

THE DEFEAT OF L. METELLUS DENTER AT ARRETIIUM

THE consuls of 284, according to the *Fasti Capitolini*, were L. Caecilius Metellus Denter and C. Servilius Tucca.¹ Of Tucca we know nothing else at all, and if the literary sources also tell us that Metellus Denter was defeated and killed by Gauls at Arretium, the date of this setback and Metellus' status at the time have long been matter for dispute. The surviving accounts of Rome's campaigns against the Gauls in this period fall into three categories. First, there is Polybius, who apparently sets Metellus' death in 284 and terms him *στρατηγός*, *prima facie* consul. Then there are the sources which seem clearly to derive from a later, annalistic tradition; they describe Metellus as *praetor* and place his death in 283. And finally there is Appian, whose account represents an attempt to conflate these views and consequently falls between two stools; in his account Metellus is not even mentioned. Every previous discussion of these traditions (and there have been many) has tended to exalt one of the two main versions at the expense of the other. But since they both contain serious difficulties, it should be obvious that we ought rather to try to reconcile their divergencies. Hence it is the purpose of this paper to demonstrate that any such inquiry will lead to only one plausible solution: Metellus was proconsul at the time of his defeat and death, and the battle of Arretium took place at the start of the campaigning season for 283. Not that the attempt to resolve a notorious crux is the only reason for undertaking this investigation. It may also be emphasized that if the arguments advanced here are valid, it is possible to form a clearer picture of the ways in which Polybius uses the term *στρατηγός* and of the nature of our sources in general, and at the same time to improve our understanding of the purposes and the problems involved in much Roman activity in the early third century.²

I

It will be best to begin by outlining the content of the traditions and indicating the principal difficulties they contain. In Polybius' account, almost certainly taken from Fabius Pictor,³ the Gauls laid siege to Arretium ten years after the

¹ A. Degrassi, *Inscriptiones Italiae*, xiii. 1 (Rome, 1947), 40 f. I wish to thank Prof. E. Badian for having many times discussed with me the problems of Metellus' career, and Prof. A. Mauersberger for making available to me a complete list of the Polybian passages containing the word *στρατηγός*; but this is not to say that they share my views. [All dates are B.C.]

² To simplify references, the following works are cited hereafter by author's name and page number only: K. J. Beloch, *Römische Geschichte bis zum Beginn der punischen Kriege* (1926); T. R. S. Broughton, *Magistrates of the Roman Republic*, i (1951); J. H. Corbett, 'Rome and the Gauls 285-280

B.C.', *Historia* xx (1971), 656-64; G. Forni, 'Manio Curio Dentato uomo democratico', *Athenaeum* xxxi (1953), 170-240; T. Mommsen, *Römische Forschungen*, ii (1879); E. T. Salmon, 'Rome's Battles with Etruscans and Gauls in 284-282 B.C.', *C.P.* xxx (1935), 23-31; F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, i (1957).

³ Polyb. 2. 19. 7-20. 6. That Polybius followed Fabius Pictor, suggested first by Mommsen 365 ff., was contested by P. Bung, *Q. Fabius Pictor: der erste römische Annalist* (Diss., Cologne, 1950), 161 ff., especially 175 ff.; but his arguments in favour of Cato have been demolished by A. Klotz (*Gnomon* xxiv [1952], 132) and by

battle of Sentinum. The Roman 'strategos Lucius' (i.e. Metellus) was sent to relieve the town, but he was defeated and killed with a large part of his force. As his successor the Romans appointed M'. Curius Dentatus (*cos.* I 290), who sent an embassy to the Gauls to negotiate the return of the Roman prisoners. When the envoys were murdered, the Romans were so enraged that they immediately¹ marched out to do battle with the enemy, being led no doubt by Curius Dentatus,² and they were opposed by 'Gauls called Senones'. These were defeated and driven from their land, on which the Romans planted the colony of Sena Gallica, the first to be founded in Gallic territory. This victory so alarmed the Boii, however, that they feared sharing the Senones' fate and now³ invited the Etruscans to join them. Their combined forces marched forth *en masse* against the Romans, and were crushingly defeated at Lake Vadimon (a mere forty miles or so north of Rome). The Boii and Etruscans nevertheless managed to raise another force in the following year by pressing their youth into service. But when they were again defeated by the Romans, the Gauls sought—and were granted—a peace settlement, this three years before Pyrrhus crossed to Italy and five years before Gallic raiders were destroyed at Delphi.

The difficulties in this account are numerous: Curius makes what can be shown to be a very un-Roman attempt to recover prisoners-of-war; he is able to march all the way to Sena Gallica during the course of campaigns otherwise conducted in Etruria; and no less than three battles—Metellus' defeat, Curius' victory, and the first Roman victory over Boii and Etruscans—all appear to be set within a single campaigning season. These, however, are minor problems beside the question of Curius' status at the time of his campaign. Since Polybius states explicitly that the Gauls laid siege to Arretium ten years after Sentinum, a battle of 295, he appears to place Metellus' defeat and death either in 285 (reckoning inclusively) or in 284 (by excluding both terms); and the latter, which alone makes sense of the historical facts (inasmuch as Metellus was obviously alive to hold the consulship in 284), fits better with Polybius' other remarks on the chronology of the period.⁴ But given that Metellus was consul, which Polybius seems also to say when he terms him *strategos*,⁵ M'. Curius Dentatus as his replacement must have been either consul suffectus or dictator. No such magistracy is credited to him by the *Fasti Capitolini* for these years, and there is only one plausible explanation for its absence from the record: Curius cannot possibly have held any such office.⁶

True, J. H. Corbett has recently attempted to circumvent this difficulty, but the two arguments he offers are based on what can only be considered a hasty reading of the *Fasti* and of Polybius.⁷ He maintains first that if Metellus had been killed while consul, the *Fasti* would 'almost certainly' have contained

K. Hanell (*Histoire et historiens dans l'antiquité* [Fondation Hardt, Entretiens iv, 1956], 162 and 168 f.).

¹ Polyb. 2. 19. 10: *ἐκ χειρός*. This must mean still in the one year; cf. Mommsen 368; Forni 205; Walbank 189.

² The grounds leading Corbett 660 f. to deny this are either unconvincing (below, pp. 310 f.) or confused (below, p. 316 n. 5).

³ Polyb. 2. 20. 1 gives no indication that the Boii made their first move in a different

year, a fact which is rejected almost as often as it is remarked (cf. below, p. 321 n. 1).

⁴ See further below, part IV.

⁵ Cf. Beloch 133 and 452; Salmon 29 and 31; Forni 205, n. 1; Walbank 188. The subject will be discussed in detail below, part V.

⁶ Degraffi, *op. cit.* 40 f., 112, 428 f.; Broughton 188, n. 2; Corbett 659, n. 9a.

