

# CONSPIRACY OF CATILINE.

## THE ARGUMENT.

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I. IT becomes all men, who desire to excel other animals<sup>1</sup>, to strive, to the utmost of their power<sup>2</sup>, not to pass through life in obscurity<sup>3</sup>, like the beasts of the field<sup>4</sup>, which nature has formed grovelling<sup>5</sup> and subservient to appetite.

<sup>1</sup> I. Desire to excel other animals] *Sese student præstare cæteris animalibus*. The pronoun, which was usually omitted, is, says Cortius, not without its force; for it is equivalent to *ut ipsi*: student *ut ipsi præsent*. In support of his opinion he quotes, with other passages, Plaut. Asinar. i., 3, 31: *Vult placere sese amiceæ*, i. e. *vult ut ipse amiceæ placeat*; and Cælius Antipater apud Festum in "Topper:." *Ita uti sese quisque vobis studeat æmulari*, i. e. *studeat ut ipse æmuletur*. This explanation is approved by Bernouf. Cortius might have added Cat. 7: *sese quisque hostem ferire—properabat*. "Student," Cortius interprets by "cupiant."

<sup>2</sup> To the utmost of their power] *Summâ ope*, with their utmost ability. "A Sallustian mode of expression. Cicero would have said *summâ operâ, summo studio, summâ contentione*. Ennius has '*Summa nituntur opum vi*.'" Colerus.

<sup>3</sup> In obscurity] *Silentio*. So as to have nothing said of them, either during their lives or at their death. So in c. 2: *Eorum ego vitam mortemque juxta æstumo, quoniam de utrâque siletur*. When Ovid says, *Bene qui latuit, bene vixit*, and Horace, *Nec vixit malè, qui vivens moriensque fefellit*, they merely signify that he has some comfort in life, who, in ignoble obscurity, escapes trouble and censure. But men thus undistinguished are, in the estimation of Sallust, little superior to the brute creation. "Optimus quisque," says Muretus, quoting Cicero, "honoris et gloriæ studio maximè ducitur;" the ablest men are most actuated by the desire of honour and glory, and are more solicitous about the character which they will bear among posterity. With reason, therefore, does Pallas, in the Odyssey, address the following exhortation to Telemachus:

"Hast thou not heard how young Orestes, fir'd  
With great revenge, immortal praise acquir'd?  
\* \* \* \* \*

O greatly bless'd with ev'ry blooming grace,  
With equal steps the paths of glory trace!  
Join to that royal youth's your rival name,  
And shine eternal in the sphere of fame."

<sup>4</sup> Like the beasts of the field] *Veluti pecora*. Many translators have rendered *pecora* "brutes" or "beasts;" *pecus*, however, does not mean brutes in general, but answers to our English word *cattle*.

<sup>5</sup> Grovelling] *Prona*. I have adopted *grovelling* from Mair's old translation

Alt our power is situate in the mind and in the body<sup>1</sup>.  
Of the mind we rather employ the government<sup>2</sup>; of the body,

*Pronus*, stooping to the earth, is applied to *cattle*, in opposition to *erectus*, which is applied to *man*; as in the following lines of Ovid, Met. i., 76:

“*Pronaque cum spectent animalia cætera terram,  
Os homini sublime dedit, cælumque tueri  
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.*”

“—— while the mute creation downward bend  
Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,  
Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes  
Beholds his own hereditary skies.” *Dryden.*

Which Milton (Par. L. vii., 502) has paraphrased:

“There wanted yet the master-work, the end  
Of all yet done; a creature, who not *prone*  
*And brute as other creatures*, but endued  
With sanctity of reason, might *erect*  
*His stature*, and *upright with front serene*  
Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence  
Magnanimous to correspond with heaven.”

So Silits Italicus, xv., 84:

“*Nonne vides hominum ut celsos ad sidera vultus  
Sustulerit Deus, et sublimia finxerit ora,  
Cum pecudes, volucrumque genus, formasque ferarum,  
Segnem atque obscenam passim travissit in alvum.*”

“See’st thou not how the Deity has rais’d  
The countenance of man erect to heav’n,  
Gazing sublime, while prone to earth he bent  
Th’ inferior tribes, reptiles, and pasturing herds,  
And beasts of prey, to appetite enslav’d?”

