

along the south side of the Forum. It was one of the oldest streets in Rome. In very early times an equestrian statue was erected there in honour of the virgin Clælia, one of the hostages delivered by Porserna, and who made her escape by swimming with her companions across the Tiber. It was no doubt a bold and dashing exploit but at the same time one that could not be justified, nor did the Romans attempt to defend it. On the contrary, they sent back again these runaway hostages. But Porserna, who was a generous enemy, and had evidently a dash of the chivalrie in his character, was pleased with the spirit of these young girls, and a treaty of peace was immediately arranged between the contending parties. This statue to Clælia seems to have been the first equestrian one in Rome. It had disappeared, we are told, before the age of Augustus.

In this same street (Via Sacra) lived no less a person than Julius Cæsar. He had formerly resided in the Suburra, which was between the Viminal and Quirinal hills; not by any means the most reputable part of Rome at that day; but this was in early life. After he had become Pontifex Maximus, which he had carried against the most influential candidates, and the whole weight of the Senate, he removed to what was probably an official residence (*Domus publica*) in this street. He was even now a remarkable man, though only just entering on that career of lofty ambition in which he was ultimately, as our great poet has said of him,

"To get the start of the majestic world,
And bear the palm alone."

You all know the height of power to which he attained—Perpetual Dictator—absolute monarch in short, in all but the name, and you know, too, his fall beneath the daggers of the conspirators; his alleged crime being, that he was the destroyer of the liberties of his country. Well, I am not about to defend him; but this, I may say, that Roman liberty had been pretty well trampled under foot by Cinna and Sylla and Marcus and others, among whom Pompey himself, may be included. The Republic was, in fact, worn out, and many in that day had not hesitated to declare that Monarchy was the only remedy for the desperate state of the commonwealth: a remark which perhaps is not to be confined to this ancient Republic alone. When Brutus and the rest had thus taken him out of the way, whom they thought fit to call a tyrant, they did not much mend the matter by letting in that bloody triumvirate of despotism which succeeded. And how little the Romans felt the loss of liberty, or desired or deserved to recover it, may be gathered from their slavish submission to successive tyrants—monsters of lust and infamy, with whose crimes History dare not pollute its pages. But let us recall the great Cæsar as he was when we introduced him as living in this street. He might then have been often seen passing along it to the Forum. We may picture him there. He is of a noble and commanding figure,* tall, graceful and well proportioned—and in this respect too without an equal in all Rome—of a fair complexion and rather full face, with dark piercing eyes, and now in vigorous health, though not always so: for he was sometimes subject to epileptic fits, but he strengthened his frame by active exercises, and undergoing in war the same hardships and fatigues as the common soldiers. With all this, he has the light careless air and affected manner of the young man about town. You may notice that he is very particular in his dress and person; neat to a degree. Look at his well cut toga—how nicely adjusted, and how gracefully thrown over the shoulders. Under it you see the white tunic, with its broad purple stripe,⁶ or *Clavus Lotus*; and where the sleeve terminates at the wrist, you may observe that it is bordered with

* *Forma omnium civium excellentissimâ.*—*Velleius Pater.* lib. 2, 41.