

Text selections from C. Julius Caesar, *Commentarii de bello Gallico* 1-7

BG translation: CJBH. BC translation: John Carter (both OUP).

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A: conquering the Helvetii and *oratio obliqua* (indirect speech) BG 1.1-30, 40

(1) The whole of Gaul is divided into three parts, one of which the Belgae inhabit, the Aquitani another, and the third a people who in their own language are called "Celts", but in ours, "Gauls." They all differ among themselves in respect of language, way of life, and laws. The River Garonne divides the Gauls from the Aquitani, and the Marne and Seine rivers separate them from the Belgae. Of these three, the Belgae are the bravest, for they are furthest away from the civilization and culture of the Province. Merchants very rarely travel to them or import such goods as make men's courage weak and womanish. They live, moreover, in close proximity to the Germans who inhabit the land across the Rhine, and they are continually at war with them. For this reason the Helvetii also exceed the other Gauls in bravery, because they are embroiled in almost daily battles with the Germans, either when they are warding them off from their own frontiers or when they themselves take the fight into enemy territory. The land which the Gauls are said to occupy begins at the River Rhône, and is bounded by the Garonne, the Ocean, and the territory of the Belgae. The part of it inhabited by the Sequani and Helvetii reaches to the Rhine: this land has one frontier to the north. The Belgae come from the most distant regions of Gaul: their lands extend to the lower part of the Rhine, facing north and east. Aquitania reaches from the Garonne to the Pyrenees and that part of the Ocean nearest Spain. It faces north-west.

(2) Among the Helvetii, by far the most aristocratic and the richest man was Orgetorix. During the consulship of Marcus Messalla and Marcus Pupius Piso, his desire to become king led him to start a conspiracy among the aristocracy, and he persuaded all the citizens to leave their land in full force. It would be perfectly simple, he said, to win power over the whole of Gaul, so superior were they in courage to all the rest. He persuaded them the more easily because the Helvetii are hemmed in on all sides by the natural terrain: on one side by the Rhine, which is very broad and deep and separates the land of the Helvetii from the Germans, on another by the heights of the Jura mountain range, which stands between them and the Sequani, and thirdly by Lake Lemannus and by the Rhône, which separates them from our Province. As a consequence their freedom of movement was constrained, and their ability to wage war against their neighbours was also impaired. As they were so fond of waging war, this made the Helvetii very resentful. In comparison with the size of their population, their glorious reputation in war, and their courage, they considered their territory too restricted (it was 220 miles from north to south, and 165 from east to west).

(3) Mindful of these considerations, and at Orgetorix's instigation, the Helvetii decided to get ready everything they thought was needed for a migration, buy up as many pack animals and waggons as they could, sow as much seed as possible to ensure a supply of corn on the journey, and to establish peaceful relations with neighbouring states. They considered that two years would suffice for these preparations, and passed a law establishing their decision to migrate in the third year.

Orgetorix was put in charge of organizing the migration, and of his own accord he undertook an embassy to the Gallic states. Whilst on his travels he persuaded one of the Sequani called Casticus, the son of Catamantaloedis (who had held the kingship over the Sequani for many years and been named a Friend of the Roman people by the Senate), to seize the kingship in his own state, which his father had previously held. At the same time he persuaded an Aeduan called Dumnorix to do likewise. Dumnorix's brother, Diviciacus, was at that time chief magistrate of the Aedui and a very popular ruler. Orgetorix also gave Dumnorix his daughter in marriage. He assured Dumnorix and Casticus that they would achieve their object with ease, especially since he would himself be seizing power among the Helvetii, who were beyond doubt the strongest of all the Gallic peoples; and he promised them that he would use his strength and his army to help them win their kingdoms. They were persuaded by his words, exchanged guarantees, and swore an oath, hoping that, once they had become kings, through these three very powerful and determined peoples they could seize control of all Gaul.

(4) News of this plot came to the Helvetii through informers. In accordance with custom, they made Orgetorix plead his defence in chains. If found guilty, the law required that he be burned alive. On the day appointed for the trial Orgetorix summoned to the court a whole gang of dependants from all directions, about 10,000 in number; and he assembled likewise all his many retainers and debtors. By their help he escaped trial. While the citizens, angry at his escape, were trying to pursue the case by force of arms, and the magistrates were mustering a crowd of men from the surrounding countryside, Orgetorix died—and not without the suspicion, according to the Helvetii, that it was by his own hand.

(5) After his death, the Helvetii none the less tried to put their previous decision into action by emigrating from their own land. As soon as they considered that they were ready for the enterprise, they set fire to all their own towns (about twelve in number) and to about 400 villages, as well as all their private buildings. All the corn, except what they were to carry with them, they reduced to ashes—so once the hope of returning home was removed they would be the more ready to undergo dangers of all kinds. They ordered each man to bring from his home three months' supply of corn ready-ground for himself. They persuaded the Raurici, the Tulingi, and the Latovici (who were their neighbours) to adopt the same plan: once all their towns and villages were burned down too they set out together. The Helvetii also welcomed the Boii (who had lived across the Rhine and had crossed into the territory of Noricum and besieged the town of Noreia) and made alliance with them.

(6) There were only two possible routes for the departure from their home. One went through the land of the Sequani, between the Jura mountain range and the Rhône. It was narrow and difficult, so that the waggons could hardly pass in single file, and the high mountain which loomed over it meant that a handful of men could easily block the pass. The other, which went through our

Province, was far quicker and easier because the Rhône, which flows between the lands of the Helvetii and those of the Allobroges (who had recently been pacified), can be forded at several points. The furthest town of the Allobroges, on the border with the Helvetii, is Genava. A bridge connects the town with the Helvetii, who reckoned they could either persuade the Allobroges to allow them a passage through their land (for they did not as yet appear to be reconciled to the Roman people), or force them to do so. Once everything was ready for the migration the Helvetii fixed a date by which everyone was to assemble by the bank of the Rhône. The date was 28 March, in the consulship of Lucius Piso and Aulus Gabinius.

(7) When news came to Caesar that the Helvetii were trying to journey through our Province he hurried his departure from Rome, and by the longest forced marches possible he made for Transalpine Gaul and reached Genava. He ordered the whole Province to supply as many men as possible (for in Transalpine Gaul there was only one legion), and gave orders for the bridge at Genava to be destroyed. When the Helvetii heard of his arrival they sent their most aristocratic citizens to him as envoys, headed by Nanneius and Verocloetius, to explain their intention of marching, without doing any harm, through the Province—for they had no other route. They asked his agreement to their action. Caesar remembered how the consul Lucius Cassius had been killed and his army beaten by the Helvetii and sent under the yoke, and decided to refuse. Nor did he believe that these men, hostile as they were, would refrain from doing harm and damage if allowed to march through the Province. Even so, he told the envoys that he would take a while to consider, and that they should if they so wished return on 13 April. Thus a space of time would elapse in which the soldiers he had ordered could muster.

(8) Meanwhile, he used the legion he had with him and the soldiers who had assembled from the Province to construct a sixteen-foot rampart and a ditch, from Lake Lemannus (which flows into the Rhône) to the Jura mountains (which form the border between the Sequani and the Helvetii), a distance of over seventeen miles. When the work was finished he allocated garrisons and fortified outposts: if the Helvetii tried to cross without permission, he could then restrain them more easily. When the day which he had agreed with the envoys came, and they returned to him, he said that in accordance with the practice and precedent of the Roman people he was unable to grant anyone access through the Province, and he made it clear that he would stop them if they tried to use force. Their hopes were crushed: some of the Helvetii lashed boats together and made a number of rafts, others tried to break across the fording-places of the Rhône where the river was at its shallowest, partly in the daytime, but mostly at night. They abandoned these efforts, forced back by the defence-works, the attacks of the soldiers, and by missiles.

