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Pompey, the Man, as Delineated by Cicero in His Correspondence, in the Light of Other Ancient Testimony

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POMPEY THE MAN, AS DELINEATED BY CICERO
IN HIS CORRESPONDENCE, IN THE LIGHT
OF OTHER ANCIENT TESTIMONY

by

Edward Francis Stace

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

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LIFE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Pompey the Great is one of the major enigmas of history. He rose spectacularly to a position of power, and glory in the Roman state; he as spectacularly fell from that eminence into defeat and dishonor. He was successively almost reverently loved and cordially detested -- more, he inspired both love and dislike at one and the same time in the very same people. Yet, despite the enmities he had made and the ignominy of his decline, he enjoyed a high reputation for many years after his death; an aura of glory long hung around his name. Seneca, sharp as he was at times in his censure of Pompey, yet saw fit to call him "decus istud firmamentumque imperii";¹ to Velleius Paterculus he was "princeps Romani nominis";² and Lucan, in the supposed words of Cato, who bore Pompey no love, proclaims him "clarum et venerabile nomen gentibus."³ On the other hand, in modern times his oblivion is all but complete; historians exhibit an almost universal uniformity in their treatment of Pompey's place in the scheme of things. He is a secondary character; he is mentioned more or less in passing, as his career high-lights or falls foul of

1 Seneca, Dialogi vi.20.

2 Velleius Paterculus ii.53.

3 Lucan ix.202-203.

those of other⁴ apparently more worthy heroes; he is merely the foil to the greatness of such men as Caesar and Cicero. Loaded shelves of every library testify to the importance which scholars accord to the names of Cicero and Caesar; the most painstaking research will unearth but a handful of works on the career of Pompey. In spite of the pre-eminence to which he at one time attained, in the judgment of history he has, to use a modern colloquialism, "missed the boat."

There may be a number of reasons why Pompey has fallen into the historical dust-bin. His life was involved in and immediately followed by events so spectacular and of such lasting and far-reaching effects, that it is not surprising that he is overwhelmed and his glory dimmed by the luster of his more successful antagonist, Caesar. Another factor that may explain Pompey's fall into oblivion is the fact that, save for a few trifling exceptions,⁴ he has left no extant writings. Caesar took great care to vindicate his position and perpetuate his name in pertinent written documents; all that is known of Pompey -- his character, his acts, his aims and ambitions -- is gathered from the writings of others, some friendly, some hostile. He has left no apologia, nothing to vindicate his career, nothing to keep his memory fresh. Such an omission may seem of minor consequence in establishing the historical position of a personality; yet it is to be noted, especially in modern times, that the accomplishments of the so-called great are frequently accompanied by a desire and an effort to, as the saying goes, "tell the world about it." How

⁴ There are some half-dozen letters, one recorded in Sallust's Historiae, the others preserved among the correspondence of Cicero.

well this was⁴ practiced by Cicero and how greatly it has enhanced his reputation is too well known to need any further elaboration.

Whatever may be the extrinsic reasons, however, for the diminution of Pompey's historical stature, the character, the personality, the capabilities of the man himself must be a deciding factor in any judgment of his importance in his own times and of his claim to the remembrance of posterity. It is this human element that is to be the subject of the present thesis. What was Pompey the Man -- what were his abilities and his deficiencies, his personality, his character? It would seem that the answers to these questions should be easily ascertainable; there exists, and has existed for centuries, a mass of written evidence that, properly correlated and analyzed, should readily furnish a clear picture of the man Pompey. Yet, in spite of this wealth of evidence, in spite of years of learned investigation and discussion, there is still, after twenty centuries, the widest disagreement among scholars as to the real nature of Pompey's character, personality and capabilities. Even as to his ability as a military leader -- generally acknowledged to be his greatest claim to fame -- there is no unanimity. Some will have it that his military reputation rested on victories won against far inferior opponents;⁵ others that in talent he was superior even to his conqueror, Caesar;⁶

5 Frank Burr Marsh, A History of the Roman World from 146 to 30 B. C., London, [1935], 240.

6 Henry G. Liddell, A History of Rome, London, 1855, II, 456.

a number praise his capacity for organization;⁷ Mommsen⁸ calls him timid. In regard to other facets of his life, there is still greater disagreement. His "whole career . . . was violent and illicit";⁹ he was a "deep dissembler,"¹⁰ a "solemn waverer";¹¹ yet, he was "honest and well-meaning,"¹² and in the "sharp thrust and parry of party politics, . . . helpless as a child";¹³ he was "neither a profligate nor an unscrupulous adventurer,"¹⁴ but he was "not slow to appropriate what belonged to others";¹⁵ "his affable manners and generosity in giving won him general favour,"¹⁶ but "he was destitute of the real generosity which makes and retains friends"¹⁷ and "without tact, taste,

7 Charles Oman, Seven Roman Statesmen of the Later Republic, New York, [1934], 236; Cyril E. Robinson, A History of the Roman Republic, New York, [1932], 317.

8 Theodor Mommsen, The History of Rome, trans. William Purdie Dickson, new ed., New York, 1905, IV, 272.

9 Ronald Syme, The Roman Revolution, Oxford, 1939, 316.

10 Charles Merivale, The Fall of the Roman Republic, new ed., London, 1895, 168.

11 W. E. Heitland, The Roman Republic, Cambridge, England, 1909, III, 368.

12 J. L. Strachan-Davidson, Cicero and the Fall of the Roman Republic, New York, [1894], 250.

13 Robinson, History, 317.

14 Oman, Seven Statesmen, 236.

15 Liddell, History, II, 456.

16 Ibid.

17 Merivale, Fall of Republic, 168.

or affability.¹⁸ Instances of this kind might be multiplied, but those given should be sufficient to confirm the truth of the initial statement of this thesis.

If, then, after so many centuries, so many eminent scholars have not been able to come to any agreement in their analysis of Pompey the man, what exactly is the end and scope of the investigation proposed herein? The present writer does not presume, in a work of this kind, to be able to say the last word on the subject. In the analysis of human character and personality, it is doubtful whether the last word ever can be said. In the case of Pompey there is the added difficulty that all the available data, but for the trivial exceptions previously noted, are, as it were, second-hand. The record of his actions and the estimate of his character must be sought for in the writings of others than himself, all of whom have their own personal feelings, ideas, prejudices and ambitions. No more is aimed at in this thesis, therefore, than to gather together in one place and to correlate and analyze the various opinions of Pompey's activities found in the writings of his contemporaries and near-contemporaries, who were in a position in time and place to ascertain facts and form reasonable judgments. The writers whose works will furnish the material for the investigation are principally, though not exclusively, Romans (that is, of the city of Rome) and, if not contemporary with Pompey, principally of the first century A. D.

Of these ancient authors, Cicero is by far the most important, both

18 W. W. How and H. D. Leigh, A History of Rome to the Death of Caesar, new impression, New York, 1927, 463.

by reason of the vast quantity of pertinent written evidence that he has left and the relationship he bore to Pompey. The two men were almost exact contemporaries: they were born the same year and died but five years apart; the public life of each was closely involved with that of the other; and there was, in some degree and with some qualification, a bond of friendship between them. An association so close, both in public and in private life, could not fail to give Cicero the opportunity for a clear insight into the character of Pompey. When that opportunity is coupled with prolific literary activity, the result is a vast wealth of information and opinion on the subject of the great Pompey. The information may at times be garbled and the opinion colored by personal considerations of the author, but the writings of Cicero have to be admitted as the chief source of any study of the life of Pompey. In a goodly number of his writings Cicero has found occasion to speak of Pompey; it is in the correspondence, however, that his pen flows most freely on the subject and, it is to be believed, most honestly and impartially. The Letters of Cicero, therefore, are to form the nucleus about which the discussion of Pompey in this thesis is to be built. In fact, they will be the only part, with but a rare exception or two, of Cicero's works that will enter into the investigation. Only one reason for this need be cited: the orations comprise the other large body of writing, apart from the letters, that has reference to Pompey, and by their very nature political speeches are ill-suited to the expression of unbiased, objective truth. Such a speech, for instance, as the Pro Lege Manilia is no more likely to present a true portrait of Pompey than it is to express Cicero's real sentiments; it is a political speech and, as such, is to be viewed with suspicion.

The letters, however, are of a quite different nature. They have been universally acclaimed as one of the most important literary monuments bequeathed by the ancients to posterity. They have been called "the very marrow of Roman cultural history";¹⁹ in them "one of the most interesting epochs in the annals of the world is unfolded to us in a series of cabinet pictures by a master hand."²⁰ And these pictures present their subjects "in the aspect which they presented to their friends and associates, not in the aspect which they presented to the world and to the historian."²¹ Therein lies the value of the letters. They are free from the taint that attaches to the speeches, in that they were not, for the most part, written for publication and are, therefore, as honest and impartial as a man of Cicero's peculiarly sensitive temperament could make them. There are exceptions, of course; some of the letters were no doubt written with the realization that they would be handed about and these, therefore, could cloak ulterior motives. But the majority were private letters and, as such, were of a strictly confidential nature. How confidential Cicero himself intended them to be is shown by the caution he exercised in their dispatch; in a number of instances he remarks on the difficulty of finding trustworthy carriers and on the necessity of cloaking his thoughts in a kind of code of vague generalities, lest the documents miscarry. The trustworthiness of the letters is further con-

19 Tenney Frank, "Cicero," Proceedings of the British Academy, 1932, London, [1933], 115.

20 Robert Yelverton Tyrrell and Louis Claude Purser, The Correspondence of M. Tullius Cicero, Dublin, 1879-1901, I, lxxvi.

21 Ibid., lxxvii.

firmed by the nature of the man to whom the greater part of the correspondence was addressed, Cicero's bosom friend, Atticus. Atticus, had he chosen, could probably have been one of the most astute politicians of his age. He was a man who knew how to keep his counsel, calm, level-headed, and so adept at maintaining his balance between opposing forces that in the final struggle between Pompey and Caesar he was able to remain on the best of terms with both of them.²² It was in such a man that

Cicero found the friend exactly fitted to supplement his own qualities. The warm impulsive heart of the one sought repose in the easy-tempered, stable, appreciative nature of the other. The impetuous, indiscreet man of genius needed a calm, sympathising and absolutely safe companion, in whose ear he could breathe all his fears and hopes and doubts; through all the years of their intercourse never a word escaped through Atticus which could add to Cicero's embarrassments. It is from this perfect confidence that the letters to Atticus derive their peculiar interest and their peculiar value. Cicero is no more likely to deceive Atticus than a patient is likely to lie to his physician; the statement of the circumstances which he lays before his counsellor may sometimes be erroneous, but it is never wilfully misleading.²³

Moreover, the internal evidence of the letters themselves proves their confidential nature and thus indicates their probable sincerity. To a man of Cicero's temperament, eager for present fame and the plaudits of posterity, it is unthinkable that he would have expressed himself in the fashion he did, had he thought that his correspondence would be viewed by any other than the destined recipient. Not long before his death, when the question arose of the collection and publication of his letters, he insists on the necessity of

²² Nepos xxv.7.

²³ Strachan-Davidson, Cicero and Fall, 69.

rereading and correcting them.²⁴ There is no doubt that, if he had had the opportunity of editing them, there is a great deal that he would have excised or rewritten. That he did not do so is obvious. In too many of the letters he reveals himself in a too unflattering light to have allowed them to be made public as they were. It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that in his correspondence Cicero was at his sincerest and that the opinions he put to paper, though perhaps erroneous and certainly fickle, were the true expressions of his sentiments of the moment.

The order of the thesis, then, will be, first, to analyse and correlate the judgments of Pompey expressed in the letters of Cicero. These judgments may be viewed from several different angles, as they illuminate various facets of Pompey's life and career: he can be studied as a soldier, as a statesman, and as a man in his everyday relations with his friends and contemporaries. The expressed opinions of Cicero will, therefore, be grouped under these three aspects, and an attempt will be made to determine, if possible, his sincere and considered judgment of Pompey as a soldier, a statesman and a man. The second part of the thesis will present in the same order the opinions and judgments, whether corroborative or contradictory of Cicero, of other ancient writers who were contemporary or nearly contemporary with Pompey. And, finally, the concluding chapter will sum up briefly the salient points of Pompey's personality that have been developed. Here, too, at last, Pompey will be allowed to speak for himself: the meager evidence of his own few letters

24 Cicero, Epistulae ad Atticum xvi.5.

that have been preserved will be presented to shed what light it may on the veracity of his judges.

CHAPTER II

POMPEY: THE TESTIMONY OF CICERO

The extant correspondence of Cicero comprises some nine hundred letters, which have been traditionally grouped and published under four titles, Ad Atticum, Ad Familiares, Ad Quintum Fratrem and Ad Brutum. The bulk of the correspondence falls into the first two categories -- although those titles are slightly misleading, inasmuch as the letters "to Atticus" and "to his friends" include a number of letters to Cicero from his various correspondents, and even some few that are neither by Cicero nor addressed to him. However, by far the greater part of the correspondence -- well over eight hundred letters -- is the work of Cicero himself, and it is these that will furnish the material for the present chapter; whatever is pertinent to Pompey in the other letters of the collection will be discussed in subsequent chapters as being the testimony of other ancient writers. The traditional grouping of Cicero's correspondence is open to further criticism in that it almost completely ignores the chronological sequence of the letters. The letters Ad Familiares are for the most part divided into books and classified by correspondents -- as are the other letters, as indicated by their titles. Such an arrangement is natural enough, and it was undoubtedly a practical consideration with the collector and editor, since the letters were in the hands of the

various recipients,¹ but it is an inconvenient arrangement for any orderly study of the development of the events and personalities of the times. This problem of chronology has been taken up by a number of scholars, and there have been a number of modern editions of the letters, either in whole or in part, arranged in chronological order. Of these, the monumental work of Tyrrell and Purser is outstanding, and it will be taken as the principal source, both in its text and in its chronology, for the study of the letters of Cicero in this thesis. No disparagement of the work of other editors is here suggested, but a single text has been deemed most satisfactory for the discussion in hand. The present writer has, indeed, consulted and compared other editions of the letters, but an exhaustive textual criticism would be far from the purpose of this thesis. In fact, in very few instances do the discrepancies of text and chronology among the various editors have any bearing on the portrayal of Pompey's personality; any such discrepancies that are pertinent will be noted as they occur.

According to the chronology of Tyrrell and Purser, therefore, the correspondence of Cicero begins in the year 68 B. C. and continues until the year of his death, 43 B. C. However, the letters do not form a single solid procession through these twenty-six years. Their number varies from year to year, and there are many gaps. Thus, from the year 68 up to and including the year 65, there are only eleven letters; for the years 64 and 63 there are

1 It was apparently not a general practice with Cicero to keep copies of his letters. Not long before his death, when there was question of the publication of his correspondence, he wrote that there was no collection of his letters at the time, but that his secretary Tiro had about seventy of them (Ad Att. xvi.5).

none. In the year 62 they recommence (with a letter to Pompey, curiously enough) and continue more or less steadily until the end. The prolixity of the correspondence in some years and its meagerness or complete absence in others make it almost obvious that a great many of Cicero's letters must have failed of survival. The year 64, in which Cicero canvassed for the consulship, should have been productive of a huge quantity of correspondence, and it is hardly conceivable that his consulship, in the year 63, should not also have been an occasion for a vast amount of letter-writing; yet, for both these years he is strangely silent.

Be this as it may, for all practical purposes the correspondence of Cicero begins in earnest in the year 62, at the very time when Pompey was returning from his campaigns in the East to be a permanent and ever-present figure on the Roman political scene for the next fourteen years. Thus, the principal portion of Cicero's correspondence is coterminous with that period in which Pompey, after returning to Rome a conquering hero and a popular idol, plummeted to the depths of discredit, dishonor and defeat. One would like to know how largely Pompey figured in the lost letters of the earlier period, but, at any rate, in the few that have survived of that period he is mentioned but once, in a letter of the year 65, not long before Cicero was to begin his active canvass for the consulship:

*Illam manum tu mihi cura ut praestes, quoniam propius abes, Pompeii nostri amici. Nega me ei iratum fore, si ad mea comitia non venerit.*²

You must undertake to secure for me the 'entourage' of our friend Pompey, since you are nearer than I. Tell him I shall not be annoyed if he

2 Cicero, Ad Att. i.1.

doesn't come to my election.

The passage is indicative of little as regards Cicero's opinion of or feelings towards Pompey: a politician looking forward to an important election makes a profession of friendship and a gesture of kindly forbearance. But there is no other indication at this time, at least as far as the letters are concerned, of the nature of Cicero's relations with Pompey.

However, in the correspondence that recommences in 62, Pompey begins to loom large, and it is at this point that the three aspects under which he is to be studied will be taken up. The first consideration is that of Pompey as a soldier and military leader. And here must be noted what was asserted in the first chapter of this thesis,^{2a} that the orations of Cicero are not a satisfactory basis for determining his true opinion of Pompey. In the Pro Lege Manilia, for instance, Cicero is lavish to the point of extravagance in the praise of almost every phase of Pompey's military exploits; such enthusiasm is not apparent in the letters: there is praise of Pompey, to be sure, but it is moderate and reserved. However, let the correspondence speak for itself. The first pertinent letter is one of the year 62, addressed to Pompey in Asia as he is about to return home after the successful conclusion of the Mithridatic war; inasmuch as Cicero reveals himself in it as eager for the support and friendship of Pompey, its sincerity is suspect. The general is praised for his successful campaign: "tantam enim spem otii ostendisti, quantum ego semper omnibus te uno fretus pollicebar"³ — "you have given us that strong hope of

2a See above 6.

3 Cicero, Epistulae ad Familiares v.7.

peace, of which, in sole reliance on you, I was assuring every one"; and he is flattered with the assurance that Cicero is eager to be associated with "multo maiori quam Africanus fuit"⁴ — "a man far greater than Africanus." After this letter, there is a lapse of more than a dozen years before Cicero speaks again at any length on the subject of Pompey's generalship; once during this period he makes a passing reference to his "praestantissimis . . . rebus gestis"⁵ — "most brilliant military achievements." Such a silence on Cicero's part is understandable in view of his temperament and interests; he was a politician and a statesman, not a military man, and would have only secondary thoughts for military affairs until they were forced upon him by circumstances. Hence, it was not until Caesar stood on the Rubicon that Cicero had much to say in his letters of Pompey as a military man. Early in January, 49, he writes to his freedman and secretary, Tiro:

Numquam maiore in periculo civitas fuit; numquam improbi cives habuerunt paratiorem ducem. Omnino ex hac quoque parte diligentissime comparatur. Id fit auctoritate et studio Pompeii nostri, qui Caesarem sero coepit timere.⁶

Never was the state in greater danger; never have disloyal citizens had a better prepared man at their head. On the whole, very careful preparations are being made on our side also. This is due to the influence and activity of our old friend Pompey, who, now that it is too late, is beginning to be afraid of Caesar.

