INTRODUCTION

The period of history that stretches from the tribunate of Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus to the dictatorship of Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix constitutes the first stage of what Sir Ronald Syme has aptly named 'the Roman revolution', the first half of the century which witnessed the collapse and demise of the Roman Republic and the inception of the Augustan Principate. I may perhaps be allowed to repeat here what I have already written elsewhere:*

'The history of the tumultuous and exciting last century of the Republic of Rome centres around the fight of the great families of the senatorial ruling nobility to hold their controlling position against the assaults of their opponents. The attack was launched with verve and skill by the brothers Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus. The questions they raised, the issues they fought, the proposals they championed were to remain central to Roman politics for the next century: agrarian reform, social justice, the right of Rome's Italian allies and partners in conquest, the food supply, the administration of justice, the curbing of the arbitrary power of consuls and senate. They rested their position on the uncompromising basis of the sovereignty of the *populus Romanus*. They failed themselves to storm the citadel, but it was along the line of advance they had mapped out that later assaults were pressed home. At the end of the second century Saturninus renewed the attack. Cicero was nearly seven years old when, like the Gracchi before him, Saturninus went down in face of the force deployed by the ruling oligarchy, who when it come to the point of decision were prepared to fight rather than be legislated out of power. Cicero was already a youth and studying at Rome when the murder of Livius Drusus the Younger sparked off the Social War. In 88 Sulpicius Rufus assumed the mantle of Drusus, and from 87 Cinna and Carbo seized and held power. But first in 88 and then again in 82 Sulla led his armies against Rome to overthrow his opponents. The arrangements which he made during his later period of dominance ruthlessly restored the senatorial position and left the nobility in tight control of Rome. But the forces of reform were too deeply seated in the widespread and serious social and economic grievances of large sections of the populace to be long repressed. In 70 ... the tribunate recovered its Gracchan strength, ready to be deployed for new attacks.'

Despite its interest and importance, however, the history of these years is patchy and controversial. We lack a dependable continuous literary source to hold it together, to serve as a secure framework into which we can fit the substantial amount of miscellaneous information which we have. By accident of survival, our continuous accounts, above all that of Livy, but including also such works as those of Diodorus Siculus and Cassius Dio, remain only in excerpts or fragments or wretched short summaries of uncertain reliability. The first book of Appian's *Civil Wars* has luckily been spared, but that book is by way of being an introduction to the whole work, and is deliberately and consciously selective in its treatment of issues and episodes, leaping from high

* Cicero: *A Political Biography* (Oxford, 1971) pp. 21–22.

point to high point, uneven in the quality of the sources on which it depends. Plutarch's *Lives* of the leading men of this period are invaluable, but they are the work of a biographer and not an annalistic or general historian, and are marked by an understandable looseness in precise chronology.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the quality of the authors cited in the pages that follow varies enormously, not only between each other but also between different sections of an individual author's work, depending on his interest or on the nature of the source or sources he himself happens to be using at the time. Far and away our best guide is Cicero. Born in 106 BC, he was as a young man close to leading politicians who were thirty or more years his senior. His great idol Lucius Licinius Crassus, for example, was born in 140 BC and in due course married the daughter of Q. Mucius Scaevola (consul 117 BC), a cousin of P. Mucius Scaevola who was consul in 133 BC and of Publius' brother who was adopted into the Crassus family as P. Licinius Crassus Mucianus and himself held the consulship in 131 BC. This Lucius Crassus as a young man prosecuted the renegade Gracchan Papirius Carbo and in 106 BC was a leading and vocal supporter of Servilius Caepio, a role he was to repeat for the younger Drusus in 91 BC, having meanwhile shared the consulship with another Scaevola in 95 BC and the censorship in 92 BC with that Domitius Ahenobarbus who twelve years earlier had been a prominent reforming tribune in 104 BC. Apart from his intercourse with men of that standing and experience, Cicero was also of course able to read many works and occasionally consult public records no longer available to us. But even with a man like Cicero (or other near-contemporaries like Julius Caesar or Sallust) interest may be narrow or capricious, accidentally or deliberately selective, and there may be personal axes to grind, and hence we must be on the watch for deliberate slanting or suppression of the truth (*suggestio falsi* and *suppressio veri*), a not uncommon feature of the activities of orators and historians. (Just so nowadays, we do not necessarily or perhaps even usually assume that what a politician of one party has to say when promoting his own party's policies or running down those of the opposition party should be accepted as 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth'.)