(9) Only one way remained, through the land of the Sequani. Because it was so narrow, they could not take this route without the Sequani's consent. When the Helvetii themselves failed to win the Sequani's agreement they sent envoys to Dumnorix the Aeduan, hoping that he could intercede and sway the Sequani.

Because of his popularity and open-handed generosity, Dumnorix was extremely powerful among the Sequani. He was also a friend to the Helvetii, for it was from them that he had taken a wife—Orgetorix's daughter. Spurred on by his eagerness to be king, Dumnorix supported revolution. He also wanted, by services rendered, to put as many states as possible under an obligation to him. So he undertook the negotiations and asked the Sequani to let the Helvetii go through their territory: and he arranged for them to exchange hostages. The Sequani pledged themselves not to hinder the

Helvetii on their journey, while the Helvetii promised not to do any harm or damage as they were passing through.

(10) News came to Caesar that the Helvetii planned to march through the lands of the Sequani and Aedui into the territory of the Santones, which is not far from that of the Tolosates—a state actually in the Province. If they succeeded, he knew that it would pose a serious threat to the Province to have this warlike nation, which was hostile to the Roman people, so close to such important and completely unprotected corn-producing areas. So he put his legate Titus Labienus in charge of the defence-works which he had constructed, and set out by forced marches for Italy, where he enlisted two legions, and mobilized three more which had been wintering near Aquileia. He then hastened back by the shortest route over the Alps into Transalpine Gaul with these five legions. There the Ceutrones, the Graioceli, and the Caturiges had taken up position on some high ground and tried to hinder the army's march. They were beaten in a series of encounters, after which in seven days he marched from Ocelum (the most distant town of Cisalpine Gaul) into the land of the Vocontii in the Province. From there he led his army into the land of the Allobroges, and from there to that of the Segusiavi. These are the nearest peoples to the Rhône outside the Province.

(11) The Helvetii had already brought their forces through the narrow pass and the land of the Sequani, and had reached the country of the Aedui, which they were pillaging. When the Aedui were unable to protect either themselves or their possessions from the Helvetii they sent envoys to Caesar to ask for help. They had always behaved well, they said, towards the Roman people, so that they hardly deserved to have their land laid waste, their children enslaved, and their towns stormed almost under the gaze of our army. At the same time the Aedui Ambarri, who were relations and kinsmen of the Aedui, informed Caesar that their land too was being laid waste, and that they were having difficulty in protecting their towns from enemy attack. Likewise the Allobroges, who had dwellings and property across the Rhône, fled to Caesar, claiming that everything but their land had been taken from them. For these reasons Caesar decided not to wait until all the property of Rome's allies was destroyed and the Helvetii had reached the territory of the Santones.

(12) There is a river called the Saône, which flows through the lands of the Aedui and Sequani into the Rhône so very slowly that it is impossible to tell just by looking in which direction it is flowing. The Helvetii crossed it by lashing rafts and boats together. When Caesar learned from his scouts that the Helvetii had brought three-quarters of their forces across, and that about a quarter was left on the near bank of the Saône, during the third watch he set out from camp with three legions and made for that section of their forces which had not yet crossed. He attacked when they were encumbered with baggage and off guard, and killed a great number: the rest fled and hid in nearby woods. This section consisted of men known as "Tigurini" after their district; the whole state of the Helvetii is divided into four such districts. In the time of our fathers the Tigurini had migrated on their own; they had killed the consul Lucius Cassius and sent his army under the yoke. So whether by chance or by the gods' design, that section of the Helvetian state which had once inflicted an infamous defeat on the Roman people was also the first to pay the penalty. In doing so, Caesar avenged not only a national but also a private injury: for the grandfather of his father-in-law Lucius Piso was a legate (also called Lucius Piso) killed by the Tigurini in the same battle as Cassius.

(13) After the battle he had a bridge built over the Saône and led his army across it to pursue the Helvetii. They were thrown into confusion by his unexpected arrival, and when they learned that he had taken only a day to cross the river, a task which had taken them twenty days—and then with extreme difficulty—they sent envoys to him. The embassy was headed by Divico, who had led the Helvetii in the war against Cassius.

He spoke with Caesar to this effect: if the Roman people made peace with the Helvetii they would go to whatever region Caesar decided, and stay wherever he wished them to remain. If, however, he continued to pursue them with war, he should remember both the former misfortunes of the Roman people and the ancient bravery of the Helvetii. He had attacked a single section of their people unexpectedly, at a time when those who had crossed the river could not come to the assistance of their fellows, and so for this reason he ought not to attribute too much to his own bravery, nor should he treat them with contempt. The Helvetii had learned from their fathers and their forefathers to fight with courage rather than cunning or treachery, and so Caesar should not allow the place where they were holding talks to win fame or future renown because of a disaster for the Roman people and the massacre of an army.

(14) Caesar replied to the envoys as follows: since he remembered those past events which the envoys had mentioned, he was therefore in no doubt—and indeed he was all the more indignant because that previous defeat had happened through no fault of the Roman people. If its army had at that time been aware of having committed some wrongdoing it would have been a simple matter to take precautions, but the Roman army had been taken unawares precisely because it did not think it had done anything which gave it cause to be afraid, and so considered it inappropriate to be anxious without good reason. Even if he were willing to forget this old injury, surely it was impossible to dismiss the remembrance of recent outrages—that against his will they had tried to march through the Province by force, and that the Aedui, the Ambarri, the Allobroges had all been attacked? As for their haughty boasting about their own victory, and their marvelling that their outrages had gone so long unpunished, these pointed the same way. For the immortal gods usually allow those men they wish to punish for their crimes a time of success and a period of impunity, so that when a change of fortune comes they are all the more grieved by it. This being so, he would none the less still make peace with them if they would surrender hostages to prove to him their willingness to fulfil their promises, and if they would make reparation to the Aedui for the harm done to them and their allies, and likewise to the Allobroges.

Divico replied that, from the time of their ancestors, the Helvetii were more accustomed to receive hostages than to surrender them—and that the Roman people could witness to the fact. With this reply he departed.

(15) The following day the Helvetii struck camp and moved out of the area. So did Caesar, who sent all his cavalry ahead—4,000 in number, recruited from all over the Province, and from the Aedui and their allies—to see where the enemy was marching. But they pursued the rearguard too eagerly, and joined battle with the Helvetii's cavalry on unfavourable ground. A few of our men were killed. The Helvetii were elated by the engagement, because they had routed such a large force of cavalry with only 500 horse. So they began at times to make a bolder stand and, with their rearguard, to provoke our men to fight. Caesar restrained his men from fighting, content for the time being to prevent the enemy from pillaging, foraging, and plundering. In this way they

marched for about a fortnight, so that no more than four or five miles lay between the enemy rearguard and our vanguard.

(16) Meanwhile Caesar was daily demanding from the Aedui the corn which had been promised by their government. For because of the cold (Gaul, as has already been said, lies to the north), not only was the corn in the fields not yet ripe, but there was not even a sufficient supply of fodder. He was unable to use the corn which he had transported up the Saône by boat, because the Helvetii had changed the direction of their march away from the river, and he did not want to lose contact with them. The Aedui were fobbing him off from one day to the next: their corn was being collected, they said, it was being transported, it was at hand.

When he realized that he was being put off too long, and that the time had arrived when the corn ought to be distributed to the men, he summoned the leaders of the Aedui. Many of them were present in camp, including Diviciacus and Liscus, who held the highest magistracy of the Aedui, which they call "Vergobret." The Vergobret is annually appointed, and has power of life and death over the citizens. Caesar reproached them severely for failing to offer assistance at such a pressing time, with the enemy so close at hand, when corn could neither be bought nor taken from the fields; and he complained with particular vehemence of having been abandoned, because it was in response to the pleas of a large number of them that he had undertaken this war in the first place.