“When Nature,” says Cicero de Legg. i., 9, “had made other animals abject, and consigned them to the pastures, she made man alone upright, and raised him to the contemplation of heaven, as of his birthplace and former abode;” a passage which Dryden seems to have had in his mind when he translated the lines of Ovid cited above. Let us add Juvenal, xv., 146:

“*Sensum à cœlesti demissum traximus arce,  
Cujus egent prona et terram spectantia.*”

“To us is reason giv’n, of heav’nly birth,  
Denied to beasts, that prone regard the earth.”

<sup>1</sup> All our power is situate in the mind and in the body] *Sed omnis nostra vis in animo et corpore sita*. All our power is placed, or consists, in our mind and our body. The particle *sed*, which is merely a connective, answering to the Greek  $\delta\epsilon$ , and which would be useless in an English translation, I have omitted.

<sup>2</sup> Of the mind we—employ the government] *Animi imperio—utimur* “What the Deity is in the universe, the mind is in man; what matter is to the universe, the body is to us; let the worse, therefore, serve the better.”—Sen. Epist. lxx

the service<sup>1</sup>. The one is common to us with the gods; the other with the brutes. It appears to me, therefore, more reasonable<sup>2</sup> to pursue glory by means of the intellect than of bodily strength, and, since the life which we enjoy is short, to make the remembrance of us as lasting as possible. For the glory of wealth and beauty is fleeting and perishable; that of intellectual power is illustrious and immortal<sup>3</sup>.

Yet it was long a subject of dispute among mankind,

*Dux et imperator vitæ mortalium animus est*, the mind is the guide and ruler of the life of mortals.—Jug. c. 1. “An animal consists of mind and body, of which the one is formed by nature to rule, and the other to obey.”—Aristot. Polit. i., 5. Muretus and Graswinckel will supply abundance of similar passages.

<sup>1</sup> Of the mind we rather employ the government; of the body, the service] *Animi imperio, corporis servitio, magis utimur*. The word *magis* is not to be regarded as useless. “It signifies,” says Cortius, “that the mind rules, and the body obeys, *in general*, and *with greater reason*.” At certain times the body may seem to have the mastery, as when we are under the irresistible influence of hunger or thirst.

<sup>2</sup> It appears to me, therefore, more reasonable, &c.] *Quo mihi rectius videtur*, &c. I have rendered *quo* by *therefore*. “*Quo*,” observes Cortius, “is *propter quod*, with the proper force of the ablative case. So Jug. c. 84: *Quo mihi acrius aditendum est*, &c.; c. 2, *Quo magis pravitas eorum admiranda est*. Some expositors would force us to believe that these ablatives are inseparably connected with the comparative degree, as in *quo minus, eo major*, and similar expressions; whereas common sense shows that they cannot be so connected.” Kritzius is one of those who interprets in the way to which Cortius alludes, as if the drift of the passage were, *Quanto magis animus corpori prestat, tanto rectius ingenii opibus gloriam querere*. But most of the commentators and translators rightly follow Cortius. “*Quo*,” says Pappaur, “is for *quocirca*.”

<sup>3</sup> *That of intellectual power is illustrious and immortal*] *Virtus clara æternæque habetur*. The only one of our English translators who has given the right sense of *virtus* in this passage, is Sir Henry Steuart, who was guided to it by the Abbé Thyvon and M. Beauzée. “It appears somewhat singular,” says Sir Henry, “that none of the numerous translators of Sallust, whether among ourselves or among foreign nations—the Abbé Thyvon and M. Beauzée excepted—have thought of giving to the word *virtus*, in this place, what so obviously is the meaning intended by the historian; namely, ‘genius, ability, distinguished talents.’ Indeed, the whole tenor of the passage, as well as the scope of the context, leaves no room to doubt the fact. The main objects of comparison, throughout the three first sections of this Proœmium, or introductory discourse, are not vice and virtue, but on the body and mind; a listless indolence, and a vigorous, honourable activity. On this account it is pretty evident, that by *virtus* Sallust could never mean the Greek ἀπερί, ‘virtue or moral worth,’ but that he had in his eye the well-known interpretation of Varro, who considers it *ut viri vis* (De Ling. Lat. iv.), as denoting the useful energy which ennobles a man, and should chiefly distinguish him among his fellow-creatures. In order to be convinced of the justice of this

whether military efforts were more advanced by strength of body, or by force of intellect. For, in affairs of war, it is necessary to plan before beginning to act<sup>1</sup>, and, after planning, to act with promptitude and vigour<sup>2</sup>. Thus, each<sup>3</sup> being insufficient of itself, the one requires the assistance of the other<sup>4</sup>.

