

scarcely even to be hoped for in so great and so treacherous a war, that no good man shall fall, and that you may all be saved by the punishment of a few.

And I promise you this, O Romans, relying neither on my own prudence, nor on human counsels, but on many and manifest intimations of the will of the immortal gods; under whose guidance I first entertained this hope and this opinion; who are now defending their temples and the houses of the city, not afar off, as they were used to, from a foreign and distant enemy, but here on the spot, by their own divinity and present help. And you, O Romans, ought to pray to and implore them to defend from the nefarious wickedness of abandoned citizens, now that all the forces of all enemies are defeated by land and sea, this city which they have ordained to be the most beautiful and flourishing of all cities.

THE THIRD ORATION OF M. T. CICERO AGAINST LUCIUS CATILINE.

ADDRESSED TO THE PEOPLE.

THE ARGUMENT.

While Cicero was addressing the preceding speech to the people, a debate was going on in the senate of which we have no account. In the mean while Catiline, after staying a few days on the road to raise the country as he passed along, where his agents had been previously busy among the people, proceeded to Manlius's camp with the fasces and all the ensigns of military command displayed before him. Upon this news the senate immediately declared him and Manlius public enemies; they offered pardon to all his followers who should return to their duty by a certain day; and ordered the consuls to make new levies, and that Antonius should follow Catiline with his army, and Cicero remain behind to protect the city.

In the mean time Lentulus, and the other conspirators who remained behind, were proceeding with their designs. And among other steps, they decided on endeavoring to tamper with some ambassadors from the Allobroges,¹ who were at that moment within the city, as the Allobroges were supposed not to be very well affected to the Roman power. At first these ambassadors appear to have willingly given ear to their

¹ The Allobroges occupied the districts of Dauphiné and Savoy.

proposals; but after a while they began to consider the difficulty of the business proposed to them, and the danger which would ensue to their state if it failed after they had become implicated in it; and accordingly they revealed the business to Quintus Fabius Sanga, the patron of their city, who communicated it to Cicero. Cicero desired the ambassadors to continue to listen to the proposals of the conspirators, till they had become fully acquainted with the extent of the plot, and till they were able to furnish him with full evidence against the actors in it; and by his suggestion they required the conspirators to furnish them with credentials to show to their countrymen. This was thought reasonable by Lentulus and his party, and they accordingly appointed a man named Vulturcius to accompany them, who was to introduce them to Catiline on their road, in order to confirm the agreement, and to exchange pledges with him, and Lentulus also furnished them with a letter to Catiline under his own hand and seal, though not signed. Cicero being privately informed of all these particulars, concerted with the ambassadors the time and manner of their leaving Rome by night, and had them arrested on the Mulvian bridge, about a mile from the city, with these letters and papers in their possession. This was all done, and they brought as prisoners to Cicero's house early in the morning.

Cicero immediately summoned the senate; and at the same time he sent for Lentulus, Cethegus, and others of the conspirators who were more especially implicated, such as Gabinius and Statilius, who all came immediately to his house, being ignorant of the discovery that had taken place. Being informed also that a quantity of arms had been provided by Cethegus for the purpose of the conspiracy, he orders Caius Sulpicius, one of the prætors, to search his house, and he did so, and found a great number of swords and daggers ready cleaned and fit for use.

He then proceeds to meet the senate in the Temple of Concord, with the ambassadors and conspirators in custody. He relates the whole affair to them, and introduces Vulturcius to be examined before them. Cicero, by the order of the senate, promises him pardon and reward if he reveals what he knew. On which he confesses every thing; tells them that he had letters from Lentulus to Catiline to urge him to avail himself of the assistance of the slaves, and to lead his army with all expedition against Rome; in order, when the city had been set on fire, and the massacre commenced, that he might be able to intercept and destroy those who fled.

Then the ambassadors were examined, who declared that they had received letters to the chief men of their nation from Lentulus, Cethegus, and Statilius; and that they, and Lucius Cassius also, begged them to send a body of cavalry into Italy, and that Lentulus assured them, from the Sibylline books, that he was the third¹ Cornelius who was destined to reign at Rome. The letters were produced and opened. On the sight of them the conspirators respectively acknowledged them to be theirs, and Lentulus was even so conscience-stricken that he confessed his whole crime.

The senate passed a vote acknowledging the services of Cicero in the

¹ Cinna and Sylla had been the two former Cornelii.

most ample terms, and voted that Lentulus should be deposed from his office of prætor, and, with all the other conspirators, committed to safe custody. Cicero, after the senate adjourned, proceeded to the forum and gave an account to the people of every thing which had passed, both in regard to the steps that he had taken to detect the whole conspiracy, and to convict the conspirators; and also of what had taken place in the senate, and of the votes and resolutions which that body had just passed,

While the prisoners were before the senate he had copies of their examinations and confessions taken down, and dispersed through Italy and all the provinces. This happened on the third of December.

