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The Histories

of

Polybius

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[Book II](#)

(Vol. I)

Polybius **The Histories**

Book I

1 Had previous chroniclers neglected to speak in praise of History in general, it might perhaps have been necessary for me to recommend everyone to choose for study and welcome such treatises as the present, since men have no more ready corrective of conduct than knowledge of the past. **2** But all historians, one may say without exception, and in no half-hearted manner, but making this the beginning and end of their labour, have impressed on us that the soundest education and training for a life of active politics is the study of History, and that surest and indeed the only method of learning how to bear bravely the vicissitudes of fortune, is to recall the calamities of others. **3** Evidently therefore no one, and least of all myself, would think it his duty at this day to repeat what has been so well and so often said. **4** For the very element of unexpectedness in the events I have chosen as my theme will be sufficient to challenge and incite everyone, young and old alike, to peruse my systematic history. **5** For who is so worthless or indolent as not to wish to know by what means and under what system of polity the Romans in less than fifty-three years have succeeded in subjecting nearly the whole inhabited world to their sole government — a thing unique in history? **6** Or who again is there so passionately devoted to other spectacles or studies as to regard anything as of greater moment than the acquisition of this knowledge?

7 How striking and grand is the spectacle presented by the period with which I purpose to deal, will be most clearly apparent if we set beside and compare with the Roman dominion the most

famous empires of the past, those which have formed the chief theme of historians. ² Those worthy of being thus set beside it and compared are these. The Persians for a certain period possessed a great rule and dominion, but so often as they ventured to overstep the boundaries of Asia they imperilled not only the security of this empire, but their own existence. ³ The Lacedaemonians, after having for many years disputed the hegemony of Greece, at length attained it but to hold it uncontested for scarce twelve years. ⁴ The Macedonian rule in Europe extended but from the Adriatic region to the Danube, which would appear a quite insignificant portion of the continent. ⁵ Subsequently, by overthrowing the Persian empire they became supreme in Asia also. But though their empire was now regarded as the greatest geographically and politically that had ever existed, they left the larger part of the inhabited world as yet outside it. ⁶ For they never even made a single attempt to dispute possession of Sicily, Sardinia, or Libya, and the most warlike nations of Western Europe were, to speak the simple truth, unknown to them. ⁷ But the Romans have subjected to their rule not portions, but nearly the whole of the world and possess an empire which is not only immeasurably greater than any which preceded it, but need not fear rivalry in the future. ⁸ In the course of this work it will become more clearly intelligible by what steps this power was acquired, and it will also be seen how many and how great advantages accrue to the student from the systematic treatment of history.

¶ The date from which I propose to begin my history is the 140th Olympiad [220-216 B.C.], and the events are the following: (1) in Greece the so-called Social War, the first waged against the Aetolians by the Achaeans in league with and under the leadership of Philip of Macedon, the son of Demetrius and father of Perseus, (2) in Asia the war for Coele-Syria between Antiochus and Ptolemy Philopator, ² (3) in Italy, Libya, and the adjacent regions, the war between Rome and Carthage, usually known as the Hannibalic War. These events immediately succeed those related at the end of the work of Aratus of Sicyon. ³ Previously the doings of the world had been, so to say, dispersed, as they were held together by no unity of initiative, results, or locality; ⁴ but ever since

this date history has been an organic whole, and the affairs of Italy and Libya have been interlinked with those of Greece and Asia, all leading up to one end. ⁵ And this is my reason for beginning their systematic history from that date. ⁶ For it was owing to their defeat of the Carthaginians in the Hannibalic War that the Romans, feeling that the chief and most essential step in their scheme of universal aggression had now been taken, were first emboldened to reach out their hands to grasp the rest and to cross with an army to Greece and the continent of Asia.

p1Now were we Greeks well acquainted with the two states which disputed the empire of the world, it would not perhaps have been necessary for me to deal at all with their previous history, or to narrate what purpose guided them, and on what sources of strength they relied, in entering upon such a vast undertaking. ⁸ But as neither the former power nor the earlier history of Rome and Carthage is familiar to most of us Greeks, I thought it necessary to prefix this Book and the next to the actual history, ⁹ in order that no one after becoming engrossed in the narrative proper may find himself at a loss, and ask by what counsel and trusting to what power and resources the Romans embarked on that enterprise which has made them lords over land and sea in our part of the world; ¹⁰ but that from these Books and the preliminary sketch in them, it may be clear to readers that they had quite adequate grounds for conceiving the ambition of a world-empire and adequate means for achieving their purpose. ⁴ For what gives my work its peculiar quality, and what is most remarkable in the present age, is this. Fortune has guided almost all the affairs of the world in one direction and has forced them to incline towards one and the same end; ² a historian should likewise bring before his readers under one synoptical view the operations by which she has accomplished her general purpose. Indeed it was this chiefly that invited and encouraged me to undertake my task; and secondarily the fact that none of my contemporaries have undertaken to write a general history, in which case I should have been much less eager to take this in hand. ³ As it is, I observe that while several modern writers deal with particular wars and certain matters connected with them, no one, as far as I am aware, has even attempted to inquire

critically when and whence the general and comprehensive scheme of events originated and how it led up to the end. ⁴ I therefore thought it quite necessary not to leave unnoticed or allow to pass into oblivion this the finest and most beneficent of the performances of Fortune. ⁵ For though she is ever producing something new and ever playing a part in the lives of men, she has not in a single instance ever accomplished such a work, ever achieved such a triumph, as in our own times. ⁶ We can no more hope to perceive this from histories dealing with particular events than to get at once a notion of the form of the whole world, its disposition and order, by visiting, each in turn, the most famous cities, or indeed by looking at separate plans of each: a result by no means likely. ⁷ He indeed who believes that by studying isolated histories he can acquire a fairly just view of history as a whole, is, as it seems to me, much in the case of one, who, after having looked at the dis severed limbs of an animal once alive and beautiful, fancies he has been as good as an eyewitness of the creature itself in all its action and grace. ⁸ For could anyone put the creature together on the spot, restoring its form and the comeliness of life, and then show it to the same man, I think he would quickly avow that he was formerly very far away from the truth and more like one in a dream. ⁹ For we can get some idea of a whole from a part, but never knowledge or exact opinion. ¹⁰ Special histories therefore contribute very little to the knowledge of the whole and conviction of its truth. ¹¹ It is only indeed by study of the interconnexion of all the particulars, their resemblances and differences, that we are enabled at least to make a general survey, and thus derive both benefit and pleasure from history.

51 I shall adopt as the starting-point of this Book the first occasion on which the Romans crossed the sea from Italy. This follows immediately on the close of Timaeus' History and took place in the 129th Olympiad [264-261 B.C.]. ² Thus we must first state how and when the Romans established their position in Italy, and what prompted them afterwards to cross to Sicily, the first country outside Italy where they set foot. ⁸ The actual cause of their crossing must be stated without comment; for if I were to seek the cause of the cause and so on, my whole work would have no

clear starting-point and principle. ⁴ The starting-point must be an era generally agreed upon and recognized, and one self-apparent from the events, even if this involves my going back a little in point of date and giving a summary of intervening occurrences. ⁵ For if there is any ignorance or indeed any dispute as to what are the facts from which the work opens, it is impossible that what follows should meet with acceptance or credence; but once we produce in our readers a general agreement on this point they will give ear to all the subsequent narrative.

6 It was, therefore, the nineteenth year after the battle of Aegospotami and the sixteenth before that of Leuctra, the year in which the Spartans ratified the peace known as that of Antalcidas with the King of Persia, ² that in which also Dionysius the Elder, after defeating the Italiot Greeks in the battle at the river Elleporos, was besieging Rhegium, and that in which the Gauls, after taking Rome itself by assault, occupied the whole of that city except the Capitol. ³ The Romans, after making a truce on conditions satisfactory to the Gauls and being thus contrary to their expectation reinstated in their home and as it were now started on the road of aggrandizement, continued in the following years to wage war on their neighbours. ⁴ After subduing all the Latins by their valour and the fortune of war, they fought first against the Etruscans, then against the Celts, and next against the Samnites, whose territory was conterminous with that of the Latins on the East and North. ⁵ After some time the Tarentines, fearing the consequences of their insolence to the Roman envoys, begged for the intervention of Pyrrhus. (This was in the year preceding the expedition of those Gauls who met with the reverse at Delphi and then crossed to Asia.) ⁶ The Romans had ere this reduced the Etruscans and Samnites and had vanquished the Italian Celts in many battles, and they now for the first time attacked the rest of Italy not as if it were a foreign country, but as if it rightfully belonged to them. ⁷ Their struggle with the Samnites and Celts had made them veritable masters in the art of war, and after bravely supporting this war with Pyrrhus and finally expelling himself and his army from Italy, they continued to fight with and subdue those who had sided with him. ⁸ When, with extraordinary good fortune, they had reduced all

these peoples and had made all the inhabitants of Italy their subjects excepting the Celts, they undertook the siege of Rhegium now held by certain of their compatriots.

1 For very much the same fortune had befallen the two cities on the Straits, Messene and Rhegium. **2** Certain Campanians serving under Agathocles had long cast covetous eyes on the beauty and prosperity of Messene; and not long before the events I am speaking of they availed themselves of the first opportunity to capture it by treachery. **3** After being admitted as friends and occupying the city, they first expelled or massacred the citizens **4** and then took possession of the wives and families of the dispossessed victims, just as chance assigned them each at the time of the outrage. They next divided among themselves the land and all other property. **5** Having thus possessed themselves so quickly and easily of a fine city and territory, they were not long in finding imitators of their exploit. **6** For the people of Rhegium, when Pyrrhus crossed to Italy, dreading an attack by him and fearing also the Carthaginians who commanded the sea, begged from the Romans a garrison and support. **7** The force which came, four thousand in number and under the command of Decius, a Campanian, kept the city and their faith for some time, **8** but at length, anxious to rival the Mamertines and with their co-operation, played the people of Rhegium false, and eagerly coveting a city so favourably situated and containing so much private wealth, expelled or massacred the citizens and possessed themselves of the city in the same manner as the Campanians had done. The Romans were highly displeased, **9** yet could do nothing at the time, as they were occupied with the wars I have already mentioned. **10** But when they had a free hand they shut up the culprits in the city and proceeded to lay siege to it as I have stated above. When Rhegium fell, **11** most of the besieged were slain in the actual assault, having defended themselves desperately, as they knew what awaited them, but more than three hundred were captured. When they were sent to Rome **12** the Consuls had them all conducted to the forum and there, according to the Roman custom, scourged and beheaded; their object being to recover as far as possible by this punishment their reputation for good faith with the allies. **13** The city and

territory of Rhegium they at once restored to the citizens.

8 The Mamertines (for this was the name adopted by the Campanians after their seizure of Messene) as long as they enjoyed the alliance of the Romans together with the Campanians who had occupied Rhegium, not only remained in secure possession of their own city and territory but caused no little trouble to the Carthaginians and Syracusans about the adjacent territories, levying tribute from many parts of Sicily. **2** When, however, they were deprived of this support, the captors of Rhegium being now closely invested, they were at once in their turn driven to take refuge in their city by the Syracusans owing to the following causes. **3** Not many years before the Syracusan army had quarrelled with those in the city. They were then posted near Mergane and appointed two magistrates chosen from their own body, Artemidorus and Hiero, who was subsequently king of Syracuse. He was still quite young but because of his royal descent qualified to be a ruler and statesman of a kind. **4** Having accepted the command, he gained admittance to the city through certain relatives, and after overpowering the opposite party, administered affairs with such mildness and magnanimity that the Syracusans, though by no means inclined to approve camp elections, on this occasion unanimously accepted him as their general. **5** From his first measures it was evident at once to all capable of judging that his ambition was not limited to military command.

9 For observing that the Syracusans, every time they dispatch their forces on an expedition accompanied by their supreme magistrates, begin quarrelling among themselves and introducing continual changes, **2** and knowing that Leptines had a wider circle of dependents and enjoyed more credit than any other burgher and had an especially high name among the common people, he allied himself with him by marriage, so that whenever he had to take the field himself he might leave him behind as a sort of reserve force. **3** He married, then, the daughter of this Leptines, and finding that the veteran mercenaries were disaffected and turbulent, he marched out in force

professedly against the foreigners who had occupied Messene. ⁴ He met the enemy near Centuripa and offered battle near the river Cyamosorus. He held back the citizen cavalry and infantry at a distance under his personal command as if he meant to attack on another side, but advancing the mercenaries he allowed them all to be cut up by the Campanians. ⁵ During their rout he himself retired safely to Syracuse with the citizens. ⁶ Having thus efficiently accompanied his purpose and purged the army of its turbulent and seditious element, he himself enlisted a considerable number of mercenaries and henceforth continued to rule in safety. ⁷ Observing that the Mamertines, owing to their success, were behaving in a bold and reckless manner, he efficiently armed and trained the urban levies and leading them out engaged the enemy in the Mylaean plain near the river Longanus, ⁸ and inflicted a severe defeat on them, capturing their leaders. This put an end to the audacity of the Mamertines, and on his return to Syracuse he was with one voice proclaimed king by all the allies.

10 The Mamertines had previously, as I above narrated, lost their support from Rhegium and had now suffered complete disaster at home for the reasons I have just stated. Some of them appealed to the Carthaginians, proposing to put themselves and the citadel into their hands, ² while others sent an embassy to Rome, offering to surrender the city and begging for assistance as a kindred people. ³ The Romans were long at a loss, the succour demanded being so obviously unjustifiable. ⁴ For they had just inflicted on their own fellow-citizens the highest penalty for their treachery to the people of Rhegium, and now to try to help the Mamertines, who had been guilty of like offence not only at Messene but at Rhegium also, was a piece of injustice very difficult to excuse. ⁵ But fully aware as they were of this, they yet saw that the Carthaginians had not only reduced Libya to subjection, but a great part of Spain besides, and that they were also in possession of all the islands in the Sardinian and Tyrrhenian Seas. ⁶ They were therefore in great apprehension lest, if they also became masters of Sicily, they would be most troublesome and dangerous neighbours, hemming them in on all sides and threatening every part of Italy. ⁷ That they would soon be

supreme in Sicily, if the Mamertines were not helped, was evident; for once Messene had fallen into their hands, **8** they would shortly subdue Syracuse also, as they were absolute lords of almost all the rest of Sicily. **9** The Romans, foreseeing this and viewing it as a necessity for themselves not to abandon Messene and thus allow the Carthaginians as it were to build a bridge for crossing over to Italy, debated the matter for long, **11** and, even at the end, the Senate did not sanction the proposal for the reason given above, considering that the objection on the score of inconsistency was equal in weight to the advantage to be derived from intervention. **2** The commons, however, worn out as they were by the recent wars and in need of any and every kind of restorative, listened readily to the military commanders, who, besides giving the reasons above stated for the general advantageousness of the war, pointed out the great benefit in the way of plunder which each and every one would evidently derive from it. They were therefore in favour of sending help; **3** and when the measure had been passed by the people they appointed to the command one of the Consuls, Appius Claudius, who was ordered to cross to Messene. **4** The Mamertines, partly by menace and partly by stratagem, dislodged the Carthaginian commander, who was already established in the citadel, and then invited Appius to enter, placing the city in his hands. **5** The Carthaginians crucified their general, thinking him guilty of a lack both of judgement and of courage in abandoning their citadel. **6** Acting for themselves they stationed their fleet in the neighbourhood of Cape Pelorias, and with their land forces pressed Messene close in the direction of Sunes. **7** Hiero now, thinking that present circumstances were favourable for expelling from Sicily entirely the foreigners who occupied Messene, made an alliance with the Carthaginians, and quitting Syracuse with his army **8** marched towards that city. Pitching his camp near the Chalcidian mountain on the side opposite to the Carthaginians he cut off this means of exit from the city as well. **9** Appius, the Roman consul, at the same time succeeded at great risk in crossing the Straits by night and entering the city. **10** Finding that the enemy had strictly invested Messene on all sides and regarding it as both inglorious and perilous for himself to be besieged, **11** as they commanded both land and sea, he at first tried to negotiate with both, desiring to deliver the

Mamertines from the war. **12** But when neither paid any attention to him, he decided perforce to risk an engagement **13** and in the first place to attack the Syracusans. Leading out his forces he drew them up in order of battle, the king of Syracuse readily accepting the challenge. **14** After a prolonged struggle Appius was victorious and drove the whole hostile force back to their camp. **15** After despoiling the dead he returned to Messene. Hiero, divining the final issue of the whole conflict, retreated in haste after nightfall to Syracuse. **12** On the following day Appius, learning of the result of this action and encouraged thereby, decided not to delay but to attack the Carthaginians. **2** He ordered his troops to be in readiness early and sallied forth at break of day. **3** Engaging the enemy he slew many of them and compelled the rest to retreat in disorder to neighbouring cities. **4** Having raised the siege by these successes, he advanced fearlessly, devastating the territory of the Syracusans and of their allies, no one disputing the open country with him. Finally he sat down before Syracuse and commenced to besiege it.

5 Such then was the occasion and motive of this the first crossing of the Romans from Italy with an armed force, an event which I take to be the most natural starting-point of this whole work.

6 I have therefore made it my serious base, but went also somewhat further back in order to leave no possible obscurity in my statements of general causes. **7** To follow out this previous history — how and when the Romans after the disaster to Rome itself began their progress to better fortunes, and again how and when after conquering Italy they entered on the path of foreign enterprise — seemed to me necessary for anyone who hopes to gain a proper general survey of their present supremacy. **8** My readers need not therefore be surprised if, even in the further course of this work, I occasionally give them in addition some of the earlier history of the most famous states; **9** for I shall do so in order to establish such a fundamental view as will make it clear in the sequel starting from what origins and how and when they severally reached their present position. This is exactly what I have just done about the Romans.

13 Enough of such explanations. It is now time to come to my subject after a brief summary of the events included in these introductory Books. **2** To take them in order we have first the incidents of the war between Rome and Carthage for Sicily. **3** Next follows the war in Libya and next the achievements of the Carthaginians under Hamilcar and after under Hasdrubal. **4** At the same time occurred the first crossing of the Romans to Illyria and these parts of Europe, and subsequently to the preceding events their struggle with the Italian Celts. **5** Contemporary with this the so-called Cleomenic war was proceeding in Greece, and with this war I wind up my Introduction as a whole and my second Book.

6 Now to recount all these events in detail is neither incumbent on me nor would it be useful to my readers; **7** for it is not my purpose to write their history but to mention them summarily as introductory to the events which are my real theme. **8** I shall therefore attempt by such summary treatment of them in their proper order to fit in the end of the Introduction to the beginning of the actual History. **9** Thus there will be no break in the narrative and it will be seen that I have been justified in touching on events which have been previously narrated by others, while this arrangement will render the approach to what follows intelligible and easy for students. **10** I shall, however, attempt to narrate somewhat more carefully the first war between Rome and Carthage for the possession of Sicily; **11** since it is not easy to name any war which lasted longer, nor one which exhibited on both sides more extensive preparations, more unintermittent activity, more battles, and greater changes of fortune. **12** The two states were also at this period still uncorrupted in morals, moderate in fortune, and equal in strength, **13** so that a better estimate of the peculiar qualities and gifts of each can be formed by comparing their conduct in this war than in any subsequent one.