Although there is a criticism here of Pompey's short-sightedness, there is also a somewhat unenthusiastic expression of confidence that the situation is

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., i.9.

6 Ibid., xvi.11.

under control^{*} and in good hands; a few days later, in a letter to Atticus, Cicero is less sanguine:

Gnaeus noster quid consilii ceperit capiatve nescio, adhuc in oppidis coartatus et stupens. . . . Adhuc certe, nisi ego insanio, stulte omnia et incaute.⁷

What plan our Gnaeus has adopted or is adopting, I don't know: as yet, he is cooped up in the towns and in a state of lethargy. . . . Up to now, unless I am out of my senses, his proceedings are all fatuous and rash.

A week later, another letter to Atticus remarks: "dux quam ἀστρατήγης tu quoque animadvertis"⁸ -- "you, too, notice how ungeneral-like our leader is"; and Cicero's exasperation seems to reach its peak early in the following month:

Gnaeus autem noster -- o rem miseram et incredibilem! -- ut totus iacet! non animus est, non consilium, non copiae, non diligentia. Mittam illa, fugam ab urbe turpissimam, timidissimas in oppidis contiones, ignorantiam non solum adversarii, sed etiam suarum copiarum.⁹

What an inconceivable plight is Pompey's, and how utterly he has broken down! He has neither spirit nor plan, nor forces, nor energy. I say nothing of his most disgraceful flight from the city, his timorous speeches in the towns, his ignorance not only of the strength of his opponent, but even of his own forces.

This indictment of almost every phase of Pompey's generalship is a far cry from the lavish praises of the Pro Lege Manilia. Had Cicero's considered opinion so drastically changed in seventeen years or had Pompey's grasp of military affairs so noticeably weakened? Or was it Cicero's own panicky fear that clouded his judgment? Certainly, later writers have not been so forth-

7 Cicero, Ad Att. vii.10.

8 Ibid., 13a.

9 Ibid., 21.

right in condemning Pompey's maneuvers in Italy at the outbreak of the civil war. At any rate, such was Cicero's expressed opinion of the moment. This tone of dissatisfaction, however, finds no way into a letter of the following week addressed to the general himself. Pompey was in Luceria, where he had established his headquarters after withdrawing from Rome; Cicero, in command at Formiae, writes him a fairly lengthy report of activities in the district. The tone of the letter is respectful, almost subservient: he asks advice, offers suggestions; he assures Pompey that "auctoritate et consilio tuo in spe firmiore sumus"¹⁰ -- "your influence and your policy have encouraged me." Only one note of mild complaint creeps into the letter, a note that reflects Cicero's previous displeasure at Pompey's apparent lack of organization and planning: "nunc quod tuum consilium aut quae ratio belli sit ignoro"¹¹ -- "at the present moment I do not know what are your ideas and plan of campaign." Cicero was either a splendid liar or his spirit was even more vacillating than usual at this time, for two days later he writes to Atticus:

Mihi enim nihil ulla in gente umquam ab ullo auctore rei publicae ac duce turpius factum esse videtur quam a nostro amico factum est . . . ; urbem reliquit, id est, patriam, pro qua et in qua mori praeclarum fuit.¹²

It seems to me that never in any land has any statesman or general acted as disgracefully as has our friend . . . ; he left the city -- his fatherland, that is -- for which and in which it were glorious to die.

Apparently, Pompey's unforgivable sin in Cicero's eyes was the abandonment of Rome, yet it is by no means certain that the move was not necessary and stra-

10 Ibid., viii.11b.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., 2.

logically sound. In the same letter there is a statement that may go far in explaining Pompey's final collapse and defeat: "in unius hominis quotannis periculose aegrotantis anima positas omnes nostras spes habemus"¹³ -- "our sole hope lies in the life of one man, who falls dangerously sick every year." The year before, at Naples, Pompey had been stricken with an illness that had brought him to the brink of death; this letter seems to indicate that that illness was but a more than usually violent attack of some recurrent disease, probably contracted in the East, that plagued the later years of his life. Several later writers¹⁴ see in the seizure at Naples the turning point in Pompey's career and lament the fact that death had not then taken him in his prosperity and forestalled his plunge into defeat and ignominy. Far be it from the writer of this thesis to rest his case on a "post hoc, ergo propter hoc" argument, but consideration must be given to the possibility that Pompey's apparent ineptitude in the last two years of his life was the result of his physical condition.

The next letter to Atticus continues in the same strain:

Nihil actum est a Pompeio nostro sapienter, nihil fortiter: addo etiam, nihil nisi contra consilium auctoritatemque meam. . . . Quid foedius, quid perturbatius hoc ab urbe discessu sive potius turpissima nequissima fuga?¹⁵

Pompey has not made one prudent or courageous move -- nor one that is not contrary to my counsel and advice. . . . What can be more disgusting, more significant of panic, than this withdrawal, or rather this disgrace-

13 Ibid.

14 Velleius Paterculus ii.48; Seneca, Dialogi vi.20; Juvenal x.283-286.

15 Cicero, Ad Att. viii.3.

ful and iniquitous flight, from the city?

The most noteworthy feature of this passage is Cicero's betrayal of himself in his resentment at the rejection of his counsel; it raises the question of how much of his censure of Pompey is due to his own wounded vanity and how much to an honest appraisal of the facts. Be this as it may, Cicero soon finds another source of annoyance; Pompey was in the process of removing his troops to Brundisium, preparatory to abandoning Italy, and there was some doubt whether he would go to the assistance of one of his commanders, Domitius, besieged by Caesar in Corfinium. Cicero writes to Atticus:

Unum etiam restat amico nostro ad omne dedecus, ut Domitio non subveniat. . . . Nisi me omnia fallunt, deseret. Incredibiliter pertimuit. Nihil spectat nisi fugam; . . . ante fugit quam scit aut quem fugiat aut quo, . . . nostra tradidit, . . . patriam reliquit, Italiam relinquit.¹⁶

But one thing remains to our friend to crown his disgrace, not to go to the assistance of Domitius. . . . Unless I am greatly mistaken, he will desert him. He is unbelievably alarmed. He thinks of nothing but flight; . . . flees before he knows whom he is fleeing or whither, . . . has betrayed us, . . . has abandoned his country — and is leaving Italy.

And a day or two later, after Pompey had failed to relieve Domitius and Corfinium had fallen to Caesar:

Quamvis amemus Gnaeum nostrum . . . , tamen hoc, quod talibus viris non subvenit, laudare non possum. Nam sive timuit, quid ignavius? sive, ut quidam putant, meliorem suam causam illorum caede fore putavit, quid iniustius?¹⁷

Though I love Pompey . . . , still I cannot praise his failure to succour such men. If it was fear, it was most cowardly; if, as some think, he imagined that their massacre would assist his cause, it was most iniquitous.

16 Ibid., 7.

17 Ibid., 9.

So, as Cicero had feared and expected, Pompey did not go to the relief of Corfinium and Domitius was obliged to capitulate. That Domitius may have been stubborn and foolhardy and placed himself in an inextricable position¹⁸ or that there may have been a variety of reasons for Pompey's abandonment of Corfinium seems not to have entered Cicero's head; he is obsessed with the idea that Pompey's only motivation is fear, and his only object flight. Thus, the two passages just cited are exceptionally striking illustrations of the low esteem in which Cicero held Pompey at this time; he is even inclined to lend credence to the tale that Pompey was willing to sacrifice military advantage in order to revenge himself on his personal enemies.

Meanwhile, Pompey had arrived at Brundisium, and Cicero writes him there a very long letter, which is for the most part a defense of his own policy and activities and a profession of friendship and loyalty. Still, there is a tone of dissatisfaction and resentment; he expresses his disappointment at the outcome of the affair at Corfinium: "in eadem opinione fui qua reliqui omnes, te cum omnibus copiis ad Corfinium esse venturum"¹⁹ -- "I agreed with others in supposing that you would come in full force to Corfinium," and he is still indignant over the abandonment of Rome and Italy:

Suspicionem nullam habebam, te rei publicae causa mare transiturum, eramque in spe magna fore ut in Italia possemus aut concordiam constituere . . . aut rem publicam summa cum dignitate defendere.²⁰

¹⁸ That this was Pompey's view of the situation will be shown in a subsequent chapter, where some of his own letters are discussed (see below 90-93).

¹⁹ Cicero, *Ad Att.* viii.11d.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

I had no idea that the state's welfare would take you across the sea, and I was in great hope that in Italy we should be able to restore harmony . . . or fight most honorably for the commonwealth.

Early in March, while Pompey was still in Brundisium, Cicero describes him as "ἀστρατηγῆτότατον"²¹ — "the poorest of generals"; he had used the adjective before, but now it is in the superlative degree. A week later, he is angry at Pompey's "temeritatem, ignaviam, negligentiam"²² — "foolhardiness, listlessness, carelessness"; and finally, after the lapse of another week, Pompey "nec unquam aliud in alio peccare destitit"²³ — "has never ceased to commit one blunder after another."

By this time, Pompey had eluded Caesar, who was besieging Brundisium, and removed his forces across the Adriatic. Of the subsequent military activities Cicero has nothing to say until after the battle of Pharsalia. A letter of November, 48, gives an indication that Cicero realized that other factors than Pompey's incompetence were involved in his downfall; the low state of morale of his followers and his allies was one such:

De Pompeii exitu mihi dubium numquam fuit. Tanta enim desperatio rerum eius omnium regum et populorum animos occuparat, ut, quocumque venisset, hoc putarem futurum.²⁴

About Pompey's end I never had any doubt. For despair of his success had so completely taken possession of the minds of all the kings and peoples, that I thought this would happen to him, wherever he might go.

Somewhat the same thought is developed more at length in a letter of May, 46,

21 Ibid., 16.

22 Ibid., ix.5.

23 Ibid., 10.

24 Ibid., xi.6.

almost two years after Pharsalia. After Pompey had left Italy and taken up a position at Dyrrhachium in Illyria, he was eventually joined by Cicero, who, long after the event, thus describes his impressions on his arrival at Pompey's camp:

Primum neque magnas copias neque bellicosas: deinde extra duces paucosque praeterea -- de principibus loquor -- reliqui primum in ipso bello rapaces, deinde in oratione ita crudeles, ut ipsam victoriam horrerem: maximum autem aes alienum amplissimorum virorum. Quid quaeris? Nihil boni praeter causam.²⁵

In the first place, I found that the troops were neither numerous nor in good fighting trim; secondly, apart from the commander and some few others (I am speaking of the leading men), the rest were, firstly, so greedy of loot during the campaign itself and, secondly, so bloodthirsty in the way they spoke, that I shuddered at the thought of even victory itself; and last but not least, there was the insolvency of men of the highest rank. In short, there was nothing sound about them but their cause.

Under such circumstances, Pompey engaged in a minor skirmish with Caesar's troops and came off victorious: this, in Cicero's opinion, was fatal, for "coepisset suis militibus confidere"²⁶ -- "he began to have confidence in his men" and thereafter "signa tirone et collecticio exercitu cum legionibus robustissimis contulit"²⁷ -- "with raw and hastily levied troops, he gave battle to the toughest legions."

The twenty-odd passages cited in the foregoing pages constitute all the information that the letters of Cicero furnish as a basis for judging his opinion of Pompey's military ability; it is unfortunate that the majority of them refer to only the last two years of Pompey's life, for the opinions

25 Cicero, Ad Fam. vii.3.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

expressed are without a doubt colored by Cicero's despair for the "loyalist" cause. Yet, despite his apparent lack of confidence in Pompey's competence and his dissatisfaction with his operations, it appears beneath the surface that until the very end it was on Pompey, and on Pompey alone, that Cicero relied for the salvation of the republic. The repeated references to Pompey's activities seem to indicate this: what Pompey was doing was of supreme importance. Moreover, the fact that finally, after much wavering, Cicero joined Pompey's forces at Dyrrhachium shows that he still had hope in Pompey's ultimate triumph; it was only after he saw there the poor quality of Pompey's officers and men that Cicero realized that the cause was lost. In the absence of any further evidence, therefore, it may be conjectured that Cicero's true opinion of Pompey as a soldier was a moderate one and takes its place somewhere between the exuberance of the Pro Lege Manilia and the "poorest of generals" of the letters, probably closer to the latter than to the former.

The evidence for the determination of Cicero's opinion of Pompey's statesmanship is somewhat more abundant: politics and statecraft were Cicero's life, and there is hardly a letter that does not contain some reference to the political situation of the times. Inasmuch as Pompey played a prominent part in that political situation, his frequent appearances in Cicero's correspondence are to be expected.

It is to be noted, however, that the letters are concerned with only what may be called the second phase of Pompey's political career. He had begun his political activity on his return from the campaign against Sertorius in Spain and in the year 70 had served as consul. Subsequently, he was absent from Rome for five years on the campaigns against the Cilician pirates and

Mithridates. Now, of this early stage of his career there is, of course, no record in Cicero's letters, for, as has been noted, the extant correspondence does not begin until the year 68 and not with any regularity until the year 62. The first letter of the latter year is the one addressed to Pompey at the conclusion of the campaigns in the East;²⁸ it is a bid for friendship and political alliance and embodies the hope that Cicero and Pompey will as perfectly complement each other as did Laelius and Africanus. A few months later, when Pompey has returned to Rome, Cicero is inclined to believe that the great hero has "nihil ἐν τοῖς πολιτικοῖς honestum"²⁹ -- "no political morality," but he reserves his judgment for the time being: "haec ad te scribam alias subtilius, nam neque adhuc mihi satis nota sunt"³⁰ -- "on these points I shall write to you more minutely at another time, for they are not yet quite clear to me." Next, Cicero describes to Atticus the effect of Pompey's first public speech after his return:

Non iucunda miseris, inanis improbis, beatis non grata, bonis non gravis: itaque frigebat.³¹

The poor did not relish it, to the disaffected it was pointless, the rich were annoyed, the better class of citizens thought it shallow: and so it fell flat.

The same letter also criticizes a haughty and non-committal reply of Pompey to a direct question of policy:

²⁸ Ibid., v.7.

²⁹ Cicero, Ad Att. i.13.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 14.

Quaesivit³² ex eo placeretne ei iudices a praetore legi, quo consilio idem praetor uteretur. Id autem erat de Clodiana religione ab senatu constitutum. Tum Pompeius *μᾶλ' ἀριστοκρατικῶς* locutus est senatusque auctoritatem sibi omnibus in rebus maximi videri semperque visam esse respondit et id multis verbis.³²

He was asked whether he agreed that the jurymen should be chosen by the praetor and then used by the same praetor as his panel. (That was what had been already decided upon by the senate respecting Clodius's sacrilege.) Thereupon, Pompey spoke in a 'high and mighty' manner and replied that at all times and in all matters he had the highest respect for the senate's authority -- and very long-winded he was about it.

Some time later, Cicero finds corroboration of his charge that Pompey was lacking in political morality:

Nunc est exspectatio comitiorum, in quae omnibus invitis trudit noster Magnus Auli filium, atque in eo neque auctoritate neque gratia pugnat, sed quibus Philippus omnia castella expugnari dicebat.³³

Now every one is looking forward to the elections: our Magnus is pushing Aulus's son amidst general disapproval -- and the means he is using are neither his prestige nor his popularity, but those which Philip said would storm any fort.³⁴

Thus, by the beginning of the year 60, it appears to Cicero that Pompey has disqualified himself for the position of first man of the state. The ineptness of his public appearances and his unsavory and unpopular support of Afranius ("Aulus's son") for the consulship had caused the great man to go into partial retirement, where, according to Cicero, he sulked in the expectation that the fame of his former glory would once again call him to the fore:

πολιτικὸς ἀνὴρ οὐδ' ὄναρ quisquam inveniri potest. Qui poterat, . . .

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., 16.

34 I. e., bribery.

Pompeius togulam illam pictam silentio tuetur suam.³⁵

Not the ghost of a real statesman is to be found. The man who could be one, . . . Pompey, wraps that precious triumphal cloak of his around him in silence.

However, he is soon back again in the arena, where his personal popularity is still great but his political maneuvers are meeting with increasing suspicion and hostility:

Agraria lex a Flavio tribuno plebis vehementer agitabatur auctore Pompeio quae nihil populare habebat praeter auctorem. . . . Huic toti rationi agrariae senatus adversabatur, suspicans Pompeio novam quendam potentiam quaeri.³⁶

The agrarian law was zealously pushed by the tribune Flavius with the support of Pompey, though its only claim to popularity was its supporter. . . . The senate was opposed to the whole agrarian scheme, suspecting that Pompey was aiming at getting some new powers.

Not long after this letter, Pompey joined Caesar and Crassus in the coalition that is known as the First Triumvirate. That he was aiming at more than lawful political power is the growing conviction of Cicero at this time. This is seen first in the epithets applied to Pompey, epithets reminiscent of his virtually kingly powers in the Asiatic realms which he conquered: he is called "Hierosolymarius traductor ad plebem"³⁷ -- "the Jerusalemish plebeian-maker,"³⁸

35 Cicero, Ad Att. i.18.

36 Ibid., 19.

37 Ibid., ii.9.

38 Pompey is called a plebeian-maker in reference to his sanctioning of Clodius's adoption into the plebs, a move that was to result in Cicero's exile.

"Sampsiceramus"³⁹ -- "the Pasha," and "Arabarches."⁴⁰ Then he comes in for his share of the general condemnation of the coalition, besides being berated individually for his tyranny. The triumvirs are "tris homines immoderatos"⁴¹ -- "three unscrupulous men"; their rule is a "regnum"⁴² -- "despotism"; "numquam huc venissent, nisi ad alias res pestiferas aditus sibi compararent"⁴³ -- "they would never have gone to such lengths as they have, were they not paving the way for other pernicious acts"; "neminem tenent voluntate, ac ne metu necesse sit iis uti vereor"⁴⁴ -- "they hold no one by affection, and I fear they will be forced to use terror." As for Pompey personally, "timendum . . . ne . . . ruere incipiat"⁴⁵ -- "it is to be feared . . . that . . . he is about to run amuck"; "turbat"⁴⁶ -- "he is stirring up trouble," and "το βαρβάρως οὐκ ἐπιβουλεύεται"⁴⁷ -- "he is planning to usurp kingly power." The result of Pompey's and his fellow triumvirs' machinations was a great loss of popularity for the three:

De re publica nihil habeo ad te scribere, nisi summum odium omnium homi-

39 Cicero, Ad Att. ii.14, 17, 23.

40 Ibid., 17.

41 Ibid., 9.

42 Ibid., 13.

43 Ibid., 17.

44 Ibid., 19.

45 Ibid., 14.

46 Ibid., 17.

47 Ibid.

num in eos⁴⁸ qui tenent omnia.

I have no political news except that the present masters of the world have the world's hatred.

and for Pompey individually:

Quanto in odio noster amicus Magnus, cuius cognomen una cum Crassi Divitis cognomine consenescit!⁴⁹

How greatly hated is our friend Magnus, whose surname is becoming as obsolete as Crassus's surname Dives!