⁷ Corbett 659 f., 662, and 664, n. 16.

a notice to this effect. He then argues that the words with which Polybius describes Metellus' replacement by Curius (*Μάνιον ἐπικατέστησαν τὸν Κόριον*) imply an arrangement altogether more informal than an election, and that we may therefore assume that Curius served in Metellus' army in an advisory capacity, for example as military tribune, and was chosen interim commander by the surviving members of Metellus' staff immediately after the defeat. This fails to convince. For one thing, the *Fasti Capitolini* do not make a point of recording a consul's death in office; a notice to that effect may be inserted in the lists (as in the case of C. Flaminius, consul in 217), but there are also cases where no such information is given, e.g., those of P. Decius Mus (*cos.* 279) and C. Atilius Regulus (*cos.* 225).¹ For the rest, one could perhaps argue that the Romans who chose Curius as Metellus' replacement were survivors of the disaster, if it were not that the verb used is *ἐπικατέστησαν*. Polybius uses *ἐπικαθίστημι* of Romans in four other passages, and in every case he is concerned with men chosen to succeed others in a properly constituted election.² The dilemma therefore remains: Polybius' account seems to say that Metellus was consul, and accordingly demands that we consider Curius a suffect consul or a dictator, but the *Fasti* credit him with no such magistracy.

This problem does not arise in the tradition represented now by an assortment of fragments drawn from the Livian epitomes, Orosius, Saint Augustine, Eutropius, Florus, Frontinus, Dio, Zonaras, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus; and since all these writers save Dionysius probably derived their material from Livy, it seems reasonably certain that the tradition originated with the Sullan annalists, the authorities from whom Livy and Dionysius seem largely to have drawn their accounts of the period.³ In any case, the picture which can be built up from these sources has no place for Curius, while the foundation of Sena is set around 290/289. But here it is stated that although there was a certain amount of unrest in Italy during the years following the colony's establishment, actual warfare broke out only in 283, *Domitio et Dolabella consulibus*. At this time the Romans sent an embassy to the Gauls, apparently to dissuade them from starting a new war (*ad exorandos Gallos*). When their envoys were murdered by the Senones, the Romans dispatched a punitive expedition under the 'praetor L. Caecilius', but this was defeated by a combined Gallo-Etruscan force, the Roman losses comprising Caecilius himself, seven military tribunes and 13,000 men.⁴ Hence the command was given to the consul P. Cornelius Dolabella, and he defeated the Senones at Vadimon, wiping out

¹ Degrassi, *op. cit.* 40 f. and 44 f.

² See Polyb. 1. 24. 9; 3. 70. 7; 3. 106. 2; 9. 4. 5. Polybius uses the verb once of non-Romans (2. 2. 11); there too a properly constituted election is involved.

³ Livy, *Epit.* 11-12; Oros. 3. 22. 12-14; Augustine, *C.D.* 3. 17 (these works clearly represent the Livian tradition: H. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics*, ii [1967], 650 ff.); Eutrop. 2. 10; Flor. 1. 8. 3; Frontin., *Strat.* 1. 2. 7 (writers who may readily be assumed here to have observed their common practice of following Livy or a Livian epitome, since their remarks fit perfectly well into the Livian scheme); Dio, frag. 38. 1-39. 1 and Zonar. 8. 2. 1 show only

minor divergencies and—as in their accounts of the First Punic War (cf. De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani*, iii. 1 [1916], 238 ff.)—they too may be assumed here to have followed the Livian tradition; Dion. Hal. 19. 13. 1. For the sources which Livy himself used see P. G. Walsh, *Livy* (1961), 114 ff., and literature there cited; Dionysius' authorities are discussed by E. Schwartz, *RE* v (1905), 946 ff. W. V. Harris, *Rome in Etruria and Umbria* (1971), 79 f. exaggerates the divergencies between these sources.

⁴ Oros. 3. 22. 12-14 (whence the quotations); Livy, *Epit.* 12; cf. Augustine, *C.D.* 3. 17.

virtually the entire tribe.¹ In the following year, 282, the Boii engaged the Romans with a force of some 10,000 men, but this was outwitted and defeated by the new consul, Q. Aemilius Papus, probably at Vetulonia.² Thereafter, it seems, peace was re-established between Romans and Gauls.³

It is noteworthy that this tradition not only reports three battles instead of Polybius' four, but also records the presence of Senones rather than Boii at Vadimon. Nevertheless, the principal difficulty here lies in the fact that Metellus is termed praetor and his death placed squarely in 283. For a man to be praetor immediately after his consulship was by no means unknown at this time, and it was also possible for the praetor to see service outside Rome: Ap. Claudius Caecus, praetor in 295, had held command in Etruria and Campania.⁴ There is nothing in this tradition, however, to explain satisfactorily why the sole praetor should have been sent to face the enemy at all. The consuls for 283 appear only after his defeat and death, and no mention is made of the important business which should have detained them elsewhere. No doubt one can argue that when the tradition itself is so fragmentary, the *argumentum ex silentio* is particularly dangerous. So it would be, if we were concerned with only one consul. But we are not: though we may readily assume that affairs in Rome detained one consul, it passes belief that matters there were so crucial as to occupy both men, and even when full allowance is made for the scatter-shot principle on which this tradition imparts its information, there is nothing whatever to suggest the existence of trouble elsewhere in Italy of a type and on a scale sufficient to require a consul's attention.⁵

This last conclusion could perhaps be undermined, if it were possible to consider Appian a subscriber to this same tradition; for in his version the Romans were already fighting the Etruscans when their envoys were murdered by the Senones. As he tells the story, the Senones broke their treaty with Rome in order to serve as the Etruscans' mercenaries. The Romans protested, but their envoys were murdered. Hereupon the consul Dolabella abandoned his campaign against the Etruscans, marched into Senonian territory, and killed every member of the tribe he could find. The Senonian mercenaries in Etruria then attacked the other consul, Cn. Domitius Calvinus, and they too were defeated.⁶ Appian's omission of both Metellus' defeat and Q. Aemilius Papus' victory in 282 could perhaps be explained by the fact that we have only an excerpt from his account. What remains is nevertheless enough to show that

¹ Eutrop. 2. 10; Flor. 1. 8. 3; Dion. Hal. 19. 13. 1; cf. Dio, frag. 38. 1.

² Frontin., *Strat.* 1. 2. 7; Dion. Hal. 19. 13. 1; cf. below, part II.

³ Though the *Fasti Capitolini* record triumphs over the Etruscans under 281 and 280 (below, part III), they go unmentioned in all the literary sources. Not that this affects the date of the re-establishment of peace with the Gauls, to which alone—I think—the *συνθήκαι* of Polyb. 2. 20. 5 refer (despite Harris, *op. cit.* 83).

⁴ Praetorship after consulship: Broughton 130, n. 2; 150, n. 3; 188, n. 2. Ap. Claudius: Broughton 178; cf. A. Garzetti, 'Appio Claudio Cieco nella storia politica del suo tempo', *Athenaeum* xxv (1947), 216 ff.

⁵ Mommsen 367; cf. Beloch 133 and 452;

Salmon 27 f. Nothing can be made of trouble in the south. The Romans appear to have quarrelled with the Lucanians *c.* 285 (Livy, *Epit.* 11; Pliny, *N.H.* 34. 32; cf. Beloch 460 f.), and the defeat at Arretium certainly increased the unrest among the Lucanians, Bruttians, and Samnites—hence, no doubt, the talk of a 'conspiracy' between these peoples and the Gauls and Etruscans (Oros. 3. 22. 12; Eutrop. 2. 10; Augustine, *C.D.* 3. 17; cf. Livy, *Epit.* 12). But Dio, frag. 39. 1 and Zonar. 8. 2. 1 carefully indicate that all members of this 'conspiracy' did not rebel at once. Actual warfare must have broken out in the south only in 282 (cf. Broughton 189 f.; Beloch 460 ff.; Forni 209).