(17) Then at last Liscus was encouraged by Caesar's speech to reveal what he had previously concealed. There were certain men, he explained, who had particularly strong influence over the people, and who, in the private sphere, had more power than the magistrates. By their treacherous and wicked statements these men were deterring the people from collecting the corn which they were obliged to provide. It was better, they thought, to submit to Gallic than to Roman rule, if at present they could not win supreme control of Gaul; nor did they doubt that the Romans, if they beat the Helvetii, would then snatch liberty from the Aedui, together with the rest of Gaul. Liscus went on to say that they could not prevent these same men from relaying our plans, and what was going on in the camp here, to the enemy. Worse still, said Liscus, he knew that because he had been forced to report this urgent matter to Caesar he had put himself in great danger, and it was for this reason that he had kept silent as long as possible.

(18) Caesar felt that Liscus's words pointed to Dumnorix, Diviciacus's brother. Because, however, he was unwilling to have the matter discussed in public, he quickly dismissed the meeting, but kept Liscus back. When they were alone he questioned him about what he had said at the meeting. Liscus answered more frankly and confidently.

Caesar questioned other men in secret about the same matter. He found that it was true. Dumnorix was the man: highly audacious, extremely influential with the people—thanks to his open-handed generosity—and ambitious for revolution. For several years he had purchased, at a low price, the collection rights on river tolls and all the Aedui's other taxes—not least because not a single person dared to bid against him. In this way he had increased his own property and obtained vast resources for the purposes of bribery. He maintained a large cavalry force at his own expense, which he always kept at his side. He had influence even among neighbouring states, as well as among the Aedui. To consolidate this powerful position he had given his mother in marriage to a powerful aristocrat of the Bituriges; he himself had taken a wife from among the Helvetii, and he used his maternal half-sister and other female relations to make marriage alliances with other states.

Because of this connection he was a strong supporter of the Helvetii, but he also hated Caesar and the Romans on his own account because their coming had weakened his own power, while his brother Diviciacus had been restored to his old place of influence and respect. If something were to happen to the Romans, he entertained the highest hopes of winning the Aeduan kingship through the Helvetii; but the power of the Roman people made him despair not only of becoming king, but even of holding on to what influence he already possessed.

As to the unsuccessful cavalry battle which had taken place a few days previously, Caesar learned from these interrogations that the flight had been started by Dumnorix and his cavalry contingent (for Dumnorix was in command of the cavalry force sent by the Aedui to assist Caesar). The rest of the cavalry had been thrown into panic by their flight.

(19) All this he knew. But then incontrovertible proof was added to his suspicions: that Dumnorix had led the Helvetii through the land of the Sequani, that he had arranged for the exchange of hostages between the two, that he had done all this not only without the permission of Caesar or the Aedui, but even without the knowledge of either, and that he was being accused by a magistrate of the Aedui. Because of all this, Caesar thought he had good cause either for punishing Dumnorix himself, or for ordering the Aedui to punish him. One consideration, however, acted as a counter to all these. He was familiar with the devotion of Dumnorix's brother Diviciacus to the Roman people, his great goodwill towards Caesar, his outstanding loyalty, his justice, his moderation: Caesar was afraid of upsetting Diviciacus by punishing Dumnorix.

And so, before he attempted to resolve the matter, he gave orders for Diviciacus to be summoned to him. The regular interpreters were sent away, and he spoke with him through Gaius Valerius Procillus, a leader in the Province of Gaul and a close friend of Caesar's, in whom he placed the highest confidence in all matters. At the same time Caesar reminded Diviciacus what had been said about Dumnorix in his presence at the Gallic assembly, and revealed what each man in turn had told him about Dumnorix. Caesar asked Diviciacus, indeed he urged him, not to be offended, but rather, when the matter was investigated, either to judge Dumnorix himself or to order the state to do so.

(20) Diviciacus embraced Caesar in tears, and began to plead with him not to judge harshly of his brother. He was aware that it was all true, and no one was more grieved by it than he. There was a time when he himself had considerable influence among the Aedui and in the rest of Gaul, while his brother Dumnorix, being so young, had very little, and had risen by his help. This same brother was now using his strength and power not only to lessen Diviciacus's influence but almost to destroy him. Even so, he felt the influence of brotherly affection and of public opinion. For if Dumnorix were punished by Caesar while he, Diviciacus, continued to hold a position of favour with him, no one would believe that the punishment was meted out against his wishes—and as a result, the loyal of all Gaul would turn against him.

As he pleaded with Caesar at length, he wept. But Caesar took him by the hand, comforted him, and told him to say no more, making it clear that his influence was valuable, and that because of his goodwill and his entreaties Caesar would overlook both the harm done to the Republic and his own sense of indignation. Then, in Diviciacus's presence, Caesar summoned Dumnorix and explained the grounds for complaint against him, setting out his own view, and the state's reasons for protest. He warned Dumnorix to avoid any taint of suspicion in future, and ended by saying that he was

overlooking the past for Diviciacus's sake. Then, to make sure he knew what Dumnorix was doing, and with whom he spoke, Caesar put him under guard.

(21) That same day Caesar's scouts told him that the enemy was encamped in the foothills just over seven miles from the Roman camp. He sent men to reconnoitre the hill and find out what sort of ascent there was on the other side of it. They reported back that it was an easy climb. During the third watch Caesar ordered Titus Labienus, his second-in-command, to take two legions, follow those men who had spied out the way, and climb to the summit; and he explained his plan. Then, during the last watch of the night Caesar marched against the enemy along the same route that they had taken, sending all the cavalry on ahead. Publius Considius, who was considered a man of wide military skill and experience, and who had served in the armies of Lucius Sulla and later Marcus Crassus, was sent on ahead with the scouts.

(22) By dawn Labienus had taken possession of the summit. Caesar was little more than a mile from the enemy camp; and as he later learned from prisoners, the enemy had not been aware of his own arrival, or that of Labienus either. But Considius galloped up to him and reported that the summit which Caesar had expected Labienus to be occupying was in enemy hands; also that he had recognized them by their Gallic weapons and emblems. So Caesar led his own men instead to a nearby hill and arranged his forces for battle. He had instructed Labienus not to give battle unless his own troops appeared near the enemy camp, so that the attack upon the enemy would come from all sides at once; and so, once he was in control of the summit, Labienus prepared to wait for our men, and avoided engaging. Only late in the day did Caesar at last discover from his scouts that the hill was being held by his own men and that the Helvetii had moved camp—and that Considius had been so terrified that he had reported seeing what he had not in fact seen at all. The rest of that day Caesar followed the enemy at his usual distance, and pitched his camp about three miles from theirs.

(23) Next day, as only two more days remained before it was time to distribute the army's corn rations, and as he was no more than sixteen-and-a-half miles from Bibracte (by far the greatest and wealthiest of the Aeduan towns), he thought it time to make provision for the corn supply. So he shifted his march away from the Helvetii and set out for Bibracte. The enemy learned of this from some runaway slaves belonging to Lucius Aemilius, a squadron-leader in charge of Caesar's Gallic cavalry. Either because they thought the Romans were fleeing in fear from them (which seemed all the more likely, as on the previous day they had not engaged despite seizing a vantage-point), or because they were sure they could cut them off from their corn supply, the Helvetii changed plan, altered their course, and began to pursue and harass our rearguard.

