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THE DECLINE AND FALL

OF

THE ROMAN REPUBLIC.

BY

GEORGE LONG.

VOL. III.

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PREFACE.

SINCE the remarks on the Roman method of trying questions of bribery at elections were written (p. 205), a new way of settling these matters has been established in this country. If the new way is not perfect, it is certainly better than the old fashion, and it seems to be generally approved. Our present way of trying bribery questions by a single judge could never have been established at Rome; and perhaps there is no other country in which such an experiment would have succeeded. We have fortunately judges who are placed beyond the influence of those who hold political power, and are also elevated above the necessity of seeking popular favour.

Some persons, who look far into the future, see reasons for fearing that our prospects are not so hopeful as others think that they are, and all of us wish them to be. The best test of the social condition of a country is the possibility or impossibility of correcting political and social evils without violent revolution. Now it seems to us, who look back on the past, very difficult to conceive that any practicable reforms could have cured the political evils of the Roman State in the time of Cicero and Caesar; for the mischief lay among the rich and noble even more than among the poor. The poor had the power in name by virtue of the annual elections;

but the rich and noble had it in reality. There are indications that there were a few honest men even in those days (p. 206); but they were few in the Senate, and very few among the money-making class. We are more fortunate than the Romans. We have many good men in all classes and conditions of life, and enough at present to keep in check the bad part of the community, which is however a very formidable body, and a vigorous hand is now required to bridle the fraud, the corruption and the violence of which we have daily evidence. But it is a good sign of stability and order when a single judge can go down to a great town to inquire into the behaviour of candidates for the House of Commons, their election agents, and the electors, hear evidence, give his judgment unbiassed by fear or any unworthy motive, and retire amidst the applause even of those to whom his judgment is adverse.

In another place (p. 470) there are some remarks on the tolls or duties which obstructed commerce in Italy and Gallia. We are not yet free from these impositions, though we profess the doctrines of free trade. In Brighton for instance a toll of two shillings and six pence a ton is levied on all coals good and bad which enter within the municipal limits of the town, while other parts of the town not included within these limits are exempt from the duty. Taxes are also levied generally on vehicles drawn by horses for the carriage of persons, and even on the carriage of passengers on railroads. Since the remarks made in p. 470 were written the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1869) has removed or diminished some of these impositions; but the evil is not yet cured.

I have something to say which is suggested by experience on the way of making a book such as this. The writer, if he does his duty, looks at all the authorities, interprets them as well as he can, and combines all the evidence into the form of a narrative of events. His reflections, if he makes any, should clearly appear to be what they are; and they should

not be mixed with the facts which he undertakes to present to the reader. But there are two difficulties which the writer will encounter. He may sometimes misunderstand or misrepresent his authorities, even when there is no ambiguity in them. This is one of the dangers to which all writers are exposed. The other difficulty arises from the obscurity or ambiguity of the antient authorities, and it occurs much more frequently than a person would suppose who has not had experience of it. The best way of meeting these difficulties is to submit the manuscript or the proof sheets to some careful reader and competent judge.

It is only lately that I have found a friend willing and able to undertake this labour, the Rev. J. H. Backhouse, of Felstead Grammar School in Essex. His revision began with page 177 of this volume. When I speak of revision, it might be understood to mean nothing more than reading the proofs carefully. But Mr. Backhouse's revision has been something very different. He has turned to all the authorities which I have cited and even to those which I have not cited: he has examined them carefully, and wherever he found any error or any thing on which he disagreed with me, he sent me his remarks. Such a revision from a careful reader and an exact critic has been very useful. Mr. Backhouse and I have not always agreed about the interpretation of the antient authorities; and in the cases where I have retained my own opinion, the fault is mine, if I have made any mistake.

In this volume I have of course used very largely the evidence of Cicero's orations and his letters. I have long known, and I now know it still better, that Cicero's orations are very doubtful evidence for historical facts. Many, perhaps most of these speeches, or even all of them, were published after the delivery, and with alterations and embellishments. It is possible, and indeed very probable, that some of these speeches bear very little resemblance to the speeches which were delivered. Nor can we value them more highly as

evidence, because they were written out for the purpose of publication. Cicero was not careful about facts, nor was he a scrupulous observer of truth. A vain man is never veracious, and we can sometimes show that Cicero's alleged facts are not true. We learn his character best from his own letters, which are the strongest evidence that we have against him. If in this volume both he and C. Caesar often appear in an unfavourable light, the fault is in the facts, for I have had no inclination to depreciate either of them, nor have I exaggerated any of the evidence against them. We have nothing about Caesar from himself till we come to the Commentaries on the Gallic war; but Cicero's friends have preserved so much of his correspondence that we have ample means of estimating his character. A minute examination of a man's letters written during many years is certainly a severe kind of trial, almost as severe as if all that he had said was recorded and submitted to the inspection of an unfriendly critic. Few persons who have written many letters would come out of such an examination free from blame. Many of Cicero's letters present him to us in a pleasing aspect, as a man of taste, a lover of learning, and affectionate to his family and friends. It is the public side of his character that was feeble and often dishonest; but those who are much engaged in public affairs cannot always be honest; and if this is not an excuse, it is at least a fact.