14 An equally powerful motive with me for paying particular attention to this war is that, to my mind, the truth has not been adequately stated by those historians who are reputed to be the best

authorities on it, Philinus and Fabius. ² I do not indeed accuse them of intentional falsehood, in view of their character and principles, but they seem to me to have been much in the case of lovers; ³ for owing to his convictions and constant partiality Philinus will have it that the Carthaginians in every case acted wisely, well, and bravely, and the Romans otherwise, whilst Fabius takes the precisely opposite view. ⁴ In other relations of life we should not perhaps exclude all such favouritism; for a good man should love his friends and his country, he should share the hatreds and attachments of his friends; ⁵ but he who assumes the character of a historian must ignore everything of the sort, and often, if their actions demand this, speak good of his enemies and honour them with the highest praises while criticizing and even reproaching roundly his closest friends, should the errors of their conduct impose this duty on him. ⁶ For just as a living creature which has lost its eyesight is wholly incapacitated, so if History is stripped of her truth all that is left is but an idle tale. ⁷ We should therefore not shrink from accusing our friends or praising our enemies; nor need we be shy of sometimes praising and sometimes blaming the same people, since it is neither possible that men in the actual business of life should always be in the right, nor is it probable that they should be always mistaken. ⁸ We must therefore disregard the actors in our narrative and apply to the actions such terms and such criticism ⁹ as they deserve.

15 The truth of what I have just said is evident from what follows. Philinus, in commencing his narrative at the outset of his second Book, tells us that ² the Carthaginians and Syracusans were besieging Messene, that the Romans reaching the city by sea, at once marched out against the Syracusans, but after being severely handled returned to Messene. They next sallied out against the Carthaginians and were not only worsted but lost a considerable number of prisoners. ³ After making these statements he says that Hiero after the engagement so far lost his wits as not only to burn his camp and tents and take flight to Syracuse the same night, but to withdraw all his garrisons from the forts which menaced the territory of Messene. ⁴ The Carthaginians, likewise, he tells us, after the battle at once quitted their camp and distributed themselves among the

towns, not even daring to dispute the open country further: their leaders, he says, seeing how dispirited the ranks were, resolved not to risk a decisive engagement, ⁵ and the Romans following up the enemy not only laid waste the territory of the Carthaginians and Syracusans, but sat down before Syracuse and undertook its siege. ⁶ This account is, it seems to me, full of inconsistencies and does not require a lengthy discussion. ⁷ For those whom he introduced as besieging Messene and victorious in the engagements, he now represents as in flight and abandoning the open country and finally besieged and dispirited, ⁸ while those whom he represented as defeated and besieged are now stated to be in pursuit of their foes, and at once commanding the open country and finally besieging Syracuse. ⁹ It is absolutely impossible to reconcile the two assertions, and either his initial statements or his account of what followed must be false. ¹⁰ But the latter is true; for as a fact the Carthaginians and Syracusans abandoned the open country, and the Romans at once began to lay siege to Syracuse and, as he says, even to Echetla too, which lies between the Syracusan and Carthaginian provinces. ¹¹ We must therefore concede that Philinus's initial statements are false, and that, while the Romans were victorious in the engagements before Messene, this author announces that they were worsted.

p4 We can trace indeed the same fault throughout the whole work of Philinus and alike through that of Fabius, as I shall show when the occasion arises. ¹³ Now that I have said what is fitting on the subject of this digression, I will return to facts and attempt in a narrative that strictly follows the order of events to guide my readers by a short road to a true notion of this war.

16 When news of the successes of Appius and his legions reached Rome, they elected Manius Otacilius and Manius Valerius Consuls, and dispatched their whole armed force and both commanders to Sicily. ² The Romans have four legions of Roman citizens in all apart from the allies. These they enrol annually, each legion comprising four thousand foot and three hundred horse. ³ On their arrival in Sicily most of the cities revolted from the Carthaginians and

Syracusans and joined the Romans. ⁴ Hiero, observing both the confusion and consternation of the Sicilians, and at the same time the numbers and the powerful nature of the Roman forces, reached from all this the conclusion that the prospects of the Romans were more brilliant than those of the Carthaginians. ⁵ His conviction therefore impelling him to side with the Romans, he sent several messages to the Consuls with proposals for peace and alliance. ⁶ The Romans accepted his overtures, especially for the sake of their supplies; ⁷ for since the Carthaginians commanded the sea they were apprehensive lest they should be cut off on all sides from the necessities of life, in view of the fact that the armies which had previously crossed to Sicily had run very short of provisions. ⁸ Therefore, supposing that Hiero would be of great service to them in this respect, they readily accepted his friendly advances. ⁹ Having made a treaty by which the king bound himself to give up his prisoners to the Romans without ransom, and in addition to this to pay them a hundred talents, the Romans henceforth treated the Syracusans as allies and friends. ¹⁰ King Hiero having placed himself under the protection of the Romans, continued to furnish them with the resources of which they stood in urgent need, and ruled over Syracuse henceforth in security, treating the Greeks in such a way as to win from them crowns and other honours. ¹¹ We may, indeed, regard him as the most illustrious of princes and the one who reaped longest the fruits of his own wisdom in particular cases and in general policy.

17 When the terms of the treaty were referred to Rome, and when the people had accepted and ratified this agreement with Hiero, the Romans decided not to continue to employ all their forces in the expedition, ² but only two legions, thinking on the one hand that, now the king had joined them, the war had become a lighter task and calculating that their forces would be better off for supplies. ³ The Carthaginians, on the contrary, when they saw that Hiero had become their enemy, and that the Romans were becoming more deeply involved in the enterprise in Sicily, considered that they themselves required stronger forces in order to be able to confront their enemies and control Sicilian affairs. ⁴ They therefore enlisted foreign mercenaries from the

opposite coasts, many of them Ligurians, Celts, and still more Iberians, ⁵ and dispatched them all to Sicily. Perceiving that the city of Agrigentum had the greatest natural advantages for making their preparations, it being also the most important city in their province, they collected their troops and supplies there ⁶ and decided to use it as a base in the war.

Meanwhile the Roman Consuls who had made the treaty with Hiero had left, and their successors, Lucius Postumius and Quintus Mamilius, had arrived in Sicily with their legions. ⁷ On taking note of the plan of the Carthaginians, and their activity at Agrigentum, they decided on a bolder initiative. ⁸ Abandoning therefore other operations they brought all their forces to bear on Agrigentum itself, and encamping at a distance of ⁹ eight stades from the city, shut the Carthaginians up within the walls. ⁹ It was the height of the harvest, and as a long siege was foreseen, the soldiers began gathering corn with more venturesomeness than was advisable. ¹⁰ The Carthaginians, observing that the enemy were dispersed about the country, made a sortie and attacked the foragers. Having easily put these to flight, some of them pressed on to plunder the fortified camp while others advanced on the covering force. ¹¹ But on this occasion and often on previous ones it is the excellence of their institutions which has saved the situation for the Romans; for with them death is the penalty incurred by a man who deserts the post or takes flight in any way from such a supporting force. ¹² Therefore on this occasion as on others they gallantly faced opposites who largely outnumbered them, and, though they suffered heavy loss, killed still more of the enemy. ¹³ Finally surrounding them as they were on the point of tearing up the palisade, they dispatched some on the spot and pressing hard on the rest pursued them with slaughter to the city.

¹⁴ After this the Carthaginians were more inclined to be cautious in taking the offensive, while the Romans were more on their guard in foraging. ² As the Carthaginians did not advance beyond skirmishing range, the Roman generals divided their force into two bodies, remaining with one

near the temple of Asclepius outside the walls and encamping with the other on that side of the city that is turned towards Heraclea. **3** They fortified the ground between their camps on each side of the city, protecting themselves by the inner trench from sallies from within and encircling themselves with an outer one to guard against attacks from outside, and to prevent that secret introduction of supplies and men which is usual in the case of beleaguered cities. **4** On the spaces between the trenches and their camps they placed pickets, fortifying suitable places at some distance from each other. **5** Their supplies and other material were collected for them by all the other members of the alliance, and brought to Herbesus, and they themselves constantly fetching in live stock and provisions from this city which was at no great distance, kept themselves abundantly supplied with what they required. **6** So for five months or so matters were at a standstill, neither side being able to score any decisive advantage, nothing in fact beyond incidental success in their exchange of shots; **7** but when the Carthaginians began to be pressed by famine owing to the number of people cooped up in the city — fifty thousand at least in number — Hannibal, the commander of the besieged forces, found himself in a difficult situation and sent constant messages to Carthage explaining his position and begging for reinforcements. **8** The Carthaginian government shipped the troops they had collected and their elephants and sent them to Sicily to Hanno their other general. **9** Hanno concentrated his troops and material of war at Heraclea and in the first place surprised and occupied Herbesus, cutting off the enemy's camps from their provisions and necessary supplies. **10** The result of this was that the Romans were as a fact both besieged and besiegers at the same time; for they were so hard pressed by want of food and scarcity of the necessities of life, that they often contemplated raising the siege, **11** and would in the end have done so, had not Hiero, by using every effort and every device, provided them with a moderate amount of strictly necessary supplies. **19** In the next place Hanno, perceiving that the Romans were weakened by disease and privation, owing to an epidemic having broken out among them, and thinking that his own troops were in fit fighting condition, **2** took with him all his elephants, about fifty in number, and all the rest of his force, and advanced rapidly from Heraclea.

He had ordered the Numidian horse to precede him, and approaching the enemy's fortified camp to provoke him and attempt to draw his cavalry out, after which they were to give way and retire until they rejoined himself. ³ The Numidians acting on these orders advanced up to one of the camps, and the Roman cavalry at once issued forth and boldly attacked them. ⁴ The Libyans retreated as they had been ordered until they joined Hanno's army and then, wheeling round and encircling the enemy, they attacked them, killing many and pursuing the rest as far as the camp. ⁵ After this Hanno encamped opposite the Romans, occupying the hill called Torus, at a distance of about ten stades from the enemy. ⁶ For two months they remained stationary, without any action more decisive than shooting at each other every day: ⁷ but as Hannibal kept on announcing to Hanno by fire-signals and messengers from the city that the population could not support the famine, and that deserters to the enemy were numerous owing to privation, the Carthaginian general decided to risk battle, the Romans being no less eager for this owing to the reasons I stated above. ⁸ Both therefore led out their forces to the space between the camps and engaged. ⁹ The battle lasted for long, but at the end the Romans put to flight the advanced line of Carthaginian mercenaries, ¹⁰ and as the latter fell back on the elephants and the other divisions in their rear, the whole Phoenician army was thrown into disorder. ¹¹ A complete rout ensued, and most of them were put to the sword, some escaping to Heraclea. The Romans captured most of the elephants and all the baggage. ¹² But after nightfall, while the Romans, partly from joy at their success and partly from fatigue, had relaxed the vigilance of their watch, Hannibal, regarding his situation as desperate, and thinking for the above reasons that this was a fine opportunity for saving himself, broke out of the city about midnight with his mercenaries. ¹³ By filling up the trenches with baskets packed tightly with straw he managed to withdraw his force in safety unperceived by the enemy. ¹⁴ When day broke the Romans became aware of what had happened, and, after slightly molesting Hannibal's rear-guard, advanced with their whole force to the gates. ¹⁵ Finding nobody to oppose them they entered the city and plundered it, possessing themselves of many slaves and a quantity of booty of every description.

26 When the news of what had occurred at Agrigentum reached the Roman Senate, in their joy and elation they no longer confined themselves to their original designs and were no longer satisfied with having saved the Mamertines and with what they had gained in the war itself, **2** but, hoping that it would be possible to drive the Carthaginians entirely out of the island and that if this were done their own power would be much augmented, they directed their attention to this project and to plans that would serve their purpose. **3** As regards their land force at least they noted that all progressed satisfactorily; **4** for the Consuls appointed after those who had reduced Agrigentum, Lucius Valerius Flaccus and Titus Otacilius Crassus, seemed to be managing Sicilian affairs as well as possible; **5** but as the Carthaginians maintained without any trouble the command of the sea, the fortunes of the war continued to hang in the balance. **6** For in the period that followed, now that Agrigentum was in their hands, while many inland cities joined the Romans from dread of their land forces, still more seaboard cities deserted their cause in terror of the Carthaginian fleet. **7** Hence when they saw that the balance of the war tended more and more to shift to this side or that for the above reasons, and that while Italy was frequently ravaged by naval forces, Libya remained entirely free from damage, they took urgent steps to get on the sea like the Carthaginians. **8** And one of the reasons which induced me to narrate the history of the war named above at some length is just this, that my readers should, in this case too, not be kept in ignorance of the beginning — how, when, and for what reasons the Romans first took to the sea.

5 When they saw that the war was dragging on, they undertook for the first time to build ships, a hundred quinqueremes and twenty triremes. **10** As their shipwrights were absolutely inexperienced in building quinqueremes, such ships never having been in use in Italy, the matter caused them much difficulty, **11** and this fact shows us better than anything else how spirited and daring the Romans are when they are determined to do a thing. **12** It was not that they had fairly good resources for it, but they had none whatever, nor had they ever given a thought to the sea;

yet when they once had conceived the project, they took it in hand so boldly, that before gaining any experience in the matter they at once engaged the Carthaginians who had held for generations undisputed command of the sea. **13** Evidence of the truth of what I am saying and of their incredible pluck is this. When they first undertook to send their forces across to Messene not only had they not any decked ships, but no long warships at all, not even a single boat, **14** and borrowing fifty-oared boats and triremes from the Tarentines and Locrians, and also from the people of Elea and Naples they took their troops across in these at great hazard. **15** On this occasion the Carthaginians put to sea to attack them as they were crossing the straits, and one of their decked ships advanced too far in its eagerness to overtake them and running aground fell into the hands of the Romans. This ship they now used as a model, and built their whole fleet on its pattern; **16** so that it is evident that if this had not occurred they would have been entirely prevented from carrying out their design by lack of practical knowledge. **21** Now, however, those to whom the construction of ships was committed were busy in getting them ready, and those who had collected the crews were teaching them to row on shore in the following fashion. **2** Making the men sit on rowers' benches on dry land, in the same order as on the benches of the ships themselves, they accustomed them to fall back all at once bringing their hands up to them, and again to come forward pushing out their hands, and to begin and finish these movements at the word of command of the fogle-man. **3** When the crews had been trained, they launched the ships as soon as they were completed, and having practised for a brief time actual rowing at sea, they sailed¹ along the coast of Italy as their commander had ordered. **4** For the Consul appointed by the Romans to the command of their naval force, Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio, had a few days previously given orders to the captains to sail in the direction of the Straits whenever the fleet was ready, while he himself, putting to sea with seventeen ships, preceded them to Messene, being anxious to provided for all the urgent needs of the fleet. **5** While there a proposal happened to be made to him with regard to the city of Lipara, and embracing the prospect with undue eagerness he sailed with the above-mentioned ships and anchored off the town. **6** The Carthaginian general

Hannibal, hearing at Panormus what had happened, sent off Boödes, a member of the Senate, giving him twenty ships. ⁷ Boödes sailed up to Lipara at night and shut up Gnaeus in the harbour. When day dawned the Roman crews hastily took refuge on land, and Gnaeus, falling into a state of terror and being unable to do anything, finally surrendered to the enemy. ⁸ The Carthaginians now set off at once to rejoin Hannibal with the captured ships and commander of the enemy. ⁹ But a few days later, though Gnaeus' disaster was so signal and recent, Hannibal himself came very near falling into the same error with his eyes open. ¹⁰ For hearing that the Roman fleet which was sailing along the coast of Italy was near at hand, and wishing to get a glimpse of the numbers and general disposition of the enemy, he sailed towards them with fifty ships. ¹¹ As he was rounding the Cape of Italy he came upon the enemy sailing in good order and trim. He lost most of his ships and escaped himself with the remainder, which was more than he expected or hoped.

292 After this the Romans approached to coast of Sicily and learning of the disaster that had befallen Gnaeus, at once communicated with Gaius Duilius, the commander of the land forces, and awaited his arrival. ² At the same time, hearing that the enemy's fleet was not far distant, they began to get ready for sea-battle. ³ As their ships were ill-built and slow in their movements, someone suggested to them as a help in fighting the engines which afterwards came to be called "ravens".^a ⁴ They were constructed as follows: On the prow stood a round pole [•]four fathoms in height and three palms in diameter. ⁵ This pole had a pulley at the summit and round it was put a gangway made of cross planks attached by nails, [•]four feet in width and six fathoms in length. ⁶ In this gangway was an oblong hole,² and it went round the pole at a distance of [•]two fathoms from its near end. The gangway also had a railing on each of its long sides as high as a man's knee. ⁷ At its extremity was fastened an iron object like a pestle pointed at one end and with a ring at the other end, so that the whole looked like the machine for pounding corn. ⁸ To this ring was attached a rope with which, when the ship charged an enemy, they raised the ravens by means of

the pulley on the pole and let them down on the enemy's deck, sometimes from the prow and sometimes bringing them round when the ships collided broadsides. ⁹ Once the ravens were fixed in the planks of the enemy's deck and grappled the ships together, if they were broadside on, they boarded from all directions but if they charged with the prow, they attacked by passing over the gangway of the raven itself two abreast. ¹⁰ The leading pair protected the front by holding up their shields, and those who followed secured the two flanks by resting the rims of their shields on the top of the railing. ¹¹ Having, then, adopted this device, they awaited an opportunity for going into action.

28 As for Gaius Duilius, no sooner had he learnt of the disaster which had befallen the commander of the naval forces than handing over his legions to the military tribunes he proceeded to the fleet. ² Learning that the enemy were ravaging the territory of Mylae, he sailed against them with his whole force. ³ The Carthaginians on sighting him put to sea with a hundred and thirty sail, quite overjoyed and eager, as they despised the inexperience of the Romans. They all sailed straight on the enemy, not even thinking it worth while to maintain order in the attack, but just as is they were falling on a prey that was obviously theirs. ⁴ They were commanded by Hannibal — the same who stole out of Agrigentum by night with his army — in the seven-banked galley that was formerly King Pyrrhus'. ⁵ On approaching and seeing the ravens nodding aloft on the prow of each ship, the Carthaginians were at first nonplussed, being surprised at the construction of the engines. However, as they entirely gave the enemy up for lost, the front ships attacked daringly. ⁶ But when the ships that came into collision were in every case held fast by the machines, and the Roman crews boarded by means of the ravens and attacked them hand to hand on deck, some of the Carthaginians were cut down and others surrendered from dismay at what was happening, the battle having become just like a fight on land. ⁷ So the first thirty ships that engaged were taken with all their crews, including the commander's galley, Hannibal himself managing to escape beyond his hopes by a miracle in the jolly-boat. ⁸ The rest of the Carthaginian

force was bearing up as if to charge the enemy, but seeing, as they approached, the fate of the advanced ships they turned aside and avoided the blows of the engines. ⁹ Trusting in their swiftness, they veered round the enemy in the hope of being able to strike him in safety either on the broadside or on the stern, ¹⁰ but when the ravens swung round and plunged down in all directions and in all manner of ways so that those who approached them were of necessity grappled, they finally gave way and took to flight, terror-stricken by this novel experience and with the loss of fifty ships.