This fall from pre-eminent esteem was more than Pompey could bear, Cicero relates: "taedet ipsum Pompeium vehementerque paenitet"⁵⁰ — "Pompey is disgusted and heartily sick of it all," and again: "nostrum amicum vehementer sui status paenitere restituique in eum locum cupere, ex quo decidit"⁵¹ — "our friend is heartily sick of his position and wants to be restored to the place from which he fell." In fact, the ignominy to which Pompey has come is so great that some fear must be entertained as to his future course of action:

Ille amicus noster, insolens infamiae, semper in laude versatus, circumfluens gloria, deformatus corpore, fractus animo, quo se conferat nescit; progressum praecipitem, inconstantem reditum videt: bonos inimicos habet, improbos ipsos non amicos. . . . Timeo tam vehementem vir tanquam acer in ferro et tam insuetus contumeliae ne omni impetu dolori et iracundiae pareat.⁵²

Our friend, being unused to unpopularity and having always lived in an atmosphere of flattery and glory, disfigured in person and broken in spirit, does not know what to do with himself: he sees that to advance is

48 Ibid., 22.

49 Ibid., 13.

50 Ibid., 22.

51 Ibid., 23.

52 Ibid., 21.

dangerous, to retreat a confession of weakness; the respectable parties are his enemies, the very riff-raff not his friends. . . . I am afraid that, since he is so impulsive and ready to draw the sword, as well as so unused to abuse, he may give full reins to his indignation and wrath.

The letters of the next two years (58 and 57) ignore Pompey all but completely: for the better part of that period Cicero was in exile, and the principal burden of his correspondence is his own misfortune; the few references to Pompey touch on his part in the exile and the possible, though not too sanguinely hoped-for, return.

Early in the year 56, when Cicero was again in Rome, occurred the trial of Milo on a charge of vis, brought by Clodius. On the surface, the trial was merely a contest between rival hoodlums; actually it represented the ever-present and ever-growing antagonism between the "haves" and the "have-nots," which was to burst forth into civil war and a personal contest for supremacy between Caesar and Pompey. Clodius was Caesar's man, and Pompey saw fit to support and defend Milo. Cicero, in a letter to his brother, gives an account of the trial and displays Pompey in a much more favorable light than he had previously:

Dixit Pompeius sive voluit. Nam ut surrexit, operae Clodianae clamorem sustulerunt, idque ei perpetua oratione contigit, non modo ut acclamatione, sed ut convitio et maledictis impediretur. Qui ut peroravit — nam in eo sane fortis fuit, non est deterritus, dixit omnia atque interdum etiam silentio, cum auctoritate peregerat53

Pompey spoke, or rather such was his intention. For when he got up, Clodius's hirelings raised a yell; and that is what he had to endure throughout his speech, being interrupted not only with shouts, but with insults and abuse. When he concluded (he showed great fortitude in the circumstances; he never quailed; he said all he had to say — even, at times, amid silence; and he carried the thing through with an air of

authority)

Nevertheless, this defense of Milo was apparently pleasing to no one:

Apud perditissimam illam atque infimam faecem populi propter Milonem sub-offendit, et boni multa ab eo desiderant, multa reprehendunt.⁵⁴

For Milo's sake he has given offense to the lowest and most abandoned dregs of the populace, while right-minded citizens find much wanting in him and much to censure.

And, shortly thereafter, Cicero renews his old charges against the triumvirs:

Non est credibile quae sit perfidia in istis principibus, ut volunt esse et ut essent, si quidquam haberent fidei.⁵⁵

One could scarcely believe the amount of treachery there is in those leaders of the state, as they wish to be — and might be, if they had any principle of honor in them.

However, during the course of this year (56), a change took place. The triumvirs, in a meeting at Lucca, renewed and strengthened their pact: Caesar secured the prolongation for five years of his Gallic command and Pompey and Crassus obtained the consulship for the following year. And Cicero, making what appears to be a complete volte-face, now gave his support to the coalition! A letter late in the year 54 gives his apologia for this tergiversation; what is noteworthy therein is the manner in which he now speaks of Pompey:

Cum autem in re publica Cn. Pompeius princeps esset vir, is qui hanc potentiam et gloriam maximis in rem publicam meritis . . . esset consecutus . . . , non putavi⁵⁶

Since the leading man in the state was Gnaeus Pompey, a man who had gained such power and eminence as he had by the highest public services . . . , I did not think

54 Ibid., 4.

55 Cicero, Ad Att. iv.5.

56 Cicero, Ad Fam. i.9.

Perhaps Cicero saw that the triumvirate was soon to dissolve and that Pompey could be won to the support of the established regime. At any rate, the coalition did shortly cease to be: the death of Caesar's daughter Julia, Pompey's wife, severed one strong bond of the alliance; not long afterwards, Crassus was killed in battle against the Parthians; Caesar's long absence in Gaul and his growing belief that Pompey was intriguing against him in Rome (as he by his agents was intriguing against Pompey) further widened the breach: it is not certain that the two ever met again after the conference at Lucca. It was not long in becoming evident that their antagonism was to develop into active enmity and precipitate civil war. As the crisis approached, Cicero placed every confidence in Pompey; in May, 51, he writes to Atticus:

Ego cum triduum cum Pompeio et apud Pompeium fuisset, proficiscebatur Brundisium. . . . Civem illum egregium relinquebam et ad haec, quae timentur, propulsanda paratissimum.⁵⁷

After spending three days with Pompey at his house, I started for Brundisium. . . . I left behind me a noble citizen, well prepared to ward off the dangers we fear.

In July, to his long-time friend Caelius Rufus, whose own opinion of Pompey will be put in evidence in the following chapter:

Tantum habeto, civem egregium esse Pompeium et ad omnia, quae providenda sunt in re publica, et animo et consilio paratum.⁵⁸

Of this much you may be sure, that Pompey is an excellent citizen and has the courage and foresight to take any precautionary measure necessitated by the political situation.

And in February, 50, to Atticus again:

57 Cicero, Ad Att. v.7.

58 Cicero, Ad Fam. ii.8.

In Pompeio te spem omnem otii ponere non miror: ita res est removendumque censeo illud 'dissimulantem.'⁵⁹

I am not surprised that you depend entirely on Pompey for keeping the peace. That is quite right, and I think you must delete your phrase 'insincere.'

In the following December, however, less than a month before Caesar made his gamble and crossed the Rubicon, Cicero is not so sure of Pompey's keeping the peace and he so informs Atticus:

Quod quaeris ecquae spes pacificationis sit, quantum ex Pompeii multo et accurato sermone perspexi, ne voluntas quidem est.⁶⁰

For your query as to the chance of a peaceful settlement, so far as I could tell from Pompey's full and detailed discourse, he does not even want peace.

But Pompey's reasons were cogent enough to cause Cicero to go on to say:

Levabar cura, virum fortem et peritum et plurimum auctoritate valentem audiens πολιτικῶς de pacis simulatae periculis disserentem.⁶¹

I was relieved of anxiety as I listened to a man of courage, military skill and supreme influence discoursing in a statesmanlike way on the risks of a hollow peace.

After Caesar had, in effect, declared war upon the republic by leading his troops into Italy, Cicero's opinion of Pompey's statesmanship began to deteriorate. Or rather, perhaps, in consequence of his dissatisfaction with Pompey's military operations, Cicero allowed himself to be more outspoken in his criticism of the general's administrative abilities and policy of government. Much of what has already been said, in the letters cited in the first

59 Cicero, Ad Att. vi.1.

60 Ibid., vii.8.

61 Ibid.

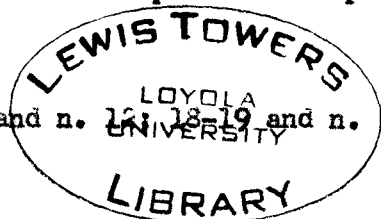
part of this chapter,^{61a} concerning Pompey's military ineptness in the conflict with Caesar might be applied with equal force to his administrative policy. Cicero does not clearly single out this or that facet of Pompey's activities for criticism, but in his indignation lashes out indiscriminately in all directions, so that it is sometimes difficult to determine exactly what is the particular source of his wrath of the moment. Such an ambiguous statement is the following: "ut enim alia omittam decem annorum peccata, quae condicio non huic fugae praestitit?"⁶² — "passing over other faults of the last ten years, what compromise were not better than this flight?" Although there is here a definite reference to military operations (the withdrawal from Rome) it seems rather that the criticism reflects Pompey's inability to forestall the war by political craft; as such, it contradicts the letter cited immediately above, in which Pompey's preference for war over a feigned peace meets with Cicero's approval. However, there are other letters which are decidedly explicit in their condemnation of Pompey's statecraft; one complaint is that he himself has raised up the engine of his own destruction: "cum omnes Caesarem metuebamus, ipse eum diligebat"⁶³ — "when we were all afraid of Caesar, he cherished him." This charge is later expanded in detail:

Istum in rem publicam ille aluit, auxit, armavit, ille legibus per vim et contra auspicia ferendis auctor, ille Galliae ulterioris adiunctor, ille gener, . . . ille provinciae propagator, ille absentis in omnibus adiutor, idem etiam tertio consulatu, postquam esse defensor rei publicae coepit,

61a See above 14-15 and nn. 7 and 9; 17 and n. 14; 18-19 and n. 15; 21 and nn. 22-23.

62 Cicero, Ad Att. vii.13a.

63 Ibid., viii.1.



contendit ut decem tribuni plebis ferrent ut absentis ratio haberetur, quod idem ipse sanxit lege quadam sua.⁶⁴

Caesar was Pompey's man: Pompey raised him to place and military power, assisted him in passing laws by force and despite bad omens, granted him Further Gaul in addition to his province; Pompey married his daughter; . . . Pompey prolonged the tenure of Caesar's provincial government; Pompey championed his cause in absence; likewise, in his third consulship, when he began to be the defender of the constitution, he struggled to get the ten tribunes to propose a bill admitting Caesar's candidature in absence, and ratified that privilege by a law of his own.

Another source of displeasure is Pompey's ambition; to Cicero, he is grasping at absolute dictatorship:

Dominatio quaesita ab utroque est, non id actum, beata et honesta civitas ut esset. Nec vero ille urbem reliquit, quod eam tueri non posset, nec Italiam, quod ea pelleretur, sed hoc a primo cogitavit, omnes terras, omnia maria movere, reges barbaros incitare, gentes feras armatas in Italiam adducere, exercitus conficere maximos. Genus illud Sullani regni iam pridem appetitur. . . . Uterque regnare vult.⁶⁵

Absolute power is what he and Caesar have sought; their aim has not been to secure the happiness and honor of the community. Pompey has not abandoned Rome because it was impossible to defend, nor Italy on forced compulsion; but it was his idea from the first to plunge the world into war, to stir up barbarous princes, to bring savage tribes into Italy under arms, and to gather a huge army. A sort of Sulla's reign has long been his object. . . . Both want to be kings.

Mirandum enim in modum Gnaeus noster Sullani regni similitudinem concupivit.⁶⁶

It is amazing how our friend Pompey has longed to duplicate Sulla's reign.

Regnandi contentio est, in qua pulsus est modestior rex et probior et integrior et is qui nisi vincit nomen populi Romani deleatur necesse est: sin autem vincit, Sullano more exemploque vincet.⁶⁷

64 Ibid., 3.

65 Ibid., 11.

66 Ibid., ix.7.

67 Ibid., x.7.

It is a struggle for royal power, a struggle in which reverses have plagued the more moderate king, the more upright and honest, the one whose defeat means that the very name of the Roman people must be blotted out; yet, if he wins, he will use his victory after the manner and example of Sulla.

It is noteworthy in this passage that, although Cicero decries Pompey's ambition, he must needs still praise him as modestus, probus and integer. Finally, Cicero seems to sum up his whole opinion of Pompey at this time in the following statement: "hominem ἀπολιτικώτατον omnium iam ante cognoram"⁶⁸ -- "I have long known him to be the poorest of statesmen."

The last half-dozen letters quoted, all addressed to Atticus, date from February, March and April of 49; thereafter, events moved rapidly to Pompey's ultimate defeat and death. No further mention is made of his statecraft until more than two years after Pharsalia; then Cicero, discussing the triumvirate, says:

Plurimi sunt testes me et initio, ne coniungeret se cum Caesare, monuisse Pompeium et postea, ne seiungeret: coniunctione frangi senatus opes, dis-iunctione civile bellum excitari videbam.⁶⁹

There are a large number of people who can testify that, though at the beginning I warned Pompey against a coalition with Caesar, I afterwards warned him not to break with him. I saw that the coalition meant the crushing of the senate's power, and a rupture the stirring up of a civil war.

A little more than two years later, when Caesar too was dead, the same point is made in one of the speeches against Antony:

Meaque illa vox est nota multis: 'Utinam, Pompei, cum Caesare societatem aut numquam coisses aut numquam diremisses! Fuit alterum gravitatis,

⁶⁸ Ibid., viii.16.

⁶⁹ Cicero, Ad Fam. vi.6.

alterum prudentiae tuae.⁷⁰

And my saying at that time is known to many: 'Pompey, would that either you had never joined in partnership with Caesar, or had never dissolved it! The one course would have shown your steadfastness, the other your foresight.

The same speech also refers to a lack of judgment on Pompey's part that has already been touched upon in the letters; he had been advised

unum, ne quinquenni imperium Caesari prorogaret, alterum, ne pateretur ferri ut absentis eius ratio haberetur.⁷¹

not to extend Caesar's command for five years and not to tolerate a proposal that Caesar's candidature should be recognized in his absence.

Now, therefore, what conclusion is to be drawn from the letters that have been cited touching on Pompey's statecraft? As in the matter of his generalship, here too there is uncertainty and contradiction. He has no political morality,⁷² he stoops to bribery in elections,⁷³ in conjunction with his fellow triumvirs he is treacherous,⁷⁴ despotic⁷⁵ and unscrupulous,⁷⁶ yet he is moderate, upright and honest,⁷⁷ he has performed the highest public services,⁷⁸ he

70 Cicero, In M. Antonium Orationes Philippicae ii.10.

71 Ibid.

72 See above 24 and n. 29.

73 See above 25 and n. 33.

74 See above 30 and n. 55.

75 See above 27 and n. 42.

76 See above 27 and n. 41.

77 See above 34-35 and n. 67.

78 See above 30 and n. 56.

is well prepared⁷⁹ for guiding the state through any contingencies,⁷⁹ he can discuss a situation in a statesmanlike manner;⁸⁰ his public utterances are sometimes pompous and platitudinous,⁸¹ sometimes calm and impressive;⁸² he is dictatorial and ambitious of supreme dominion;⁸³ withal, he is the poorest of statesmen.⁸⁴ Perhaps the best clue to Cicero's honest and sober opinion is the statement that Pompey could be a real statesman were he not wrapped up in silence in his triumphal cloak;⁸⁵ he had capabilities, but his vanity -- the sense of his own importance -- led him astray; the loss of some of his popularity drove him into the fatal alliance with Caesar; in his wounded pride, he raised up the monster that was to destroy him and the republic.⁸⁶ This, in Cicero's opinion, was his critical failing; had he been more endowed with gravitas, he would not have blindly placed himself in Caesar's hands and, had he been more endowed with prudencia, he would not have rushed headlong into a situation that could only be resolved by civil war.⁸⁷ Thus, it may fairly be concluded, Cicero looked upon Pompey as somewhat of an idol with clay feet: he

79 See above 31 and nn. 57 and 58.

80 See above 32 and n. 61.

81 See above 24-25 and nn. 31 and 32.

82 See above 29-30 and n. 53.

83 See above 34-35 and nn. 65-67.

84 See above 35 and n. 68.

85 See above 25-26 and n. 35.

86 See above 33-34 and nn. 63 and 64.

87 See above 35-36 and n. 70.

had the potentialities of a great statesman, on occasions he reduced those potentialities to act, but in the great crises he was found wanting. That he was the poorest of statesmen is hardly the expression of Cicero's calculated judgment; it is an exaggeration born of exasperation and fear.

It may be objected that the characterization of Pompey summed up in the preceding paragraph bristles with too glaring inconsistencies to be reasonably predicated of a single individual. The present writer well realizes this and presents the characterization not as objective fact but merely as the opinion of one man, Cicero, who may or may not have been calmly reasonable in the expression of his opinions. It must be admitted, however, that the inconsistencies of Pompey's character were numerous: the disagreement of modern authors in their evaluation of the man⁸⁸ testifies to this fact, as does the evidence of those ancient authors whose testimony will be the subject matter of the following chapter. Still, the apparent contradictions in his characterization of Pompey are so great that one must wonder how impersonal Cicero's judgments actually were. It is to be feared that too many of the thoughts he put to paper were a reflection of the inconsistencies of his own nature. In his undoubtedly real concern for the preservation of the republic, in his anxious care for his prestige and his reputation as the savior of the state, in the realization of the inadequacy of his own statesmanship, he displays all the changes of mood, all the alternations of optimism and despair, all the uncertainty and irresolution, which he seems to find in Pompey. It is likely, therefore, that the inconsistencies of his criticism of Pompey stemmed from

88 See above 3-5.

the rapid variations of his own enthusiasms and misgivings. Furthermore, Cicero must have seen in himself many of the failings with which he charges Pompey, and it may well be that, in his annoyance at his own insufficiency, he was setting up in Pompey a defense mechanism against the weaknesses of his own character. Certainly, the fault which Cicero seems to consider dominant in Pompey -- an exaggerated vanity and sense of one's own importance -- was the very fault which proved the stumbling block to the brilliance of his own career.

The third aspect of Pompey to be studied is his personality and character as a man, apart from his military and political functions. Of course, no man may be thus completely dissected and separated into distinct and mutually exclusive segments. In Pompey, as in anyone, the acts of his public career spring from the personality of the man. Hence, a great part of what has already been said of his generalship and statesmanship is a revelation of his inner character. He has been shown to be vain and ambitious, moody and impulsive, lacking in prudence and stability, but honest and honorable. No mention has been made of loyalty; but he has been branded, with Caesar and Crassus, as treacherous. The citation of several more passages from the letters may throw additional light upon these alleged characteristics, particularly the last. The letter to Pompey which has already been twice referred to, that of the year 62, is also pertinent here:

Ad me autem litteras, quas misisti, quamquam exiguam significationem tuae erga me voluntatis habebant, tamen mihi scito iucundas fuisse Ac ne ignores quid ego in tuis litteris desiderarim, scribam aperte, sicut et mea natura et nostra amicitia postulat. Res eas gessi quarum aliquam in tuis litteris et nostrae necessitudinis et rei publicae causa gratula-

tionem exspectavi.⁸⁹

Though your private letter to me contained a somewhat slight expression of your affection, yet I can assure you it gave me pleasure To let you know, however, what I missed in your letter, I will write with the candor which my own disposition and our common friendship demand. I did expect some congratulation in your letter on my achievements, for the sake at once of the ties between us and of the republic.