⁶ Appian, *Samn.* 6 = *Gall.* 11.

Appian or his source (whoever that may have been) attempted to conflate the two traditions which we have already discussed, assigned to Dolabella the role played by Curius in the Polybian version, and gave to Domitius Calvinus the part filled by his colleague Dolabella in the annalistic version.¹ It is of course unfortunate that we are unable to explain how or why these divergencies arose, but this failure cannot affect the argument. Since Appian's account clearly presupposes the prior existence of the other two traditions, it cannot be held to possess independent value of its own. It is of use only where it provides confirmation of details contained in the other versions.

II

Any attempt to reconcile these divergent traditions must begin with the role of M'. Curius Dentatus: either his campaign should be integrated into the annalistic version of events, or it must be removed from Polybius' account. The first expedient, seemingly the more promising line of approach, is of no avail. Though the annalistic tradition says nothing of Curius' great victory and assigns the solution of the Senonian problem to P. Cornelius Dolabella, it is conceivable (unlikely, but certainly conceivable) that accident alone has deprived us of this intelligence; after all, not one of the sources in this category gives us a continuous narrative which mentions all the incidents in the war. But if suffect praetors were not unknown,² it is impossible plausibly to explain why the Romans, after the death of their praetor Metellus, should have appointed Curius suffect praetor and have sent him, not a consul, to deal with the enemy.³ Nor will it do to dismiss as an *argumentum ex silentio* the point already made, that we have no reason to think both consuls for 283 unable to extricate themselves from their other duties. This is to maintain that the gaps in this tradition are not merely large but positively gargantuan in their proportions and, at the same time, to ignore totally the indubitable magnitude of Metellus' defeat. After that setback the Romans had no option but to appoint a consul (if not a dictator) to the command against the Gauls.

In an attempt to remove Curius from the Polybian version of events, Beloch and Salmon have argued that he was the type of semi-legendary hero to whom victories would readily be attributed by the Sullan annalists. Hence the later tradition's failure to mention any such achievement indicates either that he won no victory over the Senones at this time, or else that the annalists reversed their usual procedure and suppressed all mention of it. Emphasizing the improbability of the latter hypothesis, they concluded that Fabius Pictor (followed by Polybius) here recorded a face-saving victory so obviously fictitious that even the annalists could not accept it.⁴ It is their own conclusion which is unacceptable, however. As the surviving fragments of their work abundantly testify, the Sullan annalists could accept any victory, provided that it suited their purpose: nothing was too obviously fictitious to be rejected for that reason alone, least of all a narrative which had received the benison of Fabius Pictor.⁵

¹ Forni 209 f. For speculation on Appian's source see Schwartz, *RE* ii (1896), 217 f. Harris, *op. cit.* 80 holds that Curius' disappearance from the later tradition is significant 'only in Appian'. This misses the point; Dolabella clearly plays Curius' role as destroyer of the Senones in that tradition

generally.

² Witness C. Claudius in 180 and—perhaps—A. Manlius Vulso in 189 (respectively Broughton 388 and 361).

³ Cf. Mommsen 367.

⁴ Beloch 453 f.; Salmon 24.

⁵ Cf. Forni 208.

Nevertheless, it seems clear that Curius should be removed from the Polybian account. Not that we need invoke Roman vanity, demanding that every defeat be followed at once by a great victory.¹ The solution to this problem undoubtedly lies in the circumstances attending the foundation of the colony of Sena Gallica, with which Curius is explicitly linked in Polybius' version. For Polybius and—we may be sure—Fabius Pictor knew that the colony was named after the Senones, and obviously shared the view of those modern scholars who have maintained that its foundation presupposes the prior conquest of the land it occupied. On this view, the Livian date of *c.* 290/289 is simply impossible, because the *ager Gallicus* was not thoroughly subdued before the close of 284 or 283.² As Walbank has observed, however, Sena's establishment 'implies the ceding of land by the Senones, but not necessarily their defeat and complete expulsion; and this may well have followed the peace which must have been made after Sentinum.'³

This conclusion, of course, would lose much of its force if it could be shown on other grounds that Sena was not established before the close of 283; and Corbett and Salmon have both attempted this. The former's argument rests solely on the assertion that 'it is most unlikely that the Romans would have planted a small citizen colony . . . in the midst of an area still occupied by the Senones—the first colony east of the Appennines—while that tribe was still intact.'⁴ If we were to apply this argument rigorously to other cases, however, we would probably find it most unlikely that the Romans founded any citizen colonies at all; Minturnae and Sinuessa certainly ought not to have been established in 295, while the Samnites were still 'intact'.⁵ Besides, Corbett takes no account of a consideration justly emphasized by Salmon, the strong strategic position which such colonies regularly occupied.⁶ Indeed, it was this very consideration which led Salmon to argue that Sena could not have been founded before late 283, and since Corbett's views need detain us no longer, we may turn now to this. As Salmon sees it, the colony was the key to Cisalpina before the settlement of Ariminum in 268; hence the Gauls would not have been able to reach Arretium or Vadimon, if the colony was established *c.* 290/289.⁷ The fundamental weakness in this argument is best illustrated by Salmon's attempt to explain the campaign of Q. Aemilius Papus in 282.

The scene of Papus' victory over the Boii is recorded only by Frontinus; of the two most reliable manuscripts the Parisinus 7240 gives the site as *apud oppidum coloniam*, the Harleianus 2666 as *apud oppidum uel coloniam*.⁸ These

¹ This explanation is favoured by Beloch 452 f., Salmon 28 ff., and R. Werner, *Der Beginn der römischen Republik* (1963), 93. In fact, it explains little (cf. Forni 208), and it implies a time-lag between Arretium and Vadimon whose existence has yet to be established. If we are to see Roman vanity at work in the annalistic tradition, it would be better discerned in a deliberate multiplication of Rome's enemies after Arretium, designed to emphasize Rome's skill in surviving their combined attentions (cf. above, p. 312, n. 5).

² Polyb. 2. 19. 12; Beloch 452; Salmon 25.

³ Walbank 189; cf. De Sanctis, *Storia dei*

Romani, ii (1907), 358, n. 1 and 375.

⁴ Corbett 659, n. 3.

⁵ Cf. E. T. Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites* (1967), 264 and 268 f.

⁶ See especially Salmon, 'Roman Expansion and Roman Colonization in Italy', *Phoenix* ix (1955), 63–75.

⁷ Salmon 25; cf. Beloch 453 f.