24 When the Romans had thus, contrary to all expectation, gained the prospect of success at sea their determination to prosecute the war became twice as strong. ² On this occasion they put in on the coast of Sicily, raised the siege of Segesta which was in the last stage of distress, and in leaving Segesta took the city of Macella by assault.

¶67 After the battle at sea Hamilcar, the Carthaginian commander of their land forces, who was quartered in the neighbourhood of Panormus, heard that in the Roman camp the allies and the Romans were at variance as to which had most distinguished themselves in the battles, ⁴ and that the allies were encamped by themselves between the Paropus and the Hot Springs of Himera. Suddenly falling on them with his whole force as they were breaking up their camp he killed about four thousand. ⁵ After this action Hannibal with the ships that escaped sailed away to Carthage and shortly after crossed from there to Sardinia, taking with him additional ships and some of the most celebrated naval officers. ⁶ Not long afterwards he was blockaded in one of the harbours of Sardinia by the Romans and after losing many of his ships was summarily arrested by the surviving Carthaginians and crucified. ⁷ The Romans, I should explain, from the moment they concerned themselves with the sea, began to entertain designs on Sardinia.

¶67 The Roman troops in Sicily did nothing worthy of note during the following year; ⁹ but at its

close when they had received their new commanders the Consuls of next year, Aulus Atilius and Gaius Sulpicius, they started to attack Panormus, because the Carthaginian forces were wintering there. **10** The Consuls, when they got close up to the city, offered battle with their whole forces, but as the enemy did not come out to meet them they left Panormus and went off to attack Hippana. **11** This city they took by assault and they also took Myttistratum which withstood the siege for long owing to its strong situation. **12** They then occupied Camarina which had lately deserted their cause, bringing up a siege battery and making a breach in the wall. They similarly took Enna and several other small places belonging to the Carthaginians, **13** and when they had finished with these operations they undertook the siege of Lipara.

25 Next year Gaius Atilius Regulus the Roman Consul, while anchored off Tyndaris, caught sight of the Carthaginian fleet sailing past in disorder. Ordering his crews to follow the leaders, he dashed out before the rest with ten ships sailing together. **2** The Carthaginians, observing that some of the enemy were still embarking, and some just getting under weigh, while those in the van had much outstripped the others, turned and met them. **3** Surrounding them they sunk the rest of the ten, and came very near to taking the admiral's ship with its crew. However, as it was well manned and swift, it foiled their expectation and got out of danger. **4** The rest of the Roman fleet sailed up and gradually got into close order. As soon as they faced the enemy, they bore down on them and took ten ships with their crews, sinking eight. The rest of the Carthaginian fleet withdrew to the islands known as Liparaean.

5 The result of this battle was that both sides thought that they had fought now on equal terms, and both threw themselves most thoroughly into the task of organizing naval forces **6** and disputing the command of the sea, while in the mean time the land forces accomplished nothing worthy of mention, but spent their time in minor operations of no significance. **7** The Romans, therefore, after making preparations as I said, for the coming summer, set to sea with a fleet of

three hundred and thirty decked ships of war and put in to Messene. ⁸ Starting again from there they sailed with Sicily on their right hand, and doubling Cape Pachynus they came round to Ecnomus, because their land forces too happened to be just in that neighbourhood. ⁹ The Carthaginians, setting sail with three hundred and fifty decked vessels, touched at Lilybaeum, and proceeding thence came to anchor off Heraclea Minoa. **26** The plan of the Romans was to sail to Libya and deflect the war to that country, so that the Carthaginians might find no longer Sicily but themselves and their own territory in danger. ² The Carthaginians were resolved on just the opposite course, for, aware as they were that Africa is easily accessible, and that all the people in the country would be easily subdued by anyone who had once invaded it, they were unable to allow this, and were anxious to run the risk of a sea-battle. ³ The object of the one side being to prevent and that of the other to force a crossing, it was clear that their rival aims would result in the struggle which followed. ⁴ The Romans had made suitable preparations for both contingencies — for an action at sea and for a landing in the enemy's country. ⁵ For the latter purpose, selecting the best men from their land forces, they divided into four corps the total force they were about to embark. ⁶ Each corps had two names; it was called either the First Legion or the First Squadron, and the others accordingly. The fourth had a third name in addition; they were called **triarrii** after the usage in the land forces. ⁷ The whole body embarked on the ships numbered about a hundred and forty thousand, each ship holding three hundred rowers and a hundred and twenty marines. ⁸ The Carthaginians were chiefly or solely adapting their preparations to a maritime war, their numbers being, to reckon by the number of ships, actually above one hundred and fifty thousand. ⁹ These are figures calculated to strike not only one present and with the forces under his eyes but even a hearer with amazement at the magnitude of the struggle and at that lavish outlay and vast power of the two states, if he estimates them from the number of men and ships.

p75The Romans taking into consideration that the voyage was across the open sea and that the enemy were their superiors in speed, tried by every means to range their fleet in an order which

would render it secure and difficult to attack. ¹¹ Accordingly, they stationed their two six-banked galleys, on which the commanders, Marcus Atilius Regulus and Lucius Manlius, were sailing, in front and side by side with each other. ¹² Behind each of these they placed ships in single file, the first squadron behind the one galley, the second behind the other, so arranging them that the distance between each pair of ships in the two squadrons grew ever greater. The ships were stationed in column with their prows directed outwards. ¹³ Having thus arranged the first and second squadrons in the form of a simple wedge, they stationed the third in a single line at the base, so that when these ships had taken their places the resulting form of the whole was a triangle. ¹⁴ Behind these ships at the base they stationed the horse-transport, attaching them by towing-lines to the vessels of the third squadron. ¹⁵ Finally, behind these they stationed the fourth squadron, known as **triararii**, making a single long line of ships so extended that the line overlapped that in front of it at each extremity. ¹⁶ When all had been put together in the manner I have described, the whole arrangement had the form of a wedge, the apex of which was open, the base compact, and the whole effective and practical, while also difficult to break up.

27 About the same time the Carthaginian commanders briefly addressed their forces. They pointed out to them that in the event of victory in the battle they would be fighting afterwards for Sicily, but that if defeated they would have to fight for their own country and their homes, and bade them take this to heart and embark. ² When all readily did as they were ordered, as their general's words had made clear to them the issues at stake, they set to sea in a confident and menacing spirit. ³ The commanders when they saw the enemy's order adapted their own to it. ³ Three-quarters of their force they drew up in a single line, extending their right wing to the open sea for the purpose of encircling the enemy and with all their ships facing the Romans. The remaining quarter of their force formed the left wing of their whole line, and reached shoreward at angle with the rest. ⁴ Their right wing was under the command of the same Hanno who had been worsted in the engagement near Agrigentum. ⁵ He had vessels for charging and also the

swiftest quinqueremes for the outflanking movement. ⁶ The left wing was in charge of Hamilcar, the one who commanded in the sea-battle at Tyndaris, and he, fighting as he was in the centre of the line, used in the fray the following stratagem. ⁷ The battle was begun by the Romans who, noticing that the Carthaginian line was thin owing to its great extent, delivered an attack on the centre. ⁸ The Carthaginian centre had received Hamilcar's orders to fall back at once with the view of breaking the order of the Romans, and, as they hastily retreated, the Romans pursued them vigorously. ⁹ While the first and second squadrons thus pressed on the flying enemy, the third and fourth were separated from them, the third squadron towing the horse-transports, ¹⁰ and the **triarrii** remaining with them as a supporting force. When the Carthaginians thought they had drawn off the first and second squadrons far enough from the others, they all, on receiving a signal from Hamilcar's ship, turned simultaneously and attacked their pursuers. ¹¹ The engagement that followed was a very hot one, the superior speed of the Carthaginians enabling them to move round the enemy's flank as well as to approach easily and retire rapidly, while the Romans, relying on their sheer strength when they closed with the enemy, ¹² grappling with the ravens every ship as soon as it approached, fighting also, as they were, under the very eyes of both the Consuls, who were personally taking part in the combat, had no less high hopes of success.

¹³ Such then was the state of the battle in this quarter. **28** At one and the same time Hanno with the right wing, which had held its distance in the first attack, sailed across the open sea and fell upon the ships of the **triarrii**, causing them great embarrassment and distress. ² Meanwhile that part of the Carthaginian force which was posted near the shore, changing their former formation and deploying into line with their prows facing the enemy, attacked the vessels which were towing the horse-transports. Letting go their tow-lines this squadron met and engaged the enemy. ³ Thus the whole conflict consisted of three parts, and three sea-battles were going on at a wide distance from each other. ⁴ As the respective forces were in each case of equal strength owing to their disposition at the outset, the battle also was fought on equal terms. ⁵ However, in each case things fell out as one would expect, when the forces engaged are so equally matched. ⁶ Those who had

commenced the battle were the first to be separated, for Hamilcar's division was finally forced back and took to flight. **7** Lucius was now occupied in taking the prizes in tow, and Marcus, observing the struggle in which the **triarrii** and horse-transports were involved, hastened to their assistance with such of the ships of the second squadron as were undamaged. **8** When he reached Hanno's division and came into conflict with it, the **triarrii** at once took heart, though they had had much the worst of it, and recovered their fighting spirit. **9** The Carthaginians, attacked both in front and in the rear, were in difficulties, finding themselves surrounded, to their surprise, by the relieving force, and giving way, they began to retreat out to sea. **10** Meanwhile both Lucius, who was by this time sailing up and observed that the third squadron was shut in close to the shore by the Carthaginian left wing, and Marcus, who had now left the horse-transports and **triarrii** in safety, hastened together to the relief of this force which was in grave peril; **11** for the state of matters now was just like a siege, and they all would evidently have been lost if the Carthaginians had not been afraid of the ravens and simply hedged them in and held them close to the land instead of charging, apprehensive as they were of coming to close quarters. **12** The Consuls, coming up rapidly and surrounding the Carthaginians, captured fifty ships with their crews, a few managing to slip out along shore and escape. **13** The separate encounters fell out as I have described, and the final result of the whole battle was in favour of the Romans. **14** The latter lost twenty-four sail sunk and the Carthaginians more than thirty. Not a single Roman ship with its crew fell into the enemy's hands, but sixty-four Carthaginian ships were so captured.

15 After this the Romans, laying in a further supply of provisions, repairing the captured ships, and bestowing on their men the attention which their success deserved, put to sea and sailed towards Libya, **2** reaching the shore with their advanced ships under the promontory known as the Hermaeum which lies in front of the whole Gulf of Carthage and stretches out to sea in the direction of Sicily. Having waited there until their other ships came up, and having united their whole fleet, they sailed along the coast till they reached the city of Aspis. **3** Landing there and

beaching their ships, which they surrounded with a trench and palisade, they set themselves to lay siege to the town, the garrison of which refused to surrender voluntarily. ⁴ Those Carthaginians who made good their escape from the naval battle sailed home, and being convinced that the enemy, elated by their recent success, would at once attack Carthage itself from the sea, kept watch at different points over the approaches to the city with their land and sea forces. ⁵ But when they learnt that the Romans had safely landed and were laying siege to Aspis, they abandoned the measures taken to guard against an attack from the sea, and uniting their forces devoted themselves to the protection of the capital and its environs. The Romans, after making themselves masters of Aspis, where they left a garrison to hold the town and district, ⁶ sent a mission to Rome to report on recent events, and to inquire what they should do in future and how they were to deal with the whole situation. They then hastily advanced with their whole force and set about plundering the country. ⁷ As nobody tried to prevent them, they destroyed a number of handsome and luxuriously furnished dwelling-houses, possessed themselves of a quantity of cattle, and captured more than twenty thousand slaves, taking them back to their ships. ⁸ Messengers from Rome now arrived with instructions for one of the Consuls to remain on the spot with an adequate force and for the other to bring the fleet back to Rome. ⁹ Marcus Regulus, therefore, remained, retaining forty ships and a force of fifteen thousand infantry and five hundred horse, ¹⁰ while Lucius, taking with him the ship's crews and all the prisoners, passed safely along the coast of Sicily and reached Rome.

80 The Carthaginians, observing that the Romans were preparing for a long occupation, in the first place elected two generals from among themselves, Hasdrubal, the son of Hanno, and Bostar, and next sent to Heraclea to Hamilcar, ordering him to return instantly. ² Taking with him five hundred horse and five thousand foot, he came to Carthage where, being appointed third general, he held a consultation with Hasdrubal and his staff as to what steps should be taken. ³ They decided on marching to the assistance of the country and no longer looking on while it was

plundered with immunity. ⁴ A few days later Regulus had begun to advance, taking by assault and pillaging the unwalled places and laying siege to those which had walls. ⁵ On reaching Adys, a town of some importance, he encamped about it and busied himself with raising works to besiege it. ⁶ The Carthaginians, being anxious to attempt to regain the command of the open country, led out their forces. ⁷ They took possession of a hill which, while overlooking the enemy, was not a favourable position for their own army; and there they encamped. ⁸ In this manner, though their best hope lay in their cavalry and elephants, yet by quitting the level country and shutting themselves up in a precipitous place, difficult of access, they were sure to make it plain to their adversaries how best to attack them, and this is exactly what did happen. ⁹ For the Roman commanders, perceiving from their experience of war that the most efficient and formidable part of the enemy's force was rendered unserviceable by their position, did not wait for the Carthaginians to come down and offer battle on the plain, ¹⁰ but, seizing on their own opportunity, advanced at daybreak on the hill from both sides. ¹¹ And so their elephants and cavalry were absolutely useless to the Carthaginians, but their mercenaries sallying out with great gallantry and dash compelled the first legion to give way and take to flight; ¹² but on their advancing too far and being surrounded and driven back by the force that was attacking on the other side, the whole Carthaginian army were at once dislodged from their camp. ¹³ The elephants and cavalry, as soon as they reached level ground, effected their retreat in safety, ¹⁴ and the Romans, after pursuing the infantry for a short distance and destroying the camp, henceforth over-ran and plundered the country and its towns unmolested. ¹⁵ Having made themselves masters of the town named Tunis, which was a suitable base for these raids, and also well situated for operations against the capital and its immediate environs, they established themselves there.

§19 The Carthaginians, having thus been twice defeated, shortly before at sea and now on land, in both cases owing to no lack of bravery in their troops, but owing to the incompetence of their commanders, had now fallen into a thoroughly difficult position. ² For, in addition to the

misfortunes I have mentioned, the Numidians, attacking them at the same time as the Romans, inflicted not less but even more damage on the country than the latter. ³ The terror-stricken inhabitants took refuge in the city of Carthage where utter despondency and extreme famine prevailed, the latter owing to overcrowding and the former owing to the expectation of a siege. ⁴ Regulus, perceiving that the Carthaginians were utterly worsted both by land and sea and expecting to capture the city in a very short time, was yet apprehensive lest his successor in the Consulate should arrive from Rome before Carthage fell and receive the credit of the success, and he therefore invited the enemy to enter into negotiations. ⁵ The Carthaginians gave a ready ear to these advances, and sent out an embassy of their leading citizens. On meeting Regulus, however, the envoys were so far from being inclined to yield to the conditions he proposed that they could not even bear listening to the severity of his demands. ⁶ For, imagining himself to be complete master of the situation, he considered they ought to regard any concessions on his part as gifts and acts of grace. ⁷ As it was evident to the Carthaginians that even if they became subject to the Romans, they could be in no worse case than if they yielded to the present demands, they returned not only dissatisfied with the conditions proposed but offended by Regulus's harshness. ⁸ The attitude of the Carthaginian Senate on hearing the Roman general's proposals was, although they had almost abandoned all hope of safety, yet one of such manly dignity that rather than submit to anything ignoble or unworthy of their past they were willing to suffer anything and to face every exertion and every extremity.

¶ Just about this time there arrived at Carthage one of the recruiting-officers they had formerly dispatched to Greece, bringing a considerable number of soldiers and among them a certain Xanthippus of Lacedaemon, a man who had been brought up in the Spartan discipline, and had had a fair amount of military experience. ² On hearing of the recent reverse and how and in what way it occurred, and on taking a comprehensive view of the remaining resources of the Carthaginians and their strength in cavalry and elephants, he at once reached the conclusion and

communicated it to friends that the Carthaginians owed their defeat not to the Romans but to themselves, through the inexperience of their generals. ³ Owing to the critical situation Xanthippus's remarks soon got abroad and reached the ears of the generals, whereupon the government decided to summon him before them and examine him. ⁴ He presented himself before them and communicated to them his estimate of the situation, pointing out why they were now being worsted, and urging that if they would take his advice and avail themselves of the level country for marching, encamping and offering battle they could easily not only secure their own safety, but defeat the enemy. ⁵ The generals, accepting what he said and resolving to follow his advice, at once entrusted their forces to him. ⁶ Now even when the original utterance of Xanthippus got abroad, it had caused considerable rumour and more or less sanguine talk among the populace, ⁷ but on his leading the army out and drawing it up in good order before the city and even beginning to manoeuvre some portions of it correctly and give the word of command in the orthodox military terms, the contrast to the incompetency of the former generals was so striking that the soldiery expressed their approval by cheers and were eager to engage the enemy, feeling sure that if Xanthippus was in command no disaster could befall them. ⁸ Upon this the generals, seeing the extraordinary recovery of courage among the troops, addressed them in words suitable to the occasion and after a few days took the field with their forces. ⁹ These consisted of twelve thousand foot, four thousand horse and very nearly a hundred elephants.

