slavery by advancing money, without requiring any interest.

Manlius was now enthroned in the love of the people, and they called him with one voice their father. The patricians were alarmed, fearing that through his popularity he might attain political office and power. To arrest this peril they declared the country to be in danger, and succeeded in inducing the senate, which they controlled, to appoint a dictator. Cossus, who had once before held the office, summoned Manlius before him, and threw him into prison. He was soon brought to trial under the charge of conspiring against the state, and was arraigned before a court composed of plebeians and patricians.

Conducting his own defense, he eloquently first brought forward four hundred debtors whom he had rescued from slavery; then he exhibited the spoils of thirty enemies whom

he had slain in single combat on the field of battle; he then presented to the court forty rewards he had received from the state for his heroic exploits; among these were eight garlands of oaken leaves, in attestation of his having saved the lives of eight Roman citizens. Some of these men, whose lives he had saved were also produced in court. Finally, he bared his own breast and exhibited it covered with scars, from wounds received in defense of his country. It is not strange that the court should have refused to condemn a man who could present such a defense.

But the dictator summoned another court, composed of the patricians alone. By them Manlius was promptly condemned as a traitor, and was hurled from the Tarpeian rock, his house leveled with the ground, and disgrace attached even to the name. This victory of the patricians greatly confirmed their power. The commons had now lost all heart and were in despair, while the patricians were becoming equally strong at home and abroad.

"But freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeathed from bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft is ever won."

Even the tribunes, chosen expressly for the protection of popular rights, abandoned their offices, which only exposed them to odium, without enabling them to accomplish any good. The leading commoners generally declined standing candidates for a position of utter impotency. Under these circumstances two young men, bold and enthusiastic, C. Licinius and L. Sextius were elected among the ten tribunes. Licinius was from one of the most opulent of the plebeian families, and was emboldened by that consciousness of power which great wealth ever gives. Sextius was a young man of congenial spirit, and the warm personal friend of Licinius. These two young tribunes came forward with the intrepid demand that one of the two consuls should ever be chosen from among the plebeians, who were far more numerous than the

patricians, and whose rights it was, consequently, at least important to protect. The whole body of tribunes, strengthened by these leaders, joined in the demand.

This audacious proposal astounded the nobles and roused their most ireful opposition. A scene of extraordinary anarchy and strife ensued. The commons, with ever increasing enthusiasm, rallied around their fearless leaders. Licinius, emboldened by the support he was receiving, added to his requisition, and demanded that the commons should be eligible to the sacerdotal office as well as to the consulship. It is difficult now to conceive of the astonishment and indignation with which the patricians listened to these requirements. The popular feeling, in favor of these measures, was, however, so ardent and impetuous, that it was found impossible to resist it by any ordinary procedure, and the patricians consequently resorted to their old expedient of calling in the strong arm of a dictator.

Camillus, the most unrelenting foe of the commons, was invested with dictatorial power. Rome was then, as ever, at war with some neighboring nation, and Camillus, pretending that the exigencies of the war demanded the vigorous measure, ordered every man in Rome capable of bearing arms to follow him to the field. But the people, aroused and exasperated, and conscious that the edict was merely aimed at their own subjugation, refused to obey. So unanimous was the refusal that Camillus was left powerless, and in shame resigned his office.

"There is nothing," writes Arnold, "viler than the spirit which actuates the vulgar of an aristocracy." The whol history of the conflict between aristocratic assumption an popular rights, from the earliest dawn of history to the present hour, does but elucidate this truth. The degrading selfishness which induces pride and power to grasp at all the good things of life, dooming the feeble to ignorance and debasement, is worthy of all detestation. For this there is

no remedy but in the fraternity the gospel inculcates—all men are brothers.

After a long and stormy conflict, the Licinian bills were carried. But when the people met for choice of consuls under this law, and the plebeians chose Sextus for their consul, the wrath of the humiliated patricians burst out anew. But the commons stood firm, and, for a time, Rome was seriously menaced with civil war. At length both parties assented to a compromise, which secured temporary peace. The plebeian consul was confirmed, but the judicial power was separated from the consular office and retained in the hands of the patricians. Thus terminated a struggle of five years' duration. But the commons had made a great gain, securing eligibility both to the consulate and to the sacerdotal office. It was a bloodless victory, and until the end of the republic the consulship, with one or two trivial exceptions, continued to be shared by the commons. Five hundred years of Roman history passed away without producing a single historian or philosopher. By the dim light of tradition, and the glimpses we can catch from Grecian narratives, we grope through these dark ages.

