

THE FOURTEEN ORATIONS OF M. T. CICERO AGAINST
MARCUS ANTONIUS, CALLED PHILIPPICS.

THE FIRST PHILIPPIC.

THE ARGUMENT.

When Julius, or, as he is usually called by Cicero, Caius Cæsar was slain on the 15th of March, A.U.C. 710, B.C. 44, Marcus Antonius was his colleague in the consulship; and he, being afraid that the conspirators might murder him too (and it is said that they had debated among themselves whether they would or no), concealed himself on that day, and fortified his house; till perceiving that nothing was intended against him, he ventured to appear in public the day following. Lepidus was in the suburbs of Rome with a regular army, ready to depart for the government of Spain, which had been assigned to him with a part of Gaul. In the night, after Cæsar's death, he occupied the forum with his troops, and thought of making himself master of the city, but Antonius dissuaded him from that idea, and won him over to his views by giving his daughter in marriage to Lepidus's son, and by assisting him to seize on the office of Pontifex Maximus, which was vacant by Cæsar's death.

To the conspirators he professed friendship, sent his son among them as a hostage of his sincerity, and so deluded them, that Brutus supped with Lepidus, and Cassius with Antonius. By these means he got them to consent to his passing a decree for the confirmation of all Cæsar's acts, without describing or naming them more precisely. At last, on the occasion of Cæsar's public funeral, he contrived so to inflame the populace against the conspirators, that Brutus and Cassius had some difficulty in defending their houses and their lives; and he gradually alarmed them so much, and worked so cunningly on their fears, that they all quitted Rome. Cicero also left Rome, disapproving greatly of the vacillation and want of purpose in the conspirators. On the first of June Antonius assembled the senate to deliberate on the affairs of the republic, and in the interval visited all parts of Italy. In the mean time young Octavius appeared on the stage; he had been left by Cæsar, who was his uncle, the heir to his name and estate. He returned from Apollonia, in Macedonia, to Italy as soon as he heard of his uncle's death, and arrived at Naples on the eighteenth of April, where he was introduced by Hirtius and Pansa to Cicero, whom he promised to be guided in all respects by his directions. He was now between eighteen and nineteen years of age.

He began by the representation of public spectacles and games in honor of Cæsar's victories. In the mean time Antonius, in his progress through Italy, was making great use of the decree confirming all Cæsar's acts, which he interpolated and forged in the most *shameless manner*. Among other things he restored Deiotarus to all his dominions.

having been bribed to do so by a hundred millions of sesterces by the king's agents; but Deiotarus himself, as soon as he heard of Cæsar's death, seized all his dominions by force. He also seized the public treasure which Cæsar had deposited in the temple of Opis, amounting to above four millions and a half of our money, and with this he won over Dolabella,¹ who had seized the consulship on the death of Cæsar, and the greater part of the army.

At the end of May Cicero began to return toward Rome, in order to arrive there in time for the meeting of the senate on the first of June; but many of his friends dissuaded him from entering the city, and at last he determined not to appear in the senate on that day, but to make a tour in Greece; to assist him in which, Dolabella named him of his lieutenants. Antonius also gave Brutus and Cassius commissions to buy corn in Asia and Sicily for the use of the republic, in order to keep them out of the city.

Meantime Sextus Pompeius, who was at the head of a considerable army in Spain, addressed letters to the consuls proposing terms of accommodation, which after some debate, and some important modifications, were agreed to, and he quitted Spain, and came as far as Marseilles on his road toward Rome.

Cicero having started for Greece was forced to put back by contrary winds, and returned to Velia on the seventeenth of August, where he had a long conference with Brutus, who soon after left Italy for his province of Macedonia, which Cæsar had assigned him before his death, though Antonius now wished to compel him to exchange it for Crete. After this conference Cicero returned to Rome, where he was received with unexampled joy, immense multitudes thronging out to meet him, and to escort him into the city. He arrived in Rome on the last day of August. The next day the senate met, to which he was particularly summoned by Antonius, but he excused himself as not having recovered from the fatigue of his journey.

Antonius was greatly offended, and in his speech in the senate threatened openly to order his house to be pulled down; the real reason of Cicero's absenting himself from the senate being, that the business of the day was to decree some new and extraordinary honors to Cæsar, and to order supplications to him as a divinity, which Cicero was determined not to concur in, though he knew it would be useless to oppose them.

The next day also the senate met, and Antonius absented himself; but Cicero came down and delivered the following speech, which is the first of that celebrated series of fourteen speeches made in opposition to Antonius and his measures, and called *Philippics* from the orations of Demosthenes against Philip, to which the Romans were in the habit of comparing them.²

I. BEFORE, O conscript fathers, I say those things concerning the republic which I think myself bound to say at the

¹ Dolabella had been married to Cicero's daughter Tullia, but was divorced from her.