68 When the Romans saw that the Carthaginians were marching through the flat country and pitching their camps on level ground, they were surprised indeed and somewhat disturbed by this in particular, but yet were anxious on the whole to get into contact with the enemy. ² On coming into touch they encamped on the first day at a distance of about ten stades from him. ³ On the following day the Carthaginian government held a council to discuss what should be done for the present and the means thereto. ⁴ But the troops, eager as they were for a battle, collecting in groups and calling on Xanthippus by name, clearly indicated their opinion that he should lead

them forward at once. ⁵ The generals when they saw the enthusiasm and keenness of the soldiers, Xanthippus at the same time imploring them not to let the opportunity slip, ordered the troops to get ready and gave Xanthippus authority to conduct operations as he himself thought most advantageous. ⁶ Acting on this authority, he sent the elephants forward and drew them up in a single line in front of the whole force, placing the Carthaginian phalanx at a suitable distance behind them. ⁷ Some of the mercenaries he stationed on the right wing, while the most active he placed together with the cavalry in front of both wings. ⁸ The Romans, seeing the enemy drawn up to offer battle, issued forth to meet them with alacrity. ⁹ Alarmed at the prospect of the elephants' charge, they stationed the **velites** in the van and behind them the legions many maniples deep, dividing the cavalry between the two wings. ¹⁰ In thus making their whole line shorter and deeper than before they had been correct enough in so far as concerned the coming encounter with the elephants, but as to that with the cavalry, which largely outnumbered theirs, they were very wide of the mark. ¹¹ When both sides had made that general and detailed disposition of their forces that best suited their plan, they remained drawn up in order, each awaiting a favourable opportunity to attack. **34** No sooner had Xanthippus ordered the elephant-drivers to advance and break the enemy's line and the cavalry on each wing to execute a turning movement and charge, ² than the Roman army, clashing their shields and spears together, as is their custom and uttering their battle-cry, advanced against the foe. ³ As for the Roman cavalry on both wings it was speedily put to flight owing to the superior numbers of the Carthaginians; ⁴ while of the infantry, the left wing, partly to avoid the onset of the elephants, and partly owing to the contempt they felt for the mercenary force, fell upon the Carthaginian right wing, and having broken it, pressed on and pursued it as far as the camp. ⁵ But the first ranks of those who were stationed opposite the elephants, pushed back when they encountered them and trodden under foot by the strength of the animals, fell in heaps in the *mêlée*, while the formation of the main body, owing to the depths of the ranks behind, remained for a time unbroken. ⁶ At length, however, those in the rear were surrounded on all sides by the cavalry and obliged to face round and fight them, while those who

had managed to force a passage through the elephants and collect in the rear of those beasts, encountered the Carthaginian phalanx quite fresh and in good order ⁷ and were cut to pieces. Henceforth the Romans were in sore straits on all sides, the greater number were trampled to death by the vast weight of the elephants, while the remainder were shot down by the numerous cavalry in their ranks as they stood. Only quite a small body of these tried to effect their escape, ⁸ and of these, as their line of retreat was over level ground, some were dispatched by the elephants and cavalry, and about five hundred who got away with their general Regulus shortly afterwards fell into the enemy's hands and were made prisoners, himself included. ⁹ It resulted that in this battle the Carthaginians lost about eight hundred of the mercenaries, who had faced the Roman left wing, while of the Romans there were saved but about two thousand, whom the pursuit of the mercenaries I mentioned above carried out of the main battle. ¹⁰ All the rest perished with the exception of the general Regulus and those who took to flight together with him. ¹¹ The maniples which escaped got through by extraordinary luck to Aspis. ¹² The Carthaginians stripped the dead, and taking with them the Consul and the other captives, returned to the city in high glee at the turn of affairs.

§§ In these events there will be found by one who notes them aright much to contribute to the better conduct of human life. ² For the precept to distrust Fortune, and especially when we are enjoying success, was most clearly enforced on all by Regulus's misfortunes. ³ He who so short a time previously had refused to pity or take mercy on those in distress was now, almost immediately afterwards, being led captive to implore pity and mercy in order to save his own life. ⁴ And again Euripides' words, so long recognized as just, that "one wise counsel conquers many hands" were then confirmed by the actual facts. ⁵ For one man and one brain laid low that host which seemed so invincible and efficient, and restored the fortunes of a state which in the eyes of all was utterly fallen and the deadened spirit of its soldiers. ⁶ This I mention for the sake of the improvement of the readers of this history. ⁷ For there are two ways by which all men can reform

themselves, the one through their own mischances, the other through those of others, and of these the former is the more impressive, but the latter less hurtful. ⁸ Therefore we should never choose the first method if we can help it, as it corrects by means of great pain and peril, but ever pursue the other, since by it we can discern what is best without suffering hurt. ⁹ Reflecting on this we should regard as the best discipline for actual life the experience that accrues from serious history; ¹⁰ for this alone makes us, without inflicting any harm on us, the most competent judges of what is best at every time and in every circumstance. Well, on this subject I have said enough.

§6 ¹ All having now fallen out with the Carthaginians as they could best desire, there was no extravagance of rejoicing in which they did not indulge, paying thank-offerings to the gods and giving congratulatory entertainments. ² But Xanthippus, to whom this revolution and notable advance in the fortunes of Carthage^o was due, after a little time sailed again for home, and this was a very prudent and sensible decision on his part; for brilliant and exceptional achievements are wont to breed the deepest jealousy and most bitter slander. Natives of a place, supported as they are by their kinsmen and having many friends, may possibly be able to hold their own against those for some time, ³ but foreigners when exposed to either speedily succumb and find themselves in peril. ⁴ There is another account given of Xanthippus's departure which I will endeavour to set forth on an occasion more suitable than the present.^o

⁵ The Romans, who had never expected to receive such bad news from Libya, at once directed their efforts to fitting out their fleet and rescuing their surviving troops there. ⁶ The Carthaginians after the battle encamped before Aspis and laid siege to it with the object of capturing these survivors, ⁷ but as they had no success owing to the gallantry and daring of the defenders they at length abandoned the siege. ⁸ When news reached them that the Romans were preparing their fleet and were about to sail again for Libya, they set to repairing the ships they had and building other entirely new ones, ⁹ and having soon manned a fleet of two hundred sail, they put to sea and

remained on the watch for an attack by the enemy.

10 In the early summer the Romans, having launched three hundred and fifty ships, sent them off under the command of Marcus Aemilius and Servius Fulvius, who proceeded along the coast of Sicily making for Libya. **11** Encountering the Carthaginian fleet near the Hermaeum they fell on them and easily routed them, capturing one hundred and fourteen ships with their crews. **12** Then having taken on board at Aspis the lads who remained in Libya they set sail again for Sicily. **37** They had crossed the strait in safety and were off the territory of Camarina when they were overtaken by so fierce a storm and so terrible a disaster that it is difficult adequately to describe it owing to its surpassing magnitude. **2** For of their three hundred and sixty-four ships only eighty were saved; the rest either foundered or were dashed by the waves against the rocks and headlands and broken to pieces, covering the shore with corpses and wreckage. **3** History tells of no greater catastrophe at sea taking place at one time. **4** The blame must be laid not so much on ill-fortune as on the commanders; for the captains had repeatedly urged them not to sail along the outer coast of Sicily, that turned towards the Libyan sea, as it was very rugged and had few safe anchorages: they also warned them that one of the dangerous astral periods was not over and another just approaching (for it was between the rising of Orion and that of Sirius⁴ that they undertook the voyage). **5** The commanders, however, paid no attention to a single word they said, they took the outer course and there they were in the open sea thinking to strike terror into some of the cities they passed by the brilliancy of their recent success and thus win them over. **6** But now, all for the sake of such meagre expectations, they exposed themselves to this great disaster, and were obliged to acknowledge their lack of judgement. **7** The Romans, to speak generally, rely on force in all their enterprises, and think it is incumbent on them to carry out their projects in spite of all, and that nothing is impossible when they have once decided on it. They owe their success in many cases to this spirit, but sometimes they conspicuously fail by reason of it and especially at sea. **8** For on land they are attacking men and the works of man and are usually

successful, as there they are employing force against forces of the same nature, although even here they have in some rare instances failed. ⁹ But when they come to encounter the sea and the atmosphere and choose to fight them by force they meet with signal defeats. ¹⁰ It was so on this occasion and on many others, and it will always continue to be so, until they correct this fault of daring and violence which makes them think they can sail and travel where they will at no matter what season.

38⁷The Carthaginians, on hearing of the destruction of the Roman fleet, conceiving themselves to be now a match for the Romans both on land owing to their recent success and at sea owing to this disaster, were encouraged to make more extensive military and naval preparations. ² They at once dispatched Hasdrubal to Sicily, giving him the troops they previously had and a force which had joined them from Heraclea, together with a hundred and forty elephants. ³ After dispatching him they began to get ready for sea two hundred ships and to make all other preparations for a naval expedition. ⁴ Hasdrubal having crossed in safety to Lilybaeum occupied himself in drilling unopposed his elephants and the rest of his force, and plainly intended ⁵ to dispute the possession of the open country.

The Romans, on receiving full information about the disaster from the survivors of the shipwreck, were deeply grieved, but being resolved on no account to give in, they decided to put on the stocks a fresh fleet of two hundred and twenty ships. ⁶ In three months they were completed — a thing difficult to believe — and the new Consuls, Aulus Atilius and Gnaeus Cornelius, ⁷ having fitted out the fleet, put to sea, and passing the straits picked up at Messene the ships that had escaped shipwreck. Descending with their total fleet of three hundred sail on Panormus, the most important city in the Carthaginian province, ⁸ they undertook its siege. They threw up works in two places and after making the other necessary preparations ⁹ brought up their battering-rams. The tower on the sea shore was easily knocked down, and, the soldiers pressing in through this

breach, the so-called New Town was stormed, and the part known as the Old Town being now in imminent danger, ¹⁰ its inhabitants soon surrendered it. Having taken possession of it the Consuls sailed back to Rome leaving a garrison in the town.

39 Their successors, Gnaeus Servilius and Gaius Sempronius, put to sea with their whole fleet as soon as it was summer ² and after crossing to Sicily proceeded thence to Libya, and sailing along the coast, made a number of descents in which they accomplished nothing of importance, and finally reached the isle of the Lotus-eaters, which is called Meninx and is not far distant from the lesser Syrtis. ³ Here, owing to their ignorance of these seas, they ran on to some shoals, and, on the tide retreating ⁴ and the ships grounding fast, they were in a most difficult position. However, as the tide unexpectedly rose again after some time, they managed with difficulty to lighten their ships by throwing overboard all heavy objects. ⁵ Their departure now was so hasty as to resemble a flight, and having made Sicily ⁶ and rounded Cape Lilybaeum they anchored at Panormus. As they were rashly crossing the open sea on the way hence to Rome they again encountered such a terrific storm that they lost more than a hundred and fifty ships.

p1 The Roman Government upon this, although in all matters they are exceedingly ambitious of success, still on the present occasion, owing to the magnitude and frequency of the disasters they met with, were obliged by the force of circumstances to renounce the project of getting another fleet together. ⁸ Relying now solely on their land forces, they dispatched to Sicily with some legions the Consuls Lucius Caecilius and Gaius Furius and only manned sixty ships to revictual the legions. ⁹ The above disasters resulted in the prospects of the Carthaginians becoming once more brighter; ¹⁰ for they had now undisturbed command of the sea, the Romans having retired from it, and they had great hopes of their army. ¹¹ These hopes were not unjustified, for the Romans, when the report circulated regarding the battle in Libya that the elephants had broken the Romans' ranks and killed most of their men, ¹² grew so afraid of the beasts that for the two

years following this period, though often both in the district of Lilybaeum and in that of Selinus they were drawn up at a distance of five or six stades from the enemy, they never dared to begin a battle, and in fact never would come down at all to meet the enemy on flat ground, so much did they dread a charge of the elephants. ¹³ During this period all they accomplished was the reduction by siege of Therma and Lipara, keeping as they did to mountainous and difficult country. ¹⁴ Consequently the Government, observing the timidity and despondency that prevailed in their land forces, changed their minds and decided to try their fortunes at sea again. ¹⁵ In the consulship of Gaius Atilius and Lucius Manlius we find them building fifty ships and actively enrolling sailors and getting a fleet together.

40 The Carthaginian commander-in-chief, Hasdrubal, had noted the lack of courage which the Romans exhibited, on the occasions when they were in presence of the enemy, and when he learnt that while one of the Consuls with half the whole force had left for Italy, Caecilius and the rest of the army remained at Panormus with the object of protecting the corn^o of the allies — it now being the height of the harvest — ² removed his forces from Lilybaeum and encamped on the frontier of the territory of Panormus. ³ Caecilius, observing Hasdrubal's aggressive spirit and wishing to provoke him to attack, kept his own soldiers within the gates. ⁴ Hasdrubal gained fresh confidence from this, thinking that Caecilius did not venture to come out, and boldly advancing with his whole force, descended through the pass on the territory of Panormus. ⁵ Caecilius, adhering to his original plan, let him ravage the crops up to the walls, until he had led him on to cross the river that runs in front of the town. ⁶ Once the Carthaginians had got their elephants and other forces across, he kept sending out light-armed troops to molest them, until he had compelled them to deploy their whole force. ⁷ When he saw that what he had designed was taking place he stationed some of his light troops before the wall and the trench, ordering them, if the elephants approached, not to spare their missiles, ⁸ and when driven from their position, they were to take refuge in the trench and sallying from it again shoot at those elephants which charged at them.

9 Ordering the lower classes of the civil population to bring the missiles and arrange them outside at the foot of the wall, 10 he himself with his maniples took up his position at the gate which faced the enemy's left wing and kept sending constant reinforcements to those engaged in shooting. 11 When this latter force more generally engaged with the enemy, the drivers of the elephants, anxious to exhibit their prowess to Hasdrubal and wishing the victory to be due to themselves, all charged those of the enemy who were in advance and putting them easily to flight pursued them to the trench. 12 When the elephants charged the trench and began to be wounded by those who were shooting from the wall, while at the same time a rapid shower of javelins and spears fell on them from the fresh troops drawn up before the trench, 13 they very soon, finding themselves hit and hurt in many places, were thrown into confusion and turned on their own troops, trampling down and killing the men and disturbing and breaking the ranks. 14 Caecilius, on seeing this, made a vigorous sally and falling on the flank of the enemy, who were now in disorder, with his own fresh and well-ordered troops caused a severe rout among them, killing many and compelling the rest to quit the field in headlong flight. 15 He took ten elephants with their mahouts, and after the battle, having penned up the others who had thrown their mahouts, he captured them all. 16 By this exploit he was universally acknowledged to have caused the Roman land forces to pluck up courage again and gain the command of the open country.

¶17 When news of this success reached Rome it caused great rejoicing, not so much because of the enemy being weakened by the loss of their elephants as because of the confidence which the capture of these gave to their own troops. 2 They were consequently encouraged to revert to their original plan of sending out the Consuls to the campaign with a fleet of naval force; for they were eager by all means in their power to put an end to the war. 3 When all that was required for the expedition was ready, the Consuls set sail for Sicily with two hundred ships. This was in the fourteenth year of the war. 4 Anchoring off Lilybaeum, where they were joined by their land forces, they undertook its siege, thinking that if it fell into their possession it would be easy for

them to transfer the war to Libya. ⁵ On this matter at least the Carthaginian Government agreed more or less with the Romans, ⁶ sharing their estimate of the place's value; so that, shelving all other projects, they devoted their whole attention to the relief of this city and were ready to undertake every risk and burden for this purpose; for if it fell, no base was left for them, as the Romans were masters of all the rest of Sicily except Drepana.

To prevent my narrative from being obscure to readers owing to their ignorance of the geography, I will try to convey briefly to them an idea of the natural advantages and exact position of the places referred to. ¹ Sicily, then, as a whole occupies the same position with regard to Italy and its extremity that the Peloponnese occupies with regard to Greece ² and its extremity, the difference lying in this, that the Peloponnese is a peninsula whereas Sicily is an island, the communication being in the one case by land and in the other by sea. ³ Sicily is triangular in shape, the apices of all three angles being formed by capes. ⁴ The cape that looks to the south and stretches out into the Sicilian Sea is called Pachynus, ⁵ that on the north forms the extremity of the western coast of the Strait; it is [•]about twelve stades distant from Italy and is called Pelorias. ⁶ The third looks towards Libya itself, and is favourably situated as a base for attacking the promontories in front of Carthage, from which it is distant [•]about one thousand stades. It is turned to the south-west, separating the Libyan from the Sardinian Sea, and its name is Lilybaeum. ⁷ On the cape stands the city of the same name, of which the Romans were now opening the siege. It is excellently defended both by walls and by a deep moat all round, and on the side facing the sea by shoaly water, the passage through which into the harbour requires great skill and practice.

⁸ The Romans encamped by this city on either side, fortifying the space between their camps with a [•]trench, a stockade, and a wall. They then began to throw up works against the tower that lay

nearest the sea on the Libyan side, ⁹ and, gradually advancing from the base thus acquired and extending their works, they succeeded at last in knocking down the six adjacent towers, ¹⁰ and attacked all the others at once with battering rams. The siege was now so vigorously pursued and so terrifying, each day seeing some of the towers shaken or demolished ¹¹ and the enemy's works advancing further and further into the city, that the besieged were thrown into a state of utter confusion and panic, although, besides the civil population, there were nearly ten thousand mercenaries in the town. ¹² Their general, Himilco, however, omitted no means of resistance in his power, and by counter-building and counter-mining caused the enemy no little difficulty. ¹³ Every day he would advance and make attempts on the siege works, trying to succeed in setting them on fire, and with this object was indeed engaged by night and day in combats of so desperate a character, that at times more men fell in these encounters than usually fell in a pitched battle.

¹⁴¹⁵ About this time some of the superior officers in the mercenary force, after talking the matter over among themselves and in the full conviction that their subordinates would obey them, sallied from the town by night to the Roman camp and made proposals to the Consul for the surrender of the city. ² But the Achaean Alexon, who had on a former occasion saved the Agrigentines, when the Syracusan mercenaries had formed a project of breaking faith with them, was now too the first to get wind of what was going on and informed the Carthaginian general. ³ Himilco on hearing of it at once summoned the remaining officers and urgently implored their aid, promising them lavish gifts and favours if they remained loyal to him and refused to participate in the plot of those who had left the city. ⁴ On their readily consenting, he bade them return at once to their troops, sending with them to the Celts Hannibal, the son of that Hannibal who had died in Sardinia, as they had served under him and were well acquainted with him, while to the other mercenaries he sent Alexon, owing to his popularity and credit with them. ⁵ They called a meeting of the soldiery and partly by entreating them, partly moreover by assuring them that each man would receive the bounty the general had offered, easily persuaded them to bide by their engagements. ⁶ So,

afterwards, when the officers who had quitted the city advanced openly to the walls and attempted to entreat them and tell them of the promises made by the Romans, not only did they pay no attention but would not lend ear to them at all, and chased them away from the wall with stones and other missiles. ⁷ The Carthaginians, then, for the above reasons very narrowly escaped a complete disaster ⁸ due to the treachery of their mercenaries, and Alexon, who had previously saved by his loyalty not only the city and district but the laws and liberties of Agrigentum, now was the cause of the Carthaginians being saved from total ruin.

¹⁴⁵The Carthaginian government knew nothing of all this, but calculating the requirements of a besieged town, they filled fifty ships with troops. After addressing the soldiers in terms befitting the enterprise, they sent them off at once under the command of Hannibal, the son of Hamilcar, trierarch and most intimate friend of Adherbal, with orders not to delay, but at the first opportunity to make a bold attempt to relieve the besieged. ² Setting sail with ten thousand troops on board, he came to anchor off the islands called Aegusae, which lie between Lilybaeum and Carthage, and there awaited favourable weather. ³ As soon as he had a fine stern breeze he hoisted all sail and running before the wind sailed straight for the mouth of the harbour, his men drawn up on deck armed ready for action. ⁴ The Romans, partly owing to the suddenness of the fleet's appearance and partly because they feared being carried into the hostile harbour by the force of the wind together with their enemies, made no effort to prevent the entrance of the relieving force, but stood out at sea amazed at the audacity of the Carthaginians. ⁵ The whole population had assembled on the walls in an agony of suspense on the one hand as to what would happen, and at the same time so overjoyed at the unexpected prospect of succour that they kept on encouraging the fleet as it sailed in by cheers and clapping of hands. ⁶ Hannibal, having entered the harbour in this hazardous and daring manner, anchored and disembarked his troops in security. ⁷ All those in the city were delighted not so much at the arrival of the relief, although their prospects were much improved and their force increased thereby, as at the fact that the

Romans had not ventured to try to prevent the Carthaginians from sailing in.