Cicero himself once observed that 'anybody who supposes that he has my personal signed guarantee for the things I say in my speeches in the courts is seriously in error: they are all of them suited to particular cases and instances'. He then went on to speak with humorous admiration of the good sense of another of his boyhood idols, the great orator Marcus Antonius (consul 99 BC), who used to say that he had never had any of his own speeches 'published' because he wanted to be free to deny later anything which it might turn out he had better not have said (*pro Cluentio* 139–40).

Much of our material has to be garnered from detached comments and brief asides, casual references and stray snippets, scraps of speeches and fragmentary inscriptions, which we have to try to fit into such framework as Appian and Plutarch and others provide. And much of our information in the following pages comes from men writing long after, sometimes several centuries after, the events to which they refer, men who frequently display a sad lack of critical acumen or even interest in their selection and assessment and use of the available evidence: and where they were getting their 'facts' from is generally a

mystery. The briefest of glances at what, for instance, Appian and Velleius Paterculus have to tell us about Tiberius Gracchus' programme reveals behind the former a source or sources of the highest quality and in the latter a casual and superficial oversimplification that leaves one wondering if anything Velleius writes is worth bothering very much about.

Having said all that, it is a case of *'Spartam nactus es, hanc exorna!'*, which means that we have to stop complaining and get on to do the best job we can with the materials available. All history has to start with facts and dates, and these we must find and determine by comparing and weighing the evidence we have. The 'facts' presented in this collection are not intended to be self-sufficient, but to supplement the reading of standard text-books and even provide a check on what is to be found there. Much is necessarily and willingly left to the schoolmaster or schoolmistress to explain and elucidate. The high points are obvious: the exciting movement of the tribunates of the two Gracchi; the growing disarray of the last decade of the second century BC, the rise of Marius and the bid of Lucius Appuleius Saturninus to pick up the Gracchan threads once again; the still somewhat opaque thrust of the tribunate of Drusus the Younger in 91 BC, and the Social War which his death sparked off as Rome's Italian allies, weary of unproductive political essays, took up arms to extort the equality of status and opportunity which they so richly deserved; the merging of that Social War into a Civil War, when Roman fought Roman as he was to do again in the civil wars of the two decades that followed Caesar across the Rubicon; the firm and thorough work of the 'deadly reformer' Sulla, which ends this book and which was to collapse in ruins ten years later. No doubt it is for these episodes that this collection will chiefly be used. But, while 'history books begin and end', as Collingwood reminds us, 'the events they describe do not'. Small patches and pools of information lying between these larger episodes may illuminate them, the diligent accumulation of stray facts and names can help to build a background to them and to the society which gave them birth. Thus Sallust's monograph on *The Jugurthan War*, for all its narrow major theme, can provide something in some ways of a 'portrait of an age' and illustrate the assumptions of a whole generation. Finally, we ought not to forget that men were not and are not forever living in the violent throes of political crises of the greatest moment. There are often also the 'quiet' times, when life resumes a more even tenor, when politics display a preoccupation with the contest for office and the fruits of office, wealth and prestige, influence and patronage and distinction, a preoccupation that formed the enduring leitmotif of the concerns and activities of the ruling class of Republican Rome as of other times and places. Of course, the big divisive issues had not gone away, they had become latent or quiescent. But that truth, like many others, is easy to detect by hindsight, but was to discern for those who were alive at the time and had no access to our crystal ball in which their present and future are visible to us as the past.*

* (Note: spellings of proper names in this book are often inconsistent, reflecting the inconsistency in the original texts.)

BRIEF NOTES ON THE SOURCES AND AUTHORITIES

APPIAN was born in Alexandria towards the end of the 1st. century AD. After holding local office there he moved to Rome where he practised as an advocate, later entering government service as an imperial procurator. His *Romaica* is divided into subject patterns, including the *Civil Wars* in five books, the first of which covers the period from Tiberius Gracchus to 70 BC, *Mithridatica,* and *Celtica,* etc.

ASCONIUS. Q. Asconius Pedianus was born in Padua in 9 BC and lived until AD 76. All that survives of his work is part of his commentary on Cicero's speeches (the *in Pisonem, pro Scauro, pro Milone, pro Cornelio,* and *in toga candida*), which he composed to help his sons' education, drawing chiefly for his exposition on Cicero's own writings.

