HANNIBAL

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BY

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with ENGRAVINGS

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PREFACE

THE author of this series has made it his special object to confine himself very strictly, even in the most minute details which he records, to historic truth. The narratives are not tales founded upon history, but history itself, without any embellishment or any deviations from the strict truth, so far as it can now be discovered by an attentive examination of the annals written at the time when the events themselves occurred. In writing the narratives, the author has endeavored to avail himself of the best sources of information which this country affords; and though, of course, there must be in these volumes, as in all historical narratives, more or less of imperfection and error, there is no intentional embellishment. Nothing is stated, not even the most minute and apparently imaginary details, without what was deemed good historical authority. The readers, therefore, may rely upon the record as the truth, and nothing but the truth, so far as honest purpose and a careful examination has been effectual in ascertaining it.

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CHAPTER I

THE FIRST PUNIC WAR

HANNIBAL was a Carthaginian general. He acquired his great distinction as a warrior by his desperate contests with the Romans. Rome and Carthage grew up together on opposite sides of the Mediterranean Sea. For about a hundred years they waged against each other most dreadful wars. There were three of these wars. Rome was successful in the end, and Carthage was entirely destroyed.

There was no real cause for any disagreement between these two nations. Their hostility to each other was mere rivalry and spontaneous hate. They spoke a different language; they had a different origin; and they lived on opposite sides of the same sea. So they hated and devoured each other.

Those who have read the history of Alexander the Great, in this series, will recollect the difficulty he experienced in besieging and subduing Tyre, a great maritime city, situated about two miles from the shore, on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Carthage was originally founded by a colony from this city of Tyre, and it soon became a great commercial and maritime power like its mother. The Carthaginians

built ships, and with them explored all parts of the Mediterranean Sea. They visited all the nations on these coasts, purchased the commodities they had to sell, carried them to other nations, and sold them at great advances. They soon began to grow rich and powerful. They hired soldiers to fight their battles, and began to take possession of the islands of the Mediterranean, and, in some instances, of points on the main land. For example, in Spain: some of their ships, going there, found that the natives had silver and gold, which they obtained from veins of ore near the surface of the ground. At first the Carthaginians obtained this gold and silver by selling the natives commodities of various kinds, which they had procured in other countries; paying, of course, to the producers only a very small price compared with what they required the Spaniards to pay them. Finally, they took possession of that part of Spain where the mines were situated, and worked the mines themselves. They dug deeper; they employed skillful engineers to make pumps to raise the water, which always accumulates in mines, and prevents their being worked to any great depth unless the miners have a considerable degree of scientific and mechanical skill. They founded a city here, which they called New Carthage—Nova Carthago. They fortified and garrisoned this city, and made it the center of their operations in Spain. This city is called Carthagena to this day.

Thus the Carthaginians did every thing by power of money. They extended their operations in every direction, each new extension bringing in new treasures, and increasing their means of extending

them more. They had, besides the merchant vessels which belonged to private individuals, great ships of war belonging to the state. These vessels were called galleys, and were rowed by oarsmen, tier above tier, there being sometimes four and five banks of oars. They had armies, too, drawn from different countries, in various troops, according as different nations excelled in the different modes of warfare. For instance, the Numidians, whose country extended in the neighborhood of Carthage, on the African coast, were famous for their horsemen. There were great plains in Numidia, and good grazing, and it was, consequently, one of those countries in which horses and horsemen naturally thrive. On the other hand, the natives of the Balearic Isles, now called Majorca, Minorca, and Ivica, were famous for their skill as slingers. So the Carthaginians, in making up their forces, would hire bodies of cavalry in Numidia, and of slingers in the Balearic Isles; and, for reasons analogous, they got excellent infantry in Spain.

The tendency of the various nations to adopt and cultivate different modes of warfare was far greater in those ancient times than now. The Balearic Isles, in fact, received their name from the Greek word ballein, which means to throw with a sling. The youth there were trained to perfection in the use of this weapon from a very early age. It is said that mothers used to practice the plan of putting the bread for their boys' breakfast on the branches of trees, high above their heads, and not allow them to have their food to eat until they could bring it down with a stone thrown from a sling.

Thus the Carthaginian power became greatly extended. The whole government, however was exercised by a small body of wealthy and aristocratic families at home. It was very much such a government as that of England is at the present day, only the aristocracy of England is based on ancient birth and landed property, whereas in Carthage it depended on commercial greatness, combined, it is true, with hereditary family distinction. The aristocracy of Carthage controlled and governed every thing. None but its own sons could ordinarily obtain office or power. The great mass of inhabitants were kept in a state of servitude and vassalage. This state of things operated then, as it does now in England, very unjustly and hardly for those who were thus debased; but the result was—and in this respect the analogy with England still holds good—that a very efficient and energetic government was created. The government of an oligarchy makes sometimes a very rich and powerful state, but a discontented and unhappy people.

Let the reader now turn to the map and find the place of Carthage upon it. Let him imagine a great and rich city there, with piers, and docks, and extensive warehouses for the commerce, and temples, and public edifices of splendid architecture, for the religious and civil service of the state, and elegant mansions and palaces for the wealthy aristocracy, and walls and towers for the defense of the whole. Let him then imagine a back country, extending for some hundred miles into the interior of Africa, fertile and highly cultivated, producing great stores of corn, and wine, and rich fruits of every description. Let him then look at the islands of

Sicily, of Corsica, and Sardinia, and the Baleares, and conceive of them as rich and prosperous countries, and all under the Carthaginian rule. Look, also, at the coast of Spain; see, in imagination, the city of Carthagena, with its fortifications, and its army, and the gold and silver mines, with thousands and thousands of slaves toiling in them. Imagine fleets of ships going continually along the shores of the Mediterranean, from country to country, cruising back and forth to Tyre, to Cyprus, to Egypt, to Sicily, to Spain, carrying corn, and flax, and purple dyes, and spices, and perfumes, and precious stones, and ropes, and sails for ships, and gold and silver, and then periodically returning to Carthage, to add the profits they had made to the vast treasures of wealth already accumulated there. Let the reader imagine all this with the map before him, so as to have a distinct conception of the geographical relations of the localities, and he will have a pretty correct idea of the Carthaginian power at the time it commenced its dreadful conflicts with Rome.