139 Himilco, the commander of the garrison, seeing that all were full of spirit and confidence, the original garrison owing to the arrival of relief, and the newcomers owing to their ignorance as yet of the perilous situation, **2** desired to avail himself of this fresh spirit in both parties and make another attempt to fire the enemy's works. He therefore summoned the soldiers to a general assembly, **3** and addressing them at some length in words suitable to the occasion, roused them to great enthusiasm by his lavish promises of reward to those who distinguished themselves personally, and his assurance that the force as a whole would be duly recompensed by the Government. **4** On their all applauding him and shouting to him not to delay but to lead them on at once, he dismissed them for the present after praising them and expressing his pleasure at their eagerness, ordering them to retire to rest early and obey their officers. **5** Soon afterwards he summoned the commanding officers and assigned to each his proper place in the assault, giving them the watchword and informing them of the hour. He ordered all the commanders with the whole of their forces to be on the spot at the morning watch, **6** and his orders having been executed, he led the whole force out as it was getting light and attacked the works in several places. **7** The Romans, who had foreseen what was coming, were not idle or unprepared, but promptly ran to defend the threatened points and opposed a vigorous resistance to the enemy. **8** Soon the whole of both forces were engaged, and a desperate fight was going on all round the walls, the salliers numbering not less than twenty thousand and the force outside being rather more numerous. **9** Inasmuch as they were fighting confusedly and in no order, each man as he thought best, the battle was all the more fierce, such a large force being engaged man to man and company to company, so that there was something of the keenness of single combat in the whole contest. **10** It was, however, particularly at the siege-works themselves that there was most shouting and pressure. **11** For those on both sides whose task from the outset was on the one hand to drive the defenders from the works, and on the other not to abandon them, exhibited such

emulation and resolution, the assailants doing their very best to turn the Romans out, and the latter refusing to give way, that ¹² at last owing to this resolute spirit the men remained and fell on the spot where they had first stood. Yet, in spite of all, the bearers of pine-brands, tow, and fire intermingled with the combatants, attacked the engines from every side, hurling the burning matter at them with such pluck that the Romans were in the utmost peril, being unable to master the onset of the enemy. ¹³ But the Carthaginian general, observing that many were falling in the battle, and that his object of taking the works was not being attained, ordered his trumpeters to sound the retreat. ¹⁴ Thus the Romans who had come very near losing all their siege-material, at length were masters of their works, and remained in secure possession of them.

46 As for Hannibal he sailed out with his ships after the affair while it was still night, unobserved by the enemy, and proceeded to Drepana to meet the Carthaginian commander there, Adherbal. ² Owing to the convenient situation of Drepana and the excellency of its harbour, the Carthaginians had always given great attention to its protection. ³ The place lies at a distance of about a hundred and twenty stades from Lilybaeum.

p133 The Carthaginians at home wishing to know what was happening at Lilybaeum, but being unable to do so as their own forces were shut up in the town and the Romans were active in their vigilance, one of their leading citizens, Hannibal, surnamed the Rhodian, offered to sail into Lilybaeum and make a full report from personal observation. ⁵ They listened to his offer eagerly, but did not believe he could do this, as the Romans were anchored outside the mouth of the port. ⁶ But after fitting out his own ship, he set sail, and crossed to one of the islands that lie before Lilybaeum, and next day finding the wind happily favourable, sailed in at about ten o'clock in the morning in full sight of the enemy who were thunderstruck by his audacity. ⁷ Next day he at once made preparations for departure, ⁸ but the Roman general, with the view of guarding the entrance more carefully, had fitted out in the night ten of his fastest ships, and now he himself and his

whole army stood by the harbour waiting to see what would happen. ⁹ The ships were waiting on either side of the entrance as near as the shoals would allow them to approach, their oars out and ready to charge and capture the ship that was about to sail out. ¹⁰ But the "Rhodian," getting under weigh in the sight of all, so far outbraved the Romans by his audacity and speed that not only did he bring his ship and her whole crew out unhurt, passing the enemy's ships just as if they were motionless, ¹¹ but after sailing on a short way, he pulled up without shipping his oars as if to challenge the enemy, ¹² and no one venturing to come out against him owing to the speed of his rowing, he sailed off, after thus having with one ship successfully defied the whole Roman fleet. ¹³ After this he several times performed the same feat and was of great service by continuing to report at Carthage the news of most urgent importance, while at the same time he kept up the spirits of the besieged and struck terror into the Romans by his venturesomeness. ⁴⁷ What tended most to give him confidence was that from experience he had accurately noted the course to be followed through the shoals in entering. ² For as soon as he had crossed and come into view, he would get the sea-tower on the Italian side on his bows so that it covered the whole line of towers turned towards Africa; and this is the only way that a vessel running before the wind can hit the mouth of the harbour in entering. ³ Several others who had local knowledge, gaining confidence from the "Rhodian's" audacity, undertook to do the same, and in consequence the Romans, to whom this was a great annoyance, tried to fill up the mouth of the harbour. ⁴ For the most part indeed their attempt was resultless, both owing to the depth of the sea, and because none of the stuff that they threw in would remain in its place or hold together in the least, but all they shot in used to be at once shifted and scattered as it was sinking to the bottom, by the surge and the force of the current. ⁵ However, in one place where there were shoals a solid bank was formed at the cost of infinite pains, and on this a four-banked ship which was coming out at night grounded and fell into the hands of the enemy. ⁶ This ship was of remarkably fine build, and the Romans, after capturing it and manning it with a select crew, kept watch for all the blockade-runners ⁷ and especially for the "Rhodian." It so happened that he had sailed in that very night,

and was afterwards sailing out quite openly, but, on seeing the four-banked vessel putting out to sea again together with himself and recognizing it, he was alarmed. ⁸ At first he made a spurt to get away from it, but finding himself overhauled owing to the good oarsmanship of its crew he had at length to turn and engage the enemy. ⁹ Being no match for the boarders, who were numerous and all picked men, he fell into the enemy's hands. His ship was, like the other, very well built, ¹⁰ and the Romans when they were in possession of her fitted her out too for this special service and so put a stop to all this venturesome blockade-running at Lilybaeum.

418¹ The besieged were still counterbuilding energetically though they had renounced their effort to spoil or destroy the enemy's works, ² when there arose a turbulent storm of wind, blowing with such violence and fury on the actual apparatus for advancing the engines, that it shook the protecting pent-houses from their foundations and carried away the wooden towers in front of these by its force. ³ During the gale it struck some of the Greek mercenaries that here was an admirable opportunity for destroying the works, and they communicated their notion to the general, who approved it and made all suitable preparations for the enterprise. ⁴ The soldiers in several bodies threw fire on the works at three separate points. ⁵ The whole apparatus being old and readily inflammable, and the wind blowing very strongly on the actual towers and engines, the action of the flames as they spread was most effective, whereas the efforts of the Romans to succour and save the works were quite the reverse, the task being most difficult. ⁶ The defenders were indeed so terrified by the outbreak that they could neither realize nor understand what was happening, but half blinded by the flames and sparks that flew in their faces and by the dense smoke, many of them succumbed and fell, unable even to get near enough to combat the actual conflagration. ⁷ The difficulties that the enemy encountered for these various reasons were immense, while the exertions of the incendiaries were correspondingly facilitated. ⁸ Everything that could blind or injure the enemy was blown into flame and pushed at them, missiles and other objects hurled or discharged to wound the rescuers or to destroy the works being easily aimed

because the throwers could see in front of them, while the blows were most effective as the strong wind gave them additional force. ⁹ At the end the completeness of the destruction was such that the bases of the towers and the posts that supported the battering-rams were rendered useless by the fire. ¹⁰ After this the Romans gave up the attempt to conduct the siege by works, and digging a trench and erecting a stockade all round the city, at the same time building a wall round their own encampment, they left the result to time. ¹¹ But the garrison of Lilybaeum rebuilt the fallen portions of the wall and now confidently awaited the issue of the siege.

¹¹⁹⁹ On the news reaching Rome, and on it being reported from various quarters that the greater part of the crews of their fleet had perished in the works or in the siege operations in general, ² they set about actively enlisting sailors, and when they had collected about ten thousand dispatched them to Sicily. ³ These reinforcements were ferried over the Straits and thence proceeded on foot to the camp, where on their arrival the Roman Consul, Publius Claudius Pulcher, called a meeting of the Tribunes and told them that now was the time to attack Drepana with the whole fleet. ⁴ The Carthaginian general Adherbal who commanded there was, he said, unprepared for such a contingency, as he was ignorant of the arrival of the crews, and convinced that their fleet was unable to take the sea owing to the heavy loss of men in the siege. ⁵ On the Tribunes readily consenting, he at once embarked the former crews and the new arrivals, and chose for marines the best men in the whole army, who readily volunteered as the voyage was but a short one and the prospect of booty seemed certain. ⁶ After making these preparations he put to sea about midnight unobserved by the enemy, and at first sailed in close order with the land on his right. ⁷ At daybreak when the leading ships came into view sailing on Drepana, Adherbal was at first taken by surprise at the unexpected sight, ⁸ but soon recovering his composure and understanding that the enemy had come to attack, he decided to make every effort and incur every sacrifice rather than expose himself to the certitude of a blockade. ⁹ He himself at once collected the crews on the beach and summoned by crier the mercenaries from the city. ¹⁰ On all

being assembled he tried in a few words to impress on their minds the prospect of victory if they risked a battle, and the hardships of a siege should they delay now that they clearly foresaw the danger. ¹¹ Their spirit for the fight was readily aroused, and on their calling on him to lead them on and not delay, he thanked them, praised their zeal, and then ordered them to get on board at once, and keeping their eyes on his ship, to follow in his wake. ¹² Having made these orders quite clear to them he quickly got under weigh and took the lead, making his exit close under the rocks on the opposite side of the harbour from that on which the Romans were entering. **50** Publius, the Roman commander, had expected that the enemy would give way and would be intimidated by his attack, ² but when he saw that on the contrary they intended to fight him, and that his own fleet was partly inside the harbour, partly at the very mouth, and partly still sailing up to enter, ³ he gave orders for them all to put about and sail out again. On the ships already in the harbour fouling those which were entering owing to their sudden turn there was not only great confusion among the men but the ships had the blades of their oars broken as they came into collision. ⁴ The captains, however, bringing the ships as they cleared the harbour into line, soon drew them up close to shore with their prows to the enemy. ⁵ Publius himself from the start had been bringing up the rear of the entire fleet, and now veering out to sea without stopping his course, took up a position on the extreme left. ⁶ At the same time Adherbal, outflanking the enemy's left with five beaked ships, placed his own ship facing the enemy from the direction of the open sea. ⁷ As the other ships came up and joined getting into line, he ordered them ⁸ by his staff officers to place themselves in the same position as his own, and when they all presented a united front he gave the signal to advance that had been agreed upon and at first bore down in line on the Romans, who kept close to the shore awaiting those of their ships that were returning from the harbour. ⁹ This position close inshore placed them at a great disadvantage in the engagement. **51** When the two fleets approached each other, the signals for battle were raised on both the admirals, and they closed. ² At first the battle was equally balanced, ³ as the marines in both fleets were the very best men of their land forces; but the Carthaginians gradually began to get the best of it ⁴ as they had

many advantages throughout the whole struggle. They much surpassed the Romans in speed, owing to the superior build of their ships and the better training of the rowers, ⁵ as they had freely developed their line in the open sea. For if any ships found themselves hard pressed by the enemy it was easy for them owing to their speed to retreat safely to the open water ⁶ and from thence, fetching round on the ships that pursued and fell on them, they either got in their rear or attacked them on the flank, and as the enemy then had to turn round and found themselves in difficulty owing to the weight of the hulls and the poor oarsmanship of the crews, ⁷ they rammed them repeatedly and sunk many. Again if any other of their own ships were in peril they were ready to render assistance with perfect security to themselves, as they were out of immediate danger and could sail in open water past the sterns of their own line. ⁸ It was, however, just the opposite with the Romans. Those in distress could not retire backwards, as they were fighting close to the land, and the ships, hard pressed by the enemy in front, either ran on the shallows stern foremost or made for the shore and grounded. ⁹ To sail on the one hand through the enemy's line and then appear on the stern of such of his ships as were engaged with others (one of the most effective manoeuvres in naval warfare) was impossible owing to the weight of the vessels and their crews' lack of skill. ¹⁰ Nor again could they give assistance where it was required from astern, as they were hemmed in close to the shore, and there was not even a small space left for those who wished to come to the rescue of their comrades in distress. ¹¹ Such being their difficult position in every part of the battle, and some of the ships grounding on the shallows while others ran ashore, the Roman commander, when he saw what was happening, took to flight, slipping out on the left along shore, accompanied by about thirty of the ships nearest to him. ¹² The remainder, ninety-three in number, were captured by the Carthaginians, including their crews, with the exception of those men who ran their ships ashore and made off.

52 The battle having resulted so, Adherbal gained a high reputation at Carthage, the success being regarded as due to his foresight and boldness. ² Publius, on the contrary, fell into ill repute

among the Romans, and there was a great outcry against him for having acted rashly and inconsiderately and done all a single man could to bring a great disaster on Rome. ³ He was accordingly brought to trial afterwards, condemned to a heavy fine, and narrowly escaped with his life.

17 Yet so determined were the Romans to bring the whole struggle to a successful issue, that, notwithstanding this reverse, they left undone nothing that was in their power, and prepared to continue the campaign. ⁵ The time for the elections was now at hand, and accordingly when the new Consuls were appointed they dispatched one of them, Lucius Junius Pullus, ⁵ with corn for the besiegers of Lilybaeum and such other provisions and supplies as the army required, manning sixty ships to act as a convoy to him. ⁶ Junius, on arriving at Messene and being joined by the ships from Lilybaeum and the rest of Sicily, coasted along with all speed to Syracuse, having now a hundred and twenty ships and the supplies in about eight hundred transports. ⁷ There he entrusted half the transports and a few of the war-ships to the Quaestors and sent them on, as he was anxious to have what the troops required conveyed to them at once. ⁸ He himself remained in Syracuse waiting for the ships that were left behind on the voyage from Messene and procuring additional supplies and corn from the allies in the interior.

18 At about the same time Adherbal sent the prisoners from the naval battle and the captured ships to Carthage, ² and giving Carthalo his colleague thirty vessels in addition to the seventy with which he had arrived, ³ dispatched him with orders to make a sudden descent on the enemy's ships that were moored near Lilybaeum, capture all he could and set fire to the rest. ⁴ When Carthalo acting on these orders made the attack at dawn and began to burn some of the ships and carry off others, there was a great commotion in the Roman camp. ⁵ For as they rushed to rescue the ships with loud cries, Himilco, on the watch at Lilybaeum, heard them, and as day was just beginning to break, he saw what was happening, and sent out the mercenaries from the town to

attack the Romans also. **6** The Romans were now in danger from all sides and in no little or ordinary distress. **7** The Carthaginian admiral, having made off with a few ships and broken up others, shortly afterwards left Lilybaeum, and after coasting along for some distance in the direction of Heraclea remained on the watch, as his design was to intercept the ships that were on their way to join the army. **8** When his look-out men reported that a considerable number of ships of every variety were approaching and at no great distance, he got under weigh and sailed towards them eager to engage them, as after the recent success he had great contempt for the Romans. **9** The approach of the enemy was also announced by the light boats that usually sail in front of a fleet to the Quaestors who had been sent on in advance from Syracuse. **10** Considering themselves not strong enough to accept a battle, they anchored off a certain small fortified town subject to the Romans, which had indeed no harbour, but a roadstead shut in by headlands projecting from the land in a manner that made it a more or less secure anchorage. **11** Here they disembarked, and setting up the catapults and mangonels procured from the fortress, awaited the enemy's attack. **12** The Carthaginians on their approach at first thought of besieging them, supposing that the crews would be afraid and retreat to the city, and that they would then easily possess themselves of the ships; **13** but when their hopes were not realized, the enemy on the contrary making a gallant defence, and the situation of the place presenting many difficulties of every kind, they carried off a few of the ships laden with provisions and sailed away to a certain river where they anchored, and waited for the Romans to put out to sea again.

541 The Consul, who had remained in Syracuse, when he had concluded his business there, rounded Cape Pachynus and sailed in the direction of Lilybaeum in entire ignorance of what had befallen the advance force. **2** The Carthaginian admiral, when his look-outs again reported that the enemy were in sight, put to sea and sailed with all haste, as he wished to engage them at as great a distance as possible from their own ships. **3** Junius had sighted the Carthaginian fleet for some time, and noticed the number of their ships, but he neither dared to engage them nor could

he now escape them, as they were so near. He therefore diverted his course to a rugged and in every way perilous part of the coast and anchored there, ⁴ thinking that, no matter what happened to him, it would be preferable to his whole force of ships and men falling into the hands of the enemy. ⁵ The Carthaginian admiral, on seeing what Junius had done, decided not to incur the risk of approaching such a dangerous shore, but, gaining a certain cape and anchoring off it, remained on the alert between the two fleets, keeping his eye on both. ⁶ When the weather now became stormy, and they were threatened with a heavy gale from the open sea, the Carthaginian captains who were acquainted with the locality and with the weather signs, and foresaw and prophesied what was about to happen, persuaded Carthalo to escape the tempest by rounding Cape Pachynus. ⁷ He very wisely consented, and with great labour they just managed to get round the cape and anchor in a safe position. ⁸ But the two Roman fleets, caught by the tempest, and the coast affording no shelter at all, were so completely destroyed that not even the wrecks were good for anything. In this unlooked for manner, then, the Romans had both their fleets disabled.

5/5 ¹ Owing to this occurrence the hopes of the Carthaginians rose again, and it seemed to them that the fortune of war was inclining in their favour, ² while the Romans, on the contrary, who had been previously to a certain extent unlucky but never had met with so complete a disaster, relinquished the sea, while continuing to maintain their hold on the country. ³ The Carthaginians were now masters of the sea and were not hopeless of regaining their position on land.

⁴ Subsequently, though all, both at Rome and in the army at Lilybaeum, continued to lament their whole situation after these recent defeats, yet they did not abandon their purpose of pursuing the siege, the government not hesitating to send supplies over land, the besiegers thereby keeping up the investment as well as they could. ⁵ Junius, returning to the army after the shipwreck in a state of great affliction, set himself to devise some novel and original step that would be of service, being most anxious to make good the loss inflicted by the disaster. ⁶ Therefore on some slight pretext offering itself, he surprised and occupied Eryx, possessing himself both of the temple of

Venus and of the town. ⁷ Eryx is a mountain on the sea on that side of Sicily which looks towards Italy.^b It is situated between Drepana and Panormus, or rather it is adjacent to Drepana, on the borders, and is much the biggest mountain in Sicily after Etna.⁶ ⁸ On its summit, which is flat, stands the temple of Venus Erycina, which is indisputably the first in wealth and general magnificence of all the Sicilian holy places. ⁹ The city extends along the hill under the actual summit, the ascent to it being very long and steep on all sides. ¹⁰ He garrisoned the summit and also the approach from Drepana, and jealously guarded both these positions, especially the latter, in the conviction that by this means he would securely hold the city and the whole mountain.