I. You see this day, O Romans, the republic, and all your lives, your goods, your fortunes, your wives and children, this home of most illustrious empire, this most fortunate and beautiful city, by the great love of the immortal gods for you, by my labors and counsels and dangers, snatched from fire and sword, and almost from the very jaws of fate, and preserved and restored to you.

And if those days on which we are preserved are not less pleasant to us, or less illustrious, than those on which we are born, because the joy of being saved is certain, the good fortune of being born uncertain, and because we are born without feeling it, but we are preserved with great delight; ay, since we have, by our affection and by our good report, raised to the immortal gods that Romulus who built this city, he, too, who has preserved this city, built by him, and embellished as you see it, ought to be held in honor by you and your posterity; for we have extinguished flames which were almost laid under and placed around the temples and shrines, and houses and walls of the whole city; we have turned the edge of swords drawn against the republic, and have turned aside their points from your throats. And since all this has been displayed in the senate, and made manifest, and detected by me, I will now explain it briefly, that you, O citizens, that are as yet ignorant of it, and are in suspense, may be able to see how great the danger was, how evident and by what means it was detected and arrested. First of all, since Catiline, a few days ago, burst out of the city, when he had left behind the companions of his wickedness, the active leaders of this infamous war, I have continually watched and taken care, O Romans, of the means by which we might be safe amid such great and such carefully concealed treachery.

II. Farther, when I drove Catiline out of the city (for I do not fear the unpopularity of this expression, when that is more

to be feared that I should be blamed because he has departed alive), but then when I wished him to be removed, I thought either that the rest of the band of conspirators would depart with him, or that they who remained would be weak and powerless without him.

And I, as I saw that those whom I knew to be inflamed with the greatest madness and wickedness were among us, and had remained at Rome, spent all my nights and days in taking care to know and see what they were doing, and what they were contriving; that, since what I said would, from the incredible enormity of the wickedness, make less impression on your ears, I might so detect the whole business that you might with all your hearts provide for your safety, when you saw the crime with your own eyes. Therefore, when I found that the ambassadors of the Allobroges had been tampered with by Publius Lentulus, for the sake of exciting a Transalpine war and commotion in Gaul, and that they, on their return to Gaul, had been sent with letters and messages to Catiline on the same road, and that Vulturcius had been added to them as a companion, and that he too had had letters given him for Catiline, I thought that an opportunity was given me of contriving what was most difficult, and which I was always wishing the immortal gods might grant, that the whole business might be manifestly detected not by me alone, but by the senate also, and by you.

Therefore, yesterday I summoned Lucius Flaccus and C. Pomtinus, the prætors, brave men and well affected to the republic. I explained to them the whole matter, and showed them what I wished to have done. But they, full of noble and worthy sentiments toward the republic, without hesitation, and without any delay, undertook the business, and when it was evening, went secretly to the Mulvian bridge, and there so distributed themselves in the nearest villas, that the Tiber and the bridge was between them. And they took to the same place, without any one having the least suspicion of it, many brave men, and I had sent many picked young men of the prefecture of Reate, whose assistance I constantly employ in the protection of the republic, armed with swords. In the mean time, about the end of the third watch, when the ambassadors of the Allobroges, with a great retinue and Vulturcius with them, began to *come upon the Mulvian bridge*, an attack is made upon them; swords are drawn both by

them and by our people; the matter was understood by the prætors alone, but was unknown to the rest.

III. Then, by the intervention of Pomtinus and Flaccus, the fight which had begun was put an end to; all the letters which were in the hands of the whole company are delivered to the prætors with the seals unbroken; the men themselves are arrested and brought to me at daybreak. And I immediately summoned that most worthless contriver of all this wickedness, Gabinius, as yet suspecting nothing; after him, P. Statilius is sent for, and after him Cethegus; but Lentulus was a long time in coming—I suppose, because, contrary to his custom, he had been up a long time the night before, writing letters.

But when those most noble and excellent men of the whole city, who, hearing of the matter, came in crowds to me in the morning, thought it best for me to open the letters before I related the matter to the senate, lest, if nothing were found in them, so great a disturbance might seem to have been caused to the state for nothing, I said I would never so act as shrink from referring matter of public danger to the public council. In truth if, O Romans, these things which had been reported to me had not been found in them, yet I did not think I ought, in such a crisis of the republic, to be afraid of the imputation of over-diligence. I quickly summoned a full senate, as you saw; and meantime, without any delay, by the advice of the Allobroges, I sent Caius Sulpicius the prætor, a brave man, to bring whatever arms he could find in the house of Cethegus, whence he did bring a great number of swords and daggers.