Rome itself was very differently situated. Rome had been built by some wanderers from Troy, and it grew, for a long time, silently and slowly, by a sort of internal principle of life and energy. One region after another of the Italian peninsula was merged in the Roman state. They formed a population which was, in the main, stationary and agricultural. They tilled the fields; they hunted the wild beasts; they raised great flocks and herds. They seem to have been a race—a sort of variety of the human species—possessed of a very refined and superior organization, which, in its development, gave rise to a character of firmness, en-

ergy, and force, both of body and mind, which has justly excited the admiration of mankind. The Carthaginians had sagacity—the Romans called it cunning—and activity, enterprise and wealth. Their rivals, on the other hand, were characterized by genius, courage, and strength, giving rise to a certain calm and indomitable resolution and energy, which has since, in every age, been strongly associated, in the minds of men, with the very word Roman.

The progress of nations was much more slow in ancient days than now, and these two rival empires continued their gradual growth and extension, each on its own side of the great sea which divided them, for five hundred years, before they came into collision. At last, however, the collision came. It originated in the following way:

By looking at the map, the reader will see that the island of Sicily is separated from the main land by a narrow strait called the Strait of Messina. This strait derives its name from the town of Messina, which is situated upon it, on the Sicilian side. Opposite Messina, on the Italian side, there was a town named Rhegium. Now it happened that both these towns had been taken possession of by lawless bodies of soldiery. The Romans came and delivered Rhegium, and punished the soldiers who had seized it very severely. The Sicilian authorities advanced to the deliverance of Messina. The troops there, finding themselves thus threatened, sent to the Romans to say that if they, the Romans, would come and protect them, they would deliver Messina into their hands.

The question, what answer to give to this application, was brought before the Roman senate, and caused them great perplexity. It seemed very inconsistent to take sides with the rebels of Messina, when they had punished so severely those of Rhegium. Still the Romans had been, for a long time, becoming very jealous of the growth and extension of the Carthaginian power. Here was an opportunity of meeting and resisting it. The Sicilian authorities were about calling for direct aid from Carthage to recover the city, and the affair would probably result in establishing a large body of Carthaginian troops within sight of the Italian shore, and at a point where it would be easy for them to make hostile incursions into the Roman territories. In a word, it was a case of what is called political necessity; that is to say, a case in which the interests of one of the parties in a contest were so strong that all considerations of justice, consistency, and honor are to be sacrificed to the promotion of them. Instances of this kind of political necessity occur very frequently in the management of public affairs in all ages of the world.

The contest for Messina was, after all, however, considered by the Romans merely as a pretext, or rather as an occasion, for commencing the struggle which they had long been desirous of entering upon. They evinced their characteristic energy and greatness in the plan which they adopted at the outset. They knew very well that the power of Carthage rested mainly on her command of the seas, and that they could not hope successfully to cope with her till they could meet and conquer her on her own element. In

the mean time, however, they had not a single ship and not a single sailor, while the Mediterranean was covered with Carthaginian ships and seamen. Not at all daunted by this prodigious inequality, the Romans resolved to begin at once the work of creating for themselves a naval power.

The preparations consumed some time; for the Romans had not only to build the ships, they had first to learn how to build them. They took their first lesson from a Carthaginian galley which was cast away in a storm upon the coast of Italy. They seized this galley, collected their carpenters to examine it, and set woodmen at work to fell trees and collect materials for imitating it. The carpenters studied their model very carefully, measured the dimensions of every part, and observed the manner in which the various parts were connected and secured together. The heavy shocks which vessels are exposed to from the waves makes it necessary to secure great strength in the construction of them; and, though the ships of the ancients were very small and imperfect compared with the men-of-war of the present day, still it is surprising that the Romans could succeed at all in such a sudden and hasty attempt at building them.

They did, however, succeed. While the ships were building, officers appointed for the purpose were training men, on shore, to the art of rowing them. Benches, like the seats which the oarsman would occupy in the ships, were arranged on the ground, and the intended seamen were drilled every day in the movements and action of rowers. The result was, that in a few months after the building of the ships was

commenced, the Romans had a fleet of one hundred galleys of five banks of oars ready. They remained in harbor with them for some time, to give the oarsmen the opportunity to see whether they could row on the water as well as on the land, and then boldly put to sea to meet the Carthaginians.

There was one part of the arrangements made by the Romans in preparing their fleets which was strikingly characteristic of the determined resolution which marked all their conduct. They constructed machines containing grappling irons, which they mounted on the prows of their vessels. These engines were so contrived, that the moment one of the ships containing them should encounter a vessel of the enemy, the grappling irons would fall upon the deck of the latter, and hold the two firmly together, so as to prevent the possibility of either escaping from the other. The idea that they themselves should have any wish to withdraw from the encounter seemed entirely out of the question. Their only fear was that the Carthaginian seamen would employ their superior skill and experience in naval maneuvers in making their escape. Mankind have always regarded the action of the Romans, in this case, as one of the most striking examples of military courage and resolution which the history of war has ever recorded. An army of landsmen come down to the seashore, and, without scarcely having ever seen a ship, undertake to build a fleet, and go out to attack a power whose navies covered the sea, and made her the sole and acknowledged mistress of it. They seize a wrecked galley of their enemies for their model; they build a hundred vessels like it: they practice maneuvers for a

short time in port; and then go forth to meet the fleets of their powerful enemy, with grappling machines to hold them, fearing nothing but the possibility of their escape.

The result was as might have been expected. The Romans captured, sunk, destroyed, or dispersed the Carthaginian fleet which was brought to oppose them. They took the prows of the ships which they captured and conveyed them to Rome, and built what is called a rostral pillar of them. A rostral pillar is a column ornamented with such beaks or prows, which were, in the Roman language, called rostra. This column was nearly destroyed by lightning about fifty years afterward, but it was repaired and rebuilt again, and it stood then for many centuries, a very striking and appropriate monument of this extraordinary naval victory. The Roman commander in this case was the consul Duilius. The rostral column was erected in honor of him. In digging among the ruins of Rome, there was found what was supposed to be the remains of this column, about three hundred years ago.

The Romans now prepared to carry the war into Africa itself. Of course it was easy, after their victory over the Carthaginian fleet, to transport troops across the sea to the Carthaginian shore. The Roman commonwealth was governed at this time by a senate, who made the laws, and by two supreme executive officers, called consuls. They thought it was safer to have two chief magistrates than one, as each of the two would naturally be a check upon the other. The result was, however, that mutual jealousy involved them often in disputes and quarrels. It is thought better, in modern

times, to have but one chief magistrate in the state, and to provide other modes to put a check upon any disposition he might evince to abuse his powers.

