

THE FOURTEENTH (AND LAST) ORATION OF M. T. CICERO
AGAINST MARCUS ANTONIUS.

CALLED ALSO THE FOURTEENTH PHILIPPIC.

THE ARGUMENT.

After the last speech was delivered, Brutus gained great advantages in Macedonia over Caius Antonius, and took him prisoner. He treated him with great lenity, so much so as to displease Cicero, who remonstrated with him strongly on his design of setting him at liberty. He was also under some apprehension as to the steadiness of Plancus's loyalty to the senate; but on his writing to that body to assure them of his obedience, Cicero procured a vote of some extraordinary honors to him.

Cassius also about the same time was very successful in Syria, of which he wrote Cicero a full account. Meantime reports were being spread in the city by the partisans of Antonius, of his success before Mutina; and even of his having gained over the consuls. Cicero too was personally much annoyed at a report which they spread of his having formed the design of making himself master of the city and assuming the title of Dictator; but when Apuleius, one of his friends, and a tribune of the people, proceeded to make a speech to the people in Cicero's justification, the people all cried out that he had never done any thing which was not for the advantage of the republic. About the same time news arrived of a victory gained over Antonius at Mutina.

Pansa was now on the point of joining Hirtius with four new legions, and Antonius endeavored to surprise him on the road before he could effect that junction. A severe battle ensued, in which Hirtius came to Pansa's aid, and Antonius was defeated with great loss. On the receipt of the news the populace assembled about Cicero's house, and carried him in triumph to the Capitol. The next day Marcus Cornutus, the prætor, summoned the senate to deliberate on the letters received from the consuls and Octavius, giving an account of the victory. Servilius declared his opinion that the citizens should relinquish the *sagurn*, or robe of war; and that a supplication should be decreed in honor of the consuls and Octavius. Cicero rose next and delivered the following speech, objecting to the relinquishment of the robe of war, and blaming Servilius for not calling Antonius an enemy.

The measures which he himself proposed were carried.

I. IF, O conscript fathers, while I learned from the letters which have been read that the army of our most wicked enemies had been defeated and routed, I had also learned what we all wish for above all things, and which we do suppose has resulted from that victory which has been achieved,—namely,

that Decimus Brutus had already quitted Mutina,—then I should without any hesitation give my vote for our returning to our usual dress out of joy at the safety of that citizen on account of whose danger it was that we adopted the robe of war. But before any news of that event which the city looks for with the greatest eagerness arrives, we have sufficient reason indeed for joy at this most important and most illustrious battle; but reserve, I beg you, your return to your usual dress for the time of complete victory. But the completion of this war is the safety of Decimus Brutus.

But what is the meaning of this proposal that our dress shall be changed just for to-day, and that to-morrow we should again come forth in the garb of war? Rather when we have once turned to that dress which we wish and desire to assume, let us strive to retain it forever; for this is not only discreditable, but it is displeasing also to the immortal gods, to leave their altars, which we have approached in the attire of peace, for the purpose of assuming the garb of war. And I notice, O conscript fathers, that there are some who favor this proposal: whose intention and design is, as they see that that will be a most glorious day for Decimus Brutus on which we return to our usual dress out of joy for his safety, to deprive him of this great reward, so that it may not be handed down to the recollection of posterity that the Roman people had recourse to the garb of war on account of the danger of one single citizen, and then returned to their gowns of peace on account of his safety. Take away this reason, and you will find no other for so absurd a proposal. But do you, O conscript fathers, preserve your authority, adhere to your own opinions, preserve in your recollection what you have often declared, that the whole result of this entire war depends on the life of one most brave and excellent man.

II. For the purpose of effecting the liberation of Decimus Brutus, the chief men of the state were sent as ambassadors, to give notice to that enemy and parricidal traitor to retire from Mutina; for the sake of preserving that same Decimus Brutus, Aulus Hirtius, the consul, went by lot to conduct the war; a man the weakness of whose bodily health was made up for by the strength of his courage, and encouraged by the hope of victory; Caesar, too, after he, with an army levied by his own resources and on his own authority, had delivered the republic from the first dangers that assailed it, in order

to prevent any subsequent wicked attempts from being originated, departed to assist in the deliverance of the same Brutus, and subdued some family vexation which he may have felt by his attachment to his country. What other object had Caius Pansa in holding the levies which he did, and in collecting money, and in carrying the most severe resolutions of the senate against Antonius, and in exhorting us, and in inviting the Roman people to embrace the cause of liberty, except to insure the deliverance of Decimus Brutus? For the Roman people in crowds demanded at his hands the safety of Decimus Brutus with such unanimous outcries, that he was compelled to prefer it not only to any consideration of his own personal advantage, but even to his own necessities. And that end we now, O conscript fathers, are entitled to hope is either at the point of being achieved, or is actually gained; but it is right for the reward of our hopes to be reserved for the issue and event of the business, lest we should appear either to have anticipated the kindness of the gods by our over precipitation, or to have despised the bounty of fortune through our own folly.

