

Julius Caesar's War Commentaries

Book 3

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Book 3

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Book 3 – (56 B.C.)

[3.1]When Caesar was setting out for Italy, he sent Servius Galba with the twelfth legion and part of the cavalry, against the Nantuates, the Veragri, and Seduni, who extend from the territories of the Allobroges, and the lake of Geneva, and the River Rhone to the top of the Alps. The reason for sending him was, that he desired that the pass along the Alps, through which [the Roman] merchants had been accustomed to travel with great danger, and under great imposts, should be opened. He permitted him, if he thought it necessary, to station the legion in these places, for the purpose of wintering. Galba having fought some successful battles and stormed several of their forts, upon ambassadors being sent to him from all parts and hostages given and a peace concluded, determined to station two cohorts among the Nantuates, and to winter in person with the other cohorts of that legion in a village of the Veragri, which is called Octodurus; and this village being situated in a valley, with a small plain annexed to it, is bounded on all sides by very high mountains. As this village was divided into two parts by a river, he granted one part of it to the Gauls, and assigned the other, which had been left by them unoccupied, to the cohorts to winter in. He fortified this [latter] part with a rampart and a ditch.

[3.2]When several days had elapsed in winter quarters, and he had ordered corn to be brought in he was suddenly informed by his scouts that all the people had gone off in the night from that part of the town which he had given up to the Gauls, and that the mountains which hung over it were occupied by a very large force of the Seduni and Veragri. It had happened for several reasons that the Gauls suddenly formed the design of renewing the war and cutting off that legion. First, because they despised a single legion, on account of its small number, and that not quite full (two cohorts having been detached, and several individuals being absent, who had been dispatched for the purpose of seeking provision); then, likewise, because they thought that on account of the disadvantageous character of the situation, even their first attack could not be sustained [by us] when they would rush from the mountains into the valley, and discharge their weapons upon us. To this was added, that they were indignant that their children were torn from them under the title of hostages, and they were persuaded that the Romans designed to seize upon the summits of the Alps, and unite those parts to the neighboring province [of Gaul], not only to secure the passes, but also a constant possession.

[3.3]Having received these tidings, Galba, since the works of the winter-quarters and the fortifications were not fully completed, nor was sufficient preparation made with regard to corn and other provisions (since, as a surrender had been made, and hostages received, he had thought he need entertain no apprehension of war), speedily summoning a council, began to anxiously inquire their opinions. In which council, since so much sudden danger had happened contrary to the general expectation, and almost all the higher places were seen already covered with a multitude of armed men, nor could [either] troops come to their relief, or provisions be brought in, as the passes were blocked up [by the enemy]; safety being now nearly despaired of, some opinions of this sort were delivered: that, "leaving their baggage, and making a sally, they should hasten away for safety by the same routes by which they had come thither." To the greater part, however, it

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seemed best, reserving that measure to the last, to await the issue of the matter, and to defend the camp.

[3.4]A short time only having elapsed, so that time was scarcely given for arranging and executing those things which they had determined on, the enemy, upon the signal being given, rushed down [upon our men] from all parts, and discharged stones and darts, upon our rampart. Our men at first, while their strength was fresh, resisted bravely, nor did they cast any weapon ineffectually from their higher station. As soon as any part of the camp, being destitute of defenders, seemed to be hard pressed, thither they ran, and brought assistance. But they were over-matched in this, that the enemy when wearied by the long continuance of the battle, went out of the action, and others with fresh strength came in their place; none of which things could be done by our men, owing to the smallness of their number; and not only was permission not given to the wearied [Roman] to retire from the fight, but not even to the wounded [was liberty granted] to quit the post where he had been stationed, and recover.