ATHENAEUS. His *Deipnosophistae* (*'The Scholars' Banquet'*) dates from about AD 200, and is essentially a collection of snippets on a very wide range of varied subjects – he cited over 1,250 authors!

CAESAR. Gaius Julius Caesar, the later dictator, was born in 100 BC. Consul in 59 BC and subsequently governor of Gaul, his *de bello Gallico* was published probably in 50 BC – the eighth and final book being the work of one of his subordinate commanders, Aulus Hirtius, consul in 43 BC. The three books of his *Civil War* take the narrative from his crossing of the Rubicon in January 49 BC down to the beginning of the fighting at Alexandria the following autumn: the work was pretty certainly left unfinished at his death in 44 BC. It was continued in three works by other (contemporary) hands: the *Alexandrian War,* the *African War*, and the uncouth, ill-written, and very scrappy *Spanish War*.

CASSIODORUS held high office under the Gothic kings of the 6th. century AD. His *Chronicle* is a brief summary of Roman History down to AD 519.

CASSIUS DIO Cocceianus was born in Asia Minor, the son of Cassius Apronianus, governor of Cilicia and also of Dalmatia. After a suffect consulship in AD 205 he was colleague as consul of the Emperor Alexander Severus in AD 229. His *Roman History* went from the earliest beginnings down to AD 229. Much of it is lost, and for our period we have largely only fragments and excerpts.

L. CASSIUS HEMINA was a Roman annalist of the mid-second century BC, whose work survives only in sparse fragments.

CATO. Marcus Porcius Cato ('Cato the Censor', 'The Elder Cato') was born in 234 BC; though not of a senatorial family, he rose to be consul in 195 BC. His *On Agriculture* was written about 160 BC, a practical guide to husbandry with the well-to-do non-subsistence farmer in mind. His *Origines* covered Roman History from earliest times down to 149 BC, the year of his death; but of this work only fragments survive.

CICERO. Marcus Tullius Cicero was born in Arpinum in Central Italy in January 106 BC. Like the elder Cato, his was a non-senatorial family, but he became consul in 63 BC. Besides his speeches and dialogues and essays, nearly

1,000 letters survive written by or to him. In this book the various works are individually dated. He was proscribed and killed in 43 BC. (See also SCHOLIASTS.)

CIL. The *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, a collection of surviving Latin inscriptions.

de viris illustribus. A work sometimes attributed to Aurelius Victor, this is a rag-bag of stories and anecdotes about famous men of the Republican period. It was compiled probably in the 4th. century AD.

Digest. The *Digest* (or *Pandects*) is a collection of passages from the writings of the classical jurists compiled by order of the Emperor Justinian in the early 6th. century AD.

DIO CASSIUS (See under CASSIUS DIO.)

DIODORUS SICULUS in the second half of the 1st. century BC cobbled together a *World History* extending down to 54 BC. Of its forty books not all survive intact, and for this period we have generally to rely on fragments and excerpts.

DIONYSIUS OF HALICARNASSUS lived and taught at Rome in the Augustan period. His *Roman Antiquities* went down to the outbreak of the First Punic War in twenty books, of which the first ten survive. It is very much a moralising work, but contains much valuable information.

EPITOME OF LIVY (See under LIVY.)

EUSEBIUS. Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine in the early 4th. century AD, his works include a *Chronicle* with chronological tables from Abraham onwards.

EUTROPIUS was an imperial official in the 4th. century AD. His *Breviary* covered (in ten books) Roman History from the foundation of the city down to AD 364. For the Republican part, he drew his material from Livy or a Livian *Epitomator*.

FESTUS was roughly contemporary with Eutropius, like him an imperial official, and also the author of a *Breviary* of Roman History. He too drew his material from the Livian well.

FIR. The *Fontes Iuris Romani*, a collection of surviving Roman laws, etc. edited by the German scholar Bruns.

FIRA. The *Fontes Iuris Romani Anteiustiniani*, a similar collection by the Italian scholar Riccobono.

FLORUS in the early 2nd. century AD wrote an *Epitome* of Roman History with special emphasis on wars. He was less wholly dependent on Livy than either Eutropius or Festus or Orosius.

FRONTINUS. Sextus Iulius Frontinus lived from about AD 30 to AD 104. A partisan of Vespasian's, he was suffect consul in the seventies and then governor of Britain, conquering Wales and founding Caerleon. Appointed chief of the Roman Metropolitan Water Board by Nerva in AD 97, he wrote an excellent historical and technical manual *On the Aqueducts*. His *Strategems* is a manual of strategic and tactical instruction for the use of army officers, illustrated by examples from Greek and Roman history.

