

## CHAPTER XXIX

### ROME UNDER THE KINGS

#### I. THE MYTHS<sup>1</sup>

**361. The Myth of Aeneas and of Romulus and Remus.** — When the Greeks had taken Troy by means of the wooden horse<sup>2</sup> and were slaying the inhabitants, Ae-ne'as escaped by sea together with many followers. And though angry Juno<sup>3</sup> threatened him with storms and beset his path with trials and dangers, his goddess mother, Venus, guided him safely through every peril, and brought him after many wanderings to a haven on the west coast of Italy. There he landed and began to build a city.

Trojans and natives lived together in peace, all taking the name of Latins. A son of Aeneas founded Alba Longa. Many generations afterward A-mu'li-us wickedly expelled his brother Nu'mi-tor from the kingship of Alba, and himself usurped the throne. He had Numitor's son assassinated, and compelled Rhe'a, the daughter, to become a Vestal Virgin<sup>4</sup> that she might not marry and bring forth an avenger of the family's wrongs. However, she bore to Mars, god of war, twin sons of more than human size and beauty. She named them Rom'u-lus and Re'mus. Set adrift on the Tiber by order of the king, they were cast ashore near Mount Palatine, and would have perished had not a she-wolf nursed them till they were taken up and cared for by a shepherd of that region. When they had grown to manhood, they killed Amulius, and restored Numitor, their grandfather, to the throne.

**362. Myth of the Founding of Rome** (753 B.C.?). — With the king's consent, the twin brothers led a colony to the place where

<sup>1</sup> The Myths are merely for reading, not for study and recitation. On their historical value, see § 365.

<sup>2</sup> § 113.

<sup>3</sup> § 373.

<sup>4</sup> § 374.

they had passed their youth. There Romulus founded a city on Mount Palatine.<sup>1</sup> Remus, however, in derision, leaped the half-finished wall, exclaiming, "Methinks any of your enemies might leap this as easily as I do." Then Romulus, or one of his men, replying, "But any of us might easily chastise that enemy," struck and killed him with a pickaxe. The new city was named Rome after the founder. Becoming its first king, Romulus gave his people laws and a constitution.

**363. Myth of Numa, of Tullus Hostilius, and of Ancus Martius.**—After Romulus had ended his reign, and had ascended alive to heaven, Nu'ma became king. Whereas Romulus had been warlike, Numa was a man of peace, learned in human and divine law, who made it the aim of his rule to soften the iron tempers of the Romans. Refraining from war throughout his reign, he occupied his time in giving religious laws and institutions to his people.

At his death peace came to an end. Tul'lus Hos-til'i-us, the third king, conquered and destroyed Alba Longa,<sup>2</sup> annexed her territory, and removed the people to Rome, where he settled them on the Caelian Hill. An'cus Mar'ti-us, the fourth king, still further enlarged the Roman domain, founded Os'ti-a, at the mouth of the Tiber, to be a seaport to his city, and fortified Mount Ja-nic'u-lum, across the Tiber, as an outpost against the Etruscans.

**364. Myth of the Tarquins and of Servius Tullius.**—While Ancus Martius was king, a certain resident of Tar-quin'i-i, in Etruria, journeyed to Rome. There taking the name of Lu'ci-us Tar-quin'i-us Pris'cus ("the Elder"), he won, by his courteous manners, the favor of all. The people, therefore, elected him king



A VESTAL VIRGIN  
(Museum of the Terme, Rome)

<sup>1</sup> § 357.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

after Ancus. He gained famous victories over the Sabines and the Latins, and made a beginning of the great public works which his successors carried to completion. At length he was assassinated, and Servius Tullius, the son of a slave mother, succeeded to the throne.

Servius built a great wall around Rome, reorganized the army, and made his city leader of Latium. Such were his magnificent deeds. But the plots of his wicked daughter, Tullia, embittered his old age; and at last he was openly murdered by her husband, Tarquin the Elder's son, who, succeeding to the throne, gained the hateful title of "the Proud." The younger Tarquin completed the public works his father had begun. On these buildings he compelled the citizens to labor unrewarded till they cursed the tyrant. One day a prophetess of Apollo, the "Sib'yl," came to him from Cumae<sup>1</sup> with nine books of prophecies concerning the future of Rome. She wished him to buy them, but he objected to the price. After she had burned six of them, however, curiosity and religious fear led him to pay the original price for the remaining three. He placed them in charge of a college of two men of rank, who kept them in a vault beneath the temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Mount, and consulted them whenever the state was in especial danger or distress.

