

in the expulsion of the tyrant kings and the establishment of a republic at the beginning of the sixth century before the christian era. It was this same spirit of independence which thrilled the bosoms of the oppressed plebs and shook the very foundations of the little republic in their struggle for political recognition. It was this spirit of independence which placed Roman classes upon a basis of mutual understanding from which they could readily ascend to a position of universal supremacy in the ancient world. It was this same ideal of independence among themselves, which, when approached, unfolded to the Roman his conception of national power.

The Roman ideal of power was freedom. Her lawgivers recognized the error of the earlier empires in basing their standard upon mere mechanical force. The standard which Rome set before herself was not mechanical but mental. Her ideal of power was not the working of a mighty engine through the force of physical appliances. It was the impelling strength of a human will. In this lies the secret magnetism of a Caesar, whose army, though composed of subjected foreigners, was so attached to himself that they would march to the end of the world in his service.

And it would even seem that those disastrous contentions which again frustrated Rome, and under the cliffs of Actium laid the republic at the mercy of imperial rule, arose not from the pursuit of a national ideal, but from the collision of personal ambitions. In this way do we account for that unfortunate surrender by Rome of her republican independence to a sole rule—that surrender which marks the turning point in Roman power—for no longer is heard the voice of the people, it being drowned in the revellings of an imperial court.

This Roman ideal of power grew with the advance of the republic to an unquenchable thirst for conquest. The Roman eye seemed centered upon one grand empire whose bounds should be limited only by the extent of the known world. How successfully this ideal was pursued is familiar to all students of Roman history. In this particular, at least, the Roman career stands unparalleled. From a little and oppressed village upon the banks of the Tiber, Rome grew to be the imperial mistress of the world—to hold in her own hand the sceptre of rule over the scores of petty nationalities which girdled her infancy; and to incorporate into her own person those nations which like Greece and Carthage for a time successfully rivalled her supremacy.

The Roman ideal of glory was conquest. It was that process of removing obstacles whereby her inherent sense of