This letter, the first of several touching on the supposed friendship between Pompey and Cicero, seems to indicate that Pompey was cold and self-centered; the following passages, however, are of a somewhat different tenor:

Pompeium nobis amicissimum constat esse.⁹⁰

It is plain that Pompey is most kindly disposed to me.

Nos, ut ostendit, admodum diligit, amplectitur, amat, aperte laudat: occulte, sed ita ut perspicuum sit, invidet.⁹¹

He is to all appearances exceedingly fond of me, embraces me, loves and praises me in public, while in secret (though unable to disguise it) he is jealous of me.

Utor Pompeio familiarissime.⁹²

I am on the best of terms with Pompey.

Pompeius significat studium erga me non mediocre.⁹³

The regard Pompey displays towards me is more than ordinary.

Pompeius amat nos carosque habet. 'Credis?' inquires. Credo: prorsus mihi persuadet. . . . Clodius adhuc mihi denuntiat periculum. Pompeius adfirmat non esse periculum: adiurat: addit etiam se prius occisum iri ab eo

89 Cicero, Ad Fam. v.7.

90 Cicero, Ad Att. i.12.

91 Ibid., 13.

92 Ibid., 17.

93 Ibid., ii.19.

quam me violatum iri.⁹⁴

Pompey shows me friendship and affection. Can I believe him, you ask. I do believe him: he quite convinces me. . . . Clodius is still threatening me with danger, while Pompey asserts that there is no danger; he swears it, adding even that he will not see me injured if it costs him his life.

Pompeius de Clodio iubet nos esse sine cura et summam in nos benevolentiam omni oratione significat.⁹⁵

Pompey tells me to have no fear of Clodius, and shows me the greatest good will whenever he speaks.

Pompeius omnia pollicetur et Caesar; quibus ego ita credo, ut nihil de mea comparatione deminuum.⁹⁶

Pompey makes all sorts of promises, and so does Caesar; but my belief in them does not go so far as to make me drop any of my own preparations.⁹⁷

Ostensibly, Pompey was Cicero's loyal and devoted friend, ready to make any sacrifice for the sake of that friendship; yet, Cicero is not too certain of what lies beneath the surface: he suspects the latent jealousy and will not rely too much on the friendship when danger threatens. His fears were justified, for, when shortly thereafter Clodius was able to force him to go into exile, Pompey remained coolly aloof and, despite his previous protestations, made no move to come to his assistance. That Pompey was under the thumb of Caesar, who had his own reasons for wanting Cicero out of the way, is apparent from a letter during the exile:

Expectationem nobis . . . attuleras, cum scripseras . . . causam nostram Pompeium certe suscepturum et, simul a Caesare ei litterae quas expecta-

94 *Ibid.*, 20.

95 *Ibid.*, 24.

96 Cicero, *Ad Qu. Fratrem* 1.2.

97 I. e., against the avowed enmity of Clodius.

ret remissae essent, actorem etiam daturum. Utrum id nihil fuit an adversatae sunt Caesaris litterae?⁹⁸

You raised my hopes . . . by writing that . . . Pompey was surely going to take up my case and that he would appoint an agent as soon as he had received a letter which he was expecting from Caesar. Did it come to nothing? Or was Caesar's letter hostile?

One wonders how much of the aforementioned evidence of Pompey's friendship was actually displayed by him and how much was fashioned out of Cicero's own desire to be associated with the first man of the state. Certainly, the actual Pompey of 58, the year of Cicero's banishment, is more the Pompey of the letter of 62 than of the intervening letters. At any rate, from Cicero's point of view, Pompey stands charged with a treacherous breach of friendship. However, he afterwards partially redeemed himself by his successful efforts to secure Cicero's recall. Cicero's feelings towards him are thereafter mixed: the breach of faith rankles, but the later service rendered weighs heavily.

Pompeius a me valde contendit de reditu in gratiam, sed adhuc nihil profecit nec, si ullam partem libertatis tenebo, proficiet.⁹⁹

Pompey is making a strong effort to become reconciled with me, but as yet has met with no success and, if I retain a particle of independence, never will.

Quid in me florentem posset ostendit.¹⁰⁰

He showed what power he could wield against me in the hey-day of my career.

Quamquam et Pompeio plurimum . . . debebam et eum non solum beneficio sed amore etiam et perpetuo quodam iudicio meo diligebam, tamen . . . in

98 Cicero, Ad Att. iii.18.

99 Cicero, Ad Qu. Fratrem iii.1.

100 Ibid., 4.

omnibus meis sententiis de re publica pristinis permanebam.¹⁰¹

Although I was enormously indebted . . . to Pompey and was devoted to him not only for his services to me, but also from my own feelings and, so to speak, my unbroken admiration for him, nevertheless . . . I remained faithful to all my old political tenets.

Unus Pompeius me movet — beneficio, non auctoritate.¹⁰²

Only Pompey weighs with me — for his past kindnesses, not for his public influence.

Quod mea praedicatione factum esse scribis magis quam illius merito, ut tantum ei debere viderer, est ita. Ego illa extuli semper et eo quidem magis, ne quid ille superiorum meminisse me putaret. . . . Nihil me adiuvit, cum posset: at postea fuit amicus, etiam valde. . . . Utinam tantum ego ei prodesse potuissem, quantum mihi ille potuit! Mihi tamen quod fecit gratissimum.¹⁰³

You say that I seem to owe Pompey so much more because I say so than because he deserves it. You are right. I have always exaggerated his services for fear he might think I remembered the past. . . . He failed to help me when he might; but afterwards he was my friend, my very good friend. . . . Would that I were able to help him as much as he was able to help me! However, I am truly grateful for what he did.

It is apparent that Cicero is unable to satisfy his mind about Pompey; the last of the passages just cited is especially indicative of his confusion. He seems to be attempting to rationalize his feelings for Pompey; and yet, through all, he cannot suppress what appears to be a real affection for the man. This regard he reveals more explicitly in several other letters:

Tantum . . . mehercule amor erga Pompeium apud me valet ut, quae illi utilia sunt et quae ille vult, ea mihi omnia iam et recta et vera videntur.¹⁰⁴

101 Cicero, Ad Fam. i.9.

102 Cicero, Ad Att. viii.1.

103 Ibid., ix.13.

104 Cicero, Ad Fam. i.8.

By heavens, affection for Pompey is so powerful with me, that whatever is to his interest and whatever he wishes appear to me at once to be wholly right and reasonable.

Ego pro Pompeio libenter emori possum: facio pluris omnium hominum neminem.¹⁰⁵

I can gladly die for Pompey's sake — there is no one in the world I hold dearer.

Me una haec res torquet, quod non omnibus in rebus labentem vel potius ruentem Pompeium tanquam unus manipularis secutus sim. . . . Nunc emergit amor, nunc desiderium ferre non possum, nunc mihi nihil libri, nihil litterae, nihil doctrina prodest.¹⁰⁶

The one thing that tortures me is that I did not follow Pompey like a private soldier, when he was slipping or rather rushing to ruin. . . . Now my old love breaks forth: now I miss him intolerably: now books, letters, philosophy, do not help me one whit.

Although these passages are for the most part subjective revelations of Cicero's own inner self, they throw a bright light on Pompey's character. He must have been endowed with a most amazingly attractive personality to win and hold the esteem and affection of Cicero in spite of all his failings — his moodiness, his quick temper, his instability and imprudence, his fickleness and unfaithfulness. He must have been genial and affable, generous, intelligent, possessed of good breeding and a certain nobility of bearing — in short, all those qualities that win friends and would tend to influence a man of Cicero's intelligence, sensitivity and ideals. To such qualities he must have owed a great part of his general popularity. Some of them are mentioned by Cicero in another work, a few years after Pompey's death, as being the stuff of which great orators are made:

105 Cicero, *Ad Att.* viii.2.

106 *Ibid.*, ix.10.

Meus autem aequalis Cn. Pompeius vir ad omnia summa natus maiorem dicendi gloriam habuisset, nisi eum maioris gloriae cupiditas ad bellicas laudes abstraxisset. Erat oratione satis amplius, rem prudenter videbat; actio vero eius habebat et in voce magnum splendorem et in motu summam dignitatem.¹⁰⁷

Gnaeus Pompey, my contemporary, destined by nature to pre-eminence, would have enjoyed greater glory for eloquence had not ambition for still greater glory drawn him off to the prizes of a military career. His language had some elevation and he possessed good judgment in discerning the question at issue; but chiefly a fine voice and great dignity of bearing made his delivery impressive.

Thus, Cicero has drawn in his letters the picture of a most enigmatic character in his portrayal of Pompey. On the whole, although the portrait is hardly that of a "chevalier sans peur et sans reproche," it is not entirely displeasing. It has serious defects — one especially serious, the betrayal of friendship — and startling contrasts; the contradictions are difficult to reconcile from Cicero's statements — it is probable that he himself could not reconcile them and that he never fully understood Pompey — but the defects, even the most grievous one, are well overshadowed by other praiseworthy qualities. That the very victim of Pompey's personal disloyalty could so far lose sight of that treachery in the man's other excellences that he could later express a willingness to die for his friend is high praise. That praise is finally summed up in a letter written shortly after Pompey's death:

Non possum eius casum non dolere: hominem enim integrum et castum et gravem cognovi.¹⁰⁸

I cannot help feeling sorry for his fate, for I knew him to be a man of

107 Cicero, Brutus lxviii.239.

108 Cicero, Ad Att. xi.6.

honor and high moral principle.

CHAPTER III

POMPEY: OTHER ANCIENT TESTIMONY

Apart from the letters and speeches of Cicero, there is not a large body of contemporary written evidence concerning the life and character of Pompey. He is mentioned briefly in passing in Sallust's Catilina; in the Historiae of Sallust he would no doubt have figured largely, but of this work only fragments are extant. The Bellum Civile of Caesar naturally touches a great deal on the career of Pompey; its value, however, is lessened in that it is the work of a political and military rival and, in some sort, a defense by that rival of his own activities. Livy's work would have been a valuable source of information: he was already a boy of eleven when Pompey died, and during his youth and early manhood he would have had access to firsthand information concerning the events of the last years of the Roman republic; unfortunately, all the books treating of those years have been lost. Thus, the most abundant evidence of Pompey's life is found in the writers of the early years of the Christian era, and principally in those of the first century A. D. These writers are for the most part historians, although other types of literature, even poetry, also furnish some witness of Pompey's character and personality. Therefore, the writings of these authors of the early Roman empire, together with what information can be gleaned from the earlier writers, will provide the basis for the study of Pompey in this chapter.

As in the foregoing chapter, the question of Pompey's generalship will be the subject of the first part of the discussion. Little contemporary evidence can be offered, but a certain Caelius Rufus, a correspondent of Cicero, is as critical of Pompey's inefficiency at the beginning of the civil war as was Cicero himself:

Ecquando tu hominem ineptiorem quam tuum Cn. Pompeium vidisti, qui tantas turbas, qui tam nugax esset, commovit?¹

Did you ever see a more helpless fellow than that trifler who has stirred up so much confusion -- your friend Gnaeus Pompey?

Even Caesar has little to say about Pompey's military operations, for he would naturally be little likely to lessen his own prestige by belittling the ability of his opponent. His criticism, therefore, is by indirection:

Pompeius . . . magnam ex Asia Cycladibusque insulis, Corcyra, Athenis, Ponto, Bithynia, Syria, Cilicia, Phoenice, Aegypto classem coegerat, magnam omnibus locis aedificandam curaverat; magnam imperatam Asiae, Syriae regibusque omnibus et dynastis et tetrarchis et liberis Aethiopiae populis pecuniam exegerat, magnam societates earum provinciarum quas ipse obtinebat sibi numerare coegerat.²

Pompey . . . had gathered a large fleet from Asia and the Cyclades islands, from Corcyra, Athens, Pontus, Bithynia, Syria, Cilicia, Phoenicia and Egypt, and had arranged for the building of a large fleet wherever possible; he had levied and collected a large sum of money from Asia, Syria and all the kings, princes and potentates and from the free communities of Aethiopia; likewise, he forced a large sum to be paid to him by the tax-associations of those provinces of which he had control.

The implication is that Pompey, despite the fact that he had almost unlimited resources of men, ships and money at his command, still was no match for Cae-

1 Cicero, Ad Fam. viii.15.

2 Caesar, Bellum Civile iii.3.

sar. Somewhat the same thought is found in the Pharsalia of Lucan: 2a

Interea totum Magni fortuna per orbem
Secum casuras in proelia moverat urbes.

.....
Non, cum Memnoniis deducens agmina regnis
Cyrus et effusis numerato milite telis
Descendit Perses fraternique ultor amoris
Aequora cum tantis percussit classibus, unum
Tot reges habuere ducem.³

Meanwhile, over all the earth the fame of Magnus had brought forth to battle nations doomed to share his fall. . . . Not even when Cyrus the Persian led his hosts from the realms of morning and came down with an army that was numbered by the casting of darts, not even when Agamemnon, avenging his brother's spurned love, smote the seas with such mighty fleets, did so many kings obey a single leader.

2a The introduction into the thesis of the first of those witnesses who were not contemporaries of Pompey and who, moreover, lived and wrote under the rule of emperors who were the political heirs of Pompey's conqueror raises the question of the reliability of such witnesses. Could they be trusted, motivated as they quite likely were by fear or ambition, to treat of Pompey with an impartiality that might prove to the discredit of the first Caesar? A brief notice is in order, therefore, of the circumstances of life and work that may have influenced each in his characterization of Pompey.

Lucan's epic on the civil war was written during the reign of Nero. In a short life of twenty-five years, the poet first enjoyed the favor and intimate friendship of the emperor, then he rebelled against that tyrant's insane jealousy, scorned him and, finally, after entering into a plot against his life, was condemned to death. Depending, therefore, on the time of composition of the poem, which has not been definitely established, Lucan may or may not have been anxious to please Nero. The internal evidence is as inconclusive: in almost the opening lines it is asserted that the civil war was worth all its toil and bloodshed, in so far as it paved the way for the advent of a Nero (i.33-45), and there then follow some twenty lines of extravagant praise of the emperor; yet, less than a hundred lines further on, in a portrait that is anything but flattering, Lucan indicates that he was no admirer of the great Julius, characterizing him, finally, as one "gaudens . . . viam fecisse ruina" (i.150). On the whole, the poem is less pro-Caesarian than might be expected, and the praises of Pompey which the poet puts into the mouth of Cato (to be cited in the later pages of this chapter) warrant an assumption of reasonable fairness on Lucan's part.

3 Lucan iii.169-170 and 284-288. The omitted verses of this passage are a detailed catalogue of the nations assembled under Pompey's standard.

Velleius Paterculus,^{3a} an historian of the early first century A. D., is the first of the non-contemporaries of Pompey to discuss him at any length. That this writer is a decided admirer of Pompey is indicated in the opening passage of his discussion of the man:

Cuius viri magnitudo multorum voluminum instar exigit, sed operis modus paucis eum narrari iubet.⁴

A true portrait of the greatness of this man would require many volumes, but the scope of my work demands that he be mentioned in but a few words.

The historian then goes on to say that Pompey's military ability was a product of three factors: he had been "a toga virili adsuetus commilitio prudentissimi ducis, parentis sui,"⁵ -- "from early manhood associated in military affairs with a most sagacious commander, his father"; he was possessed of a "bonum et capax recta discendi ingenium"⁶ -- "native talent that showed great capacity to learn what was best"; and he enhanced that natural talent by a "singularem rerum militarium prudentiam"⁷ -- "remarkable insight into military tactics."

3a Velleius's compendium of Roman history was written during the reign and under the patronage of Tiberius. The historian had been a companion in arms of the emperor, had been associated in his triumphs and long enjoyed his friendship; were this not sufficient indication of pro-Caesarian sympathies, the adulation of Tiberius which marks the work affords ample confirmation. However, as will be seen in the following pages, Pompey fares better at the hands of Velleius than of most of the other writers cited herein. Velleius may have felt so secure in his friendship with Tiberius that he could venture to be completely outspoken; or, perhaps, he shrewdly calculated that the greater the praises he bestowed upon Pompey, the greater would be the glory to accrue to Pompey's conqueror and to that conqueror's heirs.

4 Velleius Paterculus ii.29.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

All this brought about the result "ut a Sertorio Metellus laudaretur magis, Pompeius timeretur validius"⁸ -- "that, although Sertorius bestowed the greater praise upon Metellus, it was Pompey he feared the more strongly." Thus, Velleius, in passing, as it were, and as a matter of course, easily resolves in Pompey's favor the much-debated question of that general's contribution to the reconquest of Spain. The repression of the Cilician pirates is also mentioned with but few details, as if the name of the commander were a sufficient guaranty of the success of the campaign; but Pompey's subsequent action is singled out for particular praise:

Reliquias eorum contractas in urbibus remotoque mari loco in certa sede constituit. Sunt qui hoc carpant, sed quamquam in auctore satis rationis est, tamen ratio quemlibet magnum auctorem faceret; data enim facultate sine rapto vivendi rapinis arcuit.⁹

The remnants of the pirates he collected and established in fixed abodes in cities far from the sea. Some criticize him for this; but, although the plan is sufficiently recommended by its author, it would have made its author great whoever he might have been; for, by giving the pirates the opportunity to live without brigandage, he restrained them from brigandage.

Here Pompey is shown to be capable not only of conducting a successful military campaign but, what is of greater importance, also of "winning the peace"; the statement is a signal tribute to his administrative ability and indicates that, at least when on familiar ground, he was not devoid of statesmanlike qualities. The eastern campaign of Pompey against Mithridates and the allied potentates Velleius treats somewhat more at length and with greater detail; two short statements, however, will suffice to show his high regard for this phase of

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., 32.

Pompey's military career:

Secuta deinde Cn. Pompeii militia, gloriae laborisne maioris incertum est.¹⁰

Then followed the military exploits of Gnaeus Pompey in regard to which it would be difficult to say whether the glory they earned or the labor they cost was the greater.

Tum victor omnium quas adierat gentium Pompeius suoque et civium voto maior et per omnia fortunam hominis egressus revertit in Italiam.¹¹

Then, after conquering all the races in his path, Pompey returned to Italy, having achieved a greatness which exceeded both his own hopes and those of his fellow citizens and having, in all his campaigns, surpassed the fortune of a mere mortal.

In regard to Pompey's operations against Caesar, however, Velleius is not so enthusiastic; his reluctant criticism is directed principally against Pompey's apparent errors of judgment:

Immanem exercitum confecerat et mare praesidiis classium, ut rebatur, saepserat, quo minus Caesar legiones posset transmittere.¹²

He had collected a formidable army and had with his fleets established, as he thought, a successful blockade upon the seas to prevent Caesar from transporting his legions.