IV. I introduced Vulturcius without the Gauls. By the command of the senate, I pledged him the public faith for his safety. I exhorted him fearlessly to tell all he knew. Then, when he had scarcely recovered himself from his great alarm, he said: that he had messages and letters for Catiline, from Publius Lentulus, to avail himself of the guard of the slaves, and to come toward the city with his army as quickly as possible; and that was to be done with the intention that, when they had set fire to the city on all sides, as it had been arranged and distributed, and had made a great massacre of the citizens, he might be at hand to catch those who fled, and to join himself to the leaders within the city. But the Gauls being introduced, said that an oath had been administered to

them, and letters given them by Publius Lentulus, Cethegus, and Statilius, for their nation; and that they had been enjoined by them, and by Lucius Cassius, to send cavalry into Italy as early as possible; that infantry should not be wanting; and that Lentulus had assured him, from the Sibylline oracles and the answers of soothsayers, that he was that third Cornelius to whom the kingdom and sovereignty over this city was fated to come; that Cinna and Sylla had been before him; and that he had also said that was the year destined to the destruction of this city and empire, being the tenth year after the acquittal of the virgins, and the twentieth after the burning of the Capitol. But they said there had been this dispute between Cethegus and the rest—that Lentulus and others thought it best that the massacre should take place and the city be burned at the Saturnalia, but that Cethegus thought it too long to wait.

V. And, not to detain you, O Romans, we ordered the letters to be brought forward which were said to have been given them by each of the men. First, I showed his seal to Cethegus; he recognized it: we cut the thread; we read the letter. It was written with his own hand: that he would do for the senate and people of the Allobroges what he had promised their ambassadors; and that he begged them also to do what their ambassadors had arranged. Then Cethegus, who a little before had made answer about the swords and daggers which had been found in his house, and had said that he had always been fond of fine arms, being stricken down and dejected at the reading of his letters, convicted by his own conscience, became suddenly silent. Statilius, being introduced, owned his handwriting and his seal. His letters were read, of nearly the same tenor: he confessed it. Then I showed Lentulus his letters, and asked him whether he recognized the seal? He nodded assent. But it is, said I, a well-known seal—the likeness of your grandfather, a most illustrious man, who greatly loved his country and his fellow-citizens; and it, even though silent, ought to have called you back from such wickedness.

Letters are read of the same tenor to the senate and people of the Allobroges. I offered him leave, if he wished to say any thing of these matters: and at first he declined to speak; but a little afterward, when *the whole examination had been gone* through and concluded, he rose. He asked the Gauls what he

had had to do with them? why they had come to his house? and he asked Vulturcius too. And when they had answered him briefly and steadily, under whose guidance they had come to him, and how often; and when they asked him whether he had said nothing to them about the Sibylline oracles; then he on a sudden, mad with wickedness, showed how great was the power of conscience; for though he might have denied it, he suddenly, contrary to every one's expectation, confessed it: so not only did his genius and skill in oratory, for which he was always eminent, but even, through the power of his manifest and detected wickedness, that impudence, in which he surpassed all men, and audacity deserted him.

But Vulturcius on a sudden ordered the letters to be produced and opened which he said had been given to him for Catiline, by Lentulus. And though Lentulus was greatly agitated at that, yet he acknowledged his seal and his handwriting; but the letter was anonymous, and ran thus: "Who I am you will know from him whom I have sent to you: take care to behave like a man, and consider to what place you have proceeded, and provide for what is now necessary for you: take care to associate to yourself the assistance of every one, even of the powerless." Then Gabinius being introduced, when at first he had begun to answer impudently, at last denied nothing of those things which the Gauls alleged against him. And to me, indeed, O Romans, though the letters, the seals, the handwriting, and the confession of each individual seemed most certain indications and proofs of wickedness, yet their color, their eyes, their countenance, their silence, appeared more certain still; for they stood so stupefied, they kept their eyes so fixed on the ground, at times looking stealthily at one another, that they appeared now not so much to be informed against by others as to be informing against themselves.

VI. Having produced and divulged these proofs, O Romans, I consulted the senate what ought to be done for the interests of the republic. Vigorous and fearless opinions were delivered by the chief men, which the senate adopted without any variety; and since the decree of the senate is not yet written out, I will relate to you from memory, O citizens, what the senate has decreed. First of all, a vote of thanks to me is passed in the most honorable words, because the republic has been delivered from the greatest dangers by my valor, and wis-

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