(24) When Caesar saw this he withdrew his forces to the nearest hill, and sent the cavalry to face the enemy assault. Meanwhile he drew up a triple battle line, consisting of the four veteran legions, half-way up the hill. On top of the height he positioned the two legions he had recently recruited in Nearer Gaul and all the auxiliaries, and filled the whole hill with men. Meanwhile, he gave orders for the soldiers' packs to be piled together in one place, and for those who were positioned in line higher up to stand guard there. The Helvetii followed with all their waggons, and piled up their baggage in a single place. Then, in a compact line they repulsed our cavalry, formed a phalanx, and moved towards our front line.

(25) Caesar first sent away his own horse out of sight, then did the same with everyone else's, to make the danger equal for everyone and to eliminate any opportunity for flight; then he encouraged his men and joined battle. The soldiers who were posted higher up threw their javelins and easily shattered the enemy phalanx. Once it was broken, they drew their swords and charged the enemy. The Gauls were severely hindered in the battle by the fact that many of their shields had been pierced and fastened together by the first javelin-cast: the iron became bent, and they could not pull it out—nor could they fight properly with the left hand restricted. So, after persistently shaking their left arm, many of them preferred to throw their shields away and fight unprotected. In the end they were exhausted by their wounds and began to retreat, moving back to a hill which was less than a mile away. They gained it; our men were approaching, as the Boii and Tulingi, who brought up the enemy rear with some 15,000 men, acted as a rearguard. They marched right up to our men, attacked them on their exposed side, and surrounded them. When the Helvetii, who had retreated to the mountain, saw this, they went back on the offensive and began the battle afresh. The Romans wheeled and advanced in two divisions: the first and second lines facing the enemy forces which had already been defeated and driven off, the third resisting this fresh attack.

(26) The battle continued long and fierce on both fronts. When the Gauls could no longer sustain our assault, the Helvetii retreated once more to the mountain, and the Boii and Tulingi headed for their baggage and waggons. Throughout the whole battle, moreover, despite the fact that it lasted from the seventh hour until evening, no one could see an enemy soldier turned in flight. Beside the baggage the fight continued far into the night, for they had formed a rampart from the waggons, and from this vantage-point began to throw missiles at our men as they advanced. Down between the waggons and wheels some were throwing pikes and javelins, and wounding our men. After a protracted struggle our men won possession of the baggage and the camp. There the daughter of Orgetorix was taken captive, and one of his sons. About 130,000 of the Helvetii survived this battle, and marched all through that night. They did not break their journey to rest even once, and three days later reached the territory of the Lingones. Because of the legionaries' wounds and the need to bury the dead, our men had been delayed for a period of three days and had not been able to pursue them. Caesar sent messengers with a letter to the Lingones, warning them not to help the Helvetii by providing food or other necessaries: if anyone did offer assistance he would treat them as enemies, just like the Helvetii. After the three-day interval he began the pursuit with all his forces.

(27) The Helvetii were compelled by their total lack of provisions to send envoys to Caesar to discuss surrender. When they met him as he was on the march they threw themselves at his feet, weeping and humbly begging him for peace. He gave orders that the Helvetii should remain where they were and await his arrival, and they obeyed him.

When Caesar arrived he demanded hostages, weapons, and the slaves who had deserted to the Helvetii. While these were being collected and brought together night intervened, and about 6,000 men of the village known as Verbigene set out at dusk from the Helvetii's camp and made for the Rhine and the land of the Germans. Perhaps they were full of fear at being made to hand over their weapons, or perhaps they were encouraged by the hope of safety, thinking that in such a huge crowd of prisoners their flight would be concealed or would even escape notice altogether.

(28) After confirming his suspicion that this escape was taking place, Caesar ordered the peoples through whose territory they were escaping to track them down and bring them back—if they

wished to clear themselves of suspicion. When they were returned he treated them as enemies; as for all the rest, he accepted their surrender after the hostages, weapons, and deserters had been handed over. He ordered the Helvetii, Tulingi, and Latovici to return to the lands from which they had come, and because their crops were all ruined and they had no means of sustenance in their homeland, he commanded the Allobroges to provide them with corn, and told the Helvetii to rebuild the towns and villages which they had burned. His particular reason for this order was that he was reluctant for them to leave the place they had abandoned still unoccupied, in case the Germans who lived across the Rhine crossed out of their own land into that of the Helvetii, because of the fertility of the soil, and settled on the borders of the Province of Gaul and of the Allobroges. At the Aedui's request, he allowed the Boii, who were famous for their great bravery, to settle in Aeduan territory. The Aedui gave farmland to them, and later admitted them to equal rights and freedom.

(29) Tablets were found in the Helvetii's camp, written in Greek characters, and were taken to Caesar. They contained a complete record under several headings—the numbers which had set out from the homeland, those capable of bearing arms, and a separate list of the boys, the old men, and the women. The sum total of all these categories came to 263,000 of the Helvetii: of the Tulingi there were 36,000, of the Latovici 14,000, of the Raurici 23,000, and of the Boii 32,000. About 92,000 of these were capable of bearing arms. The total number was about 368,000. When a census was taken of those who returned home, in accordance with Caesar's orders, the number came to 110,000.

(30) At the end of the war with the Helvetii the leaders of almost all the Gallic states came as envoys to congratulate Caesar. They were aware, they said, that Caesar's aim had been to exact punishment in return for outrages long ago inflicted on the Roman people by the Helvetii. None the less, the envoys went on, the outcome was as much to Gaul's advantage as to the Roman people's, for the Helvetii had left their homes (where they enjoyed great prosperity) with the express intention of making war upon all Gaul, and snatching dominion. From an abundance of sites the Helvetii had intended to select for their home the area which they adjudged the most conveniently situated and fertile, and to make the other states tributary. The envoys requested Caesar's permission to announce a meeting of all Gaul for a particular date, for there were certain requests they wished to make of him, once they had come to an agreement among themselves. Their request was granted. They fixed the date of the meeting, and swore an oath that none but those men designated by common agreement should divulge the proceedings.
.....

(40) As soon as Caesar was aware of the situation he called a council, ordered centurions of all ranks to attend, and severely reprimanded them, primarily for thinking that it was their business to inquire or think about either the direction or the strategy of the march. During his consulship, Caesar went on, Ariovistus had eagerly sought friendly relations with the Roman people. Why would anyone now conclude that he was going to abandon his obligations rashly? In fact, he was convinced that once Ariovistus understood the terms he was offering, and considered the fairness of the conditions, he would not spurn the favour either of Caesar or of the Roman people. And even if Ariovistus did start a war, Caesar continued, spurred on by some mad fury, what was there to fear even then? Why did they despair of their own courage, or of his anxious concern for their well-being? The danger posed by this enemy had already been experienced in the time of our fathers, when the Cimbri and Teutoni were expelled by Gaius Marius. On that occasion it was clear that the army had deserved as much credit as its commander. The same danger had also been

experienced more recently during the slave revolt in Italy. In this instance the slaves were helped to some degree by the experience and training which they had received from us.

From all this, said Caesar, they could see how crucial was firmness of purpose. After all, for a time they had feared the slaves, who were then without weapons: yet later they had defeated those same slaves after they were armed and had won battles. Finally, the Germans were the same people who had often clashed with the Helvetii—and the Helvetii had frequently beaten them, not only within their own borders but also in Germany itself—and yet the Helvetii had proved no match for our army.

Perhaps, he went on, some of those present were disturbed by the defeat and flight of the Gauls. But if they took the trouble to inquire they would discover that the Gauls had been worn down by the long duration of the campaign, before Ariovistus (who had for many months been skulking in his camp in the marshes, giving them no chance to attack him) suddenly launched his assault upon them, when the Gauls had given up hope of battle and had already dispersed. He had won, then, more by tactical planning than by conspicuous bravery. And even if there was a place for these tactics when faced with barbarians of no military skill, not even Ariovistus would pin his hopes on the success of such tactics as a means of beating our army.