The Romans now, year after year, in many bloody conflicts, which it would be tedious to enumerate, pushed their conquests through the southern portion of the peninsula. One fierce battle, beneath the shadow of Vesuvius, secured the annexation of a large portion of the present kingdom of Naples to Rome. Here again was developed the grasping spirit of the patricians. Of the territory thus gained, three acres only were assigned to each of the plebeians, while the great families of the aristocracy usurped the rest. The patricians were slowly but perseveringly endeavoring to regain their lost ascendency.

We have now reached that period in the world's history when Alexander the Great was commencing his conquests. His victories rapidly extended from the Ægæan to the Indus,

and from the Caspian to the Nile; and through all these realms the institutions of Greece were planted. The western coasts of Italy, then occupied by barbaric tribes, swarmed with pirates. Complaints of their ravages had been carried to Alexander. Rome had now attained such power that Alexander, deeming the Romans responsible for the good behavior of that portion of Italy, sent to them a remonstrance against these outrages. It is said that Roman ambassadors were consequently deputed to Babylon to meet the great conqueror, and that he was deeply impressed with their manly bearing.

In a war with the Privernatians, about this time, the Romans, after besieging the capital city of their foes for two years, were triumphant. Some illustrious prisoners were brought to Rome, and arrayed before the senate, who were to decide their doom and the doom of the nation. One of the consuls asked one of the deputies:

"Of what penalty, even in your own judgment, are your countrymen deserving?"

"Of the penalty," was the intrepid reply, "due to those who assert their liberty."

"But if we spare you now," rejoined the consul, "what peace may we expect to have with you for the time to come?"

"Peace true and lasting," was the answer, "if its terms be good; if otherwise, a peace which will soon be broken."

Some of the senators, enraged by replies so defiant and yet so heroic, declared that this was language of rebellion, which deserved the most severe punishment. But the majority, with a more appreciative spirit of true nobleness, said:

"These men, whose whole hearts are set upon liberty, deserve to become Romans."

It was, therefore, proposed to the people, and carried by acclaim, that the Privernatians should be incorporated with the Romans, and admitted to the rights of Roman citizens.

To consolidate their conquests the Romans, who were now rapidly making acquisitions of territory throughout the southern portion of the Italian peninsula, while they were making no progress in the north, established a colony of three hundred emigrants at Anxur, the present town of Tarracina, on the frontiers of what is now the kingdom of Naples. Roman laws were extended over the whole conquered domain, and Roman magistrates were sent to enforce those laws. Each colonist was allowed two acres of land for a house, lot, and garden, with a share in the common pasturage.

There was a very powerful nation called the Samnites, occupying much of the region now belonging to Naples. About three hundred years before Christ, the progress of the Roman arms brought Rome in conflict with this people. The foe was so formidable that the appointment of a dictator was deemed necessary. Through some influences, of which we are not informed, the senate at this time was remarkably popular in its character, and, to the consternation of the patricians, appointed an illustrious plebeian, M. Claudius Marcellus, dictator. There was a sort of supreme court then in existence, called the College of Augrus, which was entirely under the control of the patricians. In the appeal which the nobles made to this court, declaring that there was some illegality in the appointment of Marcellus, the court, of course, decided against the commons, and the appointment was pronounced void.

The patricians, elated by this victory, now attempted the repeal of the Licinian law which gave the commons eligibility to the consulship and to the sacerdotal office. In this attempt they were baffled. Alexander of Macedon, in the mean time had died, and Greece was beginning to exhibit indications of decay. The sun of Roman power was rising, and that of Grecian splendor majestically descending the horizon. For twenty years the Romans waged incessant war with the Samnites, with varying success.

In the fifth year of the war the Romans met with an over-

whelming defeat. For ages it could not be forgotten as one of the most humiliating reverses of the Roman arms. The two consuls, Veturius and Postumius, at the head of two armies, marched into Campania. The Samnite general, C. Pontius, a man of Grecian culture and education, adroitly lured the Roman armies into a mountain defile, which, in consequence of this event, has obtained a world-wide renown, under the name of the Caudine Forks.