Yet Caesar was able to cross the Adriatic with the greatest of ease and to besiege Pompey in Dyrrhachium; a skirmish followed, which was favorable to the Pompeian forces, and Caesar withdrew into Thessaly. Thereupon,

Pompeius, longe diversa aliis suadentibus, quorum plerique hortabantur ut in Italiam transmitteret (neque hercules quidquam partibus illis salubrius fuit), alii ut bellum traheret, quod dignatione partium in dies

10 Ibid., 40.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid., 51.

ipsis magis prosperum fieret, usus impetu suo hostem secutus est.¹³

Pompey, in spite of the contrary advice of others, followed his own impulse and set out after the enemy. Most of his advisers urged him to cross into Italy (nor indeed was there any course more expedient for his party); others advised him to prolong the war, which, by reason of the esteem in which the party was held, was daily becoming more favorable to them.

The implication here seems to be that Pompey's personal popularity and the public confidence in his arms and esteem for the principles for which he stood were still so powerful that, were he to return to Italy and take up his stand as the defender of the fatherland, such support would rally to his standards that Caesar's power against him would fade away into nothingness. Yet, he elected to fly in pursuit of his adversary and plunge into battle on grounds of that adversary's own choosing -- with disastrous results.

It has been pointed out above that Caesar displayed great reticence in his writings in criticizing Pompey as a soldier; his verbal utterances, however, were apparently more outspoken, if credit can be given to the reports of later historians. Suetonius,^{13a} in the early second century A. D., writes:

Mithridatis Magni filium . . . multiplici successu praeferocem, intra quantum quam adfuerat diem, quattuor quibus in conspectum venit horis, una profligavit acie, crebro commemorans Pompeii felicitatem, cui prae-

13 Ibid., 52.

13a The work of this author that is most pertinent to the present discussion, the Lives of the Twelve Caesars, dates from the reign of Hadrian, one of the so-called "good" emperors, whom Suetonius served for a time in the capacity of private secretary. He may thus be presumed to have been pro-Caesian, although he probably felt himself secure enough to write freely. Certainly, the discreditable and frequently scandalous anecdotes which are a prominent feature of his work do not indicate any great reverence for the princes whose deeds he is chronicling.

cipua militiae laus de tam imbelli genere hostium contigisset.¹⁴

The son of Mithridates the Great, flushed with numerous successes, Caesar vanquished in a single battle within five days after his arrival and four hours after getting sight of him, often remarking on Pompey's good luck in gaining his principal fame as a general by victories over such feeble foemen.

The reference is to the defeat of Pharnaces at Zela, the battle of Caesar's famous "Veni, vidi, vici" message. Of Pompey's failure to capitalize on his successful engagement at Dyrrhachium, Caesar is also critical, as Suetonius reports:

Ipse prosperrime semper ac ne ancipiti quidem fortuna praeterquam bis dimicavit: semel ad Dyrrhachium, ubi pulsus non instante Pompeio negavit eum vincere scire.¹⁵

Caesar always fought with the utmost success, and the issue was never even in doubt save twice: once at Dyrrhachium, where he was put to flight and said of Pompey, who failed to follow up his success, that he did not know how to use a victory.

In the latter half of the second century A. D., a certain Florus^{15a} wrote what purported to be an epitome of Livy; just how much of Florus's characterization of Pompey is owed to Livy cannot be ascertained, in view of the

14 Suetonius, Vitae Caesarum i.35.

15 Ibid., 36.

15a Of this writer very little is known; even his full and correct name is uncertain. The consensus of opinion places him in the time of Trajan or Hadrian, and by some he is identified with a poet of the same name who was a friend of Hadrian. Florus's own statement, however, would seem to indicate that he belongs to a somewhat later period; in his introduction, he claims to be writing a little less than two hundred years from the time of Augustus, which, depending upon the date in the life of Augustus from which Florus reckoned, could place his floruit anywhere from the time of Hadrian to well into the reign of Commodus or later. His possible associations, therefore, give little clue to his political sympathies. His work itself is claimed to be an epitome of Livy and, as such, should rather betray republican leanings than otherwise.

loss of the pertinent books of the Ab Urbe Condita. There is in Livy, however, a mention of Pompey which reflects a point made much of by Florus. Livy is discussing the factors of chief importance in war and singles out fortuna as being especially powerful; he points out that the fame of Alexander the Great rests in large measure on the fact that he died while he was still the favorite of Fortune, while the great Cyrus, on the other hand, was exposed by a too long life "vertenti . . . fortunae."¹⁶ And Pompey the Great, continues the historian, recently experienced the same lot. Now, of course, this emphasis on the role of Fortune in the affairs of men was not a new idea offered to the Roman mind by Livy; Cicero,¹⁷ especially, had made Pompey's good luck a strong argument in his speech on the Manilian Law, and other writers make at least passing reference to the good fortune which invariably accompanied Pompey, yet in the end overthrew him.¹⁸ Florus, whether following the lead of Livy or not, is emphatic in his references to Pompey's good fortune; "quanta felicitas viri,"¹⁹ he exclaims, as he describes Pompey's conquest of Mithridates. In fact, the whole Pontic campaign was but a means by which "decus et nomen et titulos gloriae Pompeio suo fortuna quaerebat"²⁰ — "Fortune sought honor and fame and distinctions for her own dear Pompey." One wonders whether Florus,

16 Livy ix.17.

17 Cicero, Pro Lege Manilia Oratio xvi.

18 See especially Juvenal x.285-286 and Velleius Paterculus ii.37, 40, 48, 53.

19 Florus i.40.

20 Ibid.

in ascribing so much of Pompey's success to divine assistance, is not deliberately attempting to detract from the brilliance of Pompey's generalship, for the passage describing the battle in which Mithridates met final defeat exhibits a curious inversion:

Nocturna ea dimicatio fuit et luna in partibus. Quippe quasi commilitans cum dea a tergo se hostibus, a facie Romanis praebuisset, Pontici per errorem longius cadentes umbras suas quasi hostium corpora petebant.²¹

The engagement took place at night, and the moon took sides in it; for when the goddess, as if fighting on Pompey's side, had placed herself behind the enemy and facing the Romans, the men of Pontus aimed at their own unusually long shadows, thinking that they were the bodies of their foes.

It might ordinarily be supposed that a general of Pompey's reputation would have had some hand in the disposition of the battle lines and would not have left all to the chance benignity of the fair Diana. It is likely that Florus was so obsessed with the idea of Pompey's favor with the gods that he allowed himself to be swept away from reality, but he has, at any rate, even if unwittingly, furnished evidence of one aspect of Pompey's strategical skill. Moreover, the author is more down to earth when he mentions another achievement of Pompey's in the same Mithridatic war, an achievement which may be favorably compared with Caesar's bridging of the Rhine: "Ponte navibus facto omnium ante se primus transiit Euphratem"²² — "he built a bridge of boats over the Euphrates and was the first to cross that river by this means." For the war against the Cilician pirates Florus has somewhat the same praise as had Velleius Pater-

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

culus,²³ for Pompey, after defeating the pirates,

maritimum genus a conspectu longe removit maris et mediterraneis agris quasi obligavit eodemque tempore et usum maris navibus recuperavit et terrae homines suos reddidit.²⁴

removed this maritime people far from the sight of the sea and bound it down, as it were, to the cultivation of inland districts, thus at the same time recovering the use of the sea for shipping and restoring to the land its dwellers.

It is difficult, continues Florus, to determine what in this victory was most worthy of admiration -- its speedy accomplishment, the good fortune which attended it, or its lasting effect, for "amplius piratae non fuerunt"²⁵ -- "there never were any pirates again." When, however, the author comes to the discussion of Pompey's war with Caesar, his opinion of Pompey suffers the same deterioration that has been already noted in Velleius Paterculus.²⁶ He looks upon Pompey's withdrawal from Italy as a most disgraceful flight:

Ille per obsessi claustra portus nocturna fuga evasit. Turpe dictus modo princeps patrum pacisque bellique moderator per triumphatum a se mare lacera et paene inermi nave fugiebat. Nec Pompeii ab Italia quam senatus ab urbe fuga turpior.²⁷

He escaped by night through the entrance of the beleaguered harbor. A shameful tale, he who was but lately head of the senate and arbiter of peace and war fleeing, in a storm-beaten and almost dismantled vessel, over the sea which had been the scene of his triumphs. The flight of the senate from the city was as discreditable as that of Pompey from Italy.

Yet Florus acknowledges that, after the crossing to Illyria, Pompey pursued a

23 See above 51 and n. 9.

24 Florus i.41.

25 Ibid.

26 See above 52-53 and nn. 12 and 13.

27 Florus ii.13.

careful and shrewd policy, which might have brought him ultimate victory had his hand not been forced by the disaffection of his men:

Pompeius . . . nectere moras, tergiversari, sic hostem interclusum undique inopia commeatum terere, usque dum ardentissimi ducis consenesceret impetus. Nec diutius profuit ducis salutare consilium. Miles otium, socii moram, principes ambitum ducis increpabant.²⁸

Pompey contrived delays and subterfuges and wore down the enemy, hemmed in as they were on all sides, by intercepting their supplies, waiting for the moment when the zeal of the impetuous Caesar should die down. But his salutary plan did not avail him very long; the soldiers complained of the inactivity, the allies of his dilatoriness, and the nobles of his 'playing to the gallery.'

This statement is in direct contradiction to the assertion of Velleius Paterculus²⁹ that Pompey rushed into battle against all advice to the contrary. The truth is probably somewhere between. Cicero³⁰ had said that in consequence of the skirmish at Dyrrhachium Pompey had begun to have confidence in his troops. It is likely, therefore, that his first operations on the far side of the Adriatic were cautious and studied, but that, under the goading of the more irresponsible members of his entourage, he grew deaf to the counsel of his saner associates and, abandoned by his Fortune, succumbed to the "praecipitantes fatibus"³¹ and hurled himself into Thessaly and his doom.

The final testimony to be offered concerning Pompey's generalship is that of Eutropius,^{31a} an historian of the fourth century A. D. He first refers

28 Ibid.

29 See above 52-53 and n. 13.

30 See above 22 and n. 26.

31 Florus ii.13.

31a The question of loyalty or subservience to the heirs of Julius

to Pompey in connection with the Marius-Sulla conflict. It was to Sulla that his services had been offered by Pompey,

quem adolescentem Sulla atque annos unum et viginti natum cognita eius industria exercitibus praefecerat, ut secundus a Sulla haberetur.³²

whom, although but a young man of twenty-one, Sulla, perceiving his energetic eagerness, had put in charge of his troops, so that he was reckoned second only to Sulla himself.

His operations as Sulla's lieutenant were apparently so outstanding (Eutropius gives no details, merely states the fact) that

Pompeius, quod nulli Romanorum tributum erat, quartum et vicesimum annum agens de Africa triumphavit.³³

Pompey, although only in his twenty-fourth year, was granted a triumph for Africa, a privilege which had been accorded to no Roman before him.

For the war against Sertorius Eutropius seems to give Metellus and Pompey equal credit. Pompey was sent into Spain, he says, because Metellus singly was thought to be unequal to the task; however, it was not so much Pompey, but the fact that Sertorius now had two generals arrayed against him, that caused that rebel's downfall.³⁴ And the war in Spain was brought to an end "per Cn. Pom-

Caesar hardly arises in the case of Eutropius. He flourished towards the end of the fourth century A. D., when new traditions and new problems were the heritage of the Roman world. A century of "barrack" emperors had ended in the accession of Diocletian, a man from the east, a man of peasant stock, who, in an effort to bolster the tottering empire against the onslaught of the barbarians poised on its borders, effectively destroyed its unity. The seat of government moved to the Bosphorus, and Rome and its Caesars became a memory. A half-century later Eutropius may have been devoted to the empire as to a symbol of government but hardly to the dynasty of the Julio-Claudians.

32 Eutropius v.8.

33 Ibid., 9.

34 Ibid., vi.1.

peium adulescentem et Q. Metellum Pium"³⁵ — "by the young Gnaeus Pompey and Quintus Metellus Pius." Of Pompey's suppression of the Cilician pirates Eutropius says only that the task was accomplished "intra paucos menses ingenti et felicitate et celeritate"³⁶ — "with surprising success and dispatch in the course of a few months." However, it is his conquest of Mithridates and Tigranes and his other eastern exploits that Eutropius seems to consider Pompey's greatest claim to fame, if one may judge from the proportionate amount of space devoted to these campaigns and the details with which they are presented. The overthrow of Mithridates in a single battle by night, with the loss of only twenty-two men as against Mithridates's forty thousand,³⁷ the suppression of Tigranes and the abridgment of his power and wealth,³⁸ the making and unmaking of kings and princes,³⁹ the capture of Jerusalem⁴⁰ — these are the highlights of a campaign which gained for Pompey a triumph of which Eutropius says, "Nulla unquam pompa triumphi similis fuit"⁴¹ — "no triumphal procession was ever equal to this." In his treatment of the civil war, Eutropius displays the same lack of enthusiasm which has been evident in the citations noted above. He merely states facts, content to let any inference relative to the respective

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid., 12.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid., 13.

39 Ibid., 14.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid., 16.

merits of Caesar and Pompey be drawn therefrom as the reader may see fit.

Speaking of what is obviously the battle of Dyrrhachium, he says of Caesar:

Primo proelio victus est et fugatus, evasit tamen quia nocte interveniente Pompeius sequi noluit, dixitque Caesar nec Pompeium scire vincere et illo tantum die se potuisse superari.⁴²

In the first battle he was defeated and put to flight; he escaped, however, because Pompey declined to pursue him, as the night was coming on; and Caesar remarked that Pompey knew not how to conquer and that on that day alone he himself could have been vanquished.

Eutropius here repeats what had been said in almost the same words by Suetonius,⁴³ that, in Caesar's opinion, Pompey did not know how to follow up a victory. A reason is given for Pompey's failure to pursue Caesar, "the night was coming on," but the Latin construction does not make it clear whether that reason is Pompey's or Eutropius's. Whether the reason is adequate is another question. Of the battle at Pharsalia there are no details beyond an enumeration of the forces ranged on each side: Caesar had not quite thirty thousand infantry and one thousand horse; Pompey had forty thousand foot soldiers and eleven hundred cavalry,

praeterea totius orientis auxilia, totam nobilitatem, innumeros senatores, praetorios, consulares et qui magnorum iam bellorum victores fuissent.⁴⁴

besides auxiliary troops from the whole east, all the nobility, senators without number, men of praetorian and consular rank, and some who had already been conquerors in extensive wars.

The evidence from the various writers cited in the preceding pages makes it clear that the determination of the quality of Pompey's generalship

42 Ibid., 20.

43 See above 54 and n. 15.

44 Eutropius vi.20.

presented a perplexing problem. Although there is hardly any unanimity of opinion on any phase of his military career, the greatest discrepancy is noted in the treatment of the earlier and of the later phases. The suppression of the Cilician pirates wins general praise not only for the speed and efficiency with which it was accomplished, but also for the subsequent measures which assured a permanent end of the menace. The eastern campaign against Mithridates and the other princes is also singled out for high praise. But when the discussion arrives at the civil war, the impression is given that the Pompey of the years 49 and 48 is a different person altogether from the Pompey of 67 to 62. The criticism of the later Pompey is almost universally derogatory: he is inept, confused, uncertain, fearful, at the mercy of his subordinates. The apparent change in the man must have been a source of wonder and annoyance to many; it was particularly so to Cicero, as has been pointed out in Chapter II.⁴⁵ To Caesar, however, the development was seemingly no surprise, especially in view of his reported later statement that Pompey had gained his principal fame by victories over feeble foemen.⁴⁶ So, from one point of view, Pompey was a brilliant general who, for one reason or another, had deteriorated in his later years to a fumbling ineptitude; from the other point of view, he had merely acquired a reputation for military genius which, when brought face to face with really excellent generalship, was found to be false. In the next and final chapter of this thesis, the evidence of Pompey's own few letters will be presented and an attempt will be made to reconcile these conflicting views.

⁴⁵ See above 16 and n. 9.

⁴⁶ See above 53-54 and n. 14.

The portrait of Pompey as a politician and statesman presents equally conflicting lights and shadows. The contemporary evidence is confined, after Cicero, to Sallust, Caesar and Marcus Caelius Rufus. Caelius, whose opinion of Pompey's generalship has already been referred to earlier in this chapter,⁴⁷ was a younger contemporary and protégé of Cicero; although he favored Caesar and openly attached himself to him in 49, he long maintained his friendship with Cicero and in the years 51 and 50 authored a series of letters to that statesman, who was then governor of Cilicia, with the obvious purpose of keeping him abreast of affairs in the city. In one of the earlier of these letters he writes of Pompey:

Solet enim aliud sentire et loqui neque tantum valere ingenio, ut non appareat quid cupiat.⁴⁸

As a rule, he thinks one thing and says another, and yet he is not quite clever enough to disguise his desires.

The best interpretation that can be placed on this statement is that Pompey, if he was not simply a congenital liar, was a very confused man who sought to conceal his uncertainty in the midst of weighty matters of state by fruitless attempts at craftiness. In a later letter, however, Caelius speaks of some remarks of Pompey, "quae maxime confidentiam attulerunt hominibus"⁴⁹ — "which gave people the greatest confidence"; these remarks were to the effect that

se ante Kalendas Martias non posse sine iniuria de provinciis Caesaris

47 See above 48 and n. 1.

48 Cicero, Ad Fam. viii.1.

49 Ibid., 8.

statuere, post Kalendas Martias se non dubitaturum.⁵⁰

he could not with any justice decide about Caesar's provinces before the first of March, but that after that date he would not hesitate to act.

The question at issue, of course, is that of allowing Caesar to stand for the consulship in absentia without laying down his proconsular command. Some months later, Caelius sums up the situation as follows:

Pompeius, tamquam Caesarem non impugnet, sed quod illi aequum putet constituat, ait Curionem quaerere discordias. Valde autem non vult et plane timet Caesarem consulem designari prius quam exercitum et provinciam tradiderit. Accipitur satis male a Curione et totus eius secundus consulatus exagitur.⁵¹

Pompey, as if he were not attacking Caesar, but making an arrangement which he considers fair to him, says that Curio⁵² is seeking excuses for discord. But he emphatically does not desire, and is evidently afraid of, Caesar's being named consul-designate before handing over his army and his province. He is being treated harshly enough by Curio, and the whole of his second consulship⁵³ is being fiercely impugned.

So, Pompey first appears as a dissembler, then he gives the impression of being forthright and straightforward, and then again he is the dissembler. The crux of the whole situation, of course, as Caelius indicates by his reference to the second consulship, is that all of Pompey's political maneuvers at this time are aimed at extricating himself from the intolerable position in which he had placed himself by his blunder of allying himself with Caesar in the first place. That alliance is a short time later referred to by Caelius as

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid., 11.

52 A tribune, supporter of Caesar.

53 In the year 55, when Pompey and Crassus engineered the prolongation of Caesar's command for an additional five years.

"invidiosa coniunctio"⁵⁴ — "a detestable union," which now "ad bellum se erumpit"⁵⁵ — "is breaking out into war."