But since the manner of your behavior shows plainly enough what you think of this matter, I will come to the letters which have arrived from the consuls and the proprator, after I have said a few words relating to the letters themselves.

III. The swords, O conscript fathers, of our legions and armies have been stained with, or rather, I should say, dipped deep in blood in two battles which have taken place under the consuls, and a third, which has been fought under the command of Cæsar. If it was the blood of enemies, then great is the piety of the soldiers; but it is nefarious wickedness if it was the blood of citizens. How long, then, is that man, who has surpassed all enemies in wickedness, to be spared the name of enemy? unless you wish to see the very swords of our soldiers trembling in their hands while they doubt whether they are piercing a citizen or an enemy. You vote a supplication; you do not call Antonius an enemy. Very pleasing indeed to the immortal gods will our thanksgivings be, very pleasing too the victims, after a multitude of our citizens has been slain! "For the victory," says the proposer of the supplication, "over wicked and audacious men." *For that is what this most illustrious man calls them; expressions of blame suited to lawsuits carried on in the city,*

not denunciations of searing infamy such as deserved by internecine war. I suppose they are forging wills, or trespassing on their neighbors, or cheating some young men; for it is men implicated in these and similar practices that we are in the habit of terming wicked and audacious. One man, the foulest of all banditti, is waging an irreconcilable war against four consuls. He is at the same time carrying on war against the senate and people of Rome. He is (although he is himself hastening to destruction, through the disasters which he has met with) threatening all of us with destruction, and devastation, and torments, and tortures. He declares that that inhuman and savage act of Dolabella's, which no nation of barbarians would have owned, was done by his advice; and what he himself would do in this city, if this very Jupiter, who now looks down upon us assembled in his temple, had not repelled him from this temple and from these walls, he showed, in the miseries of those inhabitants of Parma, whom, virtuous and honorable men as they were, and most intimately connected with the authority of this order, and with the dignity of the Roman people, that villain and monster, Lucius Antonius, that object of the extraordinary detestation of all men, and (if the gods hate those whom they ought) of all the gods also, murdered with every circumstance of cruelty. My mind shudders at the recollection, O conscript fathers, and shrinks from relating the cruelties which Lucius Antonius perpetrated on the children and wives of the citizens of Parma. For whatever infamy the Antonii have willingly undergone in their own persons to their own infamy, they triumph in the fact of having inflicted on others by violence. But it is a miserable violence which they offered to them; most unholy lust, such as the whole life of the Antonii is polluted with.

IV. Is there then any one who is afraid to call those men enemies, whose wickedness he admits to have surpassed even the inhumanity of the Carthaginians? For in what city, when taken by storm, did Hannibal even behave with such ferocity as Antonius did in Parma, which he filched by surprise? Unless, mayhap, Antonius is not to be considered the enemy of this colony, and of the others toward which he is animated with the same feelings. But if he is beyond all question the enemy of the colonies and municipal towns, then what do you consider him with respect to this city which he is so eager for,

to satiate the indigence of his band of robbers? which that skillful and experienced surveyor of his, Saxa, has already marked out with his rule. Recollect, I entreat you, in the name of the immortal gods, O conscript fathers, what we have been fearing for the last two days, in consequence of infamous rumors carefully disseminated by enemies within the walls. Who has been able to look upon his children or upon his wife without weeping? who has been able to bear the sight of his home, of his house, and his household gods? Already all of us were expecting a most ignominious death, or meditating a miserable flight. And shall we hesitate to call the men at whose hands we feared all these things enemies? If any one should propose a more severe designation I will willingly agree to it; I am hardly content with this ordinary one, and will certainly not employ a more moderate one.

Therefore, as we are bound to vote, and as Servilius has already proposed a most just supplication for those letters which have been read to you; I will propose altogether to increase the number of the days which it is to last, especially as it is to be decreed in honor of three generals conjointly. But first of all I will insist on styling those men imperator by whose valor, and wisdom, and good fortune we have been released from the most imminent danger of slavery and death. Indeed, who is there within the last twenty years who has had a supplication decreed to him without being himself styled imperator, though he may have performed the most insignificant exploits, or even almost none at all. Wherefore, the senator who spoke before me ought either not to have moved for a supplication at all, or he ought to have paid the usual and established compliment to those men to whom even new and extraordinary honors are justly due.

