FRAGMENTS OF BOOK XXV

Gracchus had the same principles as his brother; only the latter had drifted from excellence into ambition and thence into baseness, whereas this man was naturally turbulent and played the rogue voluntarily; and he far surpassed the other in his gift of language. For these reasons his designs were more mischievous, his actions more spontaneous, and his arrogance greater toward all alike. He was the first to walk up and down in the assemblies while delivering a speech and the first to bare his arm; hence neither of these practices has been thought improper since his time. And because his speaking was generally characterized by great condensation of thought and vigour of language and he consequently was unable to restrain himself easily, but was often led to say more than he wished, he used to bring in a flute-player, and from him, as he played an accompaniment, he would gain moderation and self-control; or, if even then he managed to get out of bounds, he would stop. This was the sort of man

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who attacked the constitution, and, by assuming no speech or act to be forbidden, in very brief time gained the greatest influence with the populace and the knights. All the nobility and the senatorial party, if he had lived longer, [would have been overthrown], but, as it was, his great power caused him to be hated even by his followers, and he was overthrown by his own methods.
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