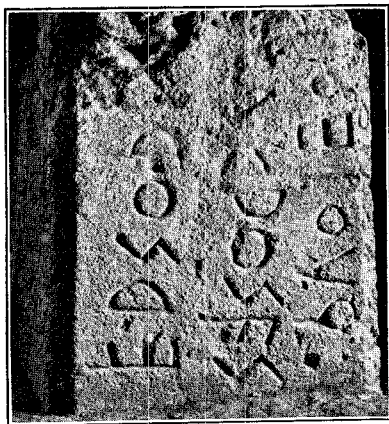
But the end of kingly rule was drawing near. The last Tarquin broke the laws of the forefathers, slew senators, and so oppressed the people by hard labor that they were ready for rebellion. Col-la-ti'nus Tarquinius and Lu'ci-us Ju'ni-us Bru'tus, both kinsmen of the king, led a revolt of nobles and commons against the tyrant. He was banished, and Brutus persuaded the people to swear that they would nevermore suffer a king to rule at Rome.

**365. Historical Value of the Myths.** — The account given above is but a brief outline of the story of the seven kings as told by the writers of later time. They could have had no real knowledge of the founding and of the earliest history of the city, for no written material came down to them from that far-off time. The traditional date of founding — 753. B.C. — is a fiction. Doubtless the beginnings of the city were far earlier. About 700 the Romans adopted the alphabet from the Greeks, but for two centuries they made little

<sup>1</sup> § 126.

use of it. In the later years of the regal period they began to put into writing their treaties and perhaps also some of their religious laws,<sup>1</sup> which could afterward be used by historians.

Evidently Romulus, whom the Romans worshipped, was not a man, but a deity.<sup>2</sup> The real names of all the earlier kings have in fact been forgotten, and those only were remembered who ruled toward the close of the period. To this time belong the other six. They, or the most of them, seem to have been real persons. The account of their lives, however, is interwoven with myths; and no two scholars will agree as to what elements of the story are true and what are fictitious.



THE "FORUM INSCRIPTION"

(In archaic characters; an early religious law.  
From a photograph.)

### 366. Other Historical Sources.

— In the accounts given by ancient writers are descriptions of many customs, institutions, and buildings as they existed in historical time. The writers refer them uncritically to the regal period. By careful examination we can often distinguish between those things which existed so early and those which came later into being. Thus we can reconstruct in broad outline the public and private life of Rome under the kings.

In this task of reconstruction we derive great assistance from archaeology. A cemetery has recently been discovered in Rome which was used in the earlier regal period. A study of the graves and of their contents throws light on the life of the common people. Such public works, however, as the Clo-a'-ca Max'i-ma, the so-called Wall of Romulus and Wall of Servius, belong to a far later time.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> One of these religious laws, engraved on stone, has recently been discovered in the Forum. It belongs probably to about 450 B.C.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Lycurgus; § 140.

<sup>3</sup> § 375.

## II. THE PEOPLE AND THE STATE

**367. Occupations and Character of the Romans.** — As Rome was on a navigable river, and well situated for small trade with the Etruscans and other neighbors, some of the citizens engaged in making wares and in buying and selling. Most of the Romans, however, were peasants. The farmer, clad simply in his tunic, a loose woollen garment which reached the knee, followed his bronze-shod plough drawn by a yoke of cattle. His narrow mind held only sober, practical ideas; for he saw nothing of the world beyond the



Side



Front

AN URN IN THE FORM OF A HUT<sup>1</sup>

(Found at Bolsena, Tuscany; Olcott Collection, Columbia University. From a photograph, with Professor Olcott's permission)

mountains bordering the plain of the Tiber, — mountains which inspired him with no love of the beautiful and the grand, but rather with a feeling of hatred for the enemies who were wont to sweep down from them upon his little field. His laborious life, his warfare against famine, pestilence, and neighbors who were always harassing, made him stern and harsh, and, even in his dealing with the gods, calculating and illiberal. Though love, pity, and benevolence found little place in his heart, he was strong in the more heroic virtues, — he was dignified, brave, and energetic; he revered the gods and the forefathers, and obeyed the laws; above all, he was a man of his word.