Twenty-five miles northwest of Naples there is the little decayed city of Avellino. A wild gorge, which nature has cut through the Apennines, leads from here to Benevento. The modern road from Naples to Benevento runs through this defile, which is called the valley of Arpaia. Here the Romans found themselves entangled in a ravine, frowned upon by inaccessible crags, and surrounded by the Samnite army. Barricades in front, crowded with troops, and bristling with all the ancient instruments of war, rendered advance impossible. The pass in the rear was closed by strong battalions of the foe against any retreat. There was no possibility of escape over the precipitous hills. Every available spot from which missiles could be hurled upon the invaders was occupied by the Samnites. For a short time the Romans, like lions in the toils, struggled to extricate themselves. But having lost half their number, and accomplishing nothing, they encamped as they best could, and throwing up entrenchments, placed themselves entirely on the defensive. Pontius, sure that there was no escape for his victims, incurred no risks, but waited quietly for the slow but inevitable operation of famine. The Romans, emaciated and haggard, were soon brought to terms, and implored the mercy of the conqueror.

Pontius proved himself a magnanimous, though a determined foe. "Restore to us," said he, "the towns and territory you have taken from us. Call home the colonists whom you have unjustly settled upon our soil; lay down your arms and surrender all your munitions of war; take an oath here

after to respect the independence of our nation, and surrender to me six hundred Roman knights as hostages to secure the ratification of the treaty, and you may defile before my army as prisoners whom we have released, and return to your homes unharmed."

These were generous terms for the conqueror to yield, but very humiliating terms for proud Romans to accept. But there was no alternative but destruction. The consuls and all the surviving officers took the oath. The hostage knights were delivered, and then the whole Roman army, consuls, generals, and soldiers, in a long procession, stripped of every article of clothing, except the kilt, which reached from the waist to the knee, thus leaving the whole upper part of the body naked, marched through a passage opened for them in the Samnite lines of blockade. They all defiled beneath a spear, supported upon two which were planted in the ground. Such a humiliation, which was richly merited, the Roman legions had never encountered before. Pontius humanely ordered carriages to be provided for the sick and the wounded, and supplied them with provisions sufficient for their wants until they should reach Rome.

When this melancholy procession, with Roman pride so healthily humbled, arrived at Capua, they were received with much condolence, and the consuls and superior officers were provided with arms and clothing, that their appearance might be more suited to their dignity. They then continued their march in a state of mortification which no language can describe, ashamed to speak to each other, or to raise their eyes from the ground. When they drew near the city all the common soldiers, who had homes in the vicinity, singly and silently dispersed, that they might reach those homes unseen. Those who lived in the city, unwilling in their deep disgrace to enter in the broad light of day, lingered outside of the walls until it was dark, and then stealthily crept to their habitations.

The loss of life in this campaign threw all Rome into

mourning, but the humiliation was a blow still more keenly felt. All business was suspended, all pleasure interdicted; marriages were postponed, and all thoughts were directed to the obliteration of the dishonor. The two unfortunate consuls immediately resigned their office, and much difficulty was found in choosing their successors. The question now arose, "Shall the treaty be ratified?" Postumius, one of the consuls of the previous year, came forward and made the astonishing proposition, equally characteristic of Roman ambition and the Roman sense of honor, that the treaty should be rejected, and that he himself, with his colleague in the consulship, T. Veturius, and every officer who had taken the oath to the Samnites, should be surrendered to them as having promised what they were unable to perform. The senate adopted this resolve, even though many of them had, doubtless, sons among the six hundred hostages thus abandoned to the vengeance of the Samnites.

The two consuls, with all the officers, were conducted by a Roman herald back to the country of the Samnites. As they approached the camp their hands were bound behind their backs, and they were thus delivered up as men who had forfeited liberty and life by a breach of faith. As soon as the surrender had been made, Postumius, the ex-consul, who now belonged to the Samnites as their slave, so that they were now responsible for his actions, turned and with his knee (for his hands were bound) struck violently the Roman herald who had surrendered him, saying:

"I now belong to the Samnites. I have insulted a Roman ambassador. Rome can justly wage war against the Samnites to avenge this outrage."

Nothing redeems this shameful trickery but the intrepidity which could brave slavery and death to promote national aggrandizement. Such conduct may be called heroic, but it is the heroism of dark and benighted natures. The conduct of Pontius was truly noble.

"I shall not accept these victims," he said. "They are not guilty. Rome has reaped the advantage of the treaty of Caudium in the liberation of her army, and now she refuses to fulfill the conditions. It is a mockery both to the gods and men to pretend that such perfidy is justice. If Rome would rescue her name from infamy, let her either replace her legions in their desperate condition, or ratify the treaty."

So saying, he sent the consuls and their companions back, unhurt, to Rome.