As for those who shifted the blame for their own fear on to a pretended anxiety about corn supplies or the narrowness of the route, they were doing so out of presumption. After all, they apparently either doubted their commander's commitment or they were dictating it to Caesar. Yet his attention was taken up with all these things: the Sequani, the Leuci, and the Lingones were supplying corn, and the crop was already ripe in the fields—as for the route of their march, in a short while they would themselves decide it. On the subject of their declared intention not to follow orders and raise the standards, it did not trouble him at all. He was well aware that whenever an army had disobeyed its commander in the past, it was either because fortune had deserted him, as proven by his failure on the field, or because he had been discovered in some crime and found guilty of rapacity. That he, Caesar, was himself guilty of no crime was evident from the whole course of his life: that he was a man who enjoyed good fortune was evident from his campaign against the Helvetii.

And so, Caesar concluded, he would do at once what he had intended to put off till a later date. The very next night, during the fourth watch, they would strike camp. Then he would know as soon as possible whether their sense of shame and duty was stronger than their fear. Moreover, even if no one at all followed him, then he would still set out, with only the Tenth legion, for he had no doubts about *its* loyalty. Indeed, it would in future serve as his bodyguard. (Caesar had treated this legion with special favour, and had the fullest confidence in its courage.)

B: Britain; *oratio recta* (direct speech) and positive characterisation: BG 4.23-37

(23) These matters settled, he took advantage of a spell of good weather for sailing and weighed anchor around the third watch. He ordered the cavalry to advance to the farther port, embark there, and follow him. They were rather late in carrying out the order, but he reached Britain with the first ships at around the fourth hour; there he spied the enemy forces, fully armed and drawn up all

along the cliffs. Such was the geography of this place, and so steep the cliffs which bounded the sea, that it was possible for missiles cast from the heights to find their target on the shore. He judged this place wholly unsuitable for disembarkation, so waited at anchor until the rest of the fleet arrived at the ninth hour. Meanwhile he summoned his legates and military tribunes, and set out what he had learned from Volusenus and what he wanted done. He also warned them that military procedure, and especially naval operations (which tend to be subject to instantaneous and irregular changes), required them to carry out all their tasks at a nod and at the right moment. After dismissing them and taking advantage of a favourable wind and tide together, he gave the signal and weighed anchor. He sailed about six-and-a-half miles further on and landed on a flat and open shore.

(24) The barbarians, however, had grasped the Romans' strategy and sent their cavalry on ahead, and their charioteers (it is their usual custom to use chariots in battle). They followed on with the rest of their forces and prevented our men from disembarking. This led to extreme difficulties, because the ships were too large to be beached except in deep water, while the soldiers, ignorant of the land, their hands full, weighed down by the size and weight of their weapons, at one and the same time had to jump down from the ships, find their feet in the surf, and fight the enemy. The Britons, on the other hand, were either on dry ground or in shallow water, their limbs unencumbered, the ground very familiar. They cast missiles boldly and spurred on their horses, which were well used to such work. This led to panic among our men, who were wholly unaccustomed to this style of fighting, and thus did not display the same eagerness and enthusiasm as they habitually did in infantry engagements.

(25) When Caesar observed this he gave orders for the warships, which were of a type less familiar to the barbarians and more manoeuvrable at need, to be moved a short distance from the transport vessels, rowed at speed, and halted on the enemy's exposed flank. From there the enemy could be repelled and driven off with slings, arrows, and artillery machines. This act was of great assistance to our men. The barbarians were thrown into a panic by the appearance of the ships, the movement of the oars, and the unfamiliar machines. They halted and then retreated a short distance. Meanwhile our soldiers were hesitating, chiefly because the sea was so deep; then the man who carried the Eagle of the Tenth legion appealed to the gods to see that his action turned out well for the legion, and said: "Jump down, soldiers, unless you want to betray our Eagle to the enemy—I at least shall have done my duty to the Republic and to my commander." He cried these words in a loud voice, then flung himself away from the ship and began to carry the Eagle towards the enemy. Then our men urged each other to prevent such a disgrace and all together jumped down from the ship. When the men who were on the closest nearby ships saw them do this, they followed them and drew close to the enemy.

(26) Both sides fought fiercely. None the less, our men could not keep ranks or get a firm foothold, neither were they able to follow the standards; rather, different men from different ships grouped round whatever standard they ran up against, and they were in great confusion. The enemy, however, knew all the shallows, so when they caught sight from the shore of some of our men disembarking one by one, they spurred their horses on and attacked while our men were still at a disadvantage, their many surrounding our few. Some began throwing weapons against a whole group of our men on their exposed side. When Caesar noticed this he gave orders for the boats of the warships and likewise the scout ships to be filled with soldiers. Wherever he saw men struggling, there he dispatched assistance. As soon as our men stood on dry ground, closely

followed by all their comrades, they charged the enemy and routed them; but they could not pursue them very far, because the cavalry had failed to hold its course and reach the island. This was the one action in which Caesar's previous good fortune was found lacking.

(27) The enemy had been beaten in battle. As soon as they recovered from the rout they at once sent envoys to Caesar to discuss peace terms. They promised to provide hostages and to do whatever he told them. Together with these envoys there came Commius of the Atrebates—I have already described how Caesar sent him on ahead to Britain. When he disembarked and delivered Caesar's demands to them in the role of envoy they had arrested him and cast him into chains, but when the battle was ended they sent him back. In seeking peace, they blamed the common crowd for what had taken place and begged him to pardon their lack of judgement. Caesar complained that although of their own accord they had sent envoys to the Gallic mainland to seek peace, they had then started a war with no reason; then he declared a pardon for their lack of judgement and demanded hostages. A number of these were surrendered at once, others were summoned from outlying areas and, they claimed, would be handed over in a few days' time. Meanwhile they ordered their men to return to their lands, and their leaders began to assemble from all directions and commit themselves and their states to Caesar.

(28) These acts established the peace. Four days after the arrival in Britain the eighteen ships which had transported the cavalry (and which were mentioned above) set sail with a gentle breeze and left their more distant port. When they were drawing near to Britain and were spied from the camp, suddenly a storm arose which was so fierce that not one of the ships could hold her course. Some were carried back to the place from which they had set out. Others, in terrible danger, were swept further down the island's coast, in a westerly direction. They cast anchor but began to fill with seawater, and were thus forced to sail out to sea during a stormy night and make for the Gallic mainland.

(29) As it happened there was a full moon that night. On this day the Ocean tides are usually at their highest—a fact of which our men were unaware. So at one and the same time the tide had flooded the warships by which Caesar had had the army ferried across, and which he had beached, and the storm began to inflict damage on the transport vessels, which were fast at anchor. Nor did our men get any chance to manœuvre them or bring them assistance. Several of the ships were wrecked, the rest had lost their ropes, their anchors, and the rest of their rigging, and were unfit to sail. The inevitable result was panic throughout the army. For there were no other ships to transport them back, and they had no materials of use for naval repairs. Moreover, since it was generally established that they must winter in Gaul, no corn had been provided for wintering in Britain.

(30) Once they learned of this the British leaders who had approached Caesar after the battle held talks among themselves. They realized that the Romans had neither cavalry nor ships nor corn, and understood, from the smallness of the camp, their weakness in manpower—circumstances all the more straitened by reason of the fact that Caesar had brought the legions over without their heavy baggage. Thus they considered it the perfect moment to engineer a renewal of hostilities, to cut our men off from corn and supplies and prolong the action into the winter. They were confident of overcoming our men or cutting off their escape, and so ensuring that no one would ever again cross to Britain to wage war. So they plotted together once more, and began to leave camp, a few at a time, and to call their men back in secret from the fields.