5169 The Carthaginians shortly afterwards appointed Hamilcar surnamed Barcas to the command and entrusted naval operations to him. ² He started with the fleet to ravage the Italian coast (this, I should say, was in the eighteenth year of the war) ³ and after laying waste Locris and the Bruttii quitted those parts and descended with his whole fleet on the territory of Panormus. Here he seized on a place called Hercte⁷ lying near the sea between Eryx and Panormus, and thought to possess peculiar advantages for the safe and prolonged stay of an army. ⁴ It is an abrupt hill rising to a considerable height from the surrounding flat country. The circumference of its brow is not less than a hundred stades and the plateau within affords good pasturage and is suitable for cultivation, being also favourably exposed to the sea-breeze and quite free of animals dangerous to life. ⁵ On the side looking to the sea and on that which faces the interior of the island, this plateau is surrounded by inaccessible cliffs, while the parts between require only a little slight strengthening. ⁶ There is also a knoll on it which serves for an acropolis as well as for an excellent post of observation over the country at the foot of the hill. ⁷ Besides this Hercte commands a harbour very well situated for ships making the voyage from Drepana and Lilybaeum to Italy to put in at, and with an abundant supply of water.⁸ ⁸ The hill has only three approaches, all difficult, two on the land side and one from the sea. ⁹ Here Hamilcar established his quarters, at great risk indeed, since he had neither the support of any of their towns nor any prospect of

support from elsewhere, but had thrown himself into the midst of the enemy. Notwithstanding this, the peril to which he put the Romans, and the combats to which he forced them, were by no means slight or insignificant. ¹⁰ For in the first place he would sally out with his fleet from this place, and devastate the coast of Italy as far as Cumae, ¹¹ and next, after the Romans had taken up a position on land in front of the city of Panormus and at a distance of about ¹² five stades from his own camp, he harassed them by delivering during almost three years constant and variously contrived attacks by land. These combats I am unable to describe in detail here. ⁵⁷ For as in a boxing-match when two champions, both distinguished for pluck and both in perfect training, meet in the decisive contest for the prize, continually delivering blow for blow, neither the combatants themselves nor the spectators can note or anticipate every attack or every blow, ² but it is possible, from the general action of each, and the determination that each displays, to get a fair idea of their respective skill, strength, and courage, so it was with these two generals. ³ The causes or the modes of their daily ambushes, counter-ambushes, attempts, and assaults were so numerous that no writer could properly describe them, while at the same time the narrative would be most tedious as well as unprofitable to the reader. ⁴ It is rather by a general pronouncement about the two men and the result of their rival efforts that a notion of the facts can be conveyed. ⁵ Nothing was neglected; neither traditional tactics nor plans suggested by the occasion and by actual pressure of circumstances, nor those strokes which depend on a bold and strong initiative. ⁶ Yet there were several reasons why no decisive success could be obtained. For the forces on each side were evenly matched; their trenches were so strong as to be equally unapproachable, and the camps were at a quite small distance from each other, ⁷ this being the chief reason why there were daily conflicts at certain points, but no decisive engagement. ⁸ The losses in these combats consisted only of those who fell in the hand-to-hand fighting, while the side which once gave way used to get out of danger at once behind their defences, from whence they would issue again and resume the fight.

58 But Fortune, however, like a good umpire, unexpectedly shifted the scene and changed the nature of the contest, confining both in a narrower field, where the struggle grew even more desperate. **2** The Romans, as I said, had garrisons at Eryx on the summit of the mountain and at the foot. Hamilcar now seized the town which lies between the summit and the spot at the foot where the garrison was. **3** The consequence of this was that the Romans on the summit — a thing they had never expected — remained besieged and in considerable peril, and that the Carthaginians, though it is scarcely credible, maintained their position though the enemy were pressing on them from all sides and the conveyance of supplies was not easy, as they only held one place on the sea and one single road connecting with it. However, here again both sides employed every device and effort that the siege demanded: **4** both endured every kind of privation and both essayed every means of attack and every variety of action. **5** At length not, as Fabius Pictor says, owing to their exhaustion and sufferings, but like two uninjured and invincible champions, they left the contest drawn. **6** For before either could get the better of the other, though the struggle in this place lasted for another two years, the war had been decided by other means.

59 Such then was the condition of affairs at Eryx and as far as regarded land forces. We may compare the spirit displayed by both states to that of game cocks engaged in a death-struggle. **8** For we often see that when these birds have lost the use of their wings from exhaustion, their courage remains as high as ever and they continue to strike blow upon blow, until closing involuntarily they get a deadly hold of each other, and as soon as this happens one or the other of the two will soon fall dead. **9** So the Romans and Carthaginians, worn out by their exertions owing to the continual fighting, at length began to be despairing, their strength paralysed and their resources exhausted by protracted taxation and expense. **59** But, in spite of all, the Romans, as if fighting for their lives, although they had for nearly five years utterly withdrawn from the sea owing to their disasters and their belief that they would be able to decide the war by the aid of

their land forces alone, ² now, when they saw that chiefly owing to the bold action of the Carthaginian general they were not making the progress on which they had reckoned, decided for the third time to court the prospect of using sea-forces. ³ They thought that this course, if they could but strike a deadly blow, was the only way of bringing the war to a favourable conclusion. ⁴ And this they finally accomplished. It was yielding to the blows of Fortune that they had retired from the sea on the first occasion; the second time it was owing to their defeat at Drepana, ⁵ but now they made this third attempt, and through it, by gaining a victory and cutting off the supplies from the sea of the Carthaginian army at Eryx, they put an end to the whole war. ⁶ The attempt was indeed of the nature of a struggle for existence. For there were no funds in the public treasury for this purpose; but yet, owing to the patriotic and generous spirit of the leading citizens, enough was found to carry out the project; ⁷ as either one, two, or three of them, according to their means, undertook to provide a quinquereme fully equipped on the understanding that they would be repaid if all went well. ⁸ In this way a fleet of two hundred quinqueremes was rapidly got ready, all built on the model of the "Rhodian's" ship. They then appointed Gaius Lutatius to the command and dispatched him at the beginning of summer. ⁹ Suddenly appearing off the coast of Sicily, he seized on the harbour of Drepana and the roadsteads near Lilybaeum, the whole Carthaginian navy having retired to their own country. ¹⁰ First of all he constructed works round the city of Drepana and made all preparations for its siege, but while continuing to prosecute this by every means in his power, ¹¹ he foresaw that the Carthaginian fleet would arrive, and was not forgetful of the original motive of the expedition, the belief that it was only by a sea battle that the war could be decisively finished. He did not, then, allow the time to pass uselessly and idly, ¹² but every day was spent in exercising and practising the crews properly for this purpose. He also paid unremitting attention to the matter of good food and drink, so that in a very short time he got his sailors into perfect condition for the anticipated battle.

60 When the unexpected news reached Carthage that the Romans were at sea with a fleet and

were again disputing the naval supremacy, they at once got their ships ready, ² and filling them with corn and other provisions, dispatched their fleet on its errand, desiring that the troops at Eryx should be in no need of necessary supplies. ³ Hanno, whom they had appointed to command the naval force, set sail and reached the so-called Holy Isle from whence he designed to cross as soon as possible to Eryx, unobserved by the enemy, and, after lightening the ships by disembarking the supplies, to take on board as marines the best qualified mercenaries together with Barcas himself and then engage the enemy. ⁴ Lutatius, learning of Hanno's arrival and divining his intentions, took on board a picked force from the army and sailed to the island of Aegusa which lies off Lilybaeum. ⁵ There, after exhorting his troops as became the occasion, he informed the captains that the battle would take place next day. ⁶ In the early morning, just as day was breaking, he saw that a brisk breeze was coming down favourable to the enemy, but that it had become difficult for himself to sail up against the wind, the sea too being heavy and rough. At first he hesitated much what to do under the circumstances, ⁷ but reflected that if he risked an attack now that the weather was stormy, he would be fighting against Hanno and the naval forces alone and also against heavily laden ships, ⁸ whereas if he waited for calm weather and by his delay allowed the enemy to cross and join the army, he would have to face ships now lightened and manageable as well as the pick of the land forces and above all the bravery of Hamilcar which was what they dreaded most at that time. ⁹ He therefore decided not to let the present opportunity slip. When he saw the Carthaginian ships under full sail he at once got under weigh. As his crews easily mastered the waves owing to their good training, he soon brought his fleet into a single line with their prows to the enemy. **61** The Carthaginians, seeing that the Romans were intercepting their crossing, lowered their masts and cheering each other on in each ship closed with the enemy. ² As the outfit of each force was just the reverse of what it had been at the battle of Drepana, the result also was naturally the reverse for each. ³ The Romans had reformed their system of shipbuilding and had also put ashore all heavy material except what was required for the battle; their crews rendered excellent service, as their training had got them well together, and

the marines they had were men selected from the army for their steadfastness. ⁴ With the Carthaginians it was just the opposite. Their ships, being loaded, were not in a serviceable condition for battle, while the crews were quite untrained, and had been put on board for the emergency, and their marines were recent levies whose first experience of the least hardship and danger this was. ⁵ The fact is that, owing to their never having expected the Romans to dispute the sea with them again, they had, in contempt for them, neglected their naval force. ⁶ So that immediately on engaging they had the worst in many parts of the battle and were soon routed, fifty ships being sunk and seventy captured with their crews. ⁷ The remainder raising their masts and finding a fair wind got back to Holy Isle, very fortunate in the wind having unexpectedly gone round and helping them just when they required it. ⁸ As for the Roman Consul, he sailed away to Lilybaeum and the legions, and there occupied himself with the disposal of the captured ships and men, a business of some magnitude, as the prisoners made in the battle numbered very nearly ten thousand.

62 Even on hearing of this unexpected defeat the Carthaginians, had they let themselves be guided by passion and ambition, would readily have continued the war, but when it came to a matter of cool calculation they were quite at a loss. ² For one thing they were no longer able to send supplies to their forces in Sicily as the enemy commanded the sea, and if they abandoned and in a manner betrayed them, they had neither other men nor other leaders with whom to pursue the war. ³ They therefore at once sent a message to Barcas giving him full powers to deal with the situation. Hamilcar acted thoroughly like the good and prudent leader he was. ⁴ As long as there had been some reasonable hope in the situation he had left no means, however perilous and venturesome it seemed, unemployed, and if there ever was a general who put to proof in a war every chance of success, it was he. ⁵ But now that fortunes were reversed and there was no reasonable prospect left of saving the troops under his command, he showed his practical good sense in yielding to circumstance and sending an embassy to treat for peace. ⁶ For our opinion

should be that a general ought to be qualified to discern both when he is victorious and when he is beaten. ⁷ Lutatius readily consented to negotiate, conscious as he was that the Romans were by this time worn out and enfeebled by the war, and he succeeded in putting an end to the contest by a treaty more or less as follows. ⁸ "There shall be friendship between the Carthaginians and Romans on the following terms if approved by the Roman people. The Carthaginians to evacuate the whole of Sicily and not to make war on Hiero or bear arms against the Syracusans or the allies of the Syracusans. ⁹ The Carthaginians to give up to the Romans all prisoners without ransom. The Carthaginians to pay to the Romans by instalments in twenty years two thousand two hundred Euboean talents." **63** But when these terms were referred to Rome, the people did not accept the treaty, but sent ten commissioners to examine the matter. ² On their arrival they made no substantial changes in the terms, but only slight modifications rendering them more severe for Carthage: ³ for they reduced the term of payment by one half, added a thousand talents to the indemnity, and demanded the evacuation by the Carthaginians of all islands lying between Sicily and Italy.

p158 Such then was the end of the war between the Romans and Carthaginians for the possession of Sicily, and such were the terms of peace. It had lasted without a break for twenty-four years and is the longest, ⁵ most unintermittent, and greatest war we know of. Apart from all the other battles and armaments, the total naval forces engaged were, as I mentioned above, on one occasion more than five hundred quinqueremes and on a subsequent one very nearly seven hundred. ⁶ Moreover the Romans lost in this war about seven hundred quinqueremes, inclusive of those that perished in the shipwrecks, and the Carthaginians about five hundred. ⁷ So that those who marvel at the great sea-battles and great fleets of an Antigonus, a Ptolemy, or a Demetrius would, if I mistake not, on inquiring into the history of this war, be much astonished at the huge scale of operations. ⁸ Again, if we take into consideration the difference between quinqueremes and the triremes in which the Persians fought against the Greeks and the Athenians and Lacedaemonians against each other, we shall find that no forces of such magnitude ever met at sea. ⁹ This confirms the assertion I ventured to make at the outset that the progress of the Romans was not due to chance

and was not involuntary, as some among the Greeks choose to think, but that by schooling themselves in such vast and perilous enterprises it was perfectly natural that they not only gained the courage to aim at universal dominion, but executed their purpose. **64** Some of my readers will wonder what can be the reason why, now that they are masters of the world and far more puissant than formerly, they could neither man so many ships, nor put to sea with such large fleets. **2** Those, however, who are puzzled by this, will be enabled to understand the reason clearly when we come to deal with their political institutions, a subject not to be treated incidentally by the writer or followed inattentively by the reader. **3** It offers a noble spectacle and one almost wholly unrevealed hitherto, owing to the incompetence of the authors who have dealt with it, **4** some of whom sinned from lack of knowledge, while the account given by others is wanting in clearness and entirely unprofitable. **5** As regards, however, the war of which we are speaking, one will find its purpose and prosecution on the part of the two states equally characterized on both sides by enterprise, by lofty spirit, and above all by ambition for supremacy. **6** In individual courage indeed the Romans were far superior on the whole, but the general to whom the palm must be given both for daring and for genius is Hamilcar called Barcas, the actual father of that Hannibal who afterwards made war on the Romans.

65 Shortly after this treaty it so happened that both states found themselves placed in circumstances peculiarly similar. **2** For at Rome there followed civil war against the Falisci, but this they brought to a speedy and favourable conclusion, taking **Falerii** in a few days. **3** But the war the Carthaginians had to face was no little or contemptible one, being against their mercenaries, the Numidians and those Libyans who joined in the revolt. **4** In this war they encountered many great perils and finally were in danger of losing not only their territory, but their own liberty and the soil of their native town. **5** For several reasons I think it worth my while to dwell on this war, and, according to the plan I stated at the outset, to give a summary and brief narrative of it. **6** In the first place one could not indicate a better illustration of the nature and character of what is

vulgarly known as a truceless war than the circumstances of this one, ⁷ and secondly one can see very clearly from all that took place what kind of dangers those who employ mercenary forces should foresee and take early precautions to avert, as well as in what lies the great difference of character between a confused herd of barbarians ⁸ and men who have been brought up in an educated, law-abiding, and civilized community. But the most important thing is that from the events of that period one can get an idea of the causes of the Hannibalic war between the Romans and the Carthaginians. ⁹ As it is still a matter of dispute, not only among historians, but among the combatants, what were the actual causes of this latter war, it will be useful to students of history if I lay before them the explanation that is nearest to the truth.

66 It is this. When, at once on the conclusion of the treaty, Barcas had transferred his forces from Eryx to Lilybaeum he immediately resigned his command, and Gesco the commandant there took steps for sending the troops over to Africa. ² Foreseeing what was likely to happen, he very wisely embarked them in detachments and at certain intervals ³ in order to give the Carthaginians time to pay them their arrears as they arrived and to pack them off to their own countries before the next batch that crossed could catch them up. ⁴ Such was the idea Gesco had, and he managed to dispatch the troops in this manner, ⁵ but the Carthaginians partly because, owing to their recent outlay, they were not very well off for money, and partly because they were convinced that the mercenaries would let them off part of their arrears of pay, once they had got them all collected in Carthage, detained them there on their arrival in this hope, confining them to the city. ⁶ As they committed frequent offences there both by night and by day, the government in the first place, suspicious of their numbers and their present licentious spirit, asked their commanding officers, until arrangements had been made for paying them in full and those who were still missing had arrived, to withdraw them all to a town called Sicca, each man receiving a gold stater for pressing expenses. ⁷ The troops readily consented to leave the capital, but wished to leave their baggage there, as they had formerly done, thinking that they would be soon returning to be paid off. ⁸ The

Carthaginians, however, were afraid lest, longing to be with their wives or children after their recent protracted absence, they might in many cases refuse to leave Carthage, or, if they did, would come back again to their families, so that there would be no decrease of outrages in the city. ⁹ In anticipation then of this, they compelled the men, much against their will and in a manner calculated to cause much offence, to take their baggage with them. ¹⁰ The mercenaries, when assembled in Sicca, lived in a free and easy manner, having not enjoyed for a long time relaxation of discipline and leisure, things most prejudicial to a force raised abroad, and nearly always the very arch-instigators and sole causes of mutiny. ¹¹ At the same time, as they had nothing else to do, some of them began reckoning up the total pay due to them, all to their own advantage, and having arrived at a most exorbitant result, submitted that this was the sum they should demand from the Carthaginians. ¹² The whole force remembered the promises the generals had made to them in critical situations, and had great hopes and indeed quite expected that the government would thus correct in their favour the account of the sum they had earned. **67** The consequence was that when the total force was assembled at Sicca, and when Hanno, who was then commander-in-chief of Africa, came there and not only said that it was impossible to meet their claims and fulfil their hopes, but on the contrary tried by dwelling on the present heavy taxation and general distress of Carthage to induce them to renounce some of their stipulated wage, ² it produced at once a spirit of dissension and sedition, and the soldiers began to hold constant meetings, sometimes of particular nations and sometimes general. ³ As they were neither all of the same nationality nor spoke the same language, the camp was full of confusion and tumult and what is known as τύρβη or turbulence. ⁴ For the Carthaginian practice of employing hired troops of various nationalities is indeed well calculated to prevent them from combining rapidly in acts of insubordination or disrespect to their officers, ⁵ but in cases of an outburst of anger or of slanderous rumours or disaffection it is most prejudicial to all efforts to convey the truth to them, to calm their passions, or to show the ignorant their error. ⁶ Indeed, such forces, when once their anger is aroused against anyone, or slander spreads among them, are not content

with mere human wickedness, but end by becoming like wild beasts or men deranged, as happened in the present case. ⁷ Some of these troops were Iberians, some Celts, some Ligurians, and some from the Balearic islands; there were a good many Greek half-breeds, mostly deserters and slaves, but the largest portion consisted of Libyans. ⁸ It was therefore impossible to assemble them and address them as a body or to do so by any other means; for how could any general be expected to know all their languages? ⁹ And again to address them through several interpreters, repeating the same thing four or five times, was, if anything, more impracticable. ¹⁰ The only means was to make demands or entreaties through their officers, as Hanno continued to attempt on the present occasion, ¹¹ and even these did not understand all that was told them, or at times, after seeming to agree with the general, addressed their troops in just the opposite sense either from ignorance or from malice. The consequence was that everything was in a state of uncertainty, mistrust and confusion. ¹² For one thing, they thought the Carthaginians had acted purposely in not communicating with them through the generals who were acquainted with their performances in Sicily and who had made them the promises of bounties, but in sending one who had not been present on any of those occasions. ¹³ At length, then, refusing to treat with Hanno, thoroughly distrusting their divisional officers, and highly indignant with the Carthaginians, they marched on the capital and encamped at a distance of about one hundred and twenty stades from Carthage at the place called Tunis. They were more than twenty thousand in number.