The Roman consuls, in time of war, took command of the armies. The name of the consul upon whom it devolved to carry on the war with the Carthaginians, after this first great victory, was Regulus, and his name has been celebrated in every age, on account of his extraordinary adventures in this campaign, and his untimely fate. How far the story is strictly true it is now impossible to ascertain, but the following is the story, as the Roman historians relate it:

At the time when Regulus was elected consul he was a plain man, living simply on his farm, maintaining himself by his own industry, and evincing no ambition or pride. His fellow-citizens, however, observed those qualities of mind in him which they were accustomed to admire, and made him consul. He left the city and took command of the army. He enlarged the fleet to more than three hundred vessels. He put one hundred and forty thousand men on board and sailed for Africa. One or two years had been spent in making these preparations, which time the Carthaginians had improved in building new ships; so that, when the Romans set sail, and were moving along the coast of Sicily, they soon came in sight of a larger Carthaginian fleet assembled to oppose them. Regulus advanced to the contest. The Carthaginian fleet was beaten as before. The ships which were not captured or destroyed made their escape in all directions, and Regulus went on, without further opposition, and landed his forces on the Carthaginian shore. He encamped as soon as he

landed, and sent back word to the Roman senate asking what was next to be done.

The senate, considering that the great difficulty and danger, viz., that of repulsing the Carthaginian fleet, was now past, ordered Regulus to send home nearly all the ships and a very large part of the army, and with the rest to commence his march toward Carthage. Regulus obeyed: he sent home the troops which had been ordered home, and with the rest began to advance upon the city.

Just at this time, however, news came out to him that the farmer who had had the care of his land at home had died, and that his little farm, on which rested his sole reliance for the support of his family, was going to ruin. Regulus accordingly sent to the senate, asking them to place some one else in command of the army, and to allow him to resign his office, that he might go home and take care of his wife and children. The senate sent back orders that he should go on with his campaign, and promised to provide support for his family, and to see that some one was appointed to take care of his land. This story is thought to illustrate the extreme simplicity and plainness of all the habits of life among the Romans in those days. It certainly does so, if it is true. It is, however, very extraordinary, that a man who was intrusted, by such a commonwealth, with the command of a fleet of a hundred and thirty vessels, and an army of a hundred and forty thousand men, should have a family at home dependent for subsistence on the hired cultivation of seven acres of land. Still, such is the story.

Regulus advanced toward Carthage, conquering as he came. The Carthaginians were beaten in one field after another, and were reduced, in fact, to the last extremity, when an occurrence took place which turned the scale. This was the arrival of a large body of troops from Greece, with a Grecian general at their head. These were troops which the Carthaginians had hired to fight for them, as was the case with the rest of the army. But these were Greeks, and the Greeks were of the same race, and possessed the same qualities, as the Romans. The newly-arrived Grecian general evinced at once such military superiority, that the Carthaginians gave him the supreme command. He marshaled the army, accordingly, for battle. He had a hundred elephants in the van. They were trained to rush forward and trample down the enemy. He had the Greek phalanx in the center, which was a close, compact body of many thousand troops, bristling with long, iron-pointed spears, with which the men pressed forward, bearing every thing before them. Regulus was, in a word, ready to meet Carthaginians, but he was not prepared to encounter Greeks. His army was put to flight, and he was taken prisoner. Nothing could exceed the excitement and exultation in the city when they saw Regulus, and five hundred other Roman soldiers, brought captive in. A few days before, they had been in consternation at the imminent danger of his coming in as a ruthless and vindictive conqueror.

The Roman senate were not discouraged by this disaster. They fitted out new armies, and the war went on, Regulus being kept all the time at Carthage as a close prisoner. At last the Carthaginians authorized

him to go to Rome as a sort of commissioner, to propose to the Romans to exchange prisoners and to make peace. They exacted from him a solemn promise that if he was unsuccessful he would return. The Romans had taken many of the Carthaginians prisoners in their naval combats, and held them captive at Rome. It is customary, in such cases, for the belligerent nations to make an exchange, and restore the captives on both sides to their friends and home. It was such an exchange of prisoners as this which Regulus was to propose.

When Regulus reached Rome he refused to enter the city, but he appeared before the senate without the walls, in a very humble garb and with the most subdued and unassuming demeanor. He was no longer, he said, a Roman officer, or even citizen, but a Carthaginian prisoner, and he disavowed all right to direct, or even to counsel, the Roman authorities in respect to the proper course to be pursued. His opinion was, however, he said, that the Romans ought not to make peace or to exchange prisoners. He himself and the other Roman prisoners were old and infirm, and not worth the exchange; and, moreover, they had no claim whatever on their country, as they could only have been made prisoners in consequence of want of courage or patriotism to die in their country's cause. He said that the Carthaginians were tired of the war, and that their resources were exhausted, and that the Romans ought to press forward in it with renewed vigor, and leave himself and the other prisoners to their fate.

The senate came very slowly and reluctantly to the conclusion to follow this advice. They, however, all earnestly joined in attempting to persuade Regulus that he was under no obligation to return to Carthage. His promise, they said, was extorted by the circumstances of the case, and was not binding. Regulus, however, insisted on keeping his faith with his enemies. He sternly refused to see his family, and, bidding the senate farewell, he returned to Carthage. The Carthaginians, exasperated at his having himself interposed to prevent the success of his mission, tortured him for some time in the most cruel manner, and finally put him to death. One would think that he ought to have counseled peace and an exchange of prisoners, and he ought not to have refused to see his unhappy wife and children; but it was certainly very noble in him to refuse to break his word.

The war continued for some time after this, until, at length, both nations became weary of the contest, and peace was made. The following is the treaty which was signed. It shows that the advantage, on the whole, in this first Punic war, was on the part of the Romans:

"There shall be peace between Rome and Carthage. The Carthaginians shall evacuate all Sicily. They shall not make war upon any allies of the Romans. They shall restore to the Romans, without ransom, all the prisoners which they have taken from them, and pay them within ten years three thousand two hundred talents of silver."

The war had continued twenty-four years.

CHAPTER II

HANNIBAL AT SAGUNTUM

THE name of Hannibal's father was Hamilcar. He was one of the leading Carthaginian generals. He occupied a very prominent position, both on account of his rank, and wealth, and high family connections at Carthage, and also on account of the great military energy which he displayed in the command of the armies abroad. He carried on the wars which the Carthaginians waged in Africa and in Spain after the conclusion of the war with the Romans, and he longed to commence hostilities with the Romans again.