[3.5]When they had now been fighting for more than six hours, without cessation, and not only strength, but even weapons were failing our men, and the enemy were pressing on more rigorously, and had begun to demolish the rampart and to fill up the trench, while our men were becoming exhausted, and the matter was now brought to the last extremity, P. Sextius Baculus, a centurion of the first rank, whom we have related to have been disabled by severe wounds in the engagement with the Nervii, and also C. Volusenus, a tribune of the soldiers, a man of great skill and valor, hasten to Galba, and assure him that the only hope of safety lay in making a sally, and trying the last resource. Whereupon assembling the centurions, he quickly gives orders to the soldiers to discontinue the fight a short time, and only collect the weapons flung [at them], and recruit themselves after their fatigue, and afterward, upon the signal being given, sally forth from the camp, and place in their valor all their hope of safety.

[3.6]They do what they were ordered; and, making a sudden sally from all the gates [of the camp], leave the enemy the means neither of knowing what was taking place, nor of collecting themselves. Fortune thus taking a turn, [our men] surround on every side, and slay those who had entertained the hope of gaining the camp and having killed more than the third part of an army of more than 30,000 men (which number of the barbarians it appeared certain had come up to our camp), put to flight the rest when panic-stricken, and do not suffer them to halt even upon the higher grounds. All the forces of the enemy being thus routed, and stripped of their arms, [our men] betake themselves to their camp and fortifications. Which battle being finished, inasmuch as Galba was unwilling to tempt fortune again, and remembered that he had come into winter quarters with one design, and saw that he had met with a different state of affairs; chiefly however urged by the want of corn and provision, having the next day burned all the buildings of that village, he hastens to return into the province; and as no enemy opposed or hindered his march, he brought the legion safe into the [country of the] Nantuates, thence into [that of] the Allobroges, and there wintered.

[3.7]These things being achieved, while Caesar had every reason to suppose that Gaul was reduced to a state of tranquillity, the Belgae being overcome, the Germans expelled, the Seduni among the Alps defeated, and when he had, therefore, in the beginning of winter, set out for Illyricum, as he wished to visit those nations, and acquire a knowledge of their countries, a sudden war sprang up in Gaul. The occasion of that war was this: P. Crassus, a young man, had taken up his winter quarters with the seventh legion among the Andes, who border upon the [Atlantic] ocean. He, as there was a scarcity of corn in those parts, sent out some officers of cavalry, and several military tribunes among the neighbouring states, for the purpose of procuring corn and provision; in which number T. Terrasidius was sent among the Esubii; M. Trebius Gallus among the Curiosolitae; Q. Velanius, T. Silius, amongst the Veneti.

[3.8]The influence of this state is by far the most considerable of any of the countries on the whole sea coast, because the Veneti both have a very great number of ships, with which they have been accustomed to sail to Britain, and [thus] excel the rest in their knowledge and experience of nautical affairs; and as only a few ports lie scattered along that stormy and open sea, of which they are in possession, they hold as tributaries almost all those who are accustomed to traffic in that sea. With them arose the beginning [of the revolt] by their detaining Silius and Velanius; for they thought that they should recover by their means the hostages which they had given to Crassus. The neighboring people led on by their influence (as the measures of the Gauls are sudden and hasty), detain Trebius and Terrasidius for the same motive; and quickly sending ambassadors, by means of their leading men, they enter into a mutual compact to do nothing except by general consent, and abide the same issue of fortune; and they solicit the other states to choose rather to continue in that liberty which they had received from their ancestors, than endure slavery under the Romans. All the sea coast being quickly brought over to their

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sentiments, they send a common embassy to P. Crassus [to say], "If he wished to receive back his officers, let him send back to them their hostages."