II. In early times, accordingly, kings (for that was the first title of sovereignty in the world) applied themselves in different ways<sup>5</sup>; some exercised the mind, others the body. At that period, however<sup>6</sup>, the life of man was passed without covetousness<sup>7</sup>; every one was satisfied with his own.

rendering, we need only turn to another passage of our author, in the second section of the Proœmium to the Jugurthine War, where the same train of thought is again pursued, although he gives it somewhat a different turn in the piece last mentioned. The object, notwithstanding, of both these Dissertations is to illustrate, in a striking manner, the pre-eminence of the mind over extrinsic advantages or bodily endowments, and to show that it is by genius alone that we may aspire to a reputation which shall never die. *Igitur præclara facies, magna divitiæ, adhuc vis corporis, et alia hujusmodi omnia, brevi dilabuntur: at ingenii egregia facinora, sicut anima, immortalia sunt.*"

<sup>1</sup> It is necessary to plan before beginning to act] *Præquam incipias, consulto—opus est.* Most translators have rendered *consulto* "deliberation," or something equivalent; but it is *planning* or *contrivance* that is signified. Demosthenes, in his Oration *de Pace*, reproaches the Athenians with acting without any settled plan: 'Οι μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοι πάντες ἄνθρωποι πρὸ τῶν πραγμάτων εἰώθασι χρῆσθαι τῷ βουλευεσθαι, ὑμεῖς οὐδὲ μετὰ τὰ πράγματα.

<sup>2</sup> To act with promptitude and vigour] *Maturè facto opus est.* "Mature fact" seems to include the notions both of promptitude and vigour, of force as well as speed; for what would be the use of acting expeditiously, unless expedition be attended with power and effect?

<sup>3</sup> Each] *Utrumque.* The corporeal and mental faculties.

<sup>4</sup> The one requires the assistance of the other] *Alterum alterius auxilio eget.* "Eget," says Cortius, "is the reading of all the MSS." *Veget*, which Havercamp and some others have adopted, was the conjecture of Palmerius, on account of *indigens* occurring in the same sentence. But *eget* agrees far better with *consulto et—maturè facto opus est*, in the preceding sentence.

<sup>5</sup> II. Applied themselves in different ways] *Diversi.* "Modo et instituto diverso, diversa sequentes." *Cortius.*

<sup>6</sup> At that period, however] *Et jam tum.* "Tunc temporis præcisè, at that time precisely, which is the force of the particle *jam*, as Donatus shows. \* \* \* I have therefore written *et jam* separately. \* \* \* Virg. Æn. vii., 737. Late *jam tum* ditone premebat Sarrastes populos." *Cortius.*

<sup>7</sup> Without covetousness] *Sine cupiditate.* "As in the famous golden age. See Tacit. Ann. iii., 26." *Cortius.* See also Ovid. Met. i., 89, *seq.* But "such times were never" as Cowper says.

But after Cyrus in Asia<sup>1</sup>, and the Lacedæmonians and Athenians in Greece, began to subjugate cities and nations, to deem the lust of dominion a reason for war, and to imagine the greatest glory to be in the most extensive empire, it was then at length discovered, by proof and experience<sup>2</sup>, that mental power has the greatest effect in military operations. And, indeed<sup>3</sup>, if the intellectual ability<sup>4</sup> of kings and magistrates<sup>5</sup> were exerted to the same degree in peace as in war, human affairs would be more orderly and settled, and you would not see governments shifted from hand to hand<sup>6</sup>, and things universally changed and confused. For dominion is easily secured by those qualities by which it was at first obtained. But when sloth has introduced itself in the place of industry, and covetousness and pride in that of moderation and equity, the fortune of a state is

<sup>1</sup> But after Cyrus in Asia, &c.] *Postea verò quàm in Asiâ Cyrus, &c.* Sallust writes as if he had supposed that kings were more moderate before the time of Cyrus. But this can hardly have been the case. "The Romans," says De Brosse, whose words I abridge, "though not learned in antiquity, could not have been ignorant that there were great conquerors before Cyrus; as Ninus and Sesostris. But as their reigns belonged rather to the fabulous ages, Sallust, in entering upon a serious history, wished to confine himself to what was certain, and went no farther back than the records of Herodotus and Thucydides." Ninus, says Justin. i., 1, was the first to change, through inordinate ambition, the *vetere[m] et quasi avitum gentibus morem*, that is, to break through the settled restraints of law and order. Gerlach agrees in opinion with De Brosse.