At one time, when Hannibal was about nine years of age, Hamilcar was preparing to set off on an expedition into Spain, and, as was usual in those days, he was celebrating the occasion with games, and spectacles, and various religious ceremonies. It has been the custom in all ages of the world, when nations go to war with each other, for each side to take measures for propitiating the favor of Heaven. Christian nations at the present day do it by prayers offered in each country for the success of their own arms. Heathen nations do it by sacrifices, libations, and offerings. Hamilcar had made arrangements for such sacrifices, and the

priests were offering them in the presence of the whole assembled army.

Young Hannibal, then about nine years of age, was present. He was a boy of great spirit and energy, and he entered with much enthusiasm into the scene. He wanted to go to Spain himself with the army, and he came to his father and began to urge his request. His father could not consent to this. He was too young to endure the privations and fatigues of such an enterprise. However, his father brought him to one of the altars, in the presence of the other officers of the army, and made him lay his hand upon the consecrated victim, and swear that, as soon as he was old enough, and had it in his power, he would make war upon the Romans. This was done, no doubt, in part to amuse young Hannibal's mind, and to relieve his disappointment in not being able to go to war at that time, by promising him a great and mighty enemy to fight at some future day. Hannibal remembered it, and longed for the time to come when he could go to war against the Romans.

Hamilcar bade his son farewell and embarked for Spain. He was at liberty to extend his conquests there in all directions west of the River Iberus, a river which the reader will find upon the map, flowing southeast into the Mediterranean Sea. Its name, Iberus, has been gradually changed, in modern times, to Ebro. By the treaty with the Romans the Carthaginians were not to cross the Iberus. They were also bound by the treaty not to molest the people of Saguntum, a city lying between the Iberus and the Carthaginian domin-

ions. Saguntum was in alliance with the Romans and under their protection.

Hamilcar was, however, very restless and uneasy at being obliged thus to refrain from hostilities with the Roman power. He began, immediately after his arrival in Spain, to form plans for renewing the war. He had under him, as his principal lieutenant, a young man who had married his daughter. His name was Hasdrubal. With Hasdrubal's aid he went on extending his conquests in Spain, and strengthening his position there, and gradually maturing his plans for renewing war with the Romans, when at length he died. Hasdrubal succeeded him. Hannibal was now, probably, about twenty-one or two years old, and still in Carthage. Hasdrubal sent to the Carthaginian government a request that Hannibal might receive an appointment in the army, and be sent out to join him in Spain.

On the subject of complying with this request there was a great debate in the Carthaginian senate. In all cases where questions of government are controlled by votes, it has been found, in every age, that parties will always be formed, of which the two most prominent will usually be nearly balanced one against the other. Thus, at this time, though the Hamilcar family were in power, there was a very strong party in Carthage in opposition to them. The leader of this party in the senate, whose name was Hanno, made a very earnest speech against sending Hannibal. He was too young, he said, to be of any service. He would only learn the vices and follies of the camp, and thus become corrupted and ruined. "Besides," said Hanno, "at this rate, the command of our armies in Spain is get-

ting to be a sort of hereditary right. Hamilcar was not a king, that his authority should thus descend first to his son-in-law and then to his son; for this plan of making Hannibal," he said, "while yet scarcely arrived at manhood, a high officer in the army, is only a stepping-stone to the putting of the forces wholly under his orders, whenever, for any reason, Hasdrubal shall cease to command them."

The Roman historian, through whose narrative we get our only account of this debate, says that, though these were good reasons, yet strength prevailed, as usual, over wisdom, in the decision of the question. They voted to send Hannibal, and he set out to cross the sea to Spain with a heart full of enthusiasm and joy.

A great deal of curiosity and interest was felt throughout the army to see him on his arrival. The soldiers had been devotedly attached to his father, and they were all ready to transfer this attachment at once to the son, if he should prove worthy of it. It was very evident, soon after he reached the camp, that he was going to prove himself thus worthy. He entered at once into the duties of his position with a degree of energy, patience, and self-denial which attracted universal attention, and made him a universal favorite. He dressed plainly; he assumed no airs; he sought for no pleasures or indulgences, nor demanded any exemption from the dangers and privations which the common soldiers had to endure. He ate plain food, and slept, often in his military cloak, on the ground, in the midst of the soldiers on guard; and in battle he was always foremost to press forward into the contest, and

the last to leave the ground when the time came for repose. The Romans say that, in addition to these qualities, he was inhuman and merciless when in open warfare with his foes, and cunning and treacherous in every other mode of dealing with them. It is very probable that he was so. Such traits of character were considered by soldiers in those days, as they are now, virtues in themselves, though vices in their enemies.

However this may be, Hannibal became a great and universal favorite in the army. He went on for several years increasing his military knowledge, and widening and extending his influence, when at length, one day, Hasdrubal was suddenly killed by a ferocious native of the country whom he had by some means offended. As soon as the first shock of this occurrence was over, the leaders of the army went in pursuit of Hannibal, whom they brought in triumph to the tent of Hasdrubal, and instated him at once in the supreme command, with one consent and in the midst of universal acclamations. As soon as news of this event reached Carthage, the government there confirmed the act of the army, and Hannibal thus found himself suddenly but securely invested with a very high military command.

His eager and restless desire to try his strength with the Romans received a new impulse by his finding that the power was now in his hands. Still the two countries were at peace. They were bound by solemn treaties to continue so. The River Iberus was the boundary which separated the dominions of the two nations from each other in Spain, the territory east of that boundary being under the Roman power, and that

on the west under that of the Carthaginians; except that Saguntum, which was on the western side, was an ally of the Romans, and the Carthaginians were bound by the treaty to leave it independent and free.