[3.9] Caesar, being informed of these things by Crassus, since he was so far distant himself, orders ships of war to be built in the mean time on the river Loire, which flows into the ocean; rowers to be raised from the province; sailors and pilots to be provided. These matters being quickly executed, he himself, as soon as the season of the year permits, hastens to the army. The Veneti, and the other states also, being informed of Caesar's arrival, when they reflected how great a crime they had committed, in that, the ambassadors (a character which had among all nations ever been sacred and inviolable) had by them been detained and thrown into prison, resolve to prepare for a war in proportion to the greatness of their danger, and especially to provide those things which appertain to the service of a navy, with the greater confidence, inasmuch as they greatly relied on the nature of their situation. They knew that the passes by land were cut off by estuaries, that the approach by sea was most difficult, by reason of our ignorance of the localities, [and] the small number of the harbors, and they trusted that our army would not be able to stay very long among them, on account of the insufficiency of corn; and again, even if all these things should turn out contrary to their expectation, yet they were very powerful in their navy. They well understood that the Romans neither had any number of ships, nor were acquainted with the shallows, the harbors, or the islands of those parts where they would have to carry on the war; and the navigation was very different in a narrow sea from what it was in the vast and open ocean. Having come to this resolution, they fortify their towns, convey corn into them from the country parts, bring together as many ships as possible to Venetia, where it appeared Caesar would at first carry on the war. They unite to themselves as allies for that war, the Osismii, the Lexovii, the Nannetes, the Ambiliati, the Morini, the Diablintes, and the Menapii; and send for auxiliaries from Britain, which is situated over against those regions.

[3.10] There were these difficulties which we have mentioned above, in carrying on the war, but many things, nevertheless, urged Caesar to that war; – the open insult offered to the state in the detention of the Roman knights, the rebellion raised after surrendering, the revolt after hostages were given, the confederacy of so many states, but principally, lest if, [the conduct of] this part was overlooked, the other nations should think that the same thing was permitted them. Wherefore, since he reflected that almost all the Gauls were fond of revolution, and easily and quickly excited to war; that all men likewise, by nature, love liberty and hate the condition of slavery, he thought he ought to divide and more widely distribute his army, before more states should join the confederation.

[3.11] He therefore sends T. Labienus, his lieutenant, with the cavalry to the Treviri, who are nearest to the river Rhine. He charges him to visit the Remi and the other Belgians, and to keep them in their allegiance and repel the Germans (who were said to have been summoned by the Belgae to their aid,) if they attempted to cross the river by force in their ships. He orders P. Crassus to proceed into Aquitania with twelve legionary cohorts and a great number of the cavalry, lest auxiliaries should be sent into Gaul by these states, and such great nations be united. He sends Q. Titurius Sabinus his lieutenant, with three legions, among the Unelli, the Curiosolitae, and the Lexovii, to take care that their forces should be kept separate from the rest. He appoints D. Brutus, a young man, over the fleet and those Gallic vessels which he had ordered to be furnished by the Pictones and the Santoni, and the other provinces which remained at peace; and commands him to proceed toward the Veneti, as soon as he could. He himself hastens thither with the land forces.

[3.12] The sites of their towns were generally such that, being placed on extreme points [of land] and on promontories, they neither had an approach by land when the tide had rushed in from the main ocean, which always happens twice in the space of twelve hours; nor by ships, because, upon the tide ebbing again, the ships were likely to be dashed upon the shoals. Thus, by either circumstance, was the storming of their towns rendered difficult; and if at any time perchance the Veneti overpowered by the greatness of our works, (the sea having been excluded by a mound and large dams, and the latter being made almost equal in height to the walls of the town) had begun to despair of their fortunes; bringing up a large number of ships, of which they had a very great quantity, they carried off all their property and betook themselves to the nearest towns; there they again defended themselves by the same advantages of situation. They did this the more easily during a great part of the summer, because our ships were kept back by storms, and the difficulty of sailing was very great in that vast and open sea, with its strong tides and its harbors far apart and exceedingly few in number.