**368. The Family and the Gens.** — We find the same simplicity and severity in the family. Marriage was a religious act which made the home sacred. Originally the dwelling was a hut with a single room like that shown in the illustration. In time it came to have several rooms. The dwelling was a holy place. Within lived the *Pe-na'tes*, guardian deities of the family store, and the *Lar*, who protected the house from every harm. Every person had a guard-

<sup>1</sup>In early Latium and Etruria it was customary to burn the dead and to deposit the ashes in urns, often shaped like the dwellings of the living. The urn here illustrated is of this character.

ian spirit, the man a Genius, the woman a Juno. The Genius of the father was the chief household god. The father was priest of these gods, owner of the estate, and master of his wife and children through life. He could load his son with chains, sell him into slavery, or put him to death. Even if the son were a senator or magistrate, the father could drag him home and punish him for misconduct. Woman was always under guardianship, the maiden of her father, the matron of her husband. Nevertheless she was respected. The mother aided in the worship of the home gods, and shared equally with the sons and daughters in the inheritance. In this strict, moral school, young men were disciplined for public life.

As the family grew larger in the course of several generations, it often happened that the members, even if widely separated, kept up their social and religious relations with one another. Such an association of kinsmen, larger than the family, was a gens. In origin and general character it was like the Greek gens.<sup>1</sup>

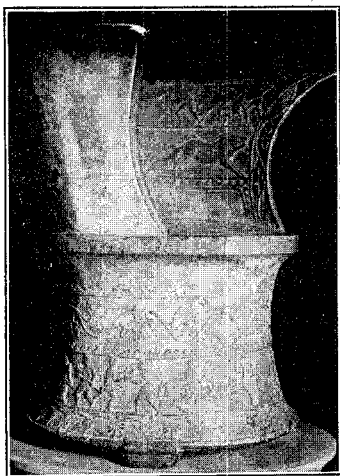
Whereas in Athens a man had but a single name, — the one given him by his parents, — a Roman usually had three. In the case of Publius Cornelius Scipio, for instance, Publius is the personal name given by his parents; Cornelius is the name of his gens; and Scipio the name of his family, a branch of the Cornelian gens. This is the order in which the names occur. Sometimes a fourth name is added to define the individual more precisely, or merely as an honor, and occasionally we find even a fifth.<sup>2</sup>

**369. The Curia and the Tribe.** — Several families united in a *cu'ri-a*, or brotherhood. On certain festal days the men of a brotherhood ate together in a common dining-hall containing a sacred hearth, on which they kept fire burning perpetually in honor of Juno. When war broke out, the members of a curia followed their leaders to the front, and stood side by side on the field of battle. Kinship and religion inspired them to deeds of daring; "the soldier felt ashamed to forsake the comrades with whom he had lived in communion of libations, sacrifices, and holy rites." Ten curiae

<sup>1</sup> § 116.

<sup>2</sup> The first name is the praenomen, the name of the gens is the nomen (simply "name"), the third or family name is the cognomen. A fourth or fifth name is likewise termed cognomen.

united in a tribe, and three tribes composed the state. The curia was the same institution as the Greek phratry (brotherhood), and the Roman tribe was practically the same as the Greek.<sup>1</sup> In early Rome the commons of each tribe formed a regiment of foot and the nobles a troop of horse.



AN ETRUSCAN CURULE CHAIR  
(Corsini Gallery, Rome)

**370. The Social Classes.** — The commons were called ple-be'-ians (the "multitude")<sup>2</sup> and the nobles pa-tri'ci-ans. In general character the patricians were like the Eupatrids at Athens,<sup>3</sup> or like the nobles of most other states. They alone were qualified to be senators, magistrates, and priests. The king could ennoble any plebeian whom he considered sufficiently marked by wealth or personal merit.

In general the plebeians were like the commons of Athens and of most other states of ancient or modern times.<sup>4</sup> Under the kings and for a long time afterward their rights were limited. They could own property and could engage in business. Personally they were free, and had a right to protection of life and property. They could vote in the popular assembly, but were not permitted to sit in the senate or to hold any office or priesthood. As the patricians alone were acquainted with the laws, which were unwritten, the plebeian,

<sup>1</sup> § 117.

<sup>2</sup> The word plebeians refers to them as individuals, whereas "plebs," a collective noun, denotes the entire body or class.

<sup>3</sup> § 149.