G. L.

ROMAN CONSULS

FROM B.C. 71 TO B.C. 58.

(CLINTON'S FASTI.)

B.C.

- 71. P. Cornelius Lentulus.
Cn. Aufidius Orestes.
- 70. Cn. Pompeius Magnus.
M. Licinius Crassus.
- 69. Q. Hortensius.
Q. Caecilius Metellus.
- 68. L. Caecilius Metellus.
Q. Marcius Rex.
- 67. C. Calpurnius Piso.
M'Acilius Glabrio.
- 66. M'Aemilius Lepidus.
L. Volcatius Tullus.
- 65. L. Aurelius Cotta.
L. Manlius Torquatus.
- 64. L. Julius Caesar.

B.C.

- C. Marcius Figulus.
- 63. M. Tullius Cicero.
C. Antonius.
The birth of C. Octavius afterwards Caesar Augustus.
- 62. D. Junius Silanus.
L. Licinius Murena.
- 61. M. Pupius Piso Calpurnianus.
M. Valerius Messalla.
- 60. L. Afranius.
Q. Caecilius Metellus Celer.
- 59. C. Julius Caesar.
M. Calpurnius Bibulus.
- 58. L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus.
A. Gabinius.

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THE FIFTH OF DECEMBER.

B.C. 63.

Livy, Epit. 102; Cicero, Pro P. Sestio; Sallust, Catilina; Plutarch, Caesar, and Cicero; Dion Cassius, 37, c. 35; Appian, B. C. ii. 5; Cicero's Fourth Oration against Catilina.

P. Sestius is summoned by Cicero from Capua to Rome, and he brings a force with him—The meeting of the Senate on the Fourth of December—One L. Tarquinius charges M. Crassus with treasonable communication with Catilina, but he is lodged in prison by order of the Senate—Improbable charges against Cicero—Rewards given to Volturcius and the ambassadors of the Allobroges—Fears that an attempt would be made to rescue the conspirators—Cicero maintains that the conspirators are enemies,

and not citizens—The sophistry by which he attempts to deprive them of the protection of the Sempronia Lex—The history of the debate of the Fifth of December is not free from doubt—The work of M. Brutus in which he treated of this debate—Cicero charges Brutus with great ignorance in the matter—D. Junius Silanus, one of the consuls elect, is first called on to give his opinion—He proposes that the men who were in custody should be put to death, and others whom he named, when they were caught—Sallust reports the speech of C. Caesar, praetor elect, who is opposed to the men being put to death—Summary of Caesar's speech—Caesar's proposal about the conspirators—Remarks on the speech attributed to Caesar—Cicero's speech on the punishment of the conspirators or the fourth Catilinarian oration—Summary of this speech—The motion of Tiberius Nero, which was equivalent to an adjournment of the question—Silanus changes his opinion and is in favour of a milder punishment—The Senate wavers, but is encouraged to accept the original proposal of Silanus by the speech of M. Cato, a tribune elect—Summary of Cato's speech as reported by Sallust—Cato urges the Senate to put the prisoners to death and the Senate vote for his proposal—Cato's speech is taken down in shorthand—Remarks on his speech—Cicero in a letter to Atticus claims the merit of having moved the Senate to their final resolution—Caesar is threatened by the Equites or others after the close of the debate—Five of the conspirators are strangled in the Tullianum—Cicero's triumphant progress through the streets by torchlight—Cicero's long letter to his friend Cn. Pompeius on what he had done in his consulship 323

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B.C. 63—62.

Livy, Epit. 103; *Sallust, Catilina*; *Plutarch, Lucullus*; *Dion Cassius, 37, c. 29, &c.*

The triumph of L. Lucullus is deferred to B.C. 63, though he returned from Asia in B.C. 66—The plunder which he brought to Rome—Lucullus divorces his wife Clodia and marries Servilia, a half-sister of M. Cato—The thanksgiving voted in honour of Cn. Pompeius when his despatches announced the end of the war in the East—Cicero's letter in answer to a letter of Pompeius—On the last of December, B.C. 63, Cicero is prevented by the tribune Q. Metellus from addressing the people—The probable date of the defeat of Catilina—The preparations of Catilina to oppose C. Antonius who was sent against him—The movements of Catilina and of the troops of the Republic—The battle in the territory of Pistoria, in which Catilina is defeated by M. Petreius, the legatus of C. Antonius—The death of Catilina and Manlius 353

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B.C. 62.

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Livy, Epit. 103; *Suetonius, Caesar*; *Dion Cassius*, 37, c. 21, &c., 25, &c., 41, &c.; *Cicero, Pro P. Sestio*; *Cicero, Pro P. Sulla*; *Plutarch, Pompeius*; *Appian, Mithridatica*; *Suetonius, Caesar*, c. 50; *Dion Cassius*, 38, c. 10; *Plutarch, Caesar*; *Cicero, Ad Atticum*, lib. i. and ii. 1; *Appian, B. C.* ii. 8.

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B.C. 58.

Livy, Epit. 103; *Cicero, Ad Q. Fratrem*, i. 2; *Dion Cassius*, 38, c. 13, &c.; *Asconius in Pison.*; *Plutarch, Cicero*; *Cicero, Pro P. Sestio*; *Ad Atticum*, lib. iii.

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