[3.13] For their ships were built and equipped after this manner. The keels were somewhat flatter than those of our ships, whereby they could more easily encounter the shallows and the ebbing of the tide: the prows were

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raised very high, and, in like manner the sterns were adapted to the force of the waves and storms [which they were formed to sustain]. The ships were built wholly of oak, and designed to endure any force and violence whatever; the benches which were made of planks a foot in breadth, were fastened by iron spikes of the thickness of a man's thumb; the anchors were secured fast by iron chains instead of cables, and for sails they used skins and thin dressed leather. These [were used] either through their want of canvas and their ignorance of its application, or for this reason, which is more probable, that they thought that such storms of the ocean, and such violent gales of wind could not be resisted by sails, nor ships of such great burden be conveniently enough managed by them. The encounter of our fleet with these ships' was of such a nature that our fleet excelled in speed alone, and the plying of the oars; other things, considering the nature of the place [and] the violence of the storms, were more suitable and better adapted on their side; for neither could our ships injure theirs with their beaks (so great was their strength), nor on account of their height was a weapon easily cast up to them; and for the same reason they were less readily locked in by rocks. To this was added, that whenever a storm began to rage and they ran before the wind, they both could weather the storm more easily and heave to securely in the shallows, and when left by the tide feared nothing from rocks and shelves: the risk of all which things was much to be dreaded by our ships.

[3.14]Caesar, after taking many of their towns, perceiving that so much labor was spent in vain and that the flight of the enemy could not be prevented on the capture of their towns, and that injury could not be done them, he determined to wait for his fleet. As soon as it came up and was first seen by the enemy, about 220 of their ships, fully equipped and appointed with every kind of [naval] implement, sailed forth from the harbor, and drew up opposite to ours; nor did it appear clear to Brutus, who commanded the fleet, or to the tribunes of the soldiers and the centurions, to whom the several ships were assigned, what to do, or what system of tactics to adopt; for they knew that damage could not be done by their beaks; and that, although turrets were built [on their decks], yet the height of the stems of the barbarian ships exceeded these; so that weapons could not be cast up from [our] lower position with sufficient effect, and those cast by the Gauls fell the more forcibly upon us. One thing provided by our men was of great service, [viz.] sharp hooks inserted into and fastened upon poles, of a form not unlike the hooks used in attacking town walls. When the ropes which fastened the sail-yards to the masts were caught by them and pulled, and our vessel vigorously impelled with the oars, they [the ropes] were severed; and when they were cut away, the yards necessarily fell down; so that as all the hope of the Gallic vessels depended on their sails and rigging, upon these being cut away, the entire management of the ships was taken from them at the same time. The rest of the contest depended on courage; in which our men decidedly had the advantage; and the more so, because the whole action was carried on in the sight of Caesar and the entire army; so that no act, a little more valiant than ordinary, could pass unobserved, for all the hills and higher grounds, from which there was a near prospect of the sea were occupied by our army.

[3.15]The sail yards [of the enemy], as we have said, being brought down, although two and [in some cases] three ships [of theirs] surrounded each one [of ours], the soldiers strove with the greatest energy to board the ships of the enemy; and, after the barbarians observed this taking place, as a great many of their ships were beaten, and as no relief for that evil could be discovered, they hastened to seek safety in flight. And, having now turned their vessels to that quarter in which the wind blew, so great a calm and lull suddenly arose, that they could not move out of their place, which circumstance, truly, was exceedingly opportune for finishing the business; for our men gave chase and took them one by one, so that very few out of all the number, [and those] by the intervention of night, arrived at the land, after the battle had lasted almost from the fourth hour till sun-set.

[3.16]By this battle the war with the Veneti and the whole of the sea coast was finished; for both all the youth, and all, too, of more advanced age, in whom there was any discretion or rank, had assembled in that battle; and they had collected in that one place whatever naval forces they had anywhere; and when these were lost, the survivors had no place to retreat to, nor means of defending their towns. They accordingly surrendered themselves and all their possessions to Caesar, on whom Caesar thought that punishment should be inflicted the more severely, in order that for the future the rights of ambassadors might be more carefully respected by barbarians; having, therefore, put to death all their senate, he sold the rest for slaves.