⁸ Frontin., *Strat.* 1. 2. 7. There can be no doubt that the campaign of 282 is the subject; see G. Gundermann, 'Quaestiones de Iuli Frontini Strategematon Libris', *Jahrb. f. class. Philol.* Supb. xvi (1888), 353 f.; Beloch 454. What is more, the suggestion of Broughton 189 that Papus was the com-

phrases are commonly emended to produce the name of an Etruscan town, be it Populonia, Statonia or—palaeographically by far the most likely—Vetulonia.¹ To accept such an emendation, of course, is to concede that the Boii were able to penetrate into Etruria in 282.² Rejecting any such idea, Salmon chooses rather to emphasize the fact that when Polybius describes what in his account is the second battle between Romans and Boii, he makes no mention of any advance to precede the battle; he says only that the combined Gallo-Etruscan force 'was drawn up against the Romans' (2. 20. 4: *παρετάξατο πρὸς Ῥωμαίους*). Hence the contingents involved must derive from communities other than those which furnished the troops for the first battle between Romans and Boii, and *apud oppidum coloniam* must denote Sena. Which means that it was founded precisely at the close of 283, since in 282 it 'performed its appointed task; when the Boii and their Etruscan allies attempted to advance they found their progress barred by a strategically-placed colony. It was in the neighborhood of it that they were fought and defeated.'³

However ingenious, this interpretation fails to convince. First, it ignores the plain fact that Polybius thought the same group of Etruscans involved in the two defeats suffered by the Boii.⁴ Second, it takes insufficient account of the fact that Frontinus and Dionysius describe Q. Aemilius Papus as commander in an Etruscan war; as Walbank says, this sits ill with the idea of a battle in the north-east.⁵ Third, and most important, *apud oppidum coloniam* is not Latin, *apud oppidum uel coloniam* very little better; emendation is inevitable.⁶ Where Corbett has underestimated the colony's strength, Salmon has overstated it. Sena almost certainly received no more than 300 colonists.⁷ No matter how strong the position they occupied, so small a group of men could hardly have prevented several thousand Gauls from advancing into Etruria whenever they chose. If Ariminum was founded in 268 on a better site with many more colonists, one reason for that was Sena's proven inability to perform 'its appointed task'; in this connection the Romans' ability to colonize Ariminum, so often mentioned, is far less important than their need to do so, a point generally overlooked. And since Frontinus' text must be emended, we should accept the strong palaeographical grounds for reading *apud oppidum Vetulonium*. The strategic position occupied by Sena, therefore, proves nothing about the date of the colony's foundation.

Given, then, that Fabius Pictor (followed by Polybius) believed Sena's establishment to have followed the destruction of the Senones, an event he knew to belong several years later than c. 290/289, it is easy to see why he provided M'. Curius Dentatus with a victorious campaign immediately following Metellus' defeat at Arretium. But why did the Sullan annalists not follow this

mander at Vadimon needlessly destroys the clear inter-relation between Frontinus and the accounts of Dionysius, Florus, and Eutropius.

¹ Cf. Gundermann, loc. cit.; Beloch 454 f.; Forni 207, n. 4; A. J. Pfiffig, 'Das Verhalten Etruriens im Samniterkrieg und nachher bis zum 1. Punischen Krieg', *Historia* xvii (1968), 342, n. 117.

² This prompted Beloch 453 to transfer Sena's foundation to Curius' third consulship in 274; there is no evidence to justify so drastic a step.

³ Salmon 26 f.

⁴ Polyb. 2. 20. 4. Salmon 27, n. 30 is a wholly specious attempt to circumvent this difficulty.

⁵ Frontin., *Strat.* 1. 2. 7; Dion. Hal. 19. 13. 1; Walbank 190.

⁶ One other correction is in any case required in the passage; the manuscripts give the consul's *cognomen* as 'Paulus', not 'Papus'.

⁷ Salmon, 'The Coloniae Maritimae', *Athenaeum* xli (1963), 25 f. Cf. Harris, *Rome in Etruria and Umbria*, 80.

lead? As we have seen already, it cannot have been merely because they found it intrinsically improbable. The answer surely lies in a fact emphasized by Balsdon: for all their faults, the Sullan annalists sometimes preserve reliable information not found in earlier writers, thanks to the intervening publication of the *Annales Maximi*.¹ Since the date of a colony's foundation is precisely the type of material the *Annales Maximi* would have preserved,² we may reasonably conclude that the annalists found Sena's establishment set in Curius' first consulship in 290,³ and that they recast their narratives accordingly to comprise only three major battles, Metellus' defeat at Arretium, Dolabella's victory at Vadimon, and Papus' victory at Vetulonia. And on this matter at least they should be given preference: whatever M'. Curius Dentatus may have been doing at the time, neither he nor Sena Gallica has any part to play in the war with which we are here concerned.⁴

III

To remove Curius' campaign from the Polybian account will—if nothing else—bring the two traditions into agreement on the number of battles actually fought in this particular war between Romans and Gauls. And just as both traditions are obviously talking of the same battle when they describe Metellus' defeat at Arretium, so we need not doubt that they are also talking of one and the same battle when they refer to an engagement at Vadimon; it is, after all, highly improbable that the Romans would have won two major victories on exactly the same site within so short a space of time.⁵ But it remains noteworthy that among the various discrepancies between the two traditions Polybius has it that the Boii were Rome's adversaries at Vadimon, the annalistic tradition that this role was played by the Senones.

This difficulty is apparent rather than real. For Polybius gives us two clear indications that Rome was from the first opposed by a coalition of Gallic tribes. Although he is commonly said to ascribe Metellus' defeat to the

¹ J. P. V. D. Balsdon, 'Some Questions about Historical Writings in the Second Century B.C.', *C.Q.N.S.* iii (1953), 158 ff.

² Cf. Salmon, *Roman Colonization under the Republic* (1969), 115.

³ This is not to say that the annalistic tradition credited Curius with Sena's foundation, although that view has been widely held since Mommsen 372 f. noted the link.

⁴ Salmon 30 attempts to connect with the northern war the statement of [Aurelius Victor], *de vir. ill.* 33. 3, that Curius *tertio de Lucanis ouans urbem introiuit*. If this were accurate, the ovation would have to be set between 290 and 281, and probably between 285 and 283 (Münzer, *RE* iv. 1842 f.); but this is best seen as a confused reference to Curius' third triumph, over Pyrrhus (cf. Forni 207, n. 5). That the *acta triumphalia* count the triumph over Pyrrhus as Curius' fourth (Degrassi, *Inscr. Ital.*, xiii. 1. 74 f.) is

surely an error in numeration (the literary sources declare it his third: Cicero, *Cato maior* 55; Plut., *Cato cens.* 2. 1; Apul., *Apol.* 17). And even if we were to allow Curius an extra triumph, there is no way in which it can be attached to the war under discussion here (despite Harris, *op. cit.* 80 and n. 3); for as we have already seen, there is no way in which we can plausibly explain how Curius succeeded Metellus, be it in 284 or 283.

⁵ Corbett 661 f. argues that Curius' victory in Polybius should be equated with Dolabella's victory in the annalistic tradition (but not at Vadimon), and that Polybius' first Roman victory over the Boii at Vadimon is identical with the victory over the Senones which Appian credits to Domitius Calvinus. This would produce four battles in each tradition, if Appian could be considered a member of the later tradition. Since he is not (above, p. 313), the argument falls to the ground.

Senones,¹ he first mentions that tribe in connection with Curius' campaign; hitherto he has employed only the general term 'Galatai' (2. 19. 7; 9; 10). Since there are no grounds for thinking this the result of imprecision, accidental or deliberate, it follows that he thought more than one tribe involved at the start of the war. Which leads us to the second pointer, his statement that the Boii were afraid of sharing the Senones' fate (2. 20. 1). Their fears could, of course, be regarded as the groundless anxiety of innocent bystanders, but the context suggests that they had good reason to expect Roman reprisals, especially when Polybius also says that it was they who brought the Etruscans into the war (2. 20. 1).