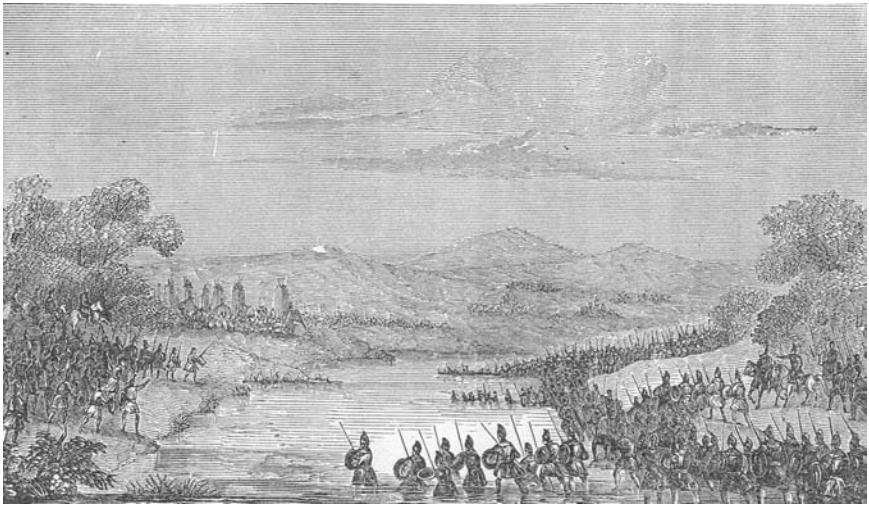
Hannibal could not, therefore, cross the Iberus or attack Saguntum without an open infraction of the treaty. He, however, immediately began to move toward Saguntum, and to attack the nations in the immediate vicinity of it. If he wished to get into a war with the Romans, this was the proper way to promote it; for, by advancing thus into the immediate vicinity of the capital of their allies, there was great probability that disputes would arise which would sooner or later end in war.

The Romans say that Hannibal was cunning and treacherous, and he certainly did display, on some occasions, a great degree of adroitness in his stratagems. In one instance in these preliminary wars he gained a victory over an immensely superior force in a very remarkable manner. He was returning from an inroad upon some of the northern provinces, laden and encumbered with spoil, when he learned that an immense army, consisting, it was said, of a hundred thousand men, were coming down upon his rear. There was a river at a short distance before him. Hannibal pressed on and crossed the river by a ford, the water being, perhaps, about three feet deep. He secreted a large body of cavalry near the bank of the stream, and pushed on with the main body of the army to some little distance from the river, so as to produce the impression upon his pursuers that he was pressing forward to make his escape.

The enemy, thinking that they had no time to lose, poured down in great numbers into the stream from various points along the banks; and, as soon as they had reached the middle of the current, and were wading laboriously, half submerged, with their weapons held above their heads, so as to present as little resistance as possible to the water, the horsemen of Hannibal rushed in to meet and attack them. The horsemen had, of course, greatly the advantage; for, though their horses were in the water, they were themselves raised above it, and their limbs were free, while their enemies were half submerged, and, being encumbered by their arms and by one another, were nearly helpless. They were immediately thrown into complete confusion, and were overwhelmed and carried down by the current in great numbers. Some of them succeeded in landing below, on Hannibal's side; but, in the mean time, the main body of his army had returned, and was ready to receive them, and they were trampled under foot by the elephants, which it was the custom to employ, in those days, as a military force. As soon as the river was cleared, Hannibal marched his own army across it, and attacked what remained of the enemy on their own side. He gained a complete victory, which was so great and decisive that he secured by it possession of the whole country west of the Iberus, except Saguntum, and Saguntum itself began to be seriously alarmed.

The Saguntines sent embassadors to Rome to ask the Romans to interpose and protect them from the dangers which threatened them. These embassadors made diligent efforts to reach Rome as soon as

possible, but they were too late. On some pretext or other, Hannibal contrived to raise a dispute between the city and one of the neighboring tribes, and then, taking sides with the tribe, he advanced to attack the city. The Saguntines prepared for their defense, hoping soon to receive succors from Rome. They strengthened and fortified their walls, while Hannibal began to move forward great military engines for battering them down.



THE BATTLE IN THE RIVER

Hannibal knew very well that by his hostilities against this city he was commencing a contest with Rome itself, as Rome must necessarily take part with her ally. In fact, there is no doubt that his design was to bring on a general war between the two great nations. He began with Saguntum for two reasons: first, it would not be safe for him to cross the Iberus, and

advance into the Roman territory, leaving so wealthy and powerful a city in his rear; and then, in the second place, it was easier for him to find pretexts for getting indirectly into a quarrel with Saguntum, and throwing the odium of a declaration of war on Rome, than to persuade the Carthaginian state to renounce the peace and themselves commence hostilities. There was, as has been already stated, a very strong party at Carthage opposed to Hannibal, who would, of course, resist any measures tending to a war with Rome, for they would consider such a war as opening a vast field for gratifying Hannibal's ambition. The only way, therefore, was to provoke a war by aggressions on the Roman allies, to be justified by the best pretexts he could find.

Saguntum was a very wealthy and powerful city. It was situated about a mile from the sea. The attack upon the place, and the defense of it by the inhabitants, went on for some time with great vigor. In these operations, Hannibal exposed himself to great danger. He approached, at one time, so near the wall, in superintending the arrangements of his soldiers and the planting of his engines, that a heavy javelin, thrown from the parapet, struck him on the thigh. It pierced the flesh, and inflicted so severe a wound that he fell immediately, and was borne away by the soldiers. It was several days before he was free from the danger incurred by the loss of blood and the fever which follows such a wound. During all this time his army were in a great state of excitement and anxiety, and suspended their active operations. As soon, however, as Hannibal was found to be decidedly convalescent, they

resumed them again, and urged them onward with greater energy than before.

The weapons of warfare in those ancient days were entirely different from those which are now employed, and there was one, described by an ancient historian as used by the Saguntines at this siege, which might almost come under the modern denomination of fire-arms. It was called the falarica. It was a sort of javelin, consisting of a shaft of wood, with a long point of iron. This point was said to be three feet long. This javelin was to be thrown at the enemy either from the hand of the soldier or by an engine. The leading peculiarity of it was, however, that, near to the pointed end, there were wound around the wooden shaft long bands of tow, which were saturated with pitch and other combustibles, and this inflammable band was set on fire just before the javelin was thrown. As the missile flew on its way, the wind fanned the flames, and made them burn so fiercely, that when the javelin struck the shield of the soldier opposing it, it could not be pulled out, and the shield itself had to be thrown down and abandoned.

While the inhabitants of Saguntum were vainly endeavoring to defend themselves against their terrible enemy by these and similar means, their embassadors, not knowing that the city had been attacked, had reached Rome, and had laid before the Roman senate their fears that the city would be attacked, unless they adopted vigorous and immediate measures to prevent it. The Romans resolved to send embassadors to Hannibal to demand of him what his intentions were, and to warn him against any acts of hostility against Sagun-

tum. When these Roman embassadors arrived on the coast, near to Saguntum, they found that hostilities had commenced, and that the city was hotly besieged. They were at a loss to know what to do.