[3.17]While these things are going on among the Veneti, Q. Titurius Sabinus with those troops which he had received from Caesar, arrives in the territories of the Unelli. Over these people Viridovix ruled, and held the chief command of all those states which had revolted; from which he had collected a large and powerful army. And in those few days, the Aulerci and the Sexovii, having slain their senate because they would not consent to be

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promoters of the war, shut their gates [against us] and united themselves to Viridovix; a great multitude besides of desperate men and robbers assembled out of Gaul from all quarters, whom the hope of plundering and the love of fighting had called away from husbandry and their daily labor. Sabinus kept himself within his camp, which was in a position convenient for everything; while Viridovix encamped over against him at a distance of two miles, and daily bringing out his forces, gave him an opportunity of fighting; so that Sabinus had now not only come into contempt with the enemy, but also was somewhat taunted by the speeches of our soldiers; and furnished so great a suspicion of his cowardice that the enemy presumed to approach even to the very rampart of our camp. He adopted this conduct for the following reason: because he did not think that a lieutenant ought to engage in battle with so great a force, especially while he who held the chief command was absent, except on advantageous ground or some favorable circumstance presented itself.

[3.18]After having established this suspicion of his cowardice, he selected a certain suitable and crafty Gaul, who was one of those whom he had with him as auxiliaries. He induces him by great gifts and promises to go over to the enemy; and informs [him] of what he wished to be done. Who, when he arrives among them as a deserter, lays before them the fears of the Romans; and informs them by what difficulties Caesar himself was harassed, and that the matter was not far removed from this – that Sabinus would the next night privately draw off his army out of the camp and set forth to Caesar for the purpose of carrying [him] assistance, which, when they heard, they all cry out together that an opportunity of successfully conducting their enterprise, ought not to be thrown away: that they ought to go to the [Roman] camp. Many things persuaded the Gauls to this measure; the delay of Sabinus during the previous days; the positive assertion of the [pretended] deserter; want of provisions, for a supply of which they had not taken the requisite precautions; the hope springing from the Venetic war; and [also] because in most cases men willingly believe what they wish. Influenced by these things they do not discharge Viridovix and the other leaders from the council, before they gained permission from them to take up arms and hasten to [our] camp; which being granted, rejoicing as if victory were fully certain, they collected faggots and brushwood, with which to fill up the Roman trenches, and hasten to the camp.

[3.19]The situation of the camp was a rising ground, gently sloping from the bottom for about a mile. Thither they proceeded with great speed (in order that as little time as possible might be given to the Romans to collect and arm themselves), and arrived quite out of breath. Sabinus having encouraged his men, gives them the signal, which they earnestly desired. While the enemy were encumbered by reason of the burdens which they were carrying, he orders a sally to be made suddenly from two gates [of the camp]. It happened, by the advantage of situation, by the unskillfulness and the fatigue of the enemy, by the valor of our soldiers, and their experience in former battles, that they could not stand one attack of our men, and immediately turned their backs; and our men with full vigor followed them while disordered, and slew a great number of them; the horse pursuing the rest, left but few, who escaped by flight. Thus at the same time, Sabinus was informed of the naval battle and Caesar of victory gained by Sabinus; and all the states immediately surrendered themselves to Titurius: for as the temper of the Gauls is impetuous and ready to undertake wars, so their mind is weak, and by no means resolute in enduring calamities.