(31) Even though Caesar had not yet learned of their plans, none the less he suspected it would happen, both because of the fate which had befallen his ships and because the Britons had left off the handover of hostages. So he began to prepare safeguards for every eventuality. Every day he gathered corn from the fields into the camp, and he used timber and bronze from the ships which had been most badly damaged to repair the rest. He gave orders for equipment to be ferried over from mainland Gaul for this purpose. The soldiers carried out these tasks with great enthusiasm, and so by the loss of twelve ships Caesar was able to render the rest sufficiently seaworthy.

(32) While this was going on the legion known as the Seventh had been sent out in a body as usual to find corn. As yet no hint of hostilities had occurred, since some of the Britons were still in the fields, while others were even making frequent visits to the Roman camp. Then the men on guard at the gates of the camp reported to Caesar that a dust-cloud, greater than usual, was visible in the place to which the Seventh had marched. Caesar guessed the truth, that the barbarians had started upon some new stratagem. He gave orders for the cohorts which were then on guard to set out with him to the place, and for two cohorts from the remainder to relieve them on guard-duty: the rest were to arm themselves and follow him without delay.

When they had made their way some distance from the camp he caught sight of his men being hard pressed by the enemy and struggling to hold their position. The legion was crowded together, and missiles were being thrown at it from every quarter. Because all the corn had been cut from the remaining areas, and this place alone was left, the enemy had suspected that our men would come there and had hidden by night in the woods. Then, when our men were scattered and, busy cutting corn, had laid down their weapons, they suddenly attacked, killed a few, cast the remainder into disorder before they could form ranks, and surrounded them at once with cavalry and chariots.

(33) Their method of fighting from chariots is as follows. First they drive around in all directions, casting missiles and generally throwing army ranks into confusion through the panic caused by the horses and the noise of the wheels. Then, when they have wormed their way in between the cavalry squadrons, they jump down from the chariots and fight on foot. Meanwhile the charioteers gradually make their way out of the fighting, and station their chariots so that, if they are hard pressed by a host of enemies, they have a speedy retreat to their own side. Thus they provide the flexible mobility of cavalry and the stability of infantry in battle. By means of daily practice and exercises they ensure that even on the steepest of inclines they can hold their horses at full gallop, control and turn them swiftly, run along the beam and stand on the yoke—and from there get quickly back to the chariot.

(34) Because this type of fighting was so unusual our men were thrown into confusion by such tactics, but in the nick of time Caesar brought them assistance. For the enemy halted at his coming, while our men recovered from their panic. After this he considered that it was an inopportune moment for going on the offensive and engaging in battle, so he stayed where he was, and after a short while led the legions back to camp. During these events all our men were busy, and the rest of the Britons who were in the fields dispersed. Continual storms followed for a number of days, which kept our men in camp and prevented the enemy from fighting. In the meantime the barbarians sent out messengers in all directions who proclaimed to their own people that our troops were few in number, and declared how great was the opportunity of winning booty and of liberating themselves for ever if they drove the Romans from their camp. In this way a huge force of infantry and cavalry was quickly mustered and approached our camp.

(35) Caesar foresaw that the same thing would happen as on previous days, namely, that if they were repulsed the enemy would use speed to escape the danger. Nevertheless, he had in his possession about thirty cavalrymen whom Commius the Atrebatian (who was mentioned above) had brought across with him, so he stationed his legions in battle formation in front of the camp. Battle was joined. The enemy was unable to withstand the attack of our soldiers for very long, and fled. Our men pursued for as far as their vigour and strength allowed, killed a number of them, then set fire to all the buildings far and wide and returned to camp.

(36) On the same day the enemy sent envoys to Caesar to sue for peace. Caesar doubled the number of hostages which he had previously demanded from them and ordered that they be taken to the Gallic mainland, because the autumnal equinox was at hand and he considered that as his ships were damaged the voyage should not be exposed to winter storms. He took advantage of a period of good weather and set sail a little after midnight. All the ships reached the mainland safely, though two of the transport vessels were unable to make the same ports as the rest and were carried a little further south down the coast.

(37) About 300 soldiers had disembarked from these ships and were marching to the camp, when the Morini, whom Caesar had left pacified when he set out for Britain, were led by the hope of booty to surround them with, at first, a small number of men. They ordered our men to lay down their weapons if they did not wish to be killed. Our men, however, formed a circle and began to defend themselves; then about 6,000 of the Morini massed swiftly on hearing the shout. News of this came to Caesar, who sent the entire cavalry to his men's assistance from the camp. Meanwhile our soldiers withstood the attack of the enemy and fought bravely for more than four hours, receiving only a few wounds and killing several of the enemy. After our cavalry came into sight the enemy threw away their weapons and turned tail; many of them were killed. The following day Caesar sent his legate Titus Labienus, with the legions he had brought back from Britain, against the Morini who had renewed hostilities. The marshes which they had used as a refuge in the previous year were too dry to offer a place of retreat, so almost all surrendered themselves to Labienus's control.

The legates Quintus Titurius and Lucius Cotta, meanwhile, had led their legions into the territory of the Menapii. There they ravaged the fields, cut down the corn, and burned the buildings, because the Menapii had concealed themselves in the depths of the forests. Then they returned to Caesar, who established winter quarters for all the legions among the Belgae. In all, only two of the British peoples sent him hostages there, while the rest failed to do so. Following receipt of a dispatch from Caesar, a thanksgiving of twenty days was decreed by the Senate for these achievements.

C: *oratio recta*, *oratio obliqua*, and military characterisation: BG 6.35-38

(35) All this was taking place in every part of the Eburones' territory, and the seventh day was approaching, when Caesar had decided to return to the baggage and the legion. In this the power of Fortune in war, and the great changes of circumstance she brings about, were plain to see. For the enemy, as we explained, was scattered and terrified, and there was no force capable of inflicting even the slightest cause for panic. News had reached the Germans across the Rhine that the

Eburones were being pillaged and moreover that everyone was being summoned to join in the hunt for booty. The Sugambri, who live beside the Rhine and who (as we described above) had given refuge to the fleeing Tencteri and Usipetes, mustered 2,000 cavalry. They crossed the Rhine by ship and boat thirty miles downstream of where Caesar had built the bridge and left a garrison behind.

The Sugambri first drew near to the Eburones' borders and captured many of them as they were scattered in flight. They also seized a large number of cattle, which are highly prized by these barbarians. Lured on by the prospect of booty, they advanced further. Neither marsh nor forest stood in the way of these Germans, men born to war and depredation. They asked their prisoners where Caesar was to be found, and learned that he had advanced further and that his whole army had left. Then one of the prisoners said: "Why are you setting off in pursuit of wretched and scanty loot when you now have the chance of extreme good fortune? Within three hours you can reach Aduatuca, where the Roman army has gathered all its riches. The garrison is so small it cannot even man the wall, and no one dares to venture outside the defences." Once this expectation opened up, the Germans left the plunder they had already taken in a hidden place and made for Aduatuca, following as their guide the very man whose information had led to this discovery.

(36) Throughout all the preceding days Quintus Cicero had been extremely careful to keep the soldiers in camp, as Caesar had instructed. He had not even permitted any of the orderlies to go outside the defences. On the seventh day, however, he gave up hope that Caesar would keep his word about the number of days he would be gone, for he heard that Caesar had advanced further, yet no news reached him of his return. At the same time, Cicero began to be disturbed by the soldiers saying that—inasmuch as no one was permitted to leave camp—his persistence in waiting there virtually amounted to a siege. Moreover, since nine legions and a large cavalry force were on the offensive, while the enemy was scattered and practically wiped out, he did not anticipate that any serious misfortune could occur within three miles of camp. So he sent five cohorts to the nearest fields to fetch corn. There was nothing between the cornfields and the camp but a single hill. Several of the legionaries had been left behind sick; about 300 of them, who by then had regained their health, were sent out together in a separate detachment. Once permission was granted, there went with them a company of orderlies and a large number of pack-horses (which had been left behind in camp).