That the annalistic tradition was aware of the existence of such a coalition is also demonstrable. The Senones, it is true, are the only tribe named by the Livian epitomator, Florus, Orosius, Saint Augustine, Dionysius and—for that matter—Appian. But two of these writers (Florus and Dionysius) mention the Senones in such a way as to prove nothing about the allies they may or may not have had; and if none of these six name the Boii, their part must still have been known to writers of this group, since it is reported by Frontinus.² This clearly suggests that the six writers in question chose deliberately to focus on the one tribe, either because they alone were responsible for the murder of the Roman envoys,³ or because Vadimon—in their view—marked the final destruction of a tribe which had once inflicted the ultimate indignity on the Romans, the sack of their city.⁴ In any event, we may legitimately give more weight to the fact that Eutropius, Dio, and Zonaras speak of Gauls in general.⁵ Far from being the example of vague terminology it might at first appear, this shows that the annalistic tradition was indeed aware that several Gallic tribes combined against Rome at this time.

On this basis it is possible to reconcile the two accounts of Vadimon. We have seen already that Curius' campaign and the foundation of Sena Gallica do not belong among the events of these years, but we cannot similarly remove all mention of the Senones from Polybius' account, since their destruction around this date is one of the few points on which the two traditions do agree. Hence it is simplest to argue that Fabius Pictor somehow made two battles out of one. When he credited Curius with the defeat of the Senones at an unspecified site, and an unspecified commander with the defeat of the Boii at Vadimon, he in fact split up a coalition of Senones and Boii and partitioned a single victory which belonged by rights to P. Cornelius Dolabella. And though there may be other ways of accounting for such duplication, the most likely reason has already been indicated: since Fabius thought Sena's foundation the result of the Senones' destruction and Vadimon a battle following the

¹ Mommsen 366; Walbank 188; cf. De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani*, ii. 375 f.

² The references are given above, p. 311, n. 3.

³ Cf. Mommsen 376. I cannot accept the suggestion of Werner, *Der Beginn der röm. Republik*, 94, n. 3, 'daß bei den Späteren die Senones stellvertretend für die Galli überhaupt stehen', so that in the accounts of Vadimon we are dealing 'weniger um eine Substituierung, sondern vielmehr um eine Subsumierung der Boii unter die Senones'.

⁴ This motif is explicit in Florus, implied by Dionysius. J. Wolski (*Historia* v [1956], 33) suggests that the Senones' role in Rome's sack was a retrojection designed to justify the Romans' annihilating the tribe in 284/3. But for that the murder of the Roman envoys, fact or fiction, would have sufficed—and there is no cogent reason for thinking the murders fictitious (despite Beloch 454 and Salmon 31, n. 39).

⁵ Eutrop. 2. 10; Dio, frag. 39. 1 (cf. 38. 1-2); Zonar. 8. 2. 1.

colony's establishment, he could not possibly include the Senones among the participants in the battle; consequently, he drew attention instead to the part played by the Boii.¹ As for Polybius, we have to remember that his account of this war was no more than a digression from his main theme, so that there are no grounds for thinking he used another source as a control on Fabius' account in the way he employed Philinus in his narrative of the First Punic War. Nor need we suppose that it was Polybius who made two battles out of one by unintelligent condensation of Fabius' account; the latter undoubtedly constructed his account of this period *capitulatim*,² and so almost certainly devoted no more space to it than does Polybius. In short, then, Polybius simply repeated the version of events which Fabius Pictor provided, a version which made two battles out of one for the reason we have already indicated.

Not that this by itself explains the disagreement between the two traditions over the timing of the Roman envoys' murder. Though the Senones alone are held responsible for this action in both versions, the annalistic tradition sets it before Metellus' defeat at Arretium, Polybius after that setback. But as De Sanctis and Corbett have realized, Polybius' statement that the envoys were sent to recover prisoners taken at Arretium ascribes to the Romans behaviour which is decidedly out of character for them. Though they often included a demand for the return of prisoners-of-war in the peace treaties imposed on defeated enemies, the Romans very seldom negotiated for the exchange or return of prisoners during the course of a war.³ On this basis De Sanctis and Corbett conclude that Polybius' account is to be preferred, since so unusual a procedure is not likely to have been an invention. This is a moot point, since one can argue equally well that virtually any other explanation for the embassy's dispatch would be preferable to Polybius'. Certainly there is nothing in the least remarkable about the version of events recorded in the annalistic tradition: Orosius has it that the envoys were sent out before hostilities began *ad exorandos Gallos*, and Appian may be held to confirm this when he says that the envoys were sent to remonstrate with the Senones for agreeing to serve as Etruscan mercenaries and thereby breaking their treaty with Rome.⁴ But if this seems to leave the matter undecided, we shall find that the essential accuracy of the annalistic version is confirmed when we examine another detail on which the two traditions disagree, the part taken in the war by the Etruscans.

According to Polybius (2. 20. 1), the Etruscans entered the war only after the destruction of the Senones by Curius—at any rate after the defeat of Arretium—and did so then at the urging of the Boii. Among the writers in the annalistic tradition, on the other hand, Eutropius, Saint Augustine, Dio, and Zonaras all indicate that the Gauls concluded an alliance with the Etruscans before the fighting began (a view shared by Appian), and Orosius states explicitly that Metellus was defeated by Gauls and Etruscans.⁵ Since the Livian epitome records that Rome had trouble with Volsinii before the defeat at

¹ Cf. Mommsen 373; Forni 212 f.; Walbank 190.

² Cf. F. Bömer, 'Naevius und Fabius Pictor', *S.O.* xxix (1952), 38.

³ De Sanctis, *Storia*, ii. 377; Corbett 661. Peace-treaties: see E. Täubler, *Imperium Romanum* (1913), i. 81 ff. Wartime: H. Kornhardt, 'Regulus und die Cannae-

gefangenen', *Hermes* lxxxii (1954), 85 ff., especially 97 f.

⁴ Oros. 3. 22. 12; Appian, *Samn.* 6 = *Gall.* 11 (cf. Mommsen 364 f.).

⁵ Eutrop. 2. 10; Augustine, *C.D.* 3. 17; Dio, frag. 39. 1; Zonar. 8. 2. 1; Appian, ll. cc.; Oros. 3. 22. 13.

Arretium, while the *acta triumphalia* list a triumph by Ti. Coruncanus over Vulci and Volsinii in 280, Beloch very plausibly suggested that these two towns (in the annalistic tradition anyway) were responsible for the original appearance of the Gauls and, ultimately, for the outbreak of the war.¹ His suggestion is certainly not invalidated by the observation that Q. Marcius Philippus' celebrating a triumph *de Etrusceis* in 281 proves the existence of more general unrest in the area;² Philippus' triumph tells us nothing about the core of the Etruscan revolt, whereas the continued resistance of Vulci and Volsinii suggests that they were Rome's most determined enemies in the region at this time and, as such, the obvious candidates for the role of ring-leaders.