[3.20]About the same time, P. Crassus, when he had arrived in Aquitania (which, as has been before said, both from its extent of territory and the great number of its people, is to be reckoned a third part of Gaul,) understanding that he was to wage war in these parts, where a few years before, L. Valerius Praeconinus, the lieutenant had been killed, and his army routed, and from which L. Manilius, the proconsul, had fled with the loss of his baggage, he perceived that no ordinary care must be used by him. Wherefore, having provided corn, procured auxiliaries and cavalry, [and] having summoned by name many valiant men from Tolosa, Carcaso, and Narbo, which are the states of the province of Gaul, that border on these regions [Aquitania], he led his army into the territories of the Sotiates. On his arrival being known, the Sotiates having brought together great forces and [much] cavalry, in which their strength principally lay, and assailing our army on the march, engaged first in a cavalry action, then when their cavalry was routed, and our men pursuing, they suddenly display their infantry forces, which they had placed in ambuscade in a valley. These attacked our men [while] disordered, and renewed the fight.

[3.21]The battle was long and vigorously contested, since the Sotiates, relying on their former victories, imagined that the safety of the whole of Aquitania rested on their valor; [and] our men, on the other hand, desired it might be seen what they could accomplish without their general and without the other legions, under a very

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young commander; at length the enemy, worn out with wounds, began to turn their backs, and a great number of them being slain, Crassus began to besiege the [principal] town of the Sotiates on his march. Upon their valiantly resisting, he raised vineae and turrets. They at one time attempting a sally, at another forming mines, to our rampart and vineae (at which the Aquitani are eminently skilled, because in many places among them there are copper mines); when they perceived that nothing could be gained by these operations through the perseverance of our men, they send ambassadors to Crassus, and entreat him to admit them to a surrender. Having obtained it, they, being ordered to deliver up their arms, comply.

[3.22]And while the attention of our men is engaged in that matter, in another part Adcantuannus, who held the chief command, with 600 devoted followers whom they call soldurii (the conditions of whose association are these, – that they enjoy all the conveniences of life with those to whose friendship they have devoted themselves: if any thing calamitous happen to them, either they endure the same destiny together with them, or commit suicide: nor hitherto, in the memory of men, has there been found any one who, upon his being slain to whose friendship he had devoted himself, refused to die); Adcantuannus, [Isay] endeavoring to make a sally with these, when our soldiers had rushed together to arms, upon a shout being raised at that part of the, fortification, and a fierce battle had been fought there, was driven back into the town, yet he obtained from Crassus [the indulgence] that he should enjoy the same terms of surrender [as the other inhabitants].

[3.23]Crassus, having received their arms and hostages, marched into the territories of the Vocates and the Tarusates. But then, the barbarians being alarmed, because they had heard that a town fortified by the nature of the place and by art, had been taken by us in a few days after our arrival there, began to send ambassadors into all quarters, to combine, to give hostages one to another, to raise troops. Embassadors also are sent to those states of Hither Spain which are nearest to Aquitania, and auxiliaries and leaders are summoned from them; on whose arrival they proceed to carry on the war with great confidence, and with a great host of men. They who had been with Q. Sertorius the whole period [of his war in Spain] and were supposed to have very great skill in military matters, are chosen leaders. These, adopting the practice of the Roman people, begin to select [advantageous] places, to fortify their camp, to cut off our men from provisions, which, when Crassus observes, [and likewise] that his forces, on account of their small number could not safely be separated; that the enemy both made excursions and beset the passes, and [yet] left sufficient guard for their camp; that on that account, corn and provision could not very conveniently be brought up to him, and that the number of the enemy was daily increased, he thought that he ought not to delay in giving battle. This matter being brought to a council, when he discovered that all thought the same thing, he appointed the next day for the fight.

[3.24]Having drawn out all his forces at the break of day, and marshaled them in a double line, he posted the auxiliaries in the center, and waited to see what measures the enemy would take. They, although on account of their great number and their ancient renown in war, and the small number of our men, they supposed they might safely fight, nevertheless considered it safer to gain the victory without any wound, by besetting the passes [and] cutting off the provisions: and if the Romans, on account of the want of corn, should begin to retreat, they intended to attack them while encumbered in their march and depressed in spirit [as being assailed while] under baggage. This measure being approved of by the leaders and the forces of the Romans drawn out, the enemy [still] kept themselves in their camp. Crassus having remarked this circumstance, since the enemy, intimidated by their own delay, and by the reputation [i.e. for cowardice arising thence] had rendered our soldiers more eager for fighting, and the remarks of all were heard [declaring] that no longer ought delay to be made in going to the camp, after encouraging his men, he marches to the camp of the enemy, to the great gratification of his own troops.)