<sup>2</sup> Proof and experience] *Periculo atque negotiis*. Gronovius rightly interprets *periculo* "experiundo, experimentis," by experiment or trial. Cortius takes *periculo atque negotiis* for *periculosos negotiis*, by hendyadys; but to this figure, as Kritzius remarks, we ought but sparingly to have recourse. It is better, he adds, to take the words in their ordinary signification, understanding by *negotia* "res graviores." Bernouf judiciously explains *negotiis* by "ipsâ negotiorum tractatione," i. e. by the management of affairs, or by experience in affairs. Dureau Delamalle, the French translator, has "l'expérience et la pratique." Mair has "trial and experience," which, I believe, faithfully expresses Sallust's meaning. Rose gives only "experience" for both words.

<sup>3</sup> And, indeed, if the intellectual ability, &c.] *Quod si—animi virtus, &c.* "Quod si" cannot here be rendered *but if*; it is rather equivalent to *quæ propter si*, and might be expressed by *wherefore if, if therefore, if then, so that*.

<sup>4</sup> Intellectual ability] *Animi virtus*. See the remarks on *virtus*, above cited.

<sup>5</sup> Magistrates] *Imperatorum*. "Understand all who govern states, whether in war or in peace." Bernouf. Sallust calls the consuls *imperatores*, c. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Governments shifted from hand to hand] *Aliud aliò ferri*. Evidently alluding to changes in government.

altered together with its morals; and thus authority is always transferred from the less to the more deserving<sup>1</sup>.

Even in agriculture<sup>2</sup>, in navigation, and in architecture, whatever man performs owns the dominion of intellect. Yet many human beings, resigned to sensuality and indolence, uninstructed and unimproved, have passed through life like travellers in a strange country<sup>3</sup>; to whom, certainly, contrary to the intention of nature, the body was a gratification, and the mind a burden. Of these I hold the life and death in equal estimation<sup>4</sup>; for silence is maintained concerning both. But he only, indeed, seems to me to live, and to enjoy life, who, intent upon some employment, seeks reputation from some ennobling enterprise, or honourable pursuit.

But in the great abundance of occupations, nature points out different paths to different individuals. III. To act well for the Commonwealth is noble, and even to speak well for it is not without merit<sup>5</sup>. Both in peace and in war it is possible to obtain celebrity; many who have acted, and many who have recorded the actions of others, receive their tribute of praise. And to me, assuredly, though by no means equal glory attends the narrator and the performer of illustrious

<sup>1</sup> Less to the more deserving] *Ad optimum quemque à minus bono.* "From the less good to the best."

<sup>2</sup> Even in agriculture, &c.] *Quæ homines arant, navigant, ædificant, virtuti omnia parent.* Literally, *what men plough, sail, &c.* Sallust's meaning is, that agriculture, navigation, and architecture, though they may seem to be effected by mere bodily exertion, are as much the result of mental power as the highest of human pursuits.

<sup>3</sup> Like travellers in a strange country] *Sicuti peregrinantes.* "Vivere nesciunt; igitur in vitâ quasi hospites sunt:" they know not how to use life, and are therefore, as it were, strangers in it. *Dietsch.* "*Peregrinantes, qui, quâ transeunt, nullum sui vestigium relinquunt:*" they are as travellers, who do nothing to leave any trace of their course. *Pappaur.*

<sup>4</sup> Of these I hold the life and death in equal estimation] *Eorum ego vitam mortemque juxta æstimo.* I count them of the same value dead as alive, for they are honoured in the one state as much as in the other. "Those who are devoted to the gratification of their appetites, as Sallust says, let us regard as inferior animals, not as men; and some, indeed, not as living, but as dead animals." Seneca, Ep. lx.

<sup>5</sup> III. Not without merit] *Haud absurdum.* I have borrowed this expression from Rose, to whom Muretus furnished "*suâ laude non caret.*" "The word *absurdus* is often used by the Latins as an epithet for sounds disagreeable to the ear; but at length it came to be applied to any action unbecoming a rational being." *Kunhardt.*

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