<sup>4</sup> The theory that originally the patricians were the only citizens and that the plebs were composed of various classes of aliens originated about 1800 A.D., when modern historical science was still in its crude beginnings, and before sociology had come into existence. There is no evidence whatever for the theory, and progressive scholars are discarding it. For a detailed examination of the subject teachers are referred to Botsford, *Roman Assemblies*, ch. ii (Macmillan, 1909).

to secure protection for himself and his family before the courts of law, chose a noble as his patron, whom he bound himself to serve as a client. Thus many of the plebeians became clients of the patricians. The duty of the patron was to give his clients legal advice in their business, to sue for them when injured, and to defend them when sued. The clients, on the other hand, followed their patron to war and supported him in public life, labored in his fields or made him presents, that he might fill his offices with becoming dignity. Though the original object of clientage was doubtless good, we shall see how, after the overthrow of the kingship, it became intolerably oppressive.<sup>1</sup>

**371. The Government: the King.** — The only magistrate at this time was the king. He was elected for life by the people in the way described in the following paragraph. His authority — *im-pe'ri-um* — conferred upon him by the

people, made him absolute commander in war and supreme judge with power of life and death over his subjects. In addition to these duties, he was head of the state religion. All officials, civil, military, and religious, were appointed by him, and were merely his helpers. Although originally but a citizen, his office gave him great dignity. Accordingly he dressed in an embroidered purple robe and high red shoes, and with an eagle-headed sceptre in his hand sat on an ivory throne, the cu-



LICTORS WITH AXES

<sup>1</sup> § 381.

rule chair. In his walks he was accompanied by twelve attendants, called lictors, each bearing an axe bound in a bundle of rods. The axes signified his absolute power, extending to life and death. The curule chair and the lictors armed with axes were first used by the Etruscan kings, and borrowed from them by the rulers of Rome.

**372. The Assembly and the Senate.** — When the king wished to consult his people on questions of public interest, his criers went about the city with ox-horns, calling them to the *co-mi'ti-um*, or place of assembly. Here the curiae met, each in a group by itself, and listened to the proposition of the king, with the reasons he might urge in its favor. Then each curia voted whether it would sustain or oppose the king's wish; and a majority of the curiae decided the matter. This assembly was called the *co-mi'ti-a cu-ri-a'ta*. The king consulted it when he wished to begin a war, to change an existing custom, or to undertake any other important business.

To be binding, such a decision of the assembly had to receive the sanction of the senate, — the *pa'trum auc-tor'i-tas*. As all, without distinction of rank, had a voice in the comitia, a great majority of that body were necessarily plebeians. It was chiefly through the senate, therefore, that the nobles exercised their political influence. The king was accustomed to ask the advice of the senate on all important matters; and though he was not legally bound by this advice, he generally followed it through respect for the nobles and through desire for their support and coöperation.

On the death of a king the senate took entire charge of the government; the senators ruled by turns, each for a period of five days, in the order determined by lot. The ruler for the time being was termed *in'ter-rex*, and the period between the death of a king and the election of his successor was an *in-ter-reg'num*. The interrex nominated a king, the assembly elected him, and the senate gave its sanction. The imperium was conferred through the election itself.

**373. Religion.** — The original religion of the Romans, like that of the Egyptians, Babylonians, and earliest Greeks, was a worship of the objects and powers of nature.<sup>1</sup> It came first under Etruscan and

<sup>1</sup> §§ 24, 42, 101.

then under Greek influence. It was mainly the latter which introduced the belief that the gods had human form.<sup>1</sup> In their earliest religion the chief deity was Janus, the double-faced god who blessed the beginnings and ends of actions. The gates of his temple were open in war and closed in peace. During the reign of Numa they were shut, but rarely thereafter in the long history of Rome. From the Etruscans Rome introduced the great trinity, Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. Supplanting Janus, Jupiter came to be the supreme guardian of the state; Juno, his wife, was the patron spirit of women; Minerva became the goddess of war, skill, and wisdom. Mars, a native Roman deity, was likewise a god of war. Vulcan was the god of fire and of the forge. Vesta was goddess of the hearth. Of the countless deities a few only are mentioned here. When the Romans became acquainted with Greece, they began to identify the gods of that country with their own. Jupiter was identified with Zeus, Juno with Hera, Minerva with Athena, and Mars with Ares.<sup>2</sup> Venus, a garden deity, they identified with Aphrodite, goddess of love. The attributes of the Greek deity they transferred to the corresponding native god. Several Greek deities they adopted outright. One of the first thus introduced was Apollo. This expansion of the native religion under foreign influence continued not only during the kingship but throughout Roman history.