Caesar himself apparently attempts to place upon Pompey the onus of being the moving force in their fateful coalition: he speaks of their common enemies, "quorum ipse maximam partem illo affinitatis tempore iniunxerat Caesari"⁵⁶ — "most of whom Pompey himself had imposed upon Caesar at the time of their connection." Caesar was merely the backer and abettor: "honori et dignitati semper favorit adiutorque fuerit"⁵⁷ — "he had always supported and aided Pompey's influence and position." More definite is his charge that

Sullam nudata omnibus rebus tribunicia potestate tamen intercessionem liberam reliquisse, Pompeium, qui amissa restituisset videatur, dona etiam quae ante habuerint ademisse.⁵⁸

Sulla, although stripping the tribunicial power of everything, nevertheless left its right of intervention free, while Pompey, who has the credit of having restored the privileges that were lost, took away even those that they had before.

Especially bitter is Caesar over Pompey's chameleon-like tactics in the matter of the candidacy in absentia; he says that

latum ab decem tribunis plebis . . . ut sui ratio absentis haberetur, ipso consule Pompeio; qui si improbasset, cur ferri passus esset? si probasset, cur se uti populi beneficio prohibuisset?⁵⁹

54 Cicero, Ad Fam. viii.14.

55 Ibid.

56 Caesar, Bellum Civile i.4.

57 Ibid., 7.

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid., 32.

a proposal had been carried by the ten tribunes, while Pompey himself was consul, that his candidacy should be considered in his absence . . . ; if Pompey had disapproved, why had he allowed the measure to be passed? if he had approved, why did he prevent him from taking advantage of the people's kindness?

Caesar's derogatory criticism of Pompey's part in the restoration of the power of the tribunes is contradicted by another contemporary, who was moreover one of Caesar's own partisans, the historian Sallust. After noting that "Cn. Pompeio et M. Crasso consulibus tribunicia potestas restituta est"⁶⁰ — "the tribunicial power was restored in the consulship of Pompey and Crassus," he makes the significant statement:

Sed postquam Cn. Pompeius ad bellum maritimum atque Mithridaticum missus est, plebis opes imminutae, paucorum potentia crevit.⁶¹

When, however, Gnaeus Pompey had been dispatched to wage war against the pirates and against Mithridates, the power of the commons was lessened, while that of the few increased.

The implication certainly is that not only had Pompey restored the privileges of the people, but it was by his actual presence, and his alone, that those privileges were maintained!

Velleius Paterculus, too, gives Pompey credit for restoring the tribunicial power and implicitly denies Caesar's assertion that Pompey's action had been less beneficial than Sulla's: "Pompeius tribuniciam potestatem restituit, cuius Sulla imaginem sine re reliquerat"⁶² — "Pompey restored the power of the tribunes, of which Sulla had left the shadow without the substance."

60 Sallust, Bellum Catilinae xxxviii.

61 Ibid., xxxix.

62 Velleius Paterculus ii.30.

The association of Pompey, Caesar and Crassus in the first triumvirate is characterized by Velleius as "urbi orbique terrarum . . . exitiabilis"⁶³ — "fraught with destruction for the city and the world," but he confirms what has been suggested above,⁶⁴ that Caesar contrived to lay the burden of the conspiracy upon Pompey:

Animadvertibat se cedendo Pompeii gloriae aucturum suam et invidia communis potentiae in illum relegata confirmaturum vires suas.⁶⁵

He realized that in yielding to the prestige of Pompey he would increase his own and that by throwing on Pompey the odium of their joint power he would add to his own strength.

Pompey's first consulship, in conjunction with Crassus, has been praised for the matter of the tribunicial privileges, his second, also with Crassus, was not so happy; Caelius Rufus's remarks have already been noted,⁶⁶ Velleius adds that the second tenure "neque petitus honeste ab iis neque probabiliter gestus est"⁶⁷ — "was neither won by them fairly nor administered with popular approval." In his third consulship, in which Pompey served for the greater part of the year without a colleague, "omnem vim in coercionem ambitus exercuit"⁶⁸ — "he employed his whole power in curbing election abuses." Mention has already been made of Velleius's opinion of Pompey's treatment of the

63 Ibid., 44.

64 See above 65 and nn. 56 and 57.

65 Velleius Paterculus ii.44.

66 See above 64 and n. 51.

67 Velleius Paterculus ii.46.

68 Ibid., 47.

pirates;⁶⁹ that evidence of far-sighted political sagacity rounds out that writer's testimony to Pompey's statesmanship.

To Seneca, the moralist and philosopher of the first century A. D., Pompey was more the politician, in the bad sense of the word, than the statesman; his political morality, especially in the matter of the triumvirate, is severely censured:

Ingratus Cn. Pompeius, qui pro tribus consulatibus, pro triumphis tribus, pro tot honoribus quos ex maxima parte immaturus invaserat, hanc gratiam rei publicae reddidit ut in possessionem eius alios quoque induceret, quasi potentiae suae detractorum invidiam si quod nulli licere debebat pluribus licuisset; dum extraordinaria concupiscit imperia, dum provincias ut eligat distribuit, dum ita cum tertio rem publicam dividit ut tamen in sua domo duae partes essent, eo redegit populum Romanum ut salvus esse non posset nisi beneficio servitutis.⁷⁰

Ungrateful is Gnaeus Pompey, who in return for three consulships, in return for three triumphs, in return for the many public offices into most of which he had thrust himself before the legal age, showed such gratitude to the commonwealth that he induced others also to lay hands upon it — as if he could render his own power less odious by giving several others the right to do what no man ought to have had the right to do! While he coveted extraordinary commands, while he distributed the provinces to suit his own choice, while he divided the commonwealth in such a way that, although a third person had a share, two thirds of it remained in his own family,⁷¹ he reduced the Roman people to such a plight that only by the acceptance of slavery were they able to survive.

Thus, it was Pompey who initiated the alliance of the triumvirs — a Pompey, moreover, who abused every confidence placed in him to subject the Roman people to his will and exalt himself to the mastery of the world. The indictment is grave, but it is hardly surprising coming from the pen of the confidant of a

69 See above 51 and n. 9.

70 Seneca, De Beneficiis v.16.4.

71 Since Caesar was his father-in-law.

Julian Caesar.

The historian Tacitus, in a work that is not strictly classifiable as formal history, his Dialogus, makes a passing reference to Pompey in a connection which is pertinent to the discussion of that leader's statesmanlike qualities. Describing the earlier organization and procedure of the law courts, the narrator is made to say:

Nemo intra paucissimas perorare horas cogebatur et liberae comperendinationes erant et modum in dicendo sibi quisque sumebat et numerus neque dierum neque patronorum finiebatur. Primus haec tertio consulatu Cn. Pompeius adstrinxit, imposuitque veluti frenos eloquentiae, ita tamen ut omnia in foro, omnia legibus, omnia apud praetores gererentur.⁷²

No one was obliged to complete his pleading in a few brief hours; postponements were common; each speaker determined his own limits for his speech; and neither the number of days that the trial might run nor the number of advocates to be employed therein was fixed by law. It was Gnaeus Pompey who, in his third consulship, first checked these excesses and put a curb, as it were, to eloquence, though everything was still done in court, according to law, and in the presence of magistrates.

To the accomplishments of Pompey's third consulship, therefore, must be added, along with the curbing of election abuses,⁷³ the much-needed reformation of the law courts.

The much-argued question of the authorship of the first triumvirate seems to be resolved by Suetonius in favor of Pompey, for Caesar

omnibus officiis Gnaeum Pompeium adsectatus est . . . Pompeioque Marcum Crassum reconciliavit . . . ac societatem cum utroque inicit ne quid ageretur in re publica quod displicuisset ulli e tribus.⁷⁴

by every possible attention courted the good will of Gnaeus Pompey . . .

72 Tacitus, Dialogus de Oratoribus xxxviii.

73 See above 67 and n. 68.

74 Suetonius, Vitae i.19.

and reconciled Marcus Crassus with Pompey . . . and made a compact with both of them, that no step should be taken in public affairs which did not suit any one of the three.

If this passage does not clearly mark Caesar as the instigator of the plot, at least the renewal of the agreement four years later was wholly on Caesar's initiative:

Crassum Pompeiumque in urbem provinciae suae Lucam extractos compulit ut detrudendi Domitii causa consulatum alterum peterent, perfecitque per utrumque ut in quinquennium sibi imperium prorogaretur.⁷⁵

He dragged Crassus and Pompey up to Lucca, a city in his province, where he prevailed upon them to stand for a second consulship in order to defeat Domitius, and he also succeeded through their influence in having the term of his provincial command prolonged for an additional five years.

Florus, in his version of the establishment of the triumvirate, takes no sides, though he indicates that there were what may be considered extenuating circumstances in Pompey's case:

Nimia Pompeii potentia apud otiosos, ut solet, cives movit invidiam. Metellus ob imminutum Cretae triumphum, Cato adversus potentes semper obliquus detrectare Pompeio actisque eius obstrepere. Hic dolor transversum egit et ad praesidia dignitati paranda impulit. . . . Sic igitur Caesare dignitatem comparare, Crasso augere, Pompeio retinere cupientibus, omnibusque pariter potentiae cupidis, de invadenda re publica facile convenit.⁷⁶

The excessive power enjoyed by Pompey excited, as often happens, a feeling of envy among the ease-loving citizens. Metellus, because of the mediocrity of his Cretan triumph, and Cato, who always looked askance upon those in power, began to decry Pompey and clamor against his measures. Annoyance at this drove Pompey into opposition and induced him to seek support for his position. . . . Since Caesar, therefore, was desirous of winning, Crassus of increasing and Pompey of retaining prestige, and since all alike were eager for power, they readily came to an agreement to seize the government.

75 *Ibid.*, 24.

76 Florus ii.13.

But, in the matter of Caesar's candidacy for the consulship in absentia,

Florus joins Caelius⁷⁷ and Caesar⁷⁸ in accusing Pompey of equivocation:

Ut daretur consulatus absenti, quem decem tribuni favente Pompeio nuper decreverant, dissimulante eodem negabatur.⁷⁹

The granting of the consulship to Caesar in his absence, which the ten tribunes had recently decreed with the support of Pompey, was now, through the machinations of the same Pompey, refused.

On the other hand, as has already been noted,⁸⁰ Florus found Pompey's activity in the disposition of the piratic problem praiseworthy; the operation was primarily military, but its aftermath testifies to the sound statecraft of the general, for "nec fidelior in posterum reperta gens ulla est idque prospectum singulari consilio ducis"⁸¹ -- "no nation was afterwards found more loyal, and this was secured by the remarkable foresight of the commander."

A summing up of the opinions of Pompey's statecraft and political activity that have been cited reveals him again as a remarkably enigmatic character. On the one hand, he appears to be a wise and far-sighted statesman, willing and able to preserve and enhance constitutional law and order: witness the reformation of the law courts, the restoration of the tribunicial power, the curbing of election abuses, the effective and salutary disposition of the piratic problem. On the other hand, he seems to be nothing more than a time-

77 See above 64 and n. 51.

78 See above 65-66 and n. 59.

79 Florus ii.13.

80 See above 57 and nn. 24 and 25.

81 Florus i.41.

“
serving politician, grasping for power and prestige: whether or not he was the master-mind of the triumvirate, his participation therein and his operations arising therefrom are not to his credit, and his equivocation and vacillation in the matter of Caesar's second consulship is hardly excused by the dilemma in which he then found himself. Pompey's enemies would probably say that the latter characterization of him is the true one, that his apparently statesman-like acts were but the means to his own aggrandizement and that, therefore, when the crisis of his affairs came, devotion to the state gave way to ward-heeling politics. If the writer of this thesis may venture an opinion, the key to the problem is Caesar. A careful analysis of the political activities of Pompey that have been noted above will show that his failures, his errors, his offenses -- in short, all the facets of his political career that have been objects of censure -- invariably bear some relation to Caesar. In conjunction with Caesar, whether as an ally or as an opponent, Pompey could do nothing right. Whether it was fear or awe, jealousy, annoyance or exasperation, there was some irritant in all of Pompey's association with Caesar that brought to the fore a fundamental weakness of Pompey's character and led him into actions inconsonant with the normal convictions of his life.

What that weakness in Pompey's character was may find some clarification in the third and final part of this chapter; however, at this point, partly by way of digression, but also as a contributing factor to Pompey's political career and a manifestation of his personality, it will be pertinent to consider his claim to fame as an orator. Cicero's⁸² remarks on Pompey's

⁸² See above 75 and n. 107.

oratorical ability have already been noted in Chapter II. The judgment of Velleius Paterculus, on the other hand, is that Pompey was "eloquentia medi-
us"⁸³ -- "of but moderate oratorical talent." Tacitus, however, confirms the statement of Cicero; he adduces the testimony of some ancient records, Proceed-
ings and Letters, from which

intellegi potest Cn. Pompeium et M. Crassum non viribus modo et armis sed ingenio quoque et oratione valuisse.⁸⁴

it can be seen that Gnaeus Pompey and Marcus Crassus rose to power not only by force of arms, but also by their talent for oratory.

Suetonius, too, furnishes some evidence that oratory was an acknowledged accomplishment of Pompey:

Cn. Pompeium quidam historici tradiderunt sub ipsum civile bellum . . . repetisse declamandi consuetudinem.⁸⁵

Some historians have asserted that Gnaeus Pompey resumed the practice of declaiming just before the civil war.

Finally, the rhetorician Quintilian, while implying that the practice of oratory was familiar to Pompey, throws an interesting light on the circumstances of that practice:

Sunt multae a Graecis Latinisque compositae orationes quibus alii uterentur, ad quorum conditionem vitamque aptanda quae dicebantur fuerunt. An eodem modo cogitavit aut eandem personam induit Cicero cum scriberet Cn. Pompeio et cum T. Ampio ceterisque?⁸⁶

There are many speeches composed by Greek and Latin authors for others to deliver, to whose position and personality the words of the speeches had

83 Velleius Paterculus ii.29.

84 Tacitus, Dialogus xxxvii.

85 Suetonius, De Rhetoribus i.

86 Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria iii.8.50.

to be adapted. Do you suppose that Cicero's thoughts took the same turn or that he assumed the same character when he wrote for Gnaeus Pompey and when he wrote for Titus Ampius or the others?

The apparent conclusion to be drawn from these few passages is that, although Pompey was unequal to the task of composing a persuasive speech, once the finished work was placed in his hands, he was able to deliver it with convincing effectiveness. This ability to sway an audience must have been an important source of Pompey's personal popularity and would seem to indicate the possession of certain agreeable traits of character and personality.

A consideration of those excellences of character, as well as of the less pleasing aspects of Pompey's personality, will occupy the final few pages of this chapter. Caesar, as is to be expected, emphasizes the darker side of the picture; Pompey, he says, "neminem dignitate secum exaequari volebat"⁸⁷ -- "wanted no one to be on the same level of authority with himself." Moreover, in consequence of his waning prestige, Pompey "rem ad arma deduci studebat"⁸⁸ -- "was eager that the issue should be brought to the decision of arms." Thus, Pompey was so concerned for his position and dignity that he was willing to plunge the Roman world into war to maintain his supremacy; and in that war his jealous spirit held as enemies all who did not actually support him,

Pompeius enim discedens ab urbe in senatu dixerat eodem se habiturum loco qui Romae remansissent et qui in castris Caesaris fuissent.⁸⁹

for Pompey, when quitting the city, had said in the senate that he would regard in the same light those who remained at Rome and those who were in

87 Caesar, Bellum Civile i.4.

88 Ibid.

89 Ibid., 33.

Caesar's camp.

The historian Velleius Paterculus had, as has already been pointed out in the first part of this chapter,⁹⁰ the greatest admiration for Pompey, and the "few words"⁹¹ to which he proposed to limit his discussion of the general run on at some length. They begin with a summary of Pompey's appearance, personality and morality and the chief characteristics of his public life:

Fuit hic genitus matre Lucilia stirpis senatoriae, forma excellens, non ea qua flos commendatur aetatis, sed ea dignitate constantiaque quae in illam conveniens amplitudinem fortunamque eum ad ultimum vitae comitata est diem; innocentia eximius, sanctitate praecipuus, eloquentia medius, potentiae quae honoris causa ad eum deferretur, non vi ab eo occuparetur, cupidissimus, dux bello peritissimus, civis in toga, nisi ubi vereretur ne quem haberet parem, modestissimus, amicitiarum tenax, in offensis exorabilis, in reconcilianda gratia fidelissimus, in accipienda satisfactione facillimus, potentia sua numquam aut raro ad impotentiam usus, paene omnium vitiorum expertus, nisi numeraretur inter maxima in civitate libera dominae gentium indignari, cum omnes cives iure haberet pares, quemquam aequalem dignitate conspiciere.⁹²

On the side of his mother Lucilia he was of senatorial stock. He was distinguished by a personal beauty, not of the sort which gives the bloom of youth its charm, but stately and unchanging, well befitting his importance and good fortune and attending him to the last day of his life. Of exceptionally great purity of life, of great uprightness of character, of but moderate oratorical talent, he was ambitious of such power as might be conferred upon him as a mark of honor but not that which he might forcibly usurp. In war a resourceful general, in peace a citizen of temperate conduct except when he feared a rival, constant in his friendships, easily placated when offended, loyal in re-establishing terms of amity, very ready to accept satisfaction, rarely or never abusing his power, he was free from almost every fault, unless it be considered one of the greatest faults for a man to chafe at seeing anyone his equal in dignity in a free state that was the mistress of the world, where he should justly regard

90 See above 50 and n. 4.

91 Ibid.

92 Velleius Paterculus ii.29.

all citizens as his equals.

Remarkable as this eulogy is, it cannot avoid mentioning -- and not once, but twice -- the jealous regard Pompey had for his own prestige. To Velleius, considering the circumstances of Pompey's rise to glory, such a selfish pride is a source of wonderment: Pompey had enjoyed the honor of two triumphs before becoming consul and while still merely an eques, yet

quem virum quis non miretur per tot extraordinaria imperia in summum fastigium evectum iniquo tulisse animo C. Caesaris absentis in altero consulatu petendo senatum populumque Romanum rationem habere? adeo familiare est hominibus omnia sibi ignoscere, nihil aliis remittere.⁹³

who is there who does not feel surprise that this man, who owed his elevation to the highest position in the state to so many extraordinary commands, should have taken it ill that the senate and the Roman people were willing to consider Gaius Caesar as a candidate for the consulship a second time, though suing for it in absence? So common a failing it is for men to overlook every irregularity in their own case, but to make no concessions to others.