It is better for a rebel not to hear an order which he is determined beforehand not to obey. Hannibal, with an adroitness which the Carthaginians called sagacity, and the Romans treachery and cunning, determined not to see these messengers. He sent word to them, at the shore, that they must not attempt to come to his camp, for the country was in such a disturbed condition that it would not be safe for them to land; and besides, he could not receive or attend to them, for he was too much pressed with the urgency of his military works to have any time to spare for debates and negotiations.

Hannibal knew that the embassadors, being thus repulsed, and having found, too, that the war had broken out, and that Saguntum was actually beset and besieged by Hannibal's armies, would proceed immediately to Carthage to demand satisfaction there. He knew, also, that Hanno and his party would very probably espouse the cause of the Romans, and endeavor to arrest his designs. He accordingly sent his own embassadors to Carthage, to exert an influence in his favor in the Carthaginian senate, and endeavor to urge them to reject the claims of the Romans, and allow the war between Rome and Carthage to break out again.

The Roman embassadors appeared at Carthage, and were admitted to an audience before the senate.

They stated their case, representing that Hannibal had made war upon Saguntum in violation of the treaty, and had refused even to receive the communication which had been sent him by the Roman senate through them. They demanded that the Carthaginian government should disavow his acts, and deliver him up to them, in order that he might receive the punishment which his violation of the treaty, and his aggressions upon an ally of the Romans, so justly deserved.

The party of Hannibal in the Carthaginian senate were, of course, earnest to have these proposals rejected with scorn. The other side, with Hanno at their head, maintained that they were reasonable demands. Hanno, in a very energetic and powerful speech, told the senate that he had warned them not to send Hannibal into Spain. He had foreseen that such a hot and turbulent spirit as his would involve them in inextricable difficulties with the Roman power. Hannibal had, he said, plainly violated the treaty. He had invested and besieged Saguntum, which they were solemnly bound not to molest, and they had nothing to expect in return but that the Roman legions would soon be investing and besieging their own city. In the mean time, the Romans, he added, had been moderate and forbearing. They had brought nothing to the charge of the Carthaginians. They accused nobody but Hannibal, who, thus far, alone was guilty. The Carthaginians, by disavowing his acts, could save themselves from the responsibility of them. He urged, therefore, that an embassage of apology should be sent to Rome, that Hannibal should be deposed and delivered up to the Romans, and that

ample restitution should be made to the Saguntines for the injuries they had received.

On the other hand, the friends of Hannibal urged in the Carthaginian senate their defense of the general. They reviewed the history of the transactions in which the war had originated, and showed, or attempted to show, that the Saguntines themselves commenced hostilities, and that consequently they, and not Hannibal, were responsible for all that followed; that, under those circumstances, the Romans ought not to take their part, and if they did so, it proved that they preferred the friendship of Saguntum to that of Carthage; and that it would be cowardly and dishonorable in the extreme for them to deliver the general whom they had placed in power, and who had shown himself so worthy of their choice by his courage and energy, into the hands of their ancient and implacable foes.

Thus Hannibal was waging at the same time two wars, one in the Carthaginian senate, where the weapons were arguments and eloquence, and the other under the walls of Saguntum, which was fought with battering rams and fiery javelins. He conquered in both. The senate decided to send the Roman embassadors home without acceding to their demands, and the walls of Saguntum were battered down by Hannibal's engines. The inhabitants refused all terms of compromise, and resisted to the last, so that, when the victorious soldiery broke over the prostrate walls, and poured into the city, it was given up to them to plunder, and they killed and destroyed all that came in their way. The disappointed embassadors returned to Rome with

the news that Saguntum had been taken and destroyed by Hannibal, and that the Carthaginians, far from offering any satisfaction for the wrong, assumed the responsibility of it themselves, and were preparing for war.

Thus Hannibal accomplished his purpose of opening the way for waging war against the Roman power. He prepared to enter into the contest with the utmost energy and zeal. The conflict that ensued lasted seventeen years, and is known in history as the second Punic war. It was one of the most dreadful struggles between rival and hostile nations which the gloomy history of mankind exhibits to view. The events that occurred will be described in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER III

OPENING OF THE SECOND PUNIC WAR

WHEN the tide once turns in any nation in favor of war, it generally rushes on with great impetuosity and force, and bears all before it. It was so in Carthage in this instance. The party of Hanno were thrown entirely into the minority and silenced, and the friends and partisans of Hannibal carried not only the government, but the whole community with them, and every body was eager for war. This was owing, in part, to the natural contagiousness of the martial spirit, which, when felt by one, catches easily, by sympathy, in the heart of another. It is a fire which, when once it begins to burn, spreads in every direction, and consumes all that comes in its way.

Besides, when Hannibal gained possession of Saguntum, he found immense treasures there, which he employed, not to increase his own private fortune, but to strengthen and confirm his civil and military power. The Saguntines did every thing they could to prevent these treasures from falling into his hands. They fought desperately to the last, refused all terms of surrender, and they became so insanely desperate in

the end, that, according to the narrative of Livy, when they found that the walls and towers of the city were falling in, and that all hope of further defense was gone, they built an enormous fire in the public streets, and heaped upon it all the treasures which they had time to collect that fire could destroy, and then that many of the principal inhabitants leaped into the flames themselves, in order that their hated conquerors might lose their prisoners as well as their spoils.

Notwithstanding this, however, Hannibal obtained a vast amount of gold and silver, both in the form of money and of plate, and also much valuable merchandise, which the Saguntine merchants had accumulated in their palaces and warehouses. He used all this property to strengthen his own political and military position. He paid his soldiers all the arrears due to them in full. He divided among them a large additional amount as their share of the spoil. He sent rich trophies home to Carthage, and presents, consisting of sums of money, and jewelry, and gems, to his friends here, and to those whom he wished to make his friends. The result of this munificence, and of the renown which his victories in Spain had procured for him, was to raise him to the highest pinnacle of influence and honor. The Carthaginians chose him one of the suffetes.