AULUS GELLIUS was a writer of the 2nd. century AD of whose personal background we are largely ignorant. His *Attic Nights* consisted of twenty books, most of which happily survive. It is a delightful sort of commonplace book on a very wide range of topics, a collection he began in his student-days at Athens and continued thereafter. It contains very valuable citations from earlier writers whose work has been lost.

ad Herennium. The earliest extant Latin work on Rhetoric, addressed to Gaius Herennius, it was in late antiquity taken to be a work of Cicero's, which it is not. It is a systematic and technical manual dating from the very early 1st. century BC.

INSCRIPTIONS. As well as the *CIL, FIR,* and *FIRA*, already listed, we have the *ILS (Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*: ed. Dessau*)*; *ILLRP (Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae*: ed Degrassi*)*; *II (Inscriptiones Italiae)*; *IGRR (Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes)*; *SEG (Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum)*; *MAMA (Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua)*; and the *Fasti Consulares* and *Fasti Triumphales*, lists of consuls and triumphators.

JULIUS VICTOR wrote in the 4th. century AD on *The Art of Rhetoric.*

JUSTIN. Marcus Justinus Junianus in the 3rd. century AD wrote an *Epitome* of the *Historiae Philippicae* of the Augustan writer Pompeius Trogus.

JUSTINIAN, the famous emperor of the early 6th. century AD, commissioned massive legal compendia, the *Digest* and *Codex* and *Institutes.*

LICINIANUS. Granius Licinianus in the 2nd. century AD wrote an annalistic handbook of Roman History which survives only in bitty fragments very scattered in date.

LIVY. Titus Livius of Padua lived either from 59 BC to AD 17 or from 64 BC to AD 12. His history of Rome *ab urbe condita* was written in annalistic form and totalled 142 books, of which only 35 have survived (Bks.1–10 and 21–45). His reputation was high from his own lifetime onwards, and shortened or 'pocket' versions were made, one *Epitome* being already in circulation in Martial's day (late 1st. century AD). For the missing books covering the period 133-80 BC we can refer to the surviving *Epitome* (or *Perioche*) of these books. This particular version is probably of late imperial date, and pretty certainly an abbreviation not of Livy himself but of an already existing Epitome. The reduction is drastic, a whole book of Livy often being compressed into a dozen or two lines of summary, little more than a bare list of contents. The *Epitomator*'s accuracy, carefulness, and judgement are all sadly of the poorest.

MACROBIUS in the late 4th. or early 5th. century AD wrote the *Saturnalia*, an academic symposium covering a wide range of topics.

MEMNON lived in Heraclea Pontica in early imperial times, and wrote a history of his city which includes some information on Roman history.

OBSEQUENS. Julius Obsequens, probably in the 4th. century AD, compiled a collection of prodigies, much of his information going back ultimately to Livy.

ORF. The *Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta*, a collection of excerpts from and testimonia about Roman orators of the Republican period (excluding Cicero), edited by Malcovati.

OROSIUS. Paulus Orosius in the early 5th. century AD was a pupil of St. Augustine, who persuaded him to write the *Historiae adversus Paganos,* from the creation of the world to the founding of Rome and then the history of Rome down to AD 417. Again, he used a lot of Livian material.

PLINY. Gaius Plinius Secundus ('Pliny the Elder') was born at Comum in North Italy in AD 23/24 and died during the course of the eruption of Vesuvius (he was commander of the fleet at Misenum) in AD 79. He saw military service and held high equestrian offices. His *Natural History* comprises 37 books and is a mine of miscellaneous information.

PLUTARCH was born in Boeotia in Greece and died sometime after AD 120 at an age of something over seventy. He was a voluminous writer. His best-known and most enduringly popular work was his collection of biographies or *Lives* of famous Greeks and Romans; but he wrote many other works both philosophical and antiquarian.

QUINTILIAN. Marcus Fabius Quintilianus came of Hispano-Italian stock, became a famous teacher, and was probably the first state-appointed and salaried 'professor' of rhetoric at Rome. His famous *Institutio Oratoria* was published towards the very end of the 1st. century AD.