Velleius hints also that Pompey's seeking for power and glory was not unaccompanied by intrigue. When the question arose of giving Pompey the command against Mithridates in place of Lucius Lucullus, the author of the bill proposing the change was "Manilius, tribunus plebis, semper venalis et alienae minister potentiae"⁹⁴ -- "the tribune Manilius, a man of venal character always and ready to abet the ambitions of others." The law was passed, and Lucullus then accused Pompey of too great ambition; the charge was not unfounded, says Velleius Paterculus,

nam neque Pompeius, ut primum ad rem publicam aggressus est; quemquam omnino parem tulit, et in quibus rebus primus esse debebat, solus esse

93 Ibid., 30.

94 Ibid., 33.

cupiebat. Neque eo viro quisquam aut alia omnia minus aut gloriam magis concupiit: in appetentibus honoribus immodicus, in gerendis verecundissimus, ut qui eos ut libentissime iniret, ita finiret aequo animo, et quod cupisset arbitrio suo sumeret alieno deponeret.⁹⁵

for Pompey, from the time when he first took part in public life, could not brook an equal at all; in undertakings in which he should have been merely the first, he wished to be the only one. In fact, no one desired other things less or glory more than he: yet, though unrestrained in his quest for position, he exercised his authority with the utmost moderation, so that, however eagerly he entered upon office, he would retire therefrom with unconcern, and, though he followed his own inclinations in grasping at what he wanted, he would yield it up again at the wish of another.

His disdain of everything but personal glory is illustrated by his attitude toward the wealth which fell into his hands during his military campaigns; he might have appropriated vast sums to swell his own fortune, yet, to cite an example, he levied upon Tigranes a fine of

ingenti pecunia, quae omnis, sicuti Pompeio moris erat, redacta in quaestoris potestatem ac publicis descripta litteris.⁹⁶

a huge sum of money, all of which, as was Pompey's practice, was turned over to the quaestor and listed in the public accounts.

Pompey's unwillingness that anyone should be his equal finds an echo also in Seneca; that fact, he says, had early become apparent to Caesar:

In oculis erat iam Cn. Pompeius non aequo laturus animo quemquam alium esse in re publica magnum et modum impositurus incrementis, quae gravia illi videbantur, etiam cum in commune crescerent.⁹⁷

It was already plain to his eyes that Gnaeus Pompey would not endure with calmness that any other should become great in the commonwealth and that he would place a check upon Caesar's advancement, which seemed to be annoying to Pompey even when it was increasing to their common interest.

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid., 37.

97 Seneca, Dialogi vi.14.

In fact, his striving for supremacy was the motivation of Pompey's whole career:

Ne Gnaeo quidem Pompeio externa bella ac domestica virtus aut ratio suadebat, sed insanus amor magnitudinis falsae. Modo in Hispaniam et Sertoriana arma, modo ad colligendos piratas ac maria pacanda vadebat. Hae praetexebantur causae ad continuandam potentiam. Quid illum in Africam, quid in septentrionem, quid in Mithridaten et Armeniam et omnis Asiae angulos traxit? Infinita scilicet cupido crescendi, cum sibi uni parum magnus videretur.⁹⁸

It was not virtue or reason which impelled Gnaeus Pompey to foreign and domestic wars; no, it was his mad passion for the appearance of greatness. Now he attacked Spain and the faction of Sertorius; now he fared forth to enchain the pirates and subdue the seas. These were merely excuses and pretexts for extending his power. What drew him into Africa, into the North, against Mithridates, into Armenia and all the corners of Asia? Assuredly, it was his boundless desire to grow bigger; only in his own eyes was he not great enough.

Another facet of Pompey's character, which is a reflection of his craving for public adulation and was deemed worthy of censure by Seneca, is his love of pomp and display, as manifested by the exhibition of elephant-fighting which he staged:

Num et Pompeium primum in circo elephantorum duodeviginti pugnam edidisse commissis more proelii noxiis hominibus ad ullam rem bonam pertinet? Princeps civitatis et inter antiquos principes, ut fama tradidit, bonitatis eximiae memorabile putavit spectaculi genus novo more perdere homines. . . . O quantum caliginis mentibus nostris obicit magna felicitas! Ille se supra rerum naturam esse tunc credidit.⁹⁹

Now, does it serve any useful purpose to know that Pompey was the first to exhibit in the circus a contest of eighteen elephants engaged in mimic battle with criminals? He, a leader of the state and one who, according to report, was conspicuous among the leaders of old for the kindness of his heart, thought it a notable kind of spectacle to kill human beings after a new fashion. . . . Oh, what blindness great prosperity casts upon

98 Seneca, Epistulae Morales xciv.64-65.

99 Seneca, Dialogi x.13.

our minds! He believed at that time¹⁰⁰ that he was beyond the power of nature.

That Pompey was the first, however, to exhibit elephants in battle in the circus is contradicted by the elder Pliny,¹⁰¹ who instances two previous occurrences of the kind, the first as early as 99 B. C.; the originality of Pompey's display lay in the great number of animals involved. But, at least, Pliny¹⁰² assigns to Pompey the distinction of being the first to employ elephants to draw the chariot of state in a triumphal procession; the occasion was the triumph for Africa, but the attempt proved a boomerang, for the beasts were unable to pass through the city gates.¹⁰³ To return to the passage of Seneca just cited, it is to be noted that the mention of Pompey's "bonitatis eximiae" is particularly significant in view of the tenor of the passage as a whole; the implied suggestion that such extrovert-like actions were alien to his true character is supported by another statement of Seneca: "Nihil erat mollius ore Pompeii; numquam non coram pluribus rubuit, utique in contionibus"¹⁰⁴ — "Pompey had the most sensitive cast of countenance; he always blushed in the presence of a gathering, and especially at public assemblies." Bashfulness is hardly an attribute of the swashbuckler.

Seneca's nephew, Lucan, echoes his uncle's sentiment that Pompey

100 The spectacle occurred in 55 B. C., during Pompey's second consulship.

101 Pliny, Naturalis Historia viii.7.

102 Ibid., 2.

103 See also Plutarch, Pompey xiv.4.

104 Seneca, Epistulae xi.4.

could not endure that anyone else should approach him in greatness:

Nec quemquam iam ferre potest Caesarve priorem
Pompeiusve parem.¹⁰⁵

No longer could Caesar a greater endure,
Nor Pompey an equal.

Yet, later in his work, Lucan presents a character sketch of Pompey that is all but entirely a song of praise. The sentiments expressed are not represented as Lucan's own, but as those of Cato Uticensis, who, although he had been a bitter opponent of much of Pompey's policy, supported him in the civil war and became the leader of the fight against Caesar after Pompey's death. It may be surmised, however, from the opening lines of the passage, that the supposed eulogium of Cato is Lucan's own tribute to the greatness of Pompey:

Pauca Catonis

Verba, sed a pleno venientia pectore veri.
'Civis obit,' inquit, 'multum maioribus impar
Nosse modum iuris, sed in hoc tamen utilis aevo,
Cui non ulla fuit iusti reverentia; salva
Libertate potens et solus plebe parata
Privatus servire sibi rectorque senatus,
Sed regnantis, erat. Nil belli iure poposcit,
Quaeque dari voluit, voluit sibi posse negari.
Immodicas possedit opes, sed plura retentis
Intulit. Invasit ferrum, sed ponere norat.
Praetulit arma togae, sed pacem armatus amavit;
Iuvit sumpta ducem, iuvit dimissa potestas.
Casta domus luxuque carens corruptaque numquam
Fortuna domini. Clarum et venerabile nomen
Gentibus, et multum nostrae quod proderat urbi.'¹⁰⁶

Few were the words of Cato, but they came from a heart fraught with truth. 'A citizen has departed,' said he, 'who was far inferior to our ancestors in recognizing the limits of what is lawful, but was yet valuable in this age of ours which has shown no respect for justice. He was powerful with-

105 Lucan i.125-126.

106 Ibid., ix.188-203.

out destroying freedom; he alone, when the people were ready to do his bidding, remained in private station; he ruled the senate, but it was a senate of kings. He made no claims by right of war; what he wished to receive, he wished that others should have the power to refuse him. He acquired great wealth; but he paid into the treasury more than he kept back. He seized the sword; but he knew how to lay it down. He preferred war to peace; but he was a lover of peace even when he wielded the weapons of war. It pleased him to assume the power of a prince, it pleased him also to resign it. His household was pure and free from extravagance and never spoiled by the greatness of its master. His name is illustrious and revered among the nations, and great was his service to our own land.'

There is little in these words that calls for elaboration; similar in tone to the eulogy of Velleius Paterculus,¹⁰⁷ they are simple and forthright and point out Pompey's excellences and palliate his faults in such a way as to be almost a contradiction of the author's previous assertion of Pompey's passion for supremacy.

That passion for supremacy is mentioned also by Florus:

*Iam Pompeio suspectae Caesaris opes et Caesari Pompeiana dignitas gravis; nec ille ferebat parem nec hic superiorem.*¹⁰⁸

Caesar's strength was now an object of suspicion to Pompey, and Pompey's eminence was offensive to Caesar; Pompey could not brook an equal or Caesar a superior.

A comparison of this statement of Florus with the similar statements of Lucan and Velleius Paterculus reveals a remarkable unanimity: all three express the same thought with the same verb and the same adjective. Florus says "nec ille ferebat parem"; Lucan's¹⁰⁹ words are "nec quemquam iam ferre potest . . .

107 See above 75-76 and n. 92.

108 Florus ii.13.

109 See above 80 and n. 105.

parem"; and Velleius¹¹⁰ puts it "neque . . . quemquam omnino parem tulit." The almost verbatim agreement of these authors suggests a cliché, as if the phrase were a standard characterization of Pompey, somewhat after the manner of the so-called "Homeric epithets."^{110a} But, whether or not the expression was one of those too-pat proverbial half-truths, it is in full agreement with a great portion of the other testimony to Pompey's character: the principal, and almost the only, charge leveled at him by the authors cited in this section of the thesis is his unbounded ambition for undisputed and unshared greatness.

Apart from this eagerness for prestige and glory, however, almost all the other aspects of Pompey's character and personality are deemed worthy of praise. Both as a private citizen and in his public life, his integrity, his moderation, his generous nature, his geniality and affability were apparently of such an attractiveness that, in spite of the seriousness of his faults, he was able to win and hold friends and maintain himself, even in the uglier phases of his career, in a perennial popularity. So high was the esteem in which he was held that his passing was regretted even by his enemies: after his death at the hands of the king of Egypt, his head was sent to Caesar, "quo conspecto Caesar etiam lacrimas fudisse dicitur tanti viri intuens caput"¹¹¹ —

110 See above 76-77 and n. 95.

110a Or they may have merely copied from one another, Lucan from Velleius, and Florus from either Velleius or Lucan. There is also the possibility that the three all drew from a common source, which could well have been the lost books of Livy: there are grounds for believing that Lucan relied heavily upon Livy, and Florus himself claims that his own work is an epitome of Livy. And if Florus and Lucan, why not Velleius Paternulus?

111 Eutropius vi.21.

"at the sight of which even Caesar is said to have shed tears as he looked upon the head of so great a man."

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In the two preceding chapters, which constitute the main body of this thesis, there has been presented the evidence of Cicero's letters and of a number of other ancient writings for the determination of the character and personality of Pompey the Great. It is the function of this chapter, in accordance with the plan outlined at the end of Chapter I, to sum up briefly the salient points that have been developed in Chapters II and III and to attempt to reconcile the varying opinions expressed therein. The reader will have already observed that a formidable obstacle stands in the way of a complete synthesis, in that not all of the writers cited touch upon all the phases and aspects of Pompey's career; the peculiar interests of the various writers and the purpose and scope of their works have led each to state facts and express opinions which must be taken into consideration in any discussion of the character of Pompey but which, in the absence of related facts and judgments, do not present a complete picture of the whole life of the man. This circumstance is especially noteworthy in the case of Cicero: the letters almost completely ignore Pompey's military capacity until Cicero's own fears at the beginning of the civil war focused his attention in that direction; moreover, his portrayal of Pompey is incomplete for another reason, the paucity of extant letters for the early years of Pompey's public life up to the end of his Asiatic campaigns.

A similar variation of emphasis and a similar insufficiency of data for specific phases of Pompey's career is noted also in various of the other writers cited. The result is that, for many aspects of Pompey's life, the body of evidence is inadequate for arriving at sound and incontrovertible judgments; at times, in fact, the testimony of a single author is the only basis for forming any judgment at all.

The first of the three aspects under which Pompey is being studied in this thesis, namely, his military career, may be most advantageously presented, this writer believes, by marshaling the evidence in the chronological order of the events discussed. On this basis, the first reference to Pompey's military activity is the statement of Velleius Paterculus¹ that from early manhood he had been closely associated with a sagacious commander, his father, and that his capacity to learn was remarkable for an exceptional insight into military tactics. Presently, according to Eutropius,² he was commanding for Sulla, with a rank second only to that general himself, and he so distinguished himself that he won the honor of a triumph — notwithstanding his extreme youth and the fact that he had as yet held no public office. Some five or six years later, Pompey was sent into Spain to join Metellus in putting down the insurrection of Sertorius. The two authors who mention this campaign are not in entire agreement as to the pre-eminence of Pompey's part therein: Velleius Paterculus³ asserts that, although Sertorius gave greater praise to

1 See above 50 and nn. 5-7.

2 See above 59 and nn. 32 and 33.

3 See above 51 and n. 8.

Metellus, it was Pompey whom he feared the more; Eutropius,⁴ while not denying Velleius's statement, ascribes Sertorius's downfall principally to the fact that he was opposed by two generals instead of one and states simply and impartially that the war was brought to an end by Gnaeus Pompey and Quintus Metellus. Pompey himself, according to an alleged letter of his recorded in Sallust's Historiae, appears to lay claim to the whole success of the Sertorian campaign. "Hae litterae . . . recitatae in senatu"⁵ -- "this letter was read in the senate," says Sallust, thus ascribing to it the authenticity of a recorded document. Its style, however, is somewhat at variance with that of several other letters of Pompey found among the correspondence of Cicero: the latter, being for the most part military dispatches, are generally short, simple and terse; this is fairly long and more in the nature of a speech than of a letter. It begins, for example, with a flourish of rhetoric:

Si adversus vos patriamque et deos penatis tot labores et pericula suscepissem, quotiens a prima adulescentia ductu meo scelestissimi hostes fusi et vobis salus quaesita est, nihil amplius in absentem me statuissetis quam adhuc agitis, patres conscripti, quem contra aetatem proiectum ad bellum saevissimum cum exercitu optume merito, quantum est in vobis, fame, miserruma omnium morte, confecistis. Hacine spe populus Romanus liberos suos ad bellum misit? Haec sunt praemia pro vulneribus et totiens ob rem publicam fuso sanguine?⁶

If I had been warring against you, against my country and against my fathers' gods, when I endured such hardships and dangers as those amid which from my early youth the armies under my command have routed the most criminal of your enemies and insured your safety, even then, Fathers of the Senate, you could have done no more against me in my absence than you are now doing. For, after having exposed me, in spite of my youth, to

4 See above 59-60 and nn. 34 and 35.

5 Sallust, Historiae ii.98.

6 Ibid.

a most cruel war, you have, so far as in you lay, destroyed me and a faithful army by starvation, the most wretched of all deaths. Was it with such expectations that the Roman people sent its sons to war? Are these the rewards for wounds and for so often shedding our blood for our country?

Whether the letter was actually written by Pompey in its present form or whether it is a reconstruction by Sallust from hearsay, it probably reflects Pompey's frame of mind of the moment; he complains that for three years he has been waging a war with inadequate resources, that he has used up his own personal wealth, that even his credit is now exhausted, that, unless the senate provides funds and supplies, he will not be able to prevent the enemy from marching into Italy and that, thus, he himself will have no alternative but to withdraw into Italy, bringing with him the whole Spanish war. And, to support his complaints and demands, he points out what he has already accomplished:

Equidem fateor me ad hoc bellum maiore studio quam consilio profectum, quippe qui nomine modo imperii a vobis accepto diebus quadraginta exercitum paravi hostisque in cervicibus iam Italiae agentis ab Alpibus in Hispaniam summovi; per eas iter aliud atque Hannibal, nobis opportunius, patefecit. Recepi Galliam, Pyrenaeum, Lacetaniam, Indigetis et primum impetum Sertorii victoris novis militibus et multo paucioribus sustinui.⁷

I admit that I entered upon this war with more zeal than discretion; for, within forty days of the time when I received from you the empty title of commander, I had raised and equipped an army and driven the enemy, who were already at the throat of Italy, from the Alps into Spain; and over those mountains I opened for you another and more convenient route than Hannibal had taken. I recovered Gaul, the Pyrenees, Lacetania, the Indigetes; and with raw soldiers and far inferior numbers I withstood the first onslaught of a triumphant Sertorius.

Pompey's next important command was the expedition against the

7 Ibid.

Cilician pirates. The task was accomplished, says Eutropius,⁸ with amazing speed within the space of a few months; Florus,⁹ too, marvels at the swiftness of the campaign and emphasizes its lasting effect, which was principally due to Pompey's wisdom in establishing the survivors in inland agricultural pursuits; this prudent move is also praised by Velleius Paterculus,¹⁰ in that the Cilicians were thus restrained from piracy by the removal of the necessity thereof. Immediately after the suppression of the pirates and while Pompey was still absent from Italy, a law was passed giving him command of the war against Mithridates. In this campaign, which kept him away from Rome for the next four years, Pompey reached the pinnacle of his military fame, to judge from the amount of space the various authors devote to it and the nature of the praises they bestow upon it. The comments of Velleius Paterculus,¹¹ Florus¹² and Eutropius,¹³ which have been discussed with sufficient fulness in Chapter III not to need repetition here, are indicative of the outstanding quality of this phase of Pompey's generalship; the only dissenting voice is that of Caesar, as recorded by Suetonius.¹⁴ The Mithridatic campaign is also the occasion for Cicero's first mention in his letters of Pompey's military

8 See above 60 and n. 36.

9 See above 57 and nn. 24 and 25.

10 See above 51 and n. 9.

11 See above 52 and nn. 10 and 11.

12 See above 55-56 and nn. 19-22.

13 See above 60 and nn. 37-41.

14 See above 53-54 and n. 14.

career; at the close of the campaign he called him greater than Africanus¹⁵ and, although the sincerity of the phrase may be somewhat discounted, inasmuch as it was addressed to Pompey himself, yet, to another correspondent a few years later, Cicero speaks of Pompey's "most brilliant achievements."¹⁶

When they come to the discussion of the civil war, the tone of Cicero and the other writers is generally one of disappointment and censure. Pompey's activity in that war falls roughly into three phases, his early maneuvering in Italy, his crossing of the Adriatic and the subsequent operations on the Illyrian coast, and the final battle in Thessaly. The principal charges against Pompey in the first phase are made by Cicero; although he had said at the very beginning that careful preparations were being made on the initiative of Pompey,¹⁷ the following letters are of an entirely different tenor: all Pompey's proceedings are fatuous and rash,¹⁸ he has no spirit, no plan, no energy,¹⁹ he has made not one prudent or courageous move,²⁰ he is foolhardy, listless, careless,²¹ he has committed one blunder after another,²²

15 See above 15 and n. 4.

16 See above 15 and n. 5.

17 See above 15 and n. 6.

18 See above 16 and n. 7.

19 See above 16 and n. 9.

20 See above 18-19 and n. 15.

21 See above 21 and n. 22.

22 See above 21 and n. 23.

he is the worst of generals.²³ With this indictment Caelius Rufus agrees, calling Pompey a helpless trifler who is doing nothing but stir up confusion.²⁴ The specific causes of Cicero's annoyance are Pompey's abandonment of Rome,²⁵ his failure to relieve Domitius at Corfinium,²⁶ and his withdrawal from Italy.²⁷ The withdrawal from Italy is also censured by Florus²⁸ as a disgraceful flight. Fortunately for a better understanding of Pompey's activities during these early days of the war, there exist some half-dozen letters of his among Cicero's letters to Atticus; these letters of Pompey present the state of the war from his point of view and show some reason for the apparent uncertainty of his operations and especially for his attitude in the matter of the relief of Corfinium. In a message of the early part of February, 49, he tells Cicero that he has been informed that

L. Domitium cum suis cohortibus XII et cum cohortibus XIV quas Vibullius adduxit ad me iter habere; habuisse in animo proficisci Corfinio a. d. V Id. Febr.²⁹

Lucius Domitius with his twelve cohorts and the fourteen brought by Vibullius is on the way to me; he intended to leave Corfinium on February 9.