In any attempt to choose between these rival accounts we clearly cannot attach significance to the fact that the Romans tried to halt the Gauls' advance at Arretium; whether the latter already had allies in Etruria or were looking for dissidents to join them, it was in Rome's best interests to stop them at the earliest opportunity. But it is quite otherwise with the fact, reported by Polybius (2. 19. 7), that the Gauls themselves laid siege to Arretium. Since Polybius represents the Gauls as entering Etruria on their own initiative, the implication is necessarily that they were looking for allies, or plunder, or both. They would have fulfilled none of these aims by blockading Arretium; the town was too strong to be taken by anything save a protracted siege, in which case the plunder gained would hardly have matched the effort expended, and if they were searching for allies the Gauls would have done better to bypass the town or to find an alternative route into Etruria.³ The Gauls' action makes sense only if they entered the region at the invitation of dissident Etruscan cities. In the first place, Arretium controlled the shortest route south to Volsinii (the line of the later Via Cassia), and in pro-Roman hands it prevented the two groups from joining forces. Secondly, for the Gauls to lay siege to the town would draw the Romans northward, away from the cities of southern Etruria—like Vulci and Volsinii—which were not likely to rebel openly until the Roman legions had been removed from their doorsteps. This not only proves that the Etruscans brought the Gauls into the area. It also confirms the annalistic tradition's statement that the Romans attempted to negotiate before the defeat of Arretium: aware that the Etruscans were planning a new war, the Romans sought to limit its scope by persuading the Gauls to return to their own lands and to let the Etruscans fight their own battles.

This interpretation, moreover, enables us to explain how the divergencies between the two traditions arose in the first place. Because the Etruscans were ultimately responsible for the Gauls' appearance, the later tradition chose to dwell on the part they played in starting the war, Orosius going so far as to represent Etruscans as fighting alongside the Gauls at Arretium. Polybius, following Fabius Pictor, wrote an account concerned primarily with the Gauls, and because few—if any—Etruscans took an overt part in the events which culminated in Metellus' defeat at Arretium, they were brought into the

¹ Livy, *Epit.* 11; Degraffi, *Inscr. Ital.*, xiii. 1. 72 f. and 545; Beloch 451 and 454 ff. Despite Harris, *Rome in Etruria and Umbria*, 83, the mention of the suppression of trouble in Etruria to be found in Livy, *Epit.* 13 may readily be taken as a reference to Corun-

canus' campaign.

² Walbank 190, on the basis of Degraffi, loc. cit., and Dion. Hal. 19. 6. 2.

³ For Arretium's position and strength see H. Nissen, *Italische Landeskunde*, ii. 314 ff.

narrative only after that setback, and even then their involvement was attributed to the urging of the Boii.¹ As for the Roman envoys, they must have been sent out, as we have seen, to persuade the Gauls to return to their homes. At the time this was an eminently sensible plan: worn out by fifty years of continuous fighting, the Romans had good reason to want any new war limited in duration and space. It was not, however, a plan to reflect much credit on the Romans in the eyes of later generations; not only were they treating with barbarians, they were negotiating specifically with tribes which had once sacked Rome. Hence Fabius Pictor, writing for a Greek audience and anxious to portray the Romans in the best possible light, recast the sequence of events in a way which removed such ignoble behaviour from the record, emphasized the humanitarianism of the Romans in seeking to recover their prisoners, and pointed up the savagery of the Gauls in murdering the envoys sent out to achieve this noble purpose.² If Polybius followed him in this too, it may simply be that he was repeating Fabius' narrative uncritically. But since he surely knew from personal experience how unusual such behaviour was for Romans, it seems better to assume that, without another source to act as a control, he adopted the line of reasoning favoured by De Sanctis and Corbett, namely that the incident was too uncharacteristic to be an invention.

IV

If the arguments advanced so far bring the two traditions into agreement not only on the number but also on the circumstances of the battles fought between the Romans and the Gauls, we may turn next to a consideration of the dates at which these engagements occurred. The annalistic tradition, as we have seen, unequivocally places Arretium and Vadimon in 283, Vetulonia in 282. The evidence of Polybius is not so clear-cut.

Polybius provides two pieces of information serving to date the events he describes. He opens his account with the statement that the Gauls laid siege to Arretium ten years after Sentinum, a battle of 295. If he was reckoning inclusively, that would place the start of the war in 285; if he was counting exclusively, the date becomes 284. As has been said above, the latter date alone makes sense of the historical facts, since we know Metellus was alive to hold the consulship in 284. But this by itself cannot be used to prove that *Polybius* set Metellus' death in 284, and it is disquieting that Errington has demonstrated Polybius' clear preference for inclusive reckoning.³ Yet the later date—284—also happens to fit better with the synchronism Polybius employs to close his account of this war, when he states that peace was restored three years before Pyrrhus crossed to Italy and five years before the Gallic raiders were destroyed at Delphi; for Errington has proved conclusively that by this Polybius means us to understand the year 282.⁴

Not that this solves the chronological problem by any means. For granted

¹ Polybius' interest in the Gauls is not, by itself, enough to explain the divergency; though this leads him to ignore the Roman campaigns against the Etruscans in 281–280, it has not prevented him from mentioning their participation in the campaigns of Vadimon and Vetulonia.

² In the Greek view, as F. Kiechle has

shown (*Historia* vii [1958], 129 ff.), one was supposed to treat a civilized opponent humanely, but had no such obligation toward a barbarian enemy.

³ R. M. Errington, 'The Chronology of Polybius' Histories, Books I and II', *J.R.S.* lvii (1967), 96 ff., especially 107 f.

⁴ Errington, *op. cit.* 101 f. and 105 f.

that the termini for the war are 284 and 282, there should have been three campaigning seasons within these limits. Polybius records two only: in the first he places Metellus' defeat at Arretium, Curius' victory over the Senones, and the first Roman victory over the Boii; then, and only then, does he record the passing of a winter before describing the second Roman victory over the Boii (2. 20. 4). This difficulty has almost invariably been resolved by maintaining that Polybius places too many battles in the first year, and that we must therefore assume the passage of a winter between Curius' victory over the Senones and the defeat of the Boii at Vadimon.¹ If the arguments advanced in the preceding part of this paper have any validity at all, this is obviously untenable. If Curius' victory over the Senones and the Roman victory over the Boii at Vadimon are in fact two parts of one and the same battle, we can build nothing on the time which was supposedly required for these engagements. And though it might be maintained that the passage of the additional winter was obscured by Curius' importation into the story, not only do we lack reason to think Polybius responsible for that refinement, but we also have no warrant to consider him so stupid as to be unable to see that three major battles within a single campaigning season produced a crowded schedule—but he still gives no indication of time passing.

It seems not to have been appreciated sufficiently that Polybius does not in fact date Metellus' defeat ten years after Sentinum; it is the start of the siege of Arretium by the Gauls to which he attaches the date. If we are to assume that a winter has been omitted, therefore, there is far more to be said for the view that the winter in question fell in the period between the start of the siege and Metellus' defeat. It could be that the passage of this winter was obscured by Fabius Pictor's rearranging his material to provide the Romans with what he considered a creditable reason for approaching the Gauls.² In any event, an omission at this point would be far more understandable; important as the passage of a winter would be in a narrative of military campaigns, it would not need to bulk nearly so large in an account of the causes for those campaigns. Furthermore, this assumption yields 283 as the date of Metellus' defeat and the Roman victory at Vadimon, and 282 for the final defeat of the Gauls at Vetulonia—the same dates as are assigned to these battles in the annalistic tradition. This is surely the simplest and the best way of reconciling the two traditions on the chronology of the war.