(37) At this critical moment the German cavalry chanced to arrive, and straight away, keeping the same course by which they had come, tried to invade the camp through the main gate. Because the trees were in the way on that side they were not observed until they were actually approaching the camp, with the result that the traders who were encamped under the rampart had no chance to withdraw. Our men, caught unawares by this unexpected event, were thrown into confusion and the cohort on guard barely withstood the first assault. The enemy poured round the other sides of the camp, looking for a way in. Our men just managed to defend the gates—the nature of the site itself, combined with the defence-works, protected the other possible entrance-points. There was panic throughout the camp, some men asking others the reason for the uproar. No one made provision for where the standards must be shifted to, or where the men were to assemble. One man declared that the camp was already taken, another that the barbarians had arrived after the Roman army and its commander had been wiped out. Most of the men conjured up strange superstitious fantasies because of where they were—they visualized the disaster which befell Cotta and Sabinus, who had fallen in the same stronghold. Every one of them was thrown into panic by such fears, and this strengthened the belief of the barbarians that, as the prisoner had told them, there was no

garrison within the camp. They tried to break through and urged themselves not to let such a great piece of good fortune slip from their grasp.

(38) Left behind with the garrison, because he was ill, was one Publius Sextius Baculus. He had been one of Caesar's senior centurions (we mentioned his part in previous battles), and by now had gone five days without food. Baculus was anxious for his own safety and everyone else's, and emerged unarmed from his tent. He saw the enemy looming close and the issue coming to a crisis, so he seized weapons from men standing nearby and took his stand at the gate. The centurions of the cohort which had been on guard-duty followed his lead, and together they held off the attack for a short while. Baculus was badly wounded and lost consciousness: by dragging him back from hand to hand, they just saved him. Thanks to this respite the rest of the men found enough strength to dare to man the defences and offer a show of resistance.

D: Gergovia; *oratio recta* making victory out of defeat: BG 7.45-53

(45) On learning this Caesar sent a number of cavalry squadrons to the place around midnight, and ordered them to cause rather more disruption than usual as they ranged in every direction. At first light he commanded a large number of pack-horses and mules to be led out of camp and had the coverings which stopped their loads chafing removed. The muleteers were told to put on helmets, to look and act like cavalry, and ride around the hill. To maintain this deception he included a few cavalry, who were to range more widely. He ordered them all to head for the same place by a long route.

All these activities were watched from far off in the town, for there was a good view from Gergovia into the camp; but at such long range it was impossible to find out anything for sure. Caesar sent one of his legions to the same high ground as the cavalry, and when it had advanced a short way, he halted it on the lower ground and kept it concealed in the woods. Gallic suspicion grew, and their whole force transferred to the place to secure it. Caesar saw that the enemy camp was unoccupied, so he had his men cover up their emblems and conceal their standards; then he took the soldiers from the main camp to the smaller one in small groups so as not to attract attention from the town. He explained to his legates (to each of whom he had given command of a legion) what he wanted done. In particular, he warned them to keep their soldiers under control and prevent them advancing too far in an eagerness to fight or in hope of booty; he also set out the disadvantage of their less favourable position, which he said only speed could alter—this was a moment for seizing an opportunity, not fighting a full-scale battle. After this briefing he gave the signal and at the same time sent the Aedui by another ascent, on the right.

(46) In a straight line the wall of the town would be just over a mile from the level where the ascent began, but for the way it curved from side to side along its length. The more the route was made to wind to effect a gentler ascent, the more the distance of the march increased. About half-way up the hill the Gauls had constructed a six-foot wall of large stones, which ran lengthways following the contour-line, to slow down our attack. They had left all the ground below this unoccupied, and filled the upper slopes as far as the town wall with camps packed closely together. When the signal was given our soldiers quickly reached this line of defence, crossed it, and captured three enemy camps. In fact they acted so quickly in seizing them that Teutomatus, the

king of the Nitiobriges, was taken by surprise in his tent whilst enjoying an afternoon nap and just managed to tear himself from the hands of the plundering soldiers and escape half-naked on a wounded horse.

(47)

Caesar had achieved what he intended. He ordered the retreat to be sounded—the Tenth legion (which he was accompanying) halted at once. The soldiers of the other legions did not hear the trumpet blowing because a rather wide gully was between them. But they were held in check by the military tribunes and legates as Caesar had ordered.

But the men were excited by the hope of a quick victory, and the enemy's flight, and the successful outcome of previous battles—and they believed that there was nothing too difficult for their courage to achieve. So they did not abandon their pursuit until they drew close to the wall and gates of the town. At that moment a shout went up all over Gergovia. Those inside the most distant part of the town were panicked by the sudden uproar, and thought that the Romans were already inside the gates. So they rushed out of the town. The married women began to throw clothing and money from the wall; baring their breasts and leaning forward with outstretched arms they pleaded with the Romans not to kill them, not to act as they had at Avaricum, when they did not even spare the lives of the women and children.

It became apparent that a centurion of the Eighth legion, one Lucius Fabius, had declared among his men that he was stirred by the prospect of rewards such as the ones offered at Avaricum. He refused to let anyone else scale the wall before him. He grabbed three of his fellow-soldiers, got them to hoist him up, and climbed the wall. Then he in turned grasped hold of each of them and hauled them up on to the wall.

(48) In the meantime the Gauls who had assembled in another part of the town to fortify it (as we mentioned above) first of all heard the shouting, then were roused by a flood of reports that the town was captured by the Romans. They sent cavalry on ahead, and then with a great charge sped off in the same direction. Wherever each man arrived first, there he stood beneath the wall and swelled the fighting strength of his compatriots. A large host gathered; then the married women (who had just now been holding their hands out to the Romans) started to call upon their men and, in Gallic fashion, to unbind their hair and bring their children forward into view. For the Romans it was an unfair contest, in terms of both ground and numbers. They were tired by their climb and the duration of the fighting, and found it difficult to withstand men who were fresh and unscathed.

(49) When Caesar observed that they were fighting in a disadvantageous position, and that the enemy's numbers were growing, he became anxious for his men and sent to his legate Titus Sextius (whom he had left in charge of the smaller camp). He told him to bring cohorts from camp quickly, and to station them at the foot of the hill on the enemy's right flank. In this way, if he saw that our men were driven from their position he would be able to deter the enemy from pursuing them unchallenged. Then he advanced a short distance with the Tenth from the place where he had halted and awaited the outcome of the battle.

(50) The fighting was now fierce and at close quarters. The enemy relied on their position and numbers, our men on their courage. Suddenly our men caught sight of the Aedui on our exposed flank, although Caesar had sent them off to the right by another ascent, to draw off the enemy. Their weapons resembled those of the enemy so closely that our men panicked. Even though they

could see that the Aedui's right shoulders were bared (this was the agreed sign which regularly distinguished them), the soldiers believed that this was actually a ruse of the enemy's designed to deceive them.