A few days later, on learning that Domitius has changed his plans, Pompey

23 See above 21 and n. 21.

24 See above 48 and n. 1.

25 See above 16-19 and nn. 9, 12 and 15.

26 See above 19-20 and nn. 16, 17 and 19.

27 See above 19-21 and nn. 16 and 20.

28 See above 57 and n. 27.

29 Cicero, Ad Att. viii.11a.

writes to the latter:

Nos disiecta manu pares adversario esse non possumus; contractis nostris copiis spero nos et rei publicae et communi saluti prodesse posse. Quam ob rem, cum constituisses . . . Corfinio proficisci cum exercitu et ad me venire, miror quid causae fuerit qua re consilium mutaris. . . . Quanto enim magis appropinquare adversarius coepit, eo tibi celerius agendum erat ut te mecum coniungeres, prius quam Caesar aut tuum iter impedire aut me abs te excludere posset. Quam ob rem, etiam atque etiam te rogo et hortor, id quod non destiti superioribus litteris a te petere, ut primo quoque die Luceriam advenires, ante quam copiae quas instituit Caesar contrahere in unum locum coactae vos a nobis distrahant.³⁰

With divided forces we cannot cope with the enemy; united, I trust we may be able to do something for the state and the common weal. Wherefore, since you had decided . . . to set out from Corfinium with your army and come to me, I wonder what reason there has been for your change of plan. . . . The nearer our enemy begins to approach, the more quickly you ought to have joined forces with me, before Caesar could obstruct your march or cut me off from you. Therefore, again and again I entreat and exhort you — as I did not fail to do in my previous letter — to come to Luceria on the first possible day, before the forces which Caesar has begun to collect can concentrate in one spot and divide us.

There immediately followed upon this letter another of the same tenor: Domitius is again warned of the danger of a division of forces and is again urged to repair to Pompey at the first opportunity; the letter continues:

Nolito commoveri si audieris me regredi, si forte Caesar ad me veniet; cavendum enim puto esse ne implicatus haeream. Nam neque castra propter anni tempus et militum animos facere possum neque ex omnibus oppidis contrahere copias expedit, ne receptum amittam.³¹

Do not be disturbed if you hear of my retreat in the face of Caesar's possible advance, for I consider that I must take every step to avoid being caught in a trap. The season of the year and the spirit of my troops prevent me from making a camp; nor is it wise to call up the troops from all the towns, lest my retreat be cut off.

And the letter concludes with this significant statement:

30 Ibid., 12b.

31 Ibid., 12c.

Quod me hortare ut istuc veniam, id me facere non arbitror posse, quod non magno opere his legionibus confido.³²

I fear I cannot comply with your request that I come to your assistance, because I do not put much trust in these legions.

In still a third letter to Domitius, Pompey says "I told you so": Domitius is being hemmed in by Caesar and will have great difficulty now in extricating himself and making his way to Pompey.³³ The importance of the letter, however, lies in the further mention of the poor quality of Pompey's troops: he refers to "his legionibus de quarum voluntate dubitamus"³⁴ — "these legions whose loyalty is questionable"; and he asserts:

Neque enim meorum militum, quos mecum habeo, voluntate satis confido ut de omnibus fortunis rei publicae dimicem.³⁵

I cannot place sufficient confidence in the loyalty of the men I have with me to risk a decisive engagement.

These three letters to Domitius are followed by one to the consuls Marcellus and Lentulus, in which Pompey further defends his actions and points out his reasons for his contemplated withdrawal to Brundisium:

Ad L. Domitium litteras misi, primum uti ipse cum omni copia ad nos veniret; si de se dubitaret, ut cohortes XIX quae ex Piceno ad me iter habebant ad nos mitteret. Quod veritus sum factum est, ut Domitius implicaretur. . . . Nunc scitote me esse in summa sollicitudine. Nam et tot et tales viros periculo obsidionis liberare cupio neque subsidio ire possum, quod his duabus legionibus non puto esse committendum ut illuc ducantur. . . . Nunc, cum hoc tempore nihilo magis ego quam vos subsidio Domitio ire possim, . . . non est nobis committendum ut ad has XIV cohortes quas dubio animo habeo hostis accedere aut in itinere me consequi possit. Quam

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., 12d.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

ob rem, placitum est mihi . . . ut Brundisium ducerem hanc copiam quam mecum habeo.³⁶

I sent a dispatch to Lucius Domitius to come to me at once with his whole force; if he were doubtful about himself, he was to send me the nineteen cohorts which, as it happened, were on the way to me from Picenum. It turned out as I feared: Domitius is trapped. . . . You must realize that I am in the greatest anxiety, for I am eager to free so many excellent men from the hazards of a siege, and yet I cannot go to their assistance, because I do not think that I can trust these two legions to march thither. . . . Now, since at the present time I am no more able than you to go to the relief of Domitius, . . . I must not allow the enemy to meet these fourteen wavering cohorts of mine or overtake me on the march. Therefore, . . . I have determined to lead my present force to Brundisium.

Pompey thus lays the blame for the debacle at Corfinium on the stubbornness and short-sightedness of Domitius and offers a plausible excuse for his failure to assist Domitius and for all his Fabian tactics in Italy in the paucity and uncertain loyalty of his troops. After he had successfully withdrawn his forces from a beleaguered Brundisium and crossed over into Illyria, Pompey continued his dilatory tactics;³⁷ his forces were still small and of poor quality, Cicero³⁸ admits, but, when he was forced into an engagement at Dyrrhachium, he came off victorious. Although, apparently still doubtful of his troops, he failed to follow up this success immediately and thus incurred Caesar's scorn,³⁹ he presently began to have confidence in his troops⁴⁰ and

36 Ibid., 12a.

37 See above 58 and n. 28.

38 See above 22 and n. 25.

39 See above 54 and n. 15, and 61 and n. 42.

40 See above 22 and n. 26.

impulsively rushed off after Caesar in spite of all advice to the contrary,⁴¹ being goaded into action by the importunity of the more irresponsible of his subordinates.⁴² By the time Pompey arrived in Thessaly and was ready to risk a decisive engagement, he had assembled a formidable array that far outnumbered Caesar's forces;⁴³ yet, in the final battle at Pharsalia, he was ignominiously defeated. Two reasons are given by Cicero for Pompey's disastrous end: the despair of his cause that had taken possession of the minds of his followers⁴⁴ and, more proximately, the fact that with raw and hastily levied troops he had given battle to the toughest legions.⁴⁵ With Cicero's thus more than once giving the lie to his hysterical recriminations at the start of the war and with Pompey's own exposition of the awkward situation in which he found himself, the overall picture of his generalship, even in its final stages, appears worthy of the fame that has been attached to it. In fact, in view of Pompey's advancing years (he was fifty-eight) and the poor state of his health⁴⁶ and considering the inferior quality of his troops, the desperation to which he was driven by a supercilious and importunate nobility and the fact that he was fighting for a lost cause, it is this writer's opinion that Pompey displayed his greatest qualities in his last campaign. Despite the handicaps

41 See above 52-53 and n. 13.

42 See above 58 and n. 28.

43 See above 48-49 and nn. 2 and 3, and 61 and n. 44.

44 See above 21 and n. 24.

45 See above 22 and n. 27.

46 See above 18 and n. 13.

under which he labored, he came within an ace of crushing Caesar at Dyrrhachium, and at Pharsalia the turn of the die was of the slightest between victory and rout.

Pompey's political career may also be considered in a more or less chronological order. The first references are to his first consulship in 70 B. C., in which he is given credit by Sallust⁴⁷ and Velleius Paterculus⁴⁸ of having restored the power of the tribunes that had been abridged by Sulla, although Caesar⁴⁹ asserts that Pompey's action, while seemingly to the public advantage, was even more deleterious than Sulla's. There is no further mention of Pompey's political activity until after his return to Rome at the end of the year 62 from his campaigns in the east; during his absence, however, he had given evidence of sound statecraft in his judicious settlement of the piratic problem.⁵⁰ When he returns to the city, his attitude is puzzling and annoying to Cicero: Pompey appears to have no political morality,⁵¹ his public utterances are vague, patronizing and ineffectual,⁵² bribery and intrigue feature his support of unpopular candidates and laws,⁵³ he prefers to sulk in triumphal dignity rather than exercise the statesmanship of which he is

47 See above 66 and n. 60.

48 See above 66 and n. 62.

49 See above 65 and n. 58.

50 See above 67-68 and n. 69, and 71 and nn. 80 and 81.

51 See above 24 and nn. 29 and 30.

52 See above 24-25 and nn. 31 and 32.

53 See above 25-26 and nn. 33 and 36.

capable.⁵⁴ Presently he enters into a coalition with Caesar and Crassus, and Cicero caricatures him as an oriental despot.⁵⁵

Pompey's participation in that detestable union⁵⁶ which was to prove ruinous to the city and the world⁵⁷ meets with universal condemnation. Cicero's criticism is probably the most severe: the triumvirate is a despotism⁵⁸ and the triumvirs are three unscrupulous men⁵⁹ of unbelievable treachery⁶⁰ whose pernicious acts⁶¹ must end in a reign of terror;⁶² and Pompey himself is aiming at kingly power.⁶³ Although this last statement would seem to indicate that Cicero considered Pompey to be the motivating force behind the coalition, there are other passages which give the impression, in a negative sort of way, to be sure, that it was Caesar who forced the partnership upon Pompey;⁶⁴ on the other hand, it was due to Pompey's support that Caesar had risen to such a

54 See above 25-26 and n. 35.

55 See above 26-27 and nn. 37, 39 and 40.

56 See above 65 and n. 54.

57 See above 67 and n. 63.

58 See above 27 and n. 42.

59 See above 27 and n. 41.

60 See above 30 and n. 55.

61 See above 27 and n. 43.

62 See above 27 and n. 44.

63 See above 27 and n. 47.

64 See above 35-36 and nn. 69 and 70.

position of power to make the triumvirate possible.⁶⁵ Among the other authors there is little agreement as to the authorship of the pact. Caesar's⁶⁶ statements, naturally enough, seem to lay the blame upon Pompey, while the assertion of Velleius Paterculus⁶⁷ that such was Caesar's intent implies that it was Caesar himself who was the master-mind of the association. Suetonius⁶⁸ apparently agrees with Velleius, but Seneca⁶⁹ is categorical in charging Pompey with the full onus of the conspiracy; Florus⁷⁰ is non-committal. Nevertheless, whether or not Pompey was the chief plotter, his participation in the triumvirate is at best a serious reflection, according to Cicero,⁷¹ on his political judgment.

After the meeting of Pompey and Crassus with Caesar at Lucca, in which the association of the three was renewed and strengthened, Pompey secured the consulship again, along with Crassus, for the year 55. The administration of this second consulship met with little approval at the time⁷² and was later severely censured,⁷³ for it was then that Caesar's proconsular command was

65 See above 33-34 and nn. 63 and 64.

66 See above 65 and nn. 56 and 57.

67 See above 67 and n. 65.

68 See above 69-70 and nn. 74 and 75.

69 See above 68 and n. 70.

70 See above 70 and n. 76.

71 See above 35-36 and nn. 69 and 70.

72 See above 67 and n. 67.

73 See above 64 and n. 51.

extended and he was placed in the position that was to enable him to force his will upon the Roman people or plunge the nation into civil war: Pompey seems to have been little more than a pawn clearing the way for Caesar's advance. Three years later Pompey was consul for the third time; he had now broken with Caesar and his independent action shows him in a more favorable light: at least, he is given credit for such constructive acts of government as the curbing of election abuses⁷⁴ and the reformation of legal procedure in the courts.⁷⁵ The following two years witnessed a rapid march of events: as the term of Caesar's command drew to a close, his enemies were eagerly waiting to crush him as a private citizen, while he himself was determined to circumvent them by stepping immediately from his command into the consulship. In the consequent political maneuvering, Pompey seems to have been torn between a real anxiety for the welfare of the republic, a desire to be fair to Caesar and a fear for his own threatened supremacy. The inconsistencies into which such a state of mind led him are reflected particularly in the letters of Cicero and Caelius Rufus: Pompey is an exemplary citizen well able to cope with the dangerous situation,⁷⁶ he is sincere and will keep the peace,⁷⁷ he doesn't want peace,⁷⁸ he makes statesmanlike pronouncements on the risks of a hollow

74 See above 67 and n. 68.

75 See above 69 and n. 72.

76 See above 31 and nn. 57 and 58.

77 See above 32 and n. 59.

78 See above 32 and n. 60.

peace,⁷⁹ he wants to be a king and reign after the manner of Sulla,⁸⁰ he is the worst of statesmen,⁸¹ he is a dissembler,⁸² he inspires confidence.⁸³ And he crowns his apparent vacillation with his unashamed equivocation in the matter of Caesar's standing for the consulship in absentia.⁸⁴ Civil war follows, and Pompey's star rushes to its eclipse.

Such is the picture of Pompey as a statesman. It is, on the whole, a dismal one, although it has its splashes of brilliance; yet, the available evidence hardly warrants the wholesale condemnation of Pompey as a hopeless incompetent. On a number of occasions he showed himself capable of vigorous and judicious action, even though in the broad general policy of government he ultimately proved a failure. That a heavily contributing cause of that failure may have been something outside himself has already been pointed out in Chapter III:⁸⁵ Caesar was the bête noire of Pompey's career, Caesar was the sting that quickened into life that fundamental weakness of Pompey's character which vitiated so much of his political activity. The majority of his more salutary acts of government were free from the influence or irritation of Caesar and would thus seem to indicate that, when acting independently, Pompey was not

79 See above 32 and n. 61.

80 See above 34-35 and nn. 65-67.

81 See above 35 and n. 68.

82 See above 63 and n. 48.

83 See above 63 and n. 49.

84 See above 64 and n. 51; 65-66 and n. 59; 71 and n. 79.

85 See above 72.

completely lacking in statesmanlike qualities. That he had those qualities, however, of which truly great statesmen and patriots are made is not apparent from the evidence at hand.

In regard to the third aspect under which Pompey is being studied in this thesis, namely, his character and personality as an individual, a correlation of the opinions of Cicero, as presented in Chapter II, with those of the other writers of Chapter III, is, from the very nature of those opinions and the manner in which they have been presented, unnecessary and, in a certain sense, impossible. The two groups of opinions have been summed up in their respective chapters and the content and point of view of each group are so disparate that an attempt to interweave them into a composite whole would add nothing to the general picture. Cicero's treatment is entirely subjective: his portrait of Pompey's character and personality is principally a history of the progress of the supposed friendship between the two -- and it reveals more of Cicero than of Pompey. But it is apparent, as has already been pointed out in the concluding portion of Chapter II,⁸⁶ that, in spite of Pompey's many faults and, in particular, his seeming treachery in the Clodian affair, there must have been in him a certain outstanding nobility of character and attractiveness of personality to be able to win and hold the friendship of a man of such a sensitive nature as Cicero. In the writers of Chapter III, who are more objective in their judgments, the emphasis falls in two chief directions: on the one hand, there is the general praise of Pompey's whole character that is

⁸⁶ See above 44.

summed up in the passages cited from Velleius Paterculus⁸⁷ and Lucan;⁸⁸ especially in his private life was he an exemplary citizen — honest and upright, generous, modest and unpretentious in his mode of life, temperate and restrained in his desires and, according to the moral standards of the times, remarkably continent. These encomia, which none of the other authors sees fit to contradict, at least as far as his private life is concerned, confirm to some extent the inference that has been drawn from Cicero of Pompey's inherent nobility of character. It is only in his public career that there appears that serious defect which overshadows his finer qualities and seems to transform Pompey into the unscrupulous adventurer which too many writers, both ancient and modern, have found him to be. That defect, which is the second point of emphasis of the writers in Chapter III, is the almost insane jealousy which sprang from his overweening ambition for power. Caesar,⁸⁹ Velleius,⁹⁰ Seneca,⁹¹ Lucan⁹² and Florus⁹³ have all pointed out that Pompey could not endure to see anyone equal in authority with himself. On this dominant fault, the present writer believes, can be laid the blame for all the inconsistencies of Pompey's character and personality that have been noted. By his mad passion

87 See above 75-76 and n. 92.

88 See above 80-81 and n. 106.

89 See above 74 and n. 87.

90 See above 75-76 and n. 92, and 76-77 and n. 95.

91 See above 77 and n. 97.

92 See above 80 and n. 105.

93 See above 81 and n. 108.

for power and glory, a man naturally honest and fair-minded, generous and loyal, honorable and sincere, was driven into attitudes and actions that gained for him the contrary reputation of treachery, selfishness and deceit. It is little wonder that the study of Pompey's character still, after so many centuries, affords grounds for the greatest divergence of opinion.

Such is the portrait of Pompey as a soldier, a statesman and a man that has been bequeathed to posterity by his contemporaries and by others who were near to him in time and space. Of the three aspects, it is in his quality of general that he appears to the greatest advantage; and it is to this, principally, that he owes his still-living fame. As a man, he was no worse, and probably a great deal better, than the majority of the public figures of the late republic and the early empire. His political career is the least pleasing aspect of his life; ability he undoubtedly had, but it was so nullified by the errors and excesses into which his prevailing weakness led him that in the sum total his attempts at statesmanship proved a failure. To one who was eager to be the first man of the state, the savior and guardian of the republic, that failure must have seemed the failure of his whole life, and Pompey would probably be the first to acquiesce in the judgment of Lucan:

Stat magni nominis umbra.⁹⁴

The mere shadow of a mighty name he stands.

94 Lucan i.135.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Edward Francis Stace has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Classical Languages.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

Jan. 24, 1951
Date

Laurence E. Henderson, Jr.
Signature of Adviser