68 Now, when there was no mending, it was brought home to the Carthaginians how blind they had been. ² For they had committed two great mistakes. The first was in collecting at one place so large a body of mercenaries while themselves they could hope for nothing from the fighting power of their civic force. ³ Their second error was even more serious, to let out of their hands the women and children of the mercenaries as well as their movables, all which would have served as hostages, giving themselves greater security in their deliberations about the circumstances and ensuring a more favourable reception for their demands. ⁴ Still now, in their alarm at the troops

encamping so near, they were ready to put up with anything in their eagerness to propitiate them, **5** sending out lavish supplies of provisions which they sold to them at any price they chose to pay and constantly dispatching envoys from the Senate, promising to meet all their demands as far as it was in their power. **6** These increased daily, the mercenaries continuing to invent new claims, gaining confidence as they witnessed the terror and cowardice of the Carthaginians, **7** and being convinced in their arrogance, owing to their success in Sicily against the Roman legions, that not only the Carthaginians, but any other people in the world would not readily face them in arms. **8** When, therefore, the Carthaginians had agreed to their claims for pay, they went a step further and asked for the value of the horses they had lost. **9** This also was conceded, whereupon they maintained that they ought to get the value of the rations of corn due to them for a considerable time at the highest price corn had stood at during the war. **10** In short they always went on devising some new claim, putting matters off so as to make it impossible to come to terms, a great many of them being disaffected and mutinous. **11** However, on the Carthaginians promising to concede everything in their power, they agreed to refer the disputed points to one of the generals who had been present in Sicily. **12** Now to Hamilcar Barcas, with whom they had served there, they were ill disposed, thinking that it was largely his fault that they had been slighted, since he never came himself as an envoy to them and was believed to have resigned his command voluntarily. **13** But being very favourably inclined to Gesco, who had been general in Sicily and had been full of attention to them in other matters and in that of their transport, they submitted the points in dispute to him. **69** Gesco, on reaching Tunis by sea bringing the money, at first conferred privately with the officers, and subsequently held meetings of the troops according to their nationalities. **2** He rebuked them for their past conduct, attempted to enlighten them about the present, but most of all dwelt on the future, begging them to show themselves well-disposed to those in whose pay they had been from the outset. **3** Finally he proceeded to discharge their arrears, paying off each nationality separately. **4** There was a certain Campanian, a runaway Roman slave, called Spendius, a man of great physical strength and remarkable courage in war.

5 He was afraid of his master coming to claim him, when, if given up, he would by Roman law be tortured and put to death. He therefore hesitated at nothing in his endeavour both by speech and action to break off the negotiations with the Carthaginians. **6** He was supported by a Libyan called Mathos, who was indeed a freeman and a member of the force, but had taken a leading part in the late disturbances. Consequently he stood in great fear of being singled out to bear the whole penalty and therefore was of one mind with Spendius. **7** Taking the Libyans aside, he pointed out to them that when the other nations departed to their own countries after being paid off, they would be left to bear the whole weight of the wrath of the Carthaginians, whose object it would be by the punishment they inflicted on them to terrorize all their Libyan subjects. **8** The men were soon stirred by such arguments, and availing themselves of the slender pretext that Gesco while discharging their pay postponed the compensation for the horses and corn, they at once held a meeting. **9** When Spendius and Mathos began to traduce and accuse Gesco and the Carthaginians, they were all ears, and listened with great attention, **10** but if anyone else came forward to offer an opinion, they did not even wait to find out if he were going to speak in favour of Spendius or against him, but at once stoned him to death. **11** Numbers both of the officers and privates perished thus in the different meetings, **12** and in fact this phrase "Stone him" was the only one that became intelligible to all the different nations, owing to the frequency of the act. They used to behave thus mostly when they held meetings after their morning meal in a drunken condition, **13** so that the moment anyone called out "Stone him," the stones flew from all sides and so quickly that it was impossible for anyone who once came forward to address them to escape. **14** As for this reason no one dared any longer to express an opinion, they appointed Mathos and Spendius Generals.

70 Gesco saw how complete was the disorganization and disturbance, but valuing more than anything the interest of his country and foreseeing that if these troops became utterly deaf to all considerations of humanity, Carthage would evidently be in the gravest danger, **2** he persisted, at great personal risk, in his conciliatory efforts, sometimes conferring privately with their officers,

3 and at other times summoning and addressing meetings of the separate nations. The Libyans, however, had not yet received their pay, and considering it overdue, came to him to demand it in a very insolent manner, when Gesco, thinking to rebuke their presumption, told them to go and ask Mathos their "General" for it. This aroused their anger to such a pitch, that without a moment's delay 4 they, first of all, seized on what money they could lay their hands on and next arrested Gesco and the Carthaginians who were with him. 5 As for Mathos and Spendius, thinking that the most expeditious means of setting war ablaze would be to commit some violation of law or good faith, they co-operated in the excesses of the soldiery, plundering the personal effects as well as the money-chests of the Carthaginians, and after subjecting Gesco and those with him to the outrage of putting them in fetters, gave them into custody. 6 From this time forward they were at open war with Carthage, having bound themselves by certain impious oaths contrary to the principles recognized by all mankind.

7 Such then was the origin and beginning of the war against the mercenaries, generally known as the Libyan war. 8 Mathos, having so far carried out his purpose, at once sent envoys to the Libyan towns urging them to strike a blow for liberty and imploring their support and practical assistance. 9 Hereupon, when nearly all the Libyans had agreed to join in the revolt against Carthage and willingly contributed troops and supplies, they divided their forces into two and undertook the sieges of Utica and Hippacritae, since these cities had refused to participate in the rebellion.

10 The Carthaginians had ever been accustomed to depend for their private supplies on the produce of the country, their public expenses for armaments and commissariat had been met by the revenue they derived from Libya, and they had always been in the habit of employing hired soldiers. 2 At the present moment not only did they find themselves deprived of all these resources at one blow, but actually saw them turned against themselves. Consequently they fell

into a state of utter depression and despondency, things having turned out quite otherwise than they expected. ³ For they had been much worn by the long continued war for Sicily, and had hoped that the peace would procure them some rest and a grateful period of tranquillity, ⁴ and what happened was just the reverse, as they were now threatened by the outbreak of a greater and more formidable war. ⁵ In the former case they were disputing the dominion of Sicily with the Romans, but now, with a civil war on their hands, they were about to fight for their own existence and that of their native city. ⁶ Besides neither had they a sufficient supply of arms, nor a proper navy, nor the material left to construct one, so many had been the battles in which they had been engaged at sea. They had not even the means of providing supplies and not a single hope of external assistance from friends or allies. ⁷ So it was now that they thoroughly realized how great is the difference between a war against a foreign state carried on over sea ⁸ and civil discord and disturbance.

727 They had chiefly themselves to thank for all these grievous mischances. During the former war they had thought themselves reasonably justified in making their government of the Libyans very harsh. ² They had exacted from the peasantry, without exception, half of their crops, and had doubled the taxation of the townsmen without allowing exemption from any tax or even a partial abatement to the poor. ³ They had applauded and honoured not those governors who treated the people with gentleness and humanity, but those who procured for Carthage the largest amount of supplies and stores and used the country people most harshly — Hanno for example. ⁴ The consequence was that the male population required no incitement to revolt — a mere messenger was sufficient — ⁵ while the women, who had constantly witnessed the arrest of their husbands and fathers for non-payment of taxes, solemnly bound themselves by oath in each city to conceal none of their belongings, and stripping themselves of their jewels contributed them ungrudgingly to the war fund. ⁶ Mathos and Spendius were thus so well off that not only could they pay the soldiers their arrears, as they had promised in inciting them to mutiny, but found themselves

furnished with ample means for a protracted war. ⁷ This teaches us that it is the right policy not only to look to the present, but to look forward still more attentively to the future.

73 Yet, although the Carthaginians were in such straits, they first of all appointed Hanno to the command, as he had, they thought, on a former occasion brought matters concerning Hecatompylus in Libya to a satisfactory conclusion; they next busied themselves with enrolling mercenaries and arming the citizens of military age. ² They also mustered and drilled their civic cavalry and got ready what ships they had left, consisting of triremes, quinqueremes and the largest of their skiffs. ³ Meanwhile Mathos, when about seventy thousand Libyans had joined him, divided them into several forces with which he maintained unmolested the sieges of Utica and Hippacritae, secured his main camp at Tunis and thus shut out the Carthaginians from all outer Libya. Carthage, I should explain, lies in a gulf, ⁴ on a promontory or peninsula surrounded mostly by the sea and in part by a lake. ⁵ The isthmus which connects it with Libya is about twenty-five stades in width and on the side of this isthmus which faces the sea, at no great distance from the capital, lies Utica, while Tunis is on the other side by the lake. ⁶ So that the mutineers, encamped now as they were before both of these towns and thus shutting off Carthage from the land, continued to threaten the capital itself, appearing before the walls sometimes by day ⁷ and sometimes by night and creating the utmost terror and commotion within.

74 Hanno was doing fairly well in the matter of outfit, his talent lying in that direction, but when it came to taking the field with his forces, he was another man. ² He had no idea how to avail himself of opportunities and generally showed an entire lack of experience and energy. ³ It was then that, as regards Utica, he began by coming to the help of the besieged and terrifying the enemy by his strong force of elephants, of which he had no less than a hundred; but when, in consequence of this, he had a chance of gaining a decisive success, he made such poor use of his advantage that he very nearly brought a catastrophe on the besieged, as well as on himself. ⁴ For

bringing from Carthage catapults, missiles and all requirements for a siege and encamping before the city he undertook the assault of the enemy's entrenched camp. ⁵ When the elephants forced their way into the camp, the enemy unable to face the weight of their attack all evacuated it. Many of them were mangled and killed by the elephants, ⁶ but those who escaped rallied on a steep hill overgrown with brushwood, relying on the natural security of the position. ⁷ Hanno had been accustomed to fight with Numidians and Libyans, who once they give way continue their flight for two or three days, trying to get as far away as possible. ⁸ Thinking then, on the present occasion too, that the war was over and he had secured a complete victory he took no precaution for the safety of his army and camp, but entered the city and occupied himself with the care of his person. ⁹ The mercenaries, who had rallied on the hill, were men schooled in the daring tactics of Barcas and accustomed from their fighting in Sicily to make in one day repeated retirements followed by fresh attacks. ¹⁰ At present, on seeing that the general was absent in the city, while the troops were at their ease owing to their success and streaming out of their camp, ¹¹ they drew themselves up and attacked the camp, putting many to the sword and compelling the rest to take refuge ignominiously under the walls and at the gates. ¹² They captured all the baggage and all the artillery of the besieged, which Hanno had brought out of the town and added to his own, thus putting it in the enemy's hands. ¹³ This was not the only occasion on which he acted so negligently, but a few days later at a place called Gorza, when the enemy were encamped opposite him and owing to their proximity he had four opportunities of beating them, twice in a pitched battle and twice by a surprise attack, ¹⁴ he is said in each case to have thrown them away by his heedlessness and lack of judgement.

~~75~~⁵ The Carthaginians, in consequence, seeing that he was mismanaging matters, again appointed Hamilcar Barcas to the command ² and dispatched him to the war on hand, giving him seventy elephants, all the additional mercenaries they had been able to collect, and the deserters from the enemy, besides their burgher forces, horse and foot, so that in all he had about ten thousand men.

3 Hamilcar, on his very first expedition, struck terror into the enemy by the unexpectedness of the attack, cowing their spirit, raising the siege of Utica, and showing himself worthy of his past exploits and of the high expectations of the populace. 4 What he accomplished in this campaign was as follows. On the neck of land connecting Carthage with Libya is a chain of hills difficult of access and with several passes to the country artificially cut in them. Mathos had posted guards in all those spots which were favourable for the passage of the hills. 5 In addition to this there is a river called Macaras⁹ which shuts off in certain places the access from the town to the country. This river is for the most part unfordable owing to the volume of water, and there is only one bridge, which Mathos had also secured, building a town at the bridge-head. 6 So that not only was it impossible for the Carthaginians to reach the country with an army, but it was not even an easy matter for single persons wishing to get through to elude the vigilance of the enemy. 7 Hamilcar, seeing all these obstacles, after passing in review every means and every chance of surmounting this difficulty about a passage, thought of the following plan. 8 He had noticed that when the wind blew strongly from certain quarters the mouth of the river got silted up and the passage became shallow just where it falls into the sea. He therefore got his force ready to march out, and keeping his project to himself, waited for this to occur. 9 When the right time came he started from Carthage at night, and without anyone noticing him, had by daybreak got his army across at the place mentioned. 10 Both those in the city and the enemy were taken by surprise, and Hamilcar advanced through the plain making for the guardians of the bridge. 76 Spendius, on learning what had happened, put his two forces in movement to meet in the plain and render mutual assistance to each other, those from the town near the bridge being not less than ten thousand in number and those from Utica over fifteen thousand. 2 When they got in sight of each other, thinking that they had caught the Carthaginians in a trap between them, they exhorted each other with loud shouts and engaged the enemy. 3 Hamilcar was advancing in the following order. In front were the elephants, after them the cavalry and light-armed troops and last of all the heavy-armed. 4 When he saw that the enemy were attacking him in such precipitation he ordered his

whole force to face about. ⁵ He bade those in front, after facing about, retire with all speed, and reversing the order of those who originally were in the rear he deployed them to await the onslaught of the enemy. ⁶ The Libyans and mercenaries, thinking that the Carthaginians were afraid of them and retreating, broke their ranks and closed with them vigorously. ⁷ But when the cavalry, on approaching the line of hoplites, wheeled round again and faced the Libyans, while at the same time the remainder of the Carthaginian army was coming up, the enemy were so much surprised that they at once turned and fled panic-stricken, in the same loose order and confusion in which they had advanced. ⁸ Consequently some of them came into collision with their comrades who were advancing in their rear with disastrous effect, causing the destruction both of themselves and the latter, but the larger number were trampled to death, the cavalry and elephants attacking them at close quarters. ⁹ About six thousand Libyans and mercenaries fell and nearly two thousand were made prisoners. The rest escaped, some to the town by the bridge and some to the camp before Utica. ¹⁰ Hamilcar, successful in this fashion, followed closely on the retreating enemy and took by assault the town by the bridge, the enemy in it deserting it and flying to Tunis. He next traversed the rest of the country, winning over some towns and taking others by assault. ¹¹ He thus restored some confidence and courage to the Carthaginians, delivering them in a measure from their previous despondency.

¹² Mathos for his own part continued to prosecute the siege of Hippacritae, advising Autaritus, the leader of the Gauls, and Spendius to harass the enemy, ² keeping away from the plains owing to the numbers of the cavalry and elephants opposed to them but marching along the foothills parallel to the Carthaginians and descending on them whenever they were on difficult ground. ³ While adopting this plan he at the same time sent messages to the Numidians and Libyans, begging them to come to his assistance and not lose the chance of gaining their freedom. ⁴ Spendius, taking with him from Tunis a force of about six thousand men in all drawn from all the tribes, advanced along the slopes parallel to the Carthaginians. ⁵ He had also with him

Autaritus and his Gauls numbering only about two thousand, the rest of the original corps having deserted to the Romans when encamped near Eryx. ⁶ Hamilcar had established his camp in a plain surrounded by mountains, and just at this time Spendius was joined by the Numidian and Libyan reinforcements. ⁷ The Carthaginians, suddenly finding the additional force of Libyans in their front, and that of the Numidians in their rear, while Spendius was on their flank, were in a very difficult situation, from which it was not easy to extricate themselves.

⁷⁸ There was a certain Naravas, a Numidian of high rank and full of martial spirit. He had always had that attachment to the Carthaginians which was traditional in his family, and it was now strengthened by his admiration for Hamilcar. ² Thinking that this was a favourable opportunity for meeting Hamilcar and introducing himself, he rode up to the camp escorted by about a hundred Numidians. ³ Coming close to the palisade he remained there quite fearlessly making signals with his hand. ⁴ Hamilcar wondered what his object could be and sent out a horseman to meet him, when he said that he desired an interview with the general. ⁵ The Carthaginian leader remaining still much amazed and distrustful, Naravas handed over his horse and spears to his attendants, ⁶ and very boldly came into the camp unarmed. The Carthaginians looked on in mixed admiration and amazement at his daring, ⁷ but they met and received him, and when he was admitted to the interview, he said that he wished all the Carthaginians well but particularly desired the friendship of Barcas, and this was why he had come to introduce himself and offer his cordial assistance in all actions and enterprises. ⁸ Hamilcar, on hearing this, was so delighted at the young man's courage in coming to him and his simple frankness at their interview that not only did he consent to associate him in his undertakings but swore to give him his daughter in marriage ⁹ if he remained loyal to Carthage.

The agreement having thus been made, Naravas came in with the Numidians under his command, about two thousand in number, ¹⁰ and Hamilcar, thus reinforced, offered battle owing

to the enemy. Spendius, after effecting a junction with the Libyans, descended into the plain and attacked the Carthaginians. ¹¹ The battle was a stubborn one, but ended in the victory of Hamilcar, the elephants fighting well and Naravas rendering brilliant services. ¹² Autaritus and Spendius escaped, but with the loss of about ten thousand killed and four thousand prisoners. ¹³ After the victory Hamilcar gave permission to those of the prisoners who chose to join his own army, arming them with the spoils of the fallen enemies; ¹⁴ those who were unwilling to do so he collected and addressed saying that up to now he pardoned their offences, and therefore they were free to go their several ways, wherever each man chose, ¹⁵ but in future he threatened that if any of them bore arms against Carthage he would if captured meet with inevitable punishment.

793 About the same time the mercenaries who garrisoned Sardinia, emulous of the exploits of Mathos and Spendius, attacked the Carthaginians in the island. ² They began by shutting up in the citadel and putting to death Bostar, the commander of the foreign contingent, and his compatriots. ³ Next, when the Carthaginians sent Hanno over in command of a fresh force, this force deserted him ⁴ and joined the mutineers, who thereupon took him prisoner and at once crucified him. After this, devising the most exquisite torments, they tortured and murdered all the Carthaginians in the island, and when they had got all the towns into their power ⁵ continued to hold forcible possession of Sardinia, until they quarrelled with the natives, and were driven out by them to Italy. ⁶ Thus was Sardinia lost to the Carthaginians, an island of great extent, most thickly populated and most fertile. ⁷ Most authors have described it at length, and I do not think it necessary to repeat statements which no one disputes.