**374. Religious Officials.** — Services of the chief deities were held by priests — *fla'mi-nes*, plural of *flamen* — whose lives were made uncomfortable by strict rules governing every detail of their conduct.<sup>3</sup> Among the regulations regarding the flamen of Jupiter



MINERVA

(Etruscan; Archaeological Museum, Florence)

<sup>1</sup> § 101.<sup>2</sup> § 102.<sup>3</sup> For a group of flamines, see illustration, p. 459.

are the following: It is a crime for him to ride horseback; he is not permitted to take an oath; he is to have no knot about him, on his cap, girdle, or any other clothing; none but a freeman may cut his hair; the feet of the bed he sleeps in must be plastered with mud. No one knows the reason for such rules of conduct; but they afford us an idea of the strictness of the religion in the details



AN ETRUSCAN AUGUR

(Wall-painting from a tomb; Tarquinii, Etruria)

of life, and of its cramping effect upon the mind. Certain religious duties were the care of groups, or colleges, of sacred persons. Such were the six Vestal Virgins, who attended to the worship of Vesta, and kept the sacred fire of the state in her temple.

The college of augurs had the duty of interpreting for the king the omens sent by Jupiter through which he revealed his will regarding the state. These omens — auspices — were manifested in the flight of birds and in the thunder and lightning. The elements of the auspices, borrowed from Etruria, were

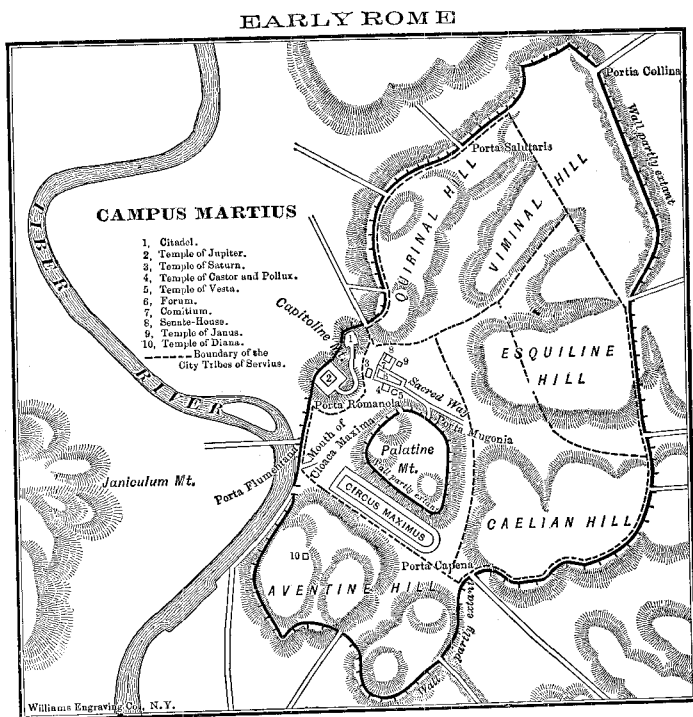
developed in Rome to a complex system. As the Romans were intensely religious, they gave strict obedience to what they believed to be the divine will. It was mainly through the auspices, therefore, that the magistrate controlled the people.

The college of pontiffs had charge of all religious knowledge, including the calendar, which had to do primarily with fixing the sacred days. When any difficult religious question arose, the pontiffs were called upon to decide it. This general supervision in all religious matters made the chief of the college — *pon'ti-fex max'i-mus* — one of the most important persons in the state.

So influential were these priests that the government might have

fallen into their hands, as often happened in the Orient, had it not been for the fact that all the important religious offices were held by the magistrates. Thus the king must generally have been pontifex maximus, and probably at the same time the chief augur. The same principle holds for all Roman history : the magistrates were not slaves to religion, but used religion rather as an aid to government.

375. **The Growth of Rome.** — The earliest settlement at Rome, as we have noticed, was on the Palatine.<sup>1</sup> Gradually the popu-



lation outgrew this narrow space, and built their dwellings on the neighboring hills. Then one of the kings took possession of the Capitoline Mount, and established his citadel there. At first

the people could not live in the valleys which separated the hills, because they were marshy and often overflowed. The Tarquins drained these low grounds by means of sewers. The most famous of these works was the Clo-a'ca Max'i-ma ("the greatest sewer"), which drained the Forum<sup>1</sup>, or market-place, and made the ground about it habitable. But the great stone arch which now covers it was built hundreds of years after the downfall of the kingship. The public life of the community henceforth centred in this valley. The smiths and the shopkeepers set up their stalls round the Forum. About it the king built temples; and adjoining it on the northwest they made an assembly-place — the comitium — in which they built a senate-house. Above the Forum, on the Capitoline, they erected a temple to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, — usually known as the temple of the Capitoline Jupiter. Though in the Etruscan style, it was for centuries the most magnificent building in Rome.