The suffetes were the supreme executive officers of the Carthaginian commonwealth. The government was, as has been remarked before, a sort of aristocratic republic, and republics are always very cautious about intrusting power, even executive power, to any one man. As Rome had two consuls, reigning

jointly, and France, after her first revolution, a Directory of five, so the Carthaginians chose annually two suffetes, as they were called at Carthage, though the Roman writers call them indiscriminately suffetes, consuls, and kings; so that, in conjunction with his colleague, he held the supreme civil authority in Carthage, besides being invested with the command of the vast and victorious army in Spain.

When news of these events—the siege and destruction of Saguntum, the rejection of the demands of the Roman embassadors, and the vigorous preparations making by the Carthaginians for war—reached Rome, the whole city was thrown into consternation. The senate and the people held tumultuous and disorderly assemblies, in which the events which had occurred, and the course of proceeding which it was incumbent on the Romans to take, were discussed with much excitement and clamor. The Romans were, in fact, afraid of the Carthaginians. The campaigns of Hannibal in Spain had impressed the people with a strong sense of remorseless and terrible energy of his character; they at once concluded that his plans would be formed for marching into Italy, and they even anticipated the danger of his bringing the war up to the very gates of the city, so as to threaten them with the destruction which he had brought upon Saguntum. The event showed how justly they appreciated his character.

Since the conclusion of the first Punic war, there had been peace between the Romans and Carthaginians for about a quarter of a century. During all this time both nations had been advancing in wealth

and power, but the Carthaginians had made much more rapid progress than the Romans. The Romans had, indeed, been very successful at the outset in the former war, but in the end the Carthaginians had proved themselves their equal. They seemed, therefore, to dread now a fresh encounter with these powerful foes, led on, as they were now to be, by such a commander as Hannibal.

They determined, therefore, to send a second embassy to Carthage, with a view of making one more effort to preserve peace before actually commencing hostilities. They accordingly selected five men from among the most influential citizens of the state—men of venerable age and of great public consideration—and commissioned them to proceed to Carthage and ask once more whether it was the deliberate and final decision of the Carthaginian senate to avow and sustain the action of Hannibal. This solemn embassage set sail. They arrived at Carthage. They appeared before the senate. They argued their cause, but it was, of course, to deaf and unwilling ears. The Carthaginian orators replied to them, each side attempting to throw the blame of the violation of the treaty on the other. It was a solemn hour, for the peace of the world, the lives of hundreds of thousands of men, and the continued happiness or the desolation and ruin of vast regions of country, depended on the issue of the debate.

Unhappily, the breach was only widened by the discussion. "Very well," said the Roman commissioners, at last, "we offer you peace or war, which do you choose?" "Whichever you please," replied the Carthaginians; "decide for yourselves." "War, then," said the

Romans, "since it must be so." The conference was broken up, and the embassadors returned to Rome.

They returned, however, by the way of Spain. Their object in doing this was to negotiate with the various kingdoms and tribes in Spain and in France, through which Hannibal would have to march in invading Italy, and endeavor to induce them to take sides with the Romans. They were too late, however, for Hannibal had contrived to extend and establish his influence in all that region too strongly to be shaken; so that, on one pretext or another, the Roman proposals were all rejected. There was one powerful tribe, for example, called the Volscians. The embassadors, in the presence of the great council of the Volscians, made known to them the probability of war, and invited them to ally themselves with the Romans. The Volscians rejected the proposition with a sort of scorn. "We see," said they, "from the fate of Saguntum, what is to be expected to result from an alliance with the Romans. After leaving that city defenseless and alone in its struggle against such terrible danger, it is in vain to ask other nations to trust to your protection. If you wish for new allies, it will be best for you to go where the story of Saguntum is not known." This answer of the Volscians was applauded by the other nations of Spain, as far as it was known, and the Roman embassadors, despairing of success in that country, went on into Gaul, which is the name by which the country now called France is known in ancient history.

On reaching a certain place which was a central point of influence and power in Gaul, the Roman commissioners convened a great martial council there.

The spectacle presented by this assembly was very imposing, for the warlike counselors came to the meeting armed completely and in the most formidable manner, as if they were coming to a battle instead of a consultation and debate. The venerable embassadors laid the subject before them. They descanted largely on the power and greatness of the Romans, and on the certainty that they should conquer in the approaching contest, and they invited the Gauls to espouse their cause, and to rise in arms and intercept Hannibal's passage through their country, if he should attempt to effect one.

The assembly could hardly be induced to hear the embassadors through; and, as soon as they had finished their address, the whole council broke forth into cries of dissent and displeasure, and even into shouts of derision. Order was at length restored, and the officers, whose duty it was to express the sentiments of the assembly, gave for their reply that the Gauls had never received any thing but violence and injuries from Rome, or any thing but kindness and good-will from Carthage; and that they had no idea of being guilty of the folly of bringing the impending storm of Hannibal's hostility upon their own heads, merely for the sake of averting it from their ancient and implacable foes. Thus the embassadors were every where repulsed. They found no friendly disposition toward the Roman power till they had crossed the Rhone.

Hannibal began now to form his plans, in a very deliberate and cautious manner, for a march into Italy. He knew well that this was an expedition of such magnitude and duration as to require beforehand the most

careful and well-considered arrangements, both for the forces which were to go, and for the states and communities which were to remain. The winter was coming on. His first measure was to dismiss a large portion of his forces, that they might visit their homes. He told them that he was intending some great designs for the ensuing spring, which might take them to a great distance, and keep them for a long time absent from Spain, and he would, accordingly, give them the intervening time to visit their families and their homes, and to arrange their affairs. This act of kind consideration and confidence renewed the attachment of the soldiers to their commander, and they returned to his camp in the spring not only with new strength and vigor, but with redoubled attachment to the service in which they were engaged.

Hannibal, after sending home his soldiers, retired himself to New Carthage, which, as will be seen by the map, is further west than Saguntum, where he went into winter quarters, and devoted himself to the maturing of his designs. Besides the necessary preparations for his own march, he had to provide for the government of the countries that he should leave. He devised various and ingenious plans to prevent the danger of insurrections and rebellions while he was gone. One was, to organize an army for Spain out of soldiers drawn from Africa, while the troops which were to be employed to garrison Carthage, and to sustain the government there, were taken from Spain. By thus changing the troops of the two countries, each country was controlled by a foreign soldiery, who were more likely to be faithful in their obedience to their

commanders, and less in danger of sympathizing with the populations which they were respectively employed to control, than if each had been retained in its own native land.