821 Mathos and Spendius, as well as the Gaul Autaritus, were apprehensive of the effect of Hamilcar's leniency to the prisoners, fearing that the Libyans and the greater part of the mercenaries might thus be won over and hasten to avail themselves of the proffered immunity. They therefore set themselves to devise some infamous crime which would make the hatred of the

troops for Carthage more savage. ⁹ They decided to call a general meeting and at this they introduced a letter-bearer supposed to have been sent by their confederates in Sardinia. ¹⁰ The letter advised them to keep careful guard over Gesco and all the others whom they had, as above narrated, treacherously arrested at Tunis, since some persons in the camp were negotiating with the Carthaginians about their release. ¹¹ Spendius, seizing on this pretext, begged them in the first place to have no reliance on the Carthaginian general's reported clemency to the prisoners. ¹² "It is not," he said, "with the intention of sparing their lives that he has taken this course regarding his captives, but by releasing them he designs to get us into his power, so that he may take vengeance not on some, but on all of us who trust him." ¹³ Moreover, he warned them to take care lest by giving up Gesco and the others they incur the contempt of their enemies and seriously damage their own situation by allowing to escape them so able a man and so good a general, who was sure to become their most formidable enemy. ¹⁴ He had not finished his speech when in came another post supposed to be from Tunis with a message similar to that from Sardinia. **80** Autaritus the Gaul was the next speaker. He said that the only hope of safety for them was to abandon all reliance on the Carthaginians. ² Whoever continued to look forward to clemency from them could be no true ally of their own. ³ Therefore he asked them to trust those, to give a hearing to those, to attend to those only who bring the most hateful and bitterest accusations against the Carthaginians, and to regard speakers on the other side as traitors and enemies. ⁴ Finally, he recommended them to torture and put to death not only Gesco and those arrested with him, but all the Carthaginians they had subsequently taken prisoners. ⁵ He was much the most effective speaker in their councils, because a number of them could understand him. ⁶ He had been a long time in the service and had learned Phoenician, a language which had become more or less agreeable to their ears owing to the length of the previous war. ⁷ His speech therefore met with universal approbation, and he retired from the platform amid applause. ⁸ Numerous speakers from each nationality now came forward all together, maintaining that the prisoners should be spared at least the infliction of torture in view of Gesco's previous kindness to them. Nothing,

however, they said was intelligible, as they were all speaking together and each stating his views in his own language. ⁹ But the moment it was disclosed that they were begging for a remission of the sentence someone among the audience called out "Stone them," and they instantly stoned all the speakers to death. ¹⁰ These unfortunates, mangled as if by wild beasts, were carried off for burial by their friends. ¹¹ Spendius and his men then led out from the camp Gesco and the other prisoners, in all about seven hundred. Taking them a short distance away, they first of all cut off their hands, ¹² beginning with Gesco, that very Gesco whom a short time previously they had selected from all the Carthaginians, proclaiming him their benefactor and referring the points in dispute to him. ¹³ After cutting off the hands they cut off the wretched men's other extremities too, and after thus mutilating them and breaking their legs, threw them still alive into a trench.

819 The Carthaginians, when news came of this unhappy event, could take no action, but their indignation was extreme, and in the heat of it they sent messengers to Hamilcar and their other general Hanno imploring them to come and avenge the unfortunate victims. ² To the assassins they sent heralds begging that the bodies might be given up to them. ³ Not only was this request refused but the messengers were told to send neither herald nor envoy again, as any who came would meet with the same punishment that had just befallen Gesco. ⁴ With regard to treatment of prisoners in the future, the mutineers passed a resolution and engaged each other to torture and kill every Carthaginian and send back to the capital with his hands cut off every ally of Carthage, and this practice they continued to observe carefully. ⁵ No one looking at this would have any hesitation in saying that not only do men's bodies and certain of the ulcers and tumours afflicting them become so to speak savage and brutalized and quite incurable, but that this is true in a much higher degree of their souls. ⁶ In the case of ulcers, if we treat them, they are sometimes inflamed by the treatment itself and spread more rapidly, while again if we neglect them they continue, in virtue of their own nature, to eat into the flesh and never rest until they have utterly destroyed the tissues beneath. ⁷ Similarly such malignant lividities and putrid ulcers often grow in the human

soul, that no beast becomes at the end more wicked or cruel than man. **8** In the case of men in such a state, if we treat the disease by pardon and kindness, they think we are scheming to betray them or deceive them, and become more mistrustful and hostile to their would-be benefactors, **9** but if, on the contrary, we attempt to cure the evil by retaliation they work up their passions to outrival ours, until there is nothing so abominable or so atrocious that they will not consent to do it, imagining all the while that they are displaying a fine courage. **10** Thus at the end they are utterly brutalized and no longer can be called human beings. Of such a condition the origin and most potent cause lies in bad manners and customs and wrong training from childhood, but there are several contributory ones, the chief of which is habitual violence and unscrupulousness on the part of those in authority over them. **11** All these conditions were present in this mercenary force as a whole and especially in their chiefs.

82 This desperation of the enemy made Hamilcar anxious, and he begged Hanno to join him, being convinced that if both armies united, an end would be put sooner to the whole war.

2 Meanwhile he continued to put to the sword those of the enemy who were conquered in the field, while those brought to him captive prisoners he threw to the elephants to be trampled to death, as it was clear to him that the rebellion would never be stamped out until the enemy were utterly exterminated.

3 The prospects of the Carthaginians in the war now seemed much brighter, but the tide of events suddenly turned completely against them. **4** For when the two generals met, they quarrelled so seriously, that this difference caused them not only to neglect many opportunities of striking a blow at the enemy, but to afford many such to the latter. **5** The Carthaginians perceiving this, ordered one of the two to leave his post and the other to remain in sole command, leaving the choice to the troops. **6** In addition to this they suffered the total loss at sea in a storm, of the supplies they were conveying from the place they call Emporia, supplies on which they entirely

relied for their commissariat and other needs. **7** And again, as I said above, they had lost Sardinia, an island which had always been of great service to them in difficult circumstances. **8** The severest blow of all, however, was the defection of Hippacritae and Utica, the only two cities in Libya which had not only bravely faced the present war, but had gallantly held out during the invasion of Agathocles and that of the Romans; indeed they never had on any occasion given the least sign of hostility to Carthage. **9** But now, apart from their unjustifiable defection to the cause of the Libyans, their sympathies so suddenly changed, that they exhibited the greatest friendship and loyalty to the rebels, while beginning to show every symptom of passionate and determined hatred of Carthage. **10** After butchering the troops the Carthaginians had sent to assist them, about five hundred in number, together with their commander, they threw all the bodies from the wall, and surrendered the city to the Libyans. They would not even give the Carthaginians the permission they requested to bury their unfortunate compatriots. **11** Mathos and Spendius in the meantime, elated by these events, undertook the siege of Carthage itself. **12** Barcas had now been joined in the command by Hannibal, the general whom the citizens had dispatched to the army, on the soldiers voting that Hanno should be the one to retire, when the decision was left in their hands by the Carthaginians at the time the two generals had quarrelled. **13** Accompanied then by this Hannibal and by Naravas, Hamilcar scoured the country, intercepting the supplies of Mathos and Spendius, receiving the greatest assistance in this and all other matters from the Numidian Naravas.

14 ²²⁷ Such were the positions of the field forces. **83** The Carthaginians, being shut in on all sides, were obliged to resort to an appeal to the states in alliance with them. **2** Hiero during the whole of the present war had been most prompt in meeting their requests, **3** and was now more complaisant than ever, being convinced that it was in his own interest for securing both his Sicilian dominions and his friendship with the Romans, that Carthage should be preserved, and that the stronger power should not be able to attain its ultimate object entirely without effort. In

this he reasoned very wisely and sensibly, ⁴ for such matters should never be neglected, and we should never contribute to the attainment by one state of a power so preponderant, that none dare dispute with it even for their acknowledged rights. ⁵ But now the Romans as well as Hiero observed loyally the engagements the treaty imposed on them. ⁶ At first there had been a slight dispute between the two states for the following reason. ⁷ The Carthaginians when they captured at sea traders coming from Italy to Libya with supplies for the enemy, brought them into Carthage, and there were now in their prisons as many as five hundred such. ⁸ The Romans were annoyed at this, but when on sending an embassy, they recovered all the prisoners by diplomatic means, they were so much gratified, that in return they gave back to the Carthaginians all the remaining prisoners from the Sicilian war ⁹ and henceforth gave prompt and friendly attention to all their requests. ¹⁰ They gave permission to their merchants to export all requirements for Carthage, but not for the enemy, ¹¹ and shortly afterwards, when the mercenaries in Sardinia on revolting from Carthage invited them to occupy the island, they refused. Again on the citizens of Utica offering to surrender to them they did not accept, but held to their treaty engagements.

p221 The Carthaginians, then, on thus obtaining assistance from their friends continued to withstand the siege. **84** But Mathos and Spendius were just as much in the position of besieged as of besiegers. ² Hamilcar had reduced them to such straits for supplies that they were finally forced to raise the siege. ³ A short time afterwards, collecting a picked force of mercenaries and Libyans to the number of about fifty thousand and including Zarzas the Libyan and those under his command, they tried again their former plan of marching in the open parallel to the enemy and keeping a watch on Hamilcar. ⁴ They avoided level ground, as they were afraid of the elephants and Naravas' horse, but they kept on trying to anticipate the enemy in occupying positions on the hills and narrow passes. ⁵ In this campaign they were quite equal to the enemy in terms of assault and enterprise, but were often worsted owing to their want of tactical skill. ⁶ This was, it seems, an opportunity for seeing by the light of actual fact, how much the methods gained

by experience and the skill of a general, differ from a soldier's inexperience in the art of war and mere unreasoning routine. ⁷ For in many partial engagements, Hamilcar, like a good draught-player, by cutting off and surrounding large numbers of the enemy, destroyed them without their resisting, ⁸ while in the more general battles he would sometimes inflict large loss by enticing them into unsuspected ambushes and sometimes throw them into panic by appearing when they least expected it by day or by night. All those he captured were thrown to the elephants. ⁹ Finally, taking them by surprise and encamping opposite to them in a position unfavourable for action on their part but favouring his own strong point — generalship — he brought them to such a pass, that not daring to risk a battle and unable to escape, as they were entirely surrounded by a trench and palisade, they were at last driven by famine to eat each other — ¹⁰ a fitting retribution at the hands of Providence for their violation of all law human and divine in their treatment of their neighbours. ¹¹ They did not venture to march out and do battle, as they were faced by the certainty of defeat and condign punishment for all captured, and they did not even think of asking for terms, as they had their evil deeds on their conscience. ¹² Always expecting the relief from Tunis that their leaders continued to promise them, there was no crime against themselves that they scrupled to commit. **85** But when they had used up their prisoners in this abominable manner by feeding on them, and had used up their slaves, and no help came from Tunis, ² and their leaders saw that their persons were in obvious danger owing to the dreadful extremity to which the common soldiers were reduced, Autaritus, Zarzas and Spendius decided to give themselves up to the enemy and discuss terms with Hamilcar. ³ They therefore dispatched a herald, and when they had obtained leave to send envoys, they went, ten in all, to the Carthaginians. ⁴ The terms Hamilcar made with them were, that the Carthaginians might choose from the enemy any ten they wished, the remainder being free to depart with one tunic apiece. ⁵ These terms having been agreed to, Hamilcar at once said that by virtue of them he chose the ten envoys. By this means the Carthaginians got into their power Autaritus, Spendius, and the other principal leaders. ⁶ The Libyans, when they learnt of their officers' arrest, thought they had been

betrayed, as they were ignorant of the treaty, and rushed to arms, ⁷ but Hamilcar, surrounding them (more than forty thousand) with his elephants and the rest of his forces, cut them all to pieces. This occurred near the place called the Saw; it got this name from its resemblance to the tool so called.

86³By this achievement Hamilcar again made the Carthaginians very hopeful of better fortune, although by this time they had nearly given up all for lost. In conjunction with Naravas and Hannibal he now raided the country and its towns. ² The Libyans in general gave in and went over to them owing to the recent victory, and after reducing most of the cities, the Carthaginians reached Tunis and began to besiege Mathos. ³ Hannibal encamped on the side of the town next Carthage and Hamilcar on the opposite side. ⁴ Their next step was to take Spendius and the other prisoners up to the walls and crucify them there in the sight of all. ⁵ Mathos noticed that Hannibal was guilty of negligence and over-confidence, and attacking his camp, put many Carthaginians to the sword and drove them all out of the camp. All the baggage fell into the rebels' hands and they made Hannibal himself prisoner. ⁶ Taking him at once to Spendius' cross they tortured him cruelly there, and then, taking Spendius down from the cross, they crucified Hannibal alive on it and slew round the body of Spendius thirty Carthaginians of the highest rank. ⁷ Thus did Fortune, as if it were her design to compare them, give both the belligerents in turn cause and opportunity for inflicting on each other the cruellest punishments. ⁸ Owing to the distance between the two camps it was some time before Hamilcar heard of the sortie and attack, and even then he was slow to give assistance owing to the difficult nature of the interjacent ground. ⁹ He therefore broke up his camp before Tunis and on reaching the river Macaras, encamped at its mouth by the seaside.

87⁵The suddenness of this reverse took the Carthaginians by surprise, and they became again despondent and low-spirited. It was only the other day that their spirits had begun to revive so they at once fell again. ² Yet they did not omit to take steps for their safety. ³ They appointed a

committee of thirty senators and dispatched them to Hamilcar accompanied by Hanno, the general who had previously retired from command, but now resumed it, and by all their remaining citizens of military age, whom they had armed as a sort of forlorn hope. ⁴ They enjoined these commissioners to put an end by all means in their power to the two generals' long-standing quarrel, and to force them, in view of the circumstances, to be reconciled. ⁵ The senators, after they had brought the generals together, pressed them with so many and varied arguments, that at length Hanno and Barcas were obliged to yield and do as they requested. ⁶ After their reconciliation they were of one mind, and consequently everything went as well as the Carthaginians could wish, ⁷ so that Mathos, unsuccessful in the many partial engagements which took place around the place called Leptis and some other cities, at length resolved to decide matters by a general battle, the Carthaginians being equally anxious for this. ⁸ Both sides then, with this purpose, called on all their allies to join them for the battle and summoned in the garrisons from the towns, as if about to stake their all on the issue. ⁹ When they were each ready to attack, they drew up their armies confronting each other and at a preconcerted signal closed. ¹⁰ The Carthaginians gained the victory, most of the Libyans falling in the battle, while the rest escaped to a certain city and soon afterwards surrendered, but Mathos himself was taken by the enemy.

88⁷The rest of Libya at once submitted to Carthage after the battle, ² but Hippacritae^o and Utica still held out, feeling they had no reasonable grounds to expect terms in view of their having been so proof to all considerations of mercy and humanity when they first rebelled. ³ This shows us that even in such offences it is most advantageous to be moderate and abstain from unpardonable excesses willingly. ⁴ However, Hanno besieging one town and Barcas the other soon compelled them to accept such conditions and terms as the Carthaginians thought fit to impose.

⁵ This Libyan war, that had brought Carthage into such peril, resulted not only in the

Carthaginians regaining possession of Libya, but in their being able to inflict exemplary punishment on the authors of the rebellion. ⁶ The last scene in it was a triumphal procession of the young men leading Mathos through the town and inflicting on him all kinds of torture. ⁷ This war had lasted for three years and four months, and it far excelled all wars we know of in cruelty and defiance of principle.

⁸ **The** Romans about the same time, on the invitation of the mercenaries who had deserted to them from Sardinia, undertook an expedition to that island. ⁹ When the Carthaginians objected on the ground that the sovereignty of Sardinia was rather their own than Rome's, and began preparations for punishing those who were the cause of its revolt, ¹⁰ the Romans made this the pretext of declaring war on them, alleging that the preparations were not against Sardinia, but against themselves. ¹¹ The Carthaginians, who had barely escaped destruction in this last war, were in every respect ill-fitted at this moment to resume hostilities with Rome. ¹² Yielding therefore to circumstances, they not only gave up Sardinia, but agreed to pay a further sum of twelve hundred talents to the Romans to avoid going to war for the present. Such then was the nature of these events.

The Translator's Notes:

1 they sailed: It is often necessary to use the word "sail," but it should be borne in mind that the ships were propelled chiefly by oars.



2 They were constructed as follows In this gangway was an oblong hole: The gangway (36 feet long) was composed of two parts united by a joint, the near part (12 feet long), which always remained horizontal, and the far part (24 feet long) which could be drawn up at right angles to the near part, thus reaching the top of the pole (also 24 feet long) and remaining vertical until lowered. The whole could be moved round the pole which pierced it at the junction of the two parts.



3 in column with their prows directed outwards: This can only mean that the prow of each ship was directed to the open sea and not to the ship in front of it; *i.e.* they were in echelon.



4 between the rising of Orion and that of Sirius: Sirius rises in July, Orion early in December.



5 Lucius Junius Pullus: This is a mistake; L. Junius was one of the consuls of 249 B.C., the colleague of Publius.



6 Eryx is much the biggest mountain in Sicily after Etna: This is not a fact.



7 Hercte: Now Monte Pellegrino.



8 a harbour very well situated. . .: This cannot be the harbour of Palermo, which was in the hands of the Romans, and must be looked for on the opposite side of Monte Pellegrino.



9 Macaras: The same as Bagraclas.

Thayer's Note:

^a **ravens:** Now usually called by the Latin word, **corvus**. For a somewhat clearer description, see [the article in Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities](#).



^b **Eryx is a mountain on the sea on that side of Sicily which looks towards Italy:** this statement may or may not be accurate, depending on exactly what Polybius had in mind; but in the general context of the Punic Wars, it is also misleading. Mt. Eryx (750 m), about 6 km ENE of the port of Trapani, the ancient Drepanum, is slightly inland. The nearest coasts are equidistant at 3.5 km: the N coast that looks towards Italy, and the W coast that looks towards Sardinia, whereas the S coast, which can be said to start at Marsala, is over 40 km away.

That said, in the context of the Punic Wars, the most important feature of Mt. Eryx is that from its summit, on a clear day, one can see Africa: the Cap Bon in Tunisia is 171 km distant. The nearest point of the Italian mainland is Reggio Emilia at 270 km, and the nearest point of Sardinia is Cape Carbonara at just under 300 km. Thus, *from a strategic point of view*, Mt. Eryx itself "faces" not Italy but Africa, and would have been a very useful lookout over the sea towards Carthage. Here, however, Polybius represents Junius as having a *tactical* motive: the general is concerned merely with holding Drepanum; so Eryx is located only in a general way, much as one would point to the

place on a map.

I am indebted to Jona Lendering for alerting me to this point; the reader interested in further details should see [the Eryx page at Livius](#).

Images with borders lead to more information. The thicker the border, the more information. ([Details here.](#))

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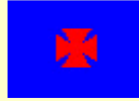
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Book III

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(Vol. I)

Polybius
The Histories

p241

Book II

1 In the preceding book I stated in the first place at what date the Romans having subjected Italy began to concern themselves in enterprises outside the peninsula; next I narrated how they crossed to Sicily and what