V

Although the annalistic tradition has so far received preference on almost every point in dispute, there is one detail on which it is manifestly unacceptable: its assertion that Metellus was praetor at the time of his defeat. As we have already seen, this creates insoluble problems. Nor can it be argued that when Polybius terms Metellus *στρατηγός*, he is translating the Latin term *praetor* or means us to assume that. A brief consideration of the ways in which he uses the term will prove this conclusively.³

¹ Mommsen 369; Beloch 133 f.; Bung, *Fabius Pictor*, 169, n. 2; Walbank 189 f.; Werner, *Der Beginn*, 94 ff.; Errington, op. cit. 102 and 105; cf. Corbett 658. The only scholars to accept the idea of a two-year war are B. Niese (*Hermes* xiii [1878], 404) and Forni (210 f.), and they think the years in

question 285–284 and 284–283 respectively; neither view is convincing.

² It will be suggested below that the envoys continued their work into the winter of 284/283.

³ The subject has been discussed by D. Magie, *De Romanorum iuris publici sacrique*

When Polybius uses *στρατηγός* of a Roman, he may have in mind any one of a number of functions. By *στρατηγός αὐτοκράτωρ*—in Roman contexts—he invariably denotes a dictator (3. 86. 7; 87. 8),¹ and *στρατηγός ὕπατος* he applies twice to consuls (1. 52. 5; 6. 14. 2), once—in a quotation of an official document—to a proconsul (18. 46. 5). But *στρατηγός* alone is employed of a variety of functions, from a military commander pure and simple (1. 11. 3; 18. 28. 8)² to the appellation *imperator* (10. 40. 5), while the epitomator would have us believe that he used it on one occasion of a mere envoy (29. 27. 2). The vast bulk of the passages in which the word occurs, however, are concerned with consuls and proconsuls, praetors and propraeors. And yet his usage here is more consistent than appears previously to have been realized.

That consistency, to be sure, will not be found in the way he applies the term to consuls and proconsuls.³ When he talks of οἱ *στρατηγοί* or οἱ *στρατηγοὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων* in the plural, it is true, he far more often means consuls than proconsuls; there are 38 examples of the former, only seven of the latter, and a further three passages where either status would be appropriate.⁴ But nothing can be made of this, since we normally hear of but one proconsul in any one theatre of war at any one time. If confirmation is needed, it is easily found in the indiscriminate manner in which Polybius uses *στρατηγός* in the singular to denote a consul or proconsul; there are eighty-nine examples where the reference is to a consul, forty-eight where it is used of a proconsul, and one passage where the status meant is unclear.⁵

In dealing with praetors and propraeors, however, Polybius is demonstrably more careful about his terminology. Normally, he uses *στρατηγός* alone to refer to a praetor only when the man in question is active in Rome

uocabulis sollemnibus in Graecum sermonem conuersis, i (Diss., Halle, 1904), 6 ff., and by M. Holleaux, *Στρατηγός Ὑπατος* (1918), 45 ff.

¹ The second of these passages is reprinted as 6. 18. 9 by Büttner-Wobst (whose Teubner text I have used throughout). Polybius uses the phrase of non-Romans at 5. 45. 6 and 46. 6.

² If Polyb. 1. 57. 2 refers to a Roman (cf. Walbank 121), it may be included in this category. There are a further twelve passages in which he uses *στρατηγός* of military commanders without regard for their race (3. 48. 1; 9. 8. 13; 9. 15. 2; 10. 17. 2; 10. 32. 9 and 11; 11. 2. 5; 15. 15. 3; 18. 15. 9; 25. 1. 2; 34. 12. 12; frag. 63); and three fragments (95, 161, 235) are too brief to permit any decision on the *στρατηγοί* meant.

³ For such distinctions as Polybius makes between *στρατηγός* and *ὑπατος* see Holleaux, op. cit. 45–50.

⁴ *Consuls*: Book 1: 7. 12; 11. 2; 16. 1 and 5; 17. 6; 18. 2; 20. 4; 24. 10; 26. 11; 27. 12; 28. 12; 29. 8; 36. 10; 39. 8 and 15; 40. 1; 41. 2 and 3. Book 2: 34. 3 and 6. Book 3: 41. 2; 61. 8; 70. 7; 106. 1. Book 5: 108. 10. Book 6: 15. 6; 19. 7. Book 9: 6. 7. Book 10: 32. 4. Book 21: 32. 13. Book 23: 1. 8. Book 28: 13. 11; 16. 2. Book 29: 1. 1; 7. 4. Book 35: 4. 14.

Book 36: 3. 9; 6. 1. *Proconsuls*: Book 3: 99. 2; 106. 7. Book 9: 22. 3. Book 10: 6. 2; 36. 3. Book 30: 13. 1; 18. 1. *Uncertain*: Book 6: 15. 8; 15. 11; 39. 9.

⁵ *Consul*: Book 1: 11. 9; 21. 3 and 8; 25. 1 and 3; 31. 4 and 8; 34. 8, 10 and 12; 43. 1; 46. 8; 49. 3; 50. 1; 51. 11; 54. 1; 59. 8; 61. 8. Book 2: 26. 2; 27. 3; 31. 3; 33. 7; 34. 14. Book 3: 18. 3; 19. 12; 45. 3; 49. 1; 61. 4; 68. 10 and 13; 88. 8; 116. 13. Book 6: 27. 1; 33. 12 (bis); 35. 2 and 3; 39. 2 and 6; 40. 2; 41. 2, 6, 7 and 9. Book 8: 35. 9. Book 14: 3. 6. Book 18: 1. 8 and 12; 8. 4; 9. 7. Book 20: 9. 3 and 9; 10. 2 and 6. Book 21: 14. 7; 26. 1 and 5; 28. 18; 29. 8, 9, 11 and 14; 32. 8 and 10; 34. 5; 37. 1 and 2; 39. 1, 7 and 9. Book 27: 8. 1 and 6. Book 28: 12. 4; 13. 3. Book 29: 10. 4. Book 35: 2. 1; 3. 2, 4 and 6; 4. 5. Book 38: 7. 6 and 11; 8. 1, 4 and 8. Book 39: 3. 10. Fragments: 74; 110; 178. *Proconsul*: Book 3: 97. 2. Book 8: 35. 1; 37. 11. Book 9: 42. 1 and 5. Book 10: 4. 5; 13. 11; 15. 9; 17. 6 and 8; 18. 12; 19. 4; 34. 1. Book 11: 23. 8; 24. 6; 26. 7; 27. 4, 5 and 6; 30. 3. Book 14: 2. 11; 7. 1; 9. 1, 2 and 3. Book 15: 1. 9; 4. 4; 5. 4; 12. 4; 14. 1; 18. 8; 19. 1. Book 18: 27. 4; 36. 2. Book 21: 4. 1; 41. 1 and 6; 44. 1; 46. 1. Book 30: 9. 17; 13. 11; 25. 1. Book 38: 20. 1, 5, 7, 8 and 9. Book 39: 6. 1. *Uncertain*: 6. 15. 6.