Hannibal knew very well that the various states and provinces of Spain, which had refused to ally themselves with the Romans and abandon him, had been led to do this through the influence of his presents or the fear of his power, and that if, after he had penetrated into Italy, he should meet with reverses, so as to diminish very much their hope of deriving benefit from his favor or their fear of his power, there would be great danger of defections and revolts. As an additional security against this, he adopted the following ingenious plan. He enlisted a body of troops from among all the nations of Spain that were in alliance with him, selecting the young men who were enlisted as much as possible from families of consideration and influence, and this body of troops, when organized and officered, he sent into Carthage, giving the nations and tribes from which they were drawn to understand that he considered them not only as soldiers serving in his armies, but as hostages, which he should hold as security for the fidelity and obedience of the countries from which they had come. The number of these soldiers was four thousand.

Hannibal had a brother, whose name, as it happened, was the same as that of his brother-in-law, Hasdrubal. It was to him that he committed the government of Spain during his absence. The soldiers provided for him were, as has been already stated, mainly drawn from Africa. In addition to the foot sol-

diers, he provided him with a small body of horse. He left with him, also, fourteen elephants. And as he thought it not improbable that the Romans might, in some contingency during his absence, make a descent upon the Spanish coast from the sea, he built and equipped for him a small fleet of about sixty vessels, fifty of which were of the first class. In modern times, the magnitude and efficiency of a ship is estimated by the number of guns she will carry; then, it was the number of banks of oars. Fifty of Hasdrubal's ships were quinqueremes, as they were called, that is, they had five banks of oars.

The Romans, on the other hand, did not neglect their own preparations. Though reluctant to enter upon the war, they still prepared to engage in it with their characteristic energy and ardor, when they found that it could not be averted. They resolved on raising two powerful armies, one for each of the consuls. The plan was, with one of these to advance to meet Hannibal, and with the other to proceed to Sicily, and from Sicily to the African coast, with a view of threatening the Carthaginian capital. This plan, if successful, would compel the Carthaginians to recall a part or the whole of Hannibal's army from the intended invasion of Italy to defend their own African homes.

The force raised by the Romans amounted to about seventy thousand men. About a third of these were Roman soldiers, and the remainder were drawn from various nations dwelling in Italy and in the islands of the Mediterranean Sea which were in alliance with the Romans. Of these troops six thousand were cavalry. Of course, as the Romans intended to cross

into Africa, they needed a fleet. They built and equipped one, which consisted of two hundred and twenty ships of the largest class, that is, quinqueremes, besides a number of smaller and lighter vessels for services requiring speed. There were vessels in use in those times larger than the quinqueremes. Mention is occasionally made of those which had six and even seven banks of oars. But these were only employed as the flag-ships of commanders, and for other purposes of ceremony and parade, as they were too unwieldy for efficient service in action.

Lots were then drawn in a very solemn manner, according to the Roman custom on such occasions, to decide on the assignment of these two armies to the respective consuls. The one destined to meet Hannibal on his way from Spain, fell to a consul named Cornelius Scipio. The name of the other was Sempronius. It devolved on him, consequently, to take charge of the expedition destined to Sicily and Africa. When all the arrangements were thus made, the question was finally put, in a very solemn and formal manner, to the Roman people for their final vote and decision. "Do the Roman people decide and decree that war shall be declared against the Carthaginians?" The decision was in the affirmative. The war was then proclaimed with the usual imposing ceremonies. Sacrifices and religious celebrations followed, to propitiate the favor of the gods, and to inspire the soldiers with that kind of courage and confidence which the superstitious, however wicked, feel when they can imagine themselves under the protection of heaven. These shows and spectacles being over, all things were ready.

In the mean time Hannibal was moving on, as the spring advanced, toward the banks of the Iberus, that frontier stream, the crossing of which made him an invader of what was, in some sense, Roman territory. He boldly passed the stream, and moved forward along the coast of the Mediterranean, gradually approaching the Pyrenees, which form the boundary between France and Spain. His soldiers hitherto did not know what his plans were. It is very little the custom now for military and naval commanders to communicate to their men much information about their designs, and it was still less the custom then; and besides, in those days, the common soldiers had no access to those means of information by which news of every sort is now so universally diffused. Thus, though all the officers of the army, and well-informed citizens both in Rome and Carthage, anticipated and understood Hannibal's designs, his own soldiers, ignorant and degraded, knew nothing except that they were to go on some distant and dangerous service. They, very likely, had no idea whatever of Italy or of Rome, or of the magnitude of the possessions, or of the power held by the vast empire which they were going to invade.

When, however, after traveling day after day, they came to the foot of the Pyrenees, and found that they were really going to pass that mighty chain of mountains, and for this purpose were actually entering its wild and gloomy defiles, the courage of some of them failed, and they began to murmur. The discontent and alarm were, in fact, so great, that one corps, consisting of about three thousand men, left the camp in a body, and moved back toward their homes. On

inquiry, Hannibal found that there were ten thousand more who were in a similar state of feeling. His whole force consisted of over one hundred thousand. And now what does the reader imagine that Hannibal would do in such an emergency? Would he return in pursuit of these deserters, to recapture and destroy them as a terror to the rest? Or would he let them go, and attempt by words of conciliation and encouragement to confirm and save those that yet remained? He did neither. He called together the ten thousand discontented troops that were still in his camp, and told them that, since they were afraid to accompany his army, or unwilling to do so, they might return. He wanted none in his service who had not the courage and fortitude to go on wherever he might lead. He would not have the faint-hearted and the timid in his army. They would only be a burden to load down and impede the courage and energy of the rest. So saying, he gave orders for them to return, and with the rest of the army, whose resolution and ardor were redoubled by this occurrence, he moved on through the passes of the mountains.

This act of Hannibal, in permitting his discontented soldiers to return, had all the effect of a deed of generosity in its influence upon the minds of the soldiers who went on. We must not, however, imagine that it was prompted by a spirit of generosity at all. It was policy. A seeming generosity was, in this case, exactly what was wanted to answer his ends. Hannibal was mercilessly cruel in all cases where he imagined that severity was demanded. It requires great sagacity sometimes in a commander to know when he must

punish, and when it is wisest to overlook and forgive. Hannibal, like Alexander and Napoleon, possessed this sagacity in a very high degree; and it was, doubtless, the exercise of that principle alone which prompted his action on this occasion.

Thus Hannibal passed the Pyrenees. The next difficulty that he anticipated was in crossing the River Rhone.