SALLUST. Gaius Sallustius Crispus was born into the local aristocracy at Amiternum around 86 BC. He was tribune of the plebs in 52 BC, when he was on the other side from Cicero and Milo. A partisan of Caesar's in the Civil War, he was praetor in 47 BC, later governing Africa Nova, after which he only narrowly escaped conviction on an extortion charge. He retired from public life and turned to the writing of history, dying in about 35 BC. Early monographs on *Catiline* and the *Jugurthan War* (both extant) were followed by a full-scale history (the *Historiae*) which began in 78 BC (the year of Sulla's death) and may not have got much beyond about 67 BC by the time Sallust died; but this, his major work, survives only in excerpts, fragments, and citations.

SCHOLIASTS is the name given to ancient commentators on particular texts. The Ciceronian scholiasts are all available in the collection *Ciceronis Orationum Scholiastae* edited by Stangl, and cited by the pages of his edition; thus (e.g.) Schol. Bob. p.172 St. = Scholia Bobiensia on page 172 of Stangl's edition. Asconius, however (see his entry) is generally cited by the pages of Clark's Oxford Text of Asconius: e.g. Asconius 25C = page 25 in Clark's edition.

SENECA. Lucius Annaeus Seneca was born into a well-to-do Hispano-Italian family at Cordoba in Spain sometime between 4 BC and AD 1. The Emperor Claudius appointed him tutor to the young Nero, and when Nero became Emperor in AD 54 his power was for some years considerable as an *éminence grise* behind the young Emperor. But his influence waned in the early sixties, and in AD 65 he was forced to commit suicide for alleged involvement in an unsuccessful conspiracy against Nero. Apart from his verse, his published works were basically 'philosophical'.

STRABO wrote his *Geography*, which also contains historical information, in the reign of Augustus.

SUETONIUS. Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus, at one time a young protégé of the younger Pliny, joined the imperial service, and under Trajan and Hadrian in the

early 2nd. century AD held in turn three of the highest posts in the imperial private secretariate, secretary *a studiis, a bibliothecis*, and *ab epistulis*. Of his works most survive only in bits, with the exception of his *Lives of the Caesars* (*de vita Caesarum*), a set of biographies of Julius Caesar (the first few chapters of this *Life* are lost) and of the eleven emperors from Augustus to Domitian.

TACITUS. Cornelius Tacitus was born probably about AD 56 of wealthy Celtic or Gallic stock, into a family which had been given the Roman citizenship some generations back. His father, a high equestrian officer, once served as procurator of Gallia Belgica and paymaster-general to the Rhine army; Tacitus himself married the daughter of the famous Julius Agricola, governor of Britain, member of another romanised Celto-Gallic family from Fréjus in Provence. Consul-suffect in AD 97, he was later governor of the province of Asia, probably in AD 112/3. Early works of his were the *Dialogus de oratoribus, de vita Julii Agricolae* (a biography of his father-in-law), and *de origine et situ Germanorum*. His great works were the *Histories*, covering the period AD 69 to (probably) the death of Domitian in AD 96, of which only the first four books and a scrap of the fifth survive; and the *Annals*, starting from the death of Augustus and going down to AD 68, where again we have not the whole work, for of its sixteen books parts of 5 and 6 are missing, the whole of 7–10, and 16 breaks off in AD 66.

VALERIUS MAXIMUS published his handbook of historical examples in the reign of Tiberius, probably sometime after AD 31. His work is an odd mish-mash of scattered information of widely varying degrees of accuracy, judgement, and critical insight.

VELLEIUS PATERCULUS was roughly a contemporary of Valerius Maximus. After an early career in the army, he entered politics and became a praetor along with his brother in AD 15. He may have been involved in Sejanus' downfall in AD 31; but two Vellei Paterculi, perhaps his sons, were suffect consuls in AD 60 and 61. His praenomen is uncertain. His *Historiae Romanae* was in two books, the first (of which much is missing) going down to the fall of Carthage in 146 BC, the second continuing down to AD 30. Which sources he drew on for his material is far from clear.

THE SOURCES

133 BC Consuls: P. Mucius Scaevola, L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi

(a) 'A house divided against itself'

SALLUST, *Jugurthine War* 41.2–42.1

Before the destruction of Carthage (*146 BC*), the Roman Senate and the Roman People managed the affairs of state in quiet and restrained co-operation, and there was no internecine struggle for glory or domination. Fear of external enemies ensured that they conducted themselves sensibly. But, once that apprehension had vanished, in came arrogance and lack of self-restraint, the children of success. So it was that the peace which they had longed for in their times of travail proved, when once it had been attained, only too harsh and bitter. For the nobility proceeded to convert the dignity of their position, and the People their liberty, into self-indulgence, every man seeking to twist and turn and force it to his own selfish advantage. As a result the whole nation was split into two divisions, and Rome was torn to pieces in the middle.

