

first of Pompey and then of Cæsar. By his powerful eloquence, and no less powerful pen, he exerted his brilliant genius in support of the authority of the Senate and constitution. He appealed to the old Roman spirit, but the old Roman spirit had passed away. The senators—the only body capable of ruling—were too much engrossed in the acquisition, or in the preservation and enjoyment of their wealth, to act for the preservation of the commonwealth.

In Cicero's time, the Senate was not the body of Conscript Fathers it once had been. In the days of the elder Cato, it was the most august body of rulers the world has ever beheld; and many men of learning, virtue and honesty, were still to be found on its benches. Some, such as Cato, of the truest patriotism and highest character, still adorned its ranks, and added dignity to its consultations by their wisdom and eloquence; but the proscriptions of Marius and Cinna, and the wholesale slaughters of Sulla, had almost annihilated the old race. Fear for their wealth, their families, and their lives, paralyzed all. Sulla had filled the vacancies with new men, many of them ignorant—others, the brutal instruments of his cruelty. To awaken in the minds of such men an adequate sense of their duties and responsibilities; to inspire them with justice and patriotism; to elevate them to a proper appreciation of the greatness of the powers they were expected to exercise, as just and humane rulers of the civilized world, and to give them courage to support the constitution, was a task beyond the powers even of Cicero.

Cicero has said that "A commonwealth ought to be immortal, and forever to renew its youth." The question arises, could the Roman commonwealth have survived the disorders, internal weaknesses and destructive forces which worked for its dissolution? If wise counsels had prevailed in the Roman Senate, and the demands

of Cæsar had been granted, or his fair offers fairly met, the war between Cæsar and Pompey, or rather the parties they represented, might possibly have been averted; but the Senate had lost both its wisdom and its power. The two surviving triumvirs had arisen far above its authority. Nothing less could satisfy the ambition of the party represented by each, than universal rule.

Again, after the death of Pompey and the destruction of his party, was it possible, with Cæsar at the head of affairs, to restore a constitutional government? It seemed the desire of Cæsar to do so; but what he might have done, had he continued to live, can only be judged by his actions during life. After his assassination, the efforts made by Cicero to revive the patriotism of the leading men, and to restore the authority of the Senate, were worthy of a better result than the formation of a second triumvirate.

The death of the consuls, Hortius and Pansa, at the battle of Modena, gave a fatal blow to all his plans and labors. Had the consuls lived and retained the control of a powerful army, in the interest of the Senate and the constitution, it seems possible that the life of the republic might have been prolonged. The difficulty has always been to provide a sufficient reward for patriotism. The honor and glory of fighting and dying for one's country, sounds very well, but, with the mass of mankind, the glory of self-denial and self-sacrifice of this kind has not, and never has had, a sufficient influence to restrain those who have the means from acquiring the substantial rewards of victory and power. It may be true that "the life of a commonwealth ought to be immortal, and forever to renew its youth," and this would be the result if all the members of the commonwealth possessed an equal amount of patriotism.

But men are naturally and necessarily selfish, ambitious and grasping. The struggle for existence exists in