V. Shall the senate, according to this custom which has now obtained, style a man imperator if he has slain a thousand or two of Spaniards, or Gauls, or Thracians; and now that so many legions have been routed, now that such a multitude of enemies has been slain,—ay, enemies, I say, although our enemies within the city do not fancy this expression,—shall we pay to our most illustrious generals the honor of a supplication, and refuse them the name of imperator? For with what great honor, and joy, and exultation ought *the deliverers of this city themselves* to enter into this temple, when yesterday, on account of the exploits which they

have performed, the Roman people carried me in an ovation, almost in a triumph from my house to the Capitol, and back again from the Capitol to my own house? That is indeed in my opinion a just and genuine triumph, when men who have deserved well of the republic receive public testimony to their merits from the unanimous consent of the senate. For if, at a time of general rejoicing on the part of the Roman people, they addressed their congratulations to one individual, that is a great proof of their opinion of him; if they gave him thanks, that is a greater still; if they did both, then nothing more honorable to him can be possibly imagined.

Are you saying all this of yourself? some one will ask. It is indeed against my will that I do so; but my indignation at injustice makes me boastful, contrary to my usual habit. Is it not sufficient that thanks should not be given to men who have well earned them, by men who are ignorant of the very nature of virtue? And shall accusations and odium be attempted to be excited against those men who devote all their thoughts to insuring the safety of the republic? For you well know that there has been a common report for the last few days, that the day before the wine feast,¹ that is to say, on this very day, I was intending to come forth with the fasces as dictator. One would think that this story was invented against some gladiator, or robber, or Catiline, and not against a man who had prevented any such step from ever being taken in the republic. Was I, who defeated and overthrew and crushed Catiline, when he was attempting such wickedness, a likely man myself all on a sudden to turn out Catiline? Under what auspices could I, an augur, take those fasces? How long should I have been likely to keep them? to whom was I to deliver them as my successor? The idea of any one having been so wicked as to invent such a tale! or so mad as to believe it! In what could such a suspicion, or rather such gossip, have originated?

VI. When, as you know, during the last three or four days a report of bad news from Mutina has been creeping abroad, the disloyal part of the citizens, inflated with exultation and

¹ There were two wine feasts, *Vinalia*, at Rome: the *vinalia urbana*, celebrated on the twenty-third of April; and the *vinalia rustica*, on the nineteenth of October. This was the *urbana vinalia*; on which occasion the wine-casks which had been filled in the autumn were tasted for the first time.

insolence, began to collect in one place, at that senate-house which has been more fatal to their party than to the republic. There, while they were forming a plan to massacre us, and were distributing the different duties among one another, and settling who was to seize on the Capitol, who on the rostra, who on the gates of the city, they thought that all the citizens would flock to me. And in order to bring me into unpopularity, and even into danger of my life, they spread abroad this report about the fasces. They themselves had some idea of bringing the fasces to my house; and then, on pretense of that having been done by my wish, they had prepared a band of hired ruffians to make an attack on me as on a tyrant, and a massacre of all of you was intended to follow. The fact is already notorious, O conscript fathers, but the origin of all this wickedness will be revealed in its fitting time.

Therefore Publius Apuleius, a tribune of the people, who ever since my consulship has been the witness and partaker of, and my assistant in all my designs and all my dangers, could not endure the grief of witnessing my indignation. He convened a numerous assembly, as the whole Roman people were animated with one feeling on the subject. And when in the harangue which he then made, he, as was natural from our great intimacy and friendship, was going to exculpate me from all suspicion in the matter of the fasces, the whole assembly cried out with one voice, that I had never had any intentions with regard to the republic which were not excellent. After this assembly was over, within two or three hours, these most welcome messengers and letters arrived; so that the same day not only delivered me from a most unjust odium, but increased my credit by that most extraordinary act with which the Roman people distinguished me.

I have made this digression, O conscript fathers, not so much for the sake of speaking of myself (for I should be in a sorry plight if I were not sufficiently acquitted in your eyes without the necessity of making a formal defense), as with the view of warning some men of too groveling and narrow minds, to adopt the line of conduct which I myself have always pursued, and to think the virtue of excellent citizens worthy of imitation, not of envy. There is a great field in the republic, as Crassus used very wisely to say; the road to *glory is open to many.*

VII. Would that those great men were still alive, who,

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