However, the nobility drew superior strength from its cohesion, while the strength of the commons was diluted and dissipated by their sheer numbers, and so was less effective. Domestic and foreign affairs were in the hands of a small group who also controlled the Treasury, the provinces, the great offices of state; theirs too the glories and the triumphs. The People were worn down by military service and poverty; the spoils of war were seized by the generals and shared with only a few, while the parents and little children of the ordinary soldiers were driven from their homes by rich neighbouring landowners. So power and greed ran riot, contaminated and pillaged everything, and held nothing sacred or worthy of respect, until they plunged themselves to their own destruction.

As soon as men emerged from the ranks of the nobility who put true glory above unjust power, the state began to be convulsed by an earthquake of civil strife. For, when Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, whose forebears had done much to add to Rome's dominion in the Punic and other wars, came forward to champion the freedom of the common people and set about exposing the crimes of the privileged few, the nobility, reeling back shaken and wounded, fought back against their activities first by way of the allies and the Latins, then by way of the Roman knights, who had been split away from the mass of the commons by hopes of co-operation with the nobles. First Tiberius was killed, then Gaius too a few years later when he started along the same path, and with him M. Fulvius Flaccus.

(b) The background to Tiberius Gracchus' agrarian legislation

PLUTARCH, *Ti. Gracchus* 8.1–3

When the Romans acquired land from their neighbours in war (*during the course of their conquest of Italy*), some of it they sold, but some of it they made public and distributed to landless needy citizens to cultivate on payment of a

small rent to the state Treasury. When the rich began to offer higher rents and drive out the poor, a law was passed barring any individual from holding more than 500 *iugera** of land. For a short while this enactment restrained the acquisitiveness of the rich and protected the poor, who were able to stay on the land they had rented and work their original individual plots. But as time passed their well-to-do neighbours took over the tenancies under fictitious names, and in the end held most of the land in their own names. Thus driven out, the poor no longer readily presented themselves for military service and began to stop raising families, with the result that a scarcity of free-born men became apparent throughout Italy, which became full of gangs of foreign slaves used by the rich to cultivate their land after the citizens had been driven out. Scipio's friend Gaius Laelius had made a move to remedy this state of affairs, but faced with the opposition of powerful interests and alarmed by the outcry, he desisted, and so won his nickname of 'Laelius the wise' (*Laelius Sapiens*).

APPIAN, *Civil Wars* 1.7–8

As step by step the Romans subdued Italy in warfare, they were in the habit of confiscating tracts of conquered territory and establishing urban settlements, or sending out colonists of their own to occupy already existing settlements, planning to use these as strongpoints.

The cultivated areas of the land thus acquired by right of conquest on various occasions they either divided among the colonists, or sold it or leased it. But as regards the areas which at the time lay uncultivated because of the fighting – and these were generally the most extensive – they announced that for the time being anyone who wished to cultivate this land might do so for the time being in return for a charge based on the yearly crop, ten per cent on cereal crops and twenty per cent on fruit crops, and they also laid down a poll-charge on any beasts, both large and small, that were pastured. Their aim in this was to encourage the fertility of the Italian race, a race they reckoned to be the most hard-working of peoples, to ensure a plentiful supply of domestic allies.

But things turned out quite otherwise. The rich got hold of the great part of this undistributed land, and, encouraged with the passage of time to believe that nobody would ever now take it away from them, they went on to acquire neighbouring lands and the smallholdings of the poor, partly by purchase and persuasion and partly by force, cultivating wide estates in place of single farms and using slaves as field-workers and herdsmen to avoid having free labourers dragged off from their farm-work to serve in the army. At the same time this slave-ownership brought them a lot of profit from the high birth-rate among their slaves, whose numbers increased since they were not exposed to the risks of military service. In consequence the powerful men became extremely rich and the slave population multiplied throughout the land, while the Italians diminished in numbers and quality, worn down by poverty and taxes and conscription. Even if they chanced to have any respite from these burdens, they spent their time in idleness, since the land was held by the rich, and the rich used slaves to work the land in place of free men.

The Roman people were upset by these developments: Italy would no longer

* one *iugerum* = $\frac{5}{8}$ of an acre.