(3. 85. 8; 6. 53. 7; 23. 2. 9; 30. 4. 4 and 6; 31. 23. 5; 35. 2. 5; 36. 4. 4 and 6). In one case he adds the adjective *ἐξαπέλεκτος*, perhaps because it would not otherwise have been clear from the context whether a consul or praetor was meant (33. 1. 5),¹ but as a general rule he adds a defining word or phrase to the title when the praetor or propraetor is operating outside Rome, and the chances of confusing him with a consul or proconsul are appreciably greater. Thus *ἐξαπέλεκτος* is again used once (3. 106. 6), but more frequently Polybius indicates the man's *provincia*, stating that he was assigned *ἐπὶ Λιλυβαίου* (7. 3. 1), or *ἐπὶ τῆς Σικελίας* (36. 5. 8), or *ἐπὶ τοῦ ναυτικοῦ* (28. 16. 6 of a praetor, 21. 44. 3 of a propraetor).²

There are only four passages in which Polybius seems to break the rules we have formulated, and in each case he warns the reader beforehand that he is doing precisely this. Firstly, at 3. 118. 6 he refers to L. Postumius Albinus (*pr.* 216) as *ὁ εἰς τὴν Γαλατίαν στρατηγὸς ἀποσταλείς*; his status has already been made clear twelve chapters earlier (3. 106. 6). Secondly, at 8. 7. 12 he uses the phrase *οἱ στρατηγοί* to describe M. Claudius Marcellus and Ap. Claudius Pulcher, respectively proconsul and propraetor in 213; Ap. Claudius Pulcher's inferior status has been defined beforehand.³ Thirdly, at 21. 10. 4 he terms L. Aemilius Regillus (*pr.* 190) *ὁ στρατηγὸς ὁ τῶν Ῥωμαίων*; but though this ought to denote a consul or proconsul, Polybius has provided the information proving this not to be the case only two chapters earlier (21. 8. 1). And finally, at 28. 17. 11 he applies the phrase *οἱ στρατηγοί* to Q. Marcius Philippus and C. Marcius Figulus, respectively consul and praetor in 169; yet again he has taken care to spell out the different standing of the two men beforehand (28. 16. 3 and 6).

It thus becomes clear that Polybius uses *στρατηγός* of a praetor without further definition only when the man in question is carrying out his functions within the city of Rome. When he wishes to refer to a praetor or propraetor in the field, he either attaches a qualifying adjective or phrase to the title, or else uses the term alone after warning his readers that he is following this procedure. So when, at 2. 19. 8, he terms Metellus Denter *στρατηγός* alone, without prior warning or further qualification, he cannot possibly have thought or meant his reader to think Metellus a praetor. He must have understood him to be a consul or proconsul. And since we have seen already that Metellus' defeat and death are best placed in 283, we have excellent reason to maintain that in this passage Polybius is talking about a proconsul.

There is certainly no constitutional objection to this explanation, since the Romans were employing prorogation regularly at this time.⁴ Nor—what is more important—is the annalistic tradition incompatible with such a view. As R. E. Smith has noted, Livy and the sources which follow or epitomize his work are generally careful in their use of the title *consul*, but they show no

¹ Since the praetor in question was A. Postumius Albinus, whom Polybius had no reason to admire (cf. G. A. Lehmann, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Glaubwürdigkeit des Polybios* [1967], 374 ff.), he may have had other motives for being precise about his title, e.g., to emphasize his inferior standing.

² This confirms the view (found in Broughton 241, n. 11) that Cn. Scipio was a *legatus pro praetore* in 218: Polybius 3. 76. 1

terms him *ὁ καταλειφθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν ἀδελφῶν Ποπλίου στρατηγὸς ἐπὶ τῆς ναυτικῆς δυνάμεως*.

³ Polyb. 7. 3. 1 (for 215) and 8. 3. 1 (for 214); no doubt Marcellus' superior status was also indicated in a passage now lost.

⁴ Cf. W. F. Jashemski, *The Origins and History of the Proconsular and the Propraetorian Imperium to 27 B.C.* (Diss., Chicago, 1950), 1 ff. and 100.

such precision about *praetor*, using it of men who in fact were praetors or propraeors or proconsuls.¹ The representatives of the annalistic tradition who style Metellus *praetor* are all writers following or epitomizing Livy: the *Periocha*, Orosius, and Saint Augustine.² In short, all the evidence points clearly to the conclusion that Metellus was a proconsul at the time of his death. And this enables us to solve the one remaining problem, how it was that Metellus rather than one of the consuls for 283 should have fought the Gauls at Arretium in that year. Since the town was placed under siege in 284 (as Polybius states), Metellus must have been given his command during his consulship. He failed to bring the Gauls to battle before the end of his year of office, however, no doubt because the time was taken up with the negotiations in which he attempted to persuade the tribesmen to return to their homes. In these circumstances, it was obviously more sensible to prorogue his command for 283 than to replace him with one of the new consuls at the start of the next campaigning season. And as a result P. Cornelius Dolabella received the command only after Metellus had been defeated and killed in the opening months of the new year.

VI

Since the arguments advanced here have necessarily been complicated, it is worth concluding the discussion with a summary of the events of the war in the sequence which the reconciliation of the two traditions establishes.

Neither the Etruscans nor the Gauls were thoroughly subdued at the end of the Third Samnite War, and this was one of the primary reasons for founding Sena Gallica in 290 or 289. In the years which followed, Vulci and Volsinii took the lead in fostering unrest against Rome, and, exploiting the Gauls' disquiet over Sena's establishment, they were able to conclude an alliance with the Boii and Senones in 285 or 284, the latter agreeing to serve as Etruscan mercenaries. In order to join forces with their Etruscan employers, however, the Gauls had to enter Etruria by way of Arretium, and to this town they laid siege in 284, not only because it hampered their progress southward, but also because such action would draw a Roman army to the north, away from towns like Vulci and Volsinii which preferred discretion to valour so long as there was any prospect of the legions' appearing in their immediate neighbourhood. For their part, the Romans were fully aware that the Etruscans were responsible for the Gauls' attacking Arretium. Consequently, although they sent an army under the consul L. Metellus Denter to relieve the town, they also instructed their commander to attempt negotiations with the enemy; if nothing else, this would limit the spread of the war beyond Etruria. The negotiations continued until at least the close of the campaigning season for 284 and probably into the winter of 284/283; but they had to be broken off when the Gauls, deciding for whatever reasons to fight, deliberately murdered the Roman envoys to make their point.

At the start of the new campaigning season, therefore, Metellus' command was prorogued, no doubt because it was simpler and more sensible to continue employing the man on the spot than it was to send out one of the new consuls

¹ R. E. Smith, *Service in the Post-Marian Roman Army* (1958), 11 f. This practice was noticed earlier by A. H. McDonald (*J.R.S.* xliii [1953], 143 f.), but he associated with it

theories of *Quellenforschung* which I cannot accept.

² Livy, *Epit.* 12; Oros. 3. 22. 13; Augustine, *C.D.* 3. 17.

for 283. So it was early in 283 that Metellus was defeated and killed with a large part of his force. This disaster, one of the worst suffered by the Romans since the Allia,¹ not only enabled the Gauls to advance unhampered into southern Etruria; it also triggered a general rising by the cities in that area. Hence the command was given now to the consul P. Cornelius Dolabella, and at Lake Vadimon (as we have seen, a mere forty or so miles north of Rome) he was able to inflict a crushing defeat on the combined force of Etruscans and Gauls and—in particular—to annihilate the Senonian contingent before the end of that same year. The Boii and the Etruscans nevertheless decided to fight on, and they had to be defeated again in 282, by the new consul Q. Aemilius Papus at Vetulonia. This ended the Gallic threat, but a further two years were required to deal with the Etruscans; thus Q. Marcius Philippus defeated their main force and celebrated a triumph *de Etrusceis* as consul in 281, and Ti. Coruncanus (*cos.* 280) spent his year of office reducing the last, most determined centres of resistance, Vulci and Volsinii.

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¹ So, rightly, De Sanctis, *Storia*, ii. 376; Beloch 454.