[3.25]There, while some were filling up the ditch, and others, by throwing a large number of darts, were driving the defenders from the rampart and fortifications, and the auxiliaries, on whom Crassus did not much rely in the battle, by supplying stones and weapons [to the soldiers], and by conveying turf to the mound, presented the appearance and character of men engaged in fighting; while also the enemy were fighting resolutely and boldly, and their weapons, discharged from their higher position, fell with great effect; the horse, having gone round the camp of the enemy, reported to Crassus that the camp was not fortified with equal care on the side of the Decuman gate, and had an easy approach.

[3.26] Crassus, having exhorted the commanders of the horse to animate their men by great rewards and promises, points out to them what he wished to have done. They, as they had been commanded, having brought out the four cohorts, which, as they had been left as a guard for the camp, were not fatigued by exertion, and

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having led them round by a somewhat longer way, lest they could be seen from the camp of the enemy, when the eyes and minds of all were intent upon the battle, quickly arrived at those fortifications which we have spoken of, and, having demolished these, stood in the camp of the enemy before they were seen by them, or it was known what was going on. And then, a shout being heard in that quarter, our men, their strength having been recruited, (which usually occurs on the hope of victory), began to fight more vigorously. The enemy surrounded on all sides, [and] all their affairs being despaired of, made great attempts to cast themselves down over the ramparts and to seek safety in flight. These the cavalry pursued over the very open plains, and after leaving scarcely a fourth part out of the number of 50,000, which it was certain had assembled out of Aquitania and from the Cantabri, returned late at night to the camp.

[3.27] Having heard of this battle, the greatest part of Aquitania surrendered itself to Crassus, and of its own accord sent hostages, in which number were the Tarbelli, the Bigerriones, the Preciani, the Vocasates, the Tarusates, the Elurates, the Garites, the Ausci, the Garumni, the Sibuzates, the Cocosates. A few [and those] most remote nations, relying on the time of the year, because winter was at hand, neglected to do this.

[3.28] About the same time Caesar, although the summer was nearly past, yet, since, all Gaul being reduced, the Morini and the Menapii alone remained in arms, and had never sent ambassadors to him [to make a treaty] of peace, speedily led his army thither, thinking that that war might soon be terminated. They resolved to conduct the war on a very different method from the rest of the Gauls; for as they perceived that the greatest nations [of Gaul] who had engaged in war, had been routed and overcome, and as they possessed continuous ranges of forests and morasses, they removed themselves and all their property thither. When Caesar had arrived at the opening of these forests, and had begun to fortify his camp, and no enemy was in the mean time seen, while our men were dispersed on their respective duties, they suddenly rushed out from all parts of the forest, and made an attack on our men. The latter quickly took up arms and drove them back again to their forests; and having killed a great many, lost a few of their own men while pursuing them too far through those intricate places.

[3.29] During the remaining days after this, Caesar began to cut down the forests; and that no attack might be made on the flank of the soldiers, while unarmed and not foreseeing it, he placed together (opposite to the enemy) all that timber which was cut down, and piled it up as a rampart on either flank. When a great space had been, with incredible speed, cleared in a few days, when the cattle [of the enemy] and the rear of their baggage train were already seized by our men, and they themselves were seeking for the thickest parts of the forests, storms of such a kind came on that the work was necessarily suspended, and, through the continuance of the rains, the soldiers could not any longer remain in their tents. Therefore, having laid waste all their country, [and] having burned their villages and houses, Caesar led back his army and stationed them in winter quarters among the Auleri and Lexovii, and the other states which had made war upon him last.

End of Book 3