² The name was given them early. Juvenal, who wrote within a hundred years of Cicero's time, calls them "divina Philippica."

present time, I will explain to you briefly the cause of my departure from, and of my return to the city. When I hoped that the republic was at last recalled to a proper respect for your wisdom and for your authority, I thought that it became me to remain in a sort of sentinelship, which was imposed upon me by my position as a senator and a man of consular rank. Nor did I depart any where, nor did I ever take my eyes off from the republic, from the day on which we were summoned to meet in the temple of Tellus;¹ in which temple, I, as far as was in my power, laid the foundations of peace, and renewed the ancient precedent set by the Athenians; I even used the Greek word,² which that city employed in those times in allaying discords, and gave my vote that all recollection of the existing dissensions ought to be effaced by everlasting oblivion.

The oration then made by Marcus Antonius was an admirable one; his disposition, too, appeared excellent; and lastly, by his means and by his sons', peace was ratified with the most illustrious of the citizens; and every thing else was consistent with this beginning. He invited the chief men of the state to those deliberations which he held at his own house concerning the state of the republic; he referred all the most important matters to this order. Nothing was at that time found among the papers of Caius Cæsar except what was already well known to every body; and he gave answers to every question that was asked of him with the greatest consistency. Were any exiles restored? He said that one was, and only one. Were any immunities granted? He answered, None. He wished us even to adopt the proposition of Servius Sulpicius, that most illustrious man, that no tablet purporting to contain any decree or grant of Cæsar's should be published after the Ides of March were expired. I pass over many other things, all excellent—for I am hastening to come to a very extraordinary act of virtue of Marcus Antonius. He utterly abolished from the constitution of the republic the Dictatorship, which had by this time attained to the authority of regal power. And that measure was not even offered to us for discussion. He brought with him a decree of the senate, ready drawn up, ordering what he chose to have done: and when it had been read, we all submitted to his authority in the mat-

¹ This meeting took place on the third day after Cæsar's death

² Μη μνησικακείν.

ter with the greatest eagerness; and, by another resolution of the senate, we returned him thanks in the most honorable and complimentary language.

II. A new light, as it were, seemed to be brought over us, now that not only the kingly power which we had endured, but all fear of such power for the future, was taken away from us; and a great pledge appeared to have been given by him to the republic that he did wish the city to be free, when he utterly abolished out of the republic the name of dictator, which had often been a legitimate title, on account of our late recollection of a perpetual dictatorship. A few days afterward the senate was delivered from the danger of bloodshed, and a hook¹ was fixed into that runaway slave who had usurped the name of Caius Marius. And all these things he did in concert with his colleague. Some other things that were done were the acts of Dolabella alone; but, if his colleague had not been absent, would, I believe, have been done by both of them in concert.

For when enormous evil was insinuating itself into the republic, and was gaining more strength day by day; and when the same men were erecting a tomb² in the forum, who had performed that irregular funeral; and when abandoned men, with slaves like themselves, were every day threatening with more and more vehemence all the houses and temples of the city; so severe was the rigor of Dolabella, not only toward the audacious and wicked slaves, but also toward the profligate and unprincipled freemen, and so prompt was his overthrow of that accursed pillar, that it seems marvelous to me that the subsequent time has been so different from that one day.

For behold, on the first of June, on which day they had given notice that we were all to attend the senate, every thing was changed. Nothing was done by the senate, but many and important measures were transacted by the agency of the people, though that people was both absent and disapproving. The consuls elect said, that they did not dare to come into the senate. The liberators of their country were absent from that city from the neck of which they had removed the yoke of slavery; though the very consuls themselves professed to

¹ The hook was to drag his carcass along the streets to throw it into the Tiber. So Juvenal says—

“Sejanus ducitur unco
Spectandus.”—x. 66.

² This refers to a pillar that was raised in the forum in honor of *Cæsar*, with the inscription, “To the Father of his Country.”

praise them in their public harangues and in all their conversation. Those who were called Veterans, men of whose safety this order had been most particularly careful, were instigated not to the preservation of those things which they had, but to cherish hopes of new booty. And as I preferred hearing of those things to seeing them, and as I had an honorary commission as lieutenant, I went away, intending to be present on the first of January, which appeared likely to be the first day of assembling the senate.