Under the Tarquins Rome was a group of straggling villages situated on neighboring hills and separated by wide tracts of vacant land. The traditional account of the period asserts that Servius surrounded the whole with a great stone wall.<sup>2</sup> This account may be true; but it is now well known that the so-called Servian Wall, remnants of which are still standing, was built in the fourth century B.C., more than a hundred years after the kingly period. Equally late is the so-called Wall of Romulus on the Palatine.

**376. The Servian Reforms: the Tribes and the Army.** — The same traditional story represents Servius as the creator of new tribes and the reorganizer of the army. His object was to introduce the Greek military system already adopted by Etruria. As each soldier had to arm and equip himself at his own expense, Servius found it necessary to take a census of the citizens in order to know who should buy heavier and who lighter armor. For this purpose a new local division of the country was necessary, for the three old tribes had been outgrown by the increase in population and territory.

First, then, he divided the city into four districts, called tribes, and the country into sixteen tribes. Taking the census tribe by

<sup>1</sup> Find the Forum and the Capitoline Mount on the map of Rome, p. 335.

<sup>2</sup> § 364.

tribe, Servius divided the citizens into five classes, according to the size of their freeholds. He required the members of the first or wealthiest class to equip themselves with the heaviest and most efficient arms, those of the second class to buy somewhat less complete equipments, and so on to the lowest. The three wealthier classes were heavy-armed, and stood in ranks, one behind another, while the fourth and fifth classes, as light troops, served wherever occasion demanded. The first class formed four ranks with ten centuries in each; the second and third classes formed each one rank. Of the light troops there were ten centuries in the fourth class, and fourteen in the fifth. When necessary, two more ranks could be formed of the light troops, making eight ranks in all. Thus the army contained eighty-four hundred footmen. From early times it appears to have been composed of two divisions, termed legions, of forty-two hundred foot-soldiers each. This organization included mainly plebeians; the patricians continued to serve in the cavalry, of which there were six centuries, three to each legion. The army, thus organized for the field, contained the men of military age — from seventeen to forty-six years. The older men remained in the city for the defence of the walls.

**377. Causes of the Greatness of Rome.** — At the time of this new arrangement the territory of Rome had increased four or five fold, chiefly at the expense of the Etruscans, the Sabines, and the Latins. When Rome subdued a neighboring city, she razed the walls and everything they enclosed, excepting the temples, and seized a third or perhaps a half of the conquered land. She compelled many of the dispossessed people to settle on her own hills, and, admitting all to the citizenship, bestowed the patriciate upon the nobles. With the growth of her territory, therefore, came a corresponding increase in her population and her military strength. After the reform of Servius, Rome could put into the field the largest, best organized, and best disciplined army in Latium.

In the character and surroundings of the Romans we discover several other causes of their future greatness. By persistent labor on their little farms the peasants acquired the patience and the strength of will which were to make them the best soldiers in the world. The unhealthfulness of the neighboring plain, by forcing

men to build their homes on the Hills, encouraged city life and intelligent enterprise. Then, too, the advantage of the situation for small trade and manufacturing made the City of the Seven Hills the chief market of the Latins. Commercial intercourse with the Etruscans and Greeks led Servius to adopt their superior military system, which in turn made Rome the political head of Latium. This event was the beginning of a great career.

### Suggestive Questions

1. Write a summary of this chapter similar to that on p. 285. 2. Why do we need to know something of the myths of early Rome, in view of the fact that they contain little historical truth? 3. In what respect does Romulus resemble Lycurgus? 4. Compare the social classes in Rome with those of early Athens. 5. What class of people were most likely to be displeased with the rule of the kings? If a revolution should take place, what class would profit most by it? 6. Compare in detail the Servian reforms with those attending the adoption of the phalanx in early Athens. 7. Describe the early Roman dwelling (p. 328). Has it any windows? What are the projections at the top? 8. Describe the curule chair (p. 330). Why did the Roman curule chair resemble the Etruscan?

### Note-book Topics

I. **Roman Religion.** — Botsford, *Story of Rome*, 33, 40-44; Munro, *Source Book of Roman History*, 6-16; Carter, *Religion of Numa*, 1-61.

II. **Government in the Time of the Kings.** — Pelham, *Outlines of Roman History*, 22-29; Abbott, *Roman Political Institutions*, ch. ii. The theory that in early Rome the curiae were made up exclusively of patricians has no foundation.

# END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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