III. I have now explained to you, O conscript fathers, my design in leaving the city. Now I will briefly set before you, also, my intention in returning, which may perhaps appear more unaccountable. As I had avoided Brundisium, and the ordinary route into Greece, not without good reason, on the first of August I arrived at Syracuse, because the passage from that city into Greece was said to be a good one. And that city, with which I had so intimate a connection, could not, though it was very eager to do so, detain me more than one night. I was afraid that my sudden arrival among my friends might cause some suspicion if I remained there at all. But after the winds had driven me, on my departure from Sicily, to Leucopetra, which is a promontory of the Rhegian district, I went up the gulf from that point, with the view of crossing over. And I had not advanced far before I was driven back by a foul wind to the very place which I had just quitted. And as the night was stormy, and as I had lodged that night in the villa of Publius Valerius, my companion and intimate friend, and as I remained all the next day at his house waiting for a fair wind, many of the citizens of the municipality of Rhegium came to me. And of them there were some who had lately arrived from Rome; from them I first heard of the harangue of Marcus Antonius, with which I was so much pleased that, after I had read it, I began for the first time to think of returning. And not long afterward the edict of Brutus and Cassius is brought to me; which (perhaps because I love those men, even more for the sake of the republic than of my own friendship for them) appeared to me, indeed, to be full of equity. They added besides, (for it is a very common thing for those who are desirous of bringing good news to invent something to make the news which they bring seem more joyful,) that parties were *coming to an agreement*; that the senate was to meet on the first of August; that Antonius having

discarded all evil counselors, and having given up the provinces of Gaul, was about to return to submission to the authority of the senate.

IV. But on this I was inflamed with such eagerness to return, that no oars or winds could be fast enough for me; not that I thought that I should not arrive in time, but lest I should be later than I wished in congratulating the republic; and I quickly arrived at Velia, where I saw Brutus; how grieved I was, I can not express. For it seemed to be a discreditable thing for me myself, that I should venture to return into that city from which Brutus was departing, and that I should be willing to live safely in a place where he could not. But he himself was not agitated in the same manner that I was; for, being elevated with the consciousness of his great and glorious exploit, he had no complaints to make of what had befallen him, though he lamented your fate exceedingly. And it was from him that I first heard what had been the language of Lucius Piso, in the senate of August; who although he was but little assisted (for that I heard from Brutus himself) by those who ought to have seconded him, still according to the testimony of Brutus (and what evidence can be more trustworthy?), and to the avowal of every one whom I saw afterward, appeared to me to have gained great credit. I hastened hither, therefore, in order that as those who were present had not seconded him, I might do so; not with the hope of doing any good, for I neither hoped for that, nor did I well see how it was possible; but in order that if any thing happened to me, (and many things appeared to be threatening me out of the regular course of nature, and even of destiny), I might still leave my speech on this day as a witness to the republic of my everlasting attachment to its interests.

Since, then, O conscript fathers, I trust that the reason of my adopting each determination appears praiseworthy to you, before I begin to speak of the republic, I will make a brief complaint of the injury which Marcus Antonius did me yesterday; to whom I am friendly, and I have at all times admitted having received some services from him which make it my duty to be so.

V. What reason had he then for endeavoring, with such bitter hostility, to force me into the senate yesterday? Was *I the only person who was absent?* Have you not repeatedly had thinner houses than yesterday? Or was a matter of such

importance under discussion, that it was desirable for even sick men to be brought down? Hannibal, I suppose, was at the gates, or there was to be a debate about peace with Pyrrhus; on which occasion it is related that even the great Appius, old and blind as he was, was brought down to the senate-house. There was a motion being made about some supplications; a kind of measure when senators are not usually wanting; for they are under the compulsion, not of pledges, but of the influence of those men whose honor is being complimented; and the case is the same when the motion has reference to a triumph. The consuls are so free from anxiety at these times, that it is almost entirely free for a senator to absent himself if he pleases. And as the general custom of our body was well known to me, and as I was hardly recovered from the fatigue of my journey, and was vexed with myself, I sent a man to him, out of regard for my friendship to him, to tell him that I should not be there. But he, in the hearing of you all, declared that he would come with masons to my house; this was said with too much passion and very intemperately. For, for what crime is there such a heavy punishment appointed as that, that any one should venture to say in this assembly that he, with the assistance of a lot of common operatives, would pull down a house which had been built at the public expense in accordance with a vote of the senate? And who ever employed such compulsion as the threat of such an injury as that to a senator? or what severer punishment has ever been imposed for absence than the forfeiture of a pledge, or a fine? But if he had known what opinion I should have delivered on the subject, he would have remitted somewhat of the rigor of his compulsion.

VI. Do you think, O conscript fathers, that I would have voted for the resolution which you adopted against your own wills, of mingling funeral obsequies with supplications? of introducing inexplicable impiety into the republic? of decreeing supplications in honor of a dead man? I say nothing about who the man was. Even had he been that great Lucius Brutus who himself also delivered the republic from kingly power, and who has produced posterity nearly five hundred years after himself of similar virtue, and equal to similar achievements—even then I could not have been induced to *join any dead man* in a religious observance paid to the immortal gods; so that a supplication should be addressed by

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