At this moment the centurion Lucius Fabius and the men who had climbed the wall with him were surrounded and killed, then thrown headlong from the wall. Another centurion from the same legion, Marcus Petronius, had tried to break down the gates, but he was overwhelmed by the enemy host and abandoned hope of saving himself. Gravely wounded, he called to his soldiers, who had followed him: "Since I cannot save myself along with you, I shall at least take care to secure your survival—for it was my desire for glory which made me lead you into danger. When I give you your chance, watch out for your own safety." At once he plunged into the midst of the enemy, killing two and forcing the rest a little way back from the gate. His men tried to come to his assistance, but he told them: "Your efforts to preserve my life are futile—already my blood and my strength are draining away. So get away while you can, and make your way back to the legion." In this manner he soon afterwards fell fighting, and proved the saviour of his men.

(51) Our men were overwhelmed on every side, and were forced back from their position with the loss of forty-six centurions. But the Tenth legion, which had taken up a support position on rather more even ground, slowed down the Gauls' uncontrolled pursuit. The cohorts of the Thirteenth legion, which had been brought from the smaller camp by the legate Titus Sextius, and had taken up position on higher ground, once more took over from the Tenth. As soon as the legions reached level ground they halted and turned their standards to face the enemy. From the foot of the hill Vercingetorix led his men back inside the fortifications. On that day almost 700 soldiers were lost.

(52) The following day Caesar called an assembly and upbraided the soldiers for their imprudence and over-eagerness in deciding for themselves where to advance and what action to undertake, and for not halting when the signal for retreat was given; also because they could not be restrained by the military tribunes and legates. He explained the significance of disadvantageous ground, and what had motivated him at Avaricum—namely, that even though the enemy were caught without their leader or their cavalry, he had given up the chance of certain victory so as to avoid even small losses in action because of unfair ground. However admirable their courage, which neither the work of fortifying their camp nor the height of the hill nor the wall of the town had been able to check, nevertheless they deserved reproach for their lack of discipline and their presumption in thinking that they knew more about victory and outcomes than their commander did. He was as eager to find level-headedness and restraint in his soldiers as courage and daring.

(53) Caesar finished his speech by encouraging the soldiers not to be disturbed because of these events, and not to attribute what had resulted from unfair ground to bravery on the enemy's part. At the end of the assembly, although he was still considering a departure in much the same terms as before, he led the legions out of camp and halted them in battle order on suitable ground. Vercingetorix did come down on to this level ground, but following a successful cavalry skirmish Caesar led his army back to camp. After doing likewise on the following day Caesar judged that enough had been done to minimize the Gauls' boasting and to improve his own soldiers' morale, so he struck camp and moved out to the Aedui. Not even then did the enemy pursue. On the third day he reached the River Allier, rebuilt the bridges, and took his army across.

E: *oratio recta* and negative characterisation: BG 7.76-78

(76) Caesar had enjoyed the loyalty and good offices of this Commius in Britain in previous years. In return for these services, Caesar had declared that his state was to be exempt from taxation. He had restored its rights and laws, and made the Morini pay it tribute. In spite of this, the whole of Gaul was united in the desire of restoring liberty and their former reputation for warfare, to such an extent that neither services rendered nor the remembrance of friendship moved them, and they all concentrated all their efforts of will and resources on the war. Once 8,000 cavalry and about 240,000 infantry were mustered, a review and reckoning of numbers was held in Aeduan territory; then officers were assigned. The chief commands went to Commius the Atrebatian, the Aeduans Viridomarus and Eporedorix, and the Arvernian Vercassivellaunus, who was a cousin of Vercingetorix. Subordinates from the Gallic states were assigned to them to advise on the conduct of the campaign.

They all set out for Alesia eager and full of confidence. Not a single one of them believed it would be possible to withstand even the sight of such a mighty host, especially as the battle would be fought on two fronts—for at the moment when this vast army of horse and foot came into view from outside, there was to be a sortie from the town.

(77) As for those who were trapped inside Alesia, the day when they had expected their reinforcements to arrive was past. Their corn was all gone, and they knew nothing of what was happening among the Aedui. So they called a meeting to debate the outcome of their situation. Various opinions were declared, some advising surrender, others urging a sortie while they still had the strength for it. The speech of Critognatus, vile and remarkable for its cruelty, should not be passed over here.

Critognatus was an Arvernian of noble birth and considered to be a man of great influence. “Not one word shall I speak”, he said, “concerning the opinion of those men who call shameful slavery by the name of ‘surrender’; nor do I think they should be treated as citizens of Gaul or called to our assemblies. My concern is with those who are proposing a sortie. For this advice of theirs seems, through your support for it, to preserve some remembrance of former courage. Yet it is not courage, but a weak spirit, which is unable to endure such trifling hardship. It is easier to find men ready and willing to face death than men prepared to endure suffering with forbearance.

“Even so, I might have approved their advice—such is the force of their prestige—if I expected no loss from it beyond that of our lives. Yet we must look to the whole of Gaul in forming our plans, for it is the whole of Gaul that we have summoned to our assistance. If 80,000 men are killed in this one place, what do you think the state of mind of our relations and kinsmen will be when they are forced to give battle practically on top of the corpses? Do not rob them of your help, when they have ignored the danger threatening them to save you—and do not bring the whole of Gaul to ruin, or commit it to endless slavery because of your reckless lack of judgement or weakness of purpose. “Or do you doubt their loyalty and determination because they have not arrived on the exact day? What then? Do you think that the Romans are hard at work on those outer defences every day for their own amusement? If you cannot find encouragement from their messengers because every approach is blockaded, let the Romans be your witnesses that they are drawing near. For it is fear of that event which keeps them busy day and night on the fortifications.

“So now, what do I advise? Do what our ancestors did in the war (a much less important one) with the Cimbri and Teutoni. When they were forced into the towns, under the strain of a deprivation like our own, they sustained their existence on the bodies of those who were too old to be of use in the campaign: and as a result they did avoid surrendering to their enemies. Even if we had no precedent for such a practice, I would still judge it a fine policy to establish for the sake of liberty, and to hand down to our descendants. After all, what resemblance was there between that war and the present one? Certainly, once Gaul was devastated and destruction widespread, the Cimbri did finally depart from our land and go in search of other territories. They left us our own laws and rights, our lands and liberty. In contrast, what do the Romans seek, what do they desire, if not to follow envy’s prompting? To become established in the lands and states of people whose distinguished reputation and military strength they acknowledge, and to inflict perpetual slavery upon them? Never have they waged a war on terms other than these. But if you are ignorant of what happens among far-off peoples, look at the part of Gaul which borders our land: reduced to the status of a province, its rights and laws changed, subjected to Roman dominion, it is oppressed by perpetual slavery.”

(78) After everyone’s opinions were expressed they decided that all those whose age or infirmity made them useless in the war should leave the town, and resolved to try every course of action before resorting to Critognatus’s proposal—but if circumstances were pressing and the reinforcements were delayed, then that was the time to put his advice into practice, rather than submitting to terms of peace and surrender.

The Mandubii, who had received them into the town, were forced to take their wives and children and depart from it. When they came to the Roman fortifications, in tears they begged and pleaded to be accepted as slaves and given food. Caesar, however, set guards on the rampart and refused to admit them.

F: from silence to speech: *BC* 3.85-87 {translation by John Carter, OUP}

(85) Pompey, whose camp was on a hill, was in the habit of drawing up his battle-line at the very bottom of the slope, always, it seemed, waiting to see whether Caesar would accept the disadvantage of the ground. Caesar, believing that there was no means of tempting Pompey to battle, judged that his best plan of campaign was to shift his camp away and always be on the march. His idea was that by moving from camp to camp and coming to more places he would find provisioning easier; at the same time he might get some chance of a battle while *en route*, and by marching every day he would exhaust Pompey’s army, which was unused to hard effort. In consequence of this decision, the signal for departure had already been given and the tents struck when it was observed that Pompey’s line had shortly beforehand advanced further from his defences than was his daily custom, so that it appeared possible to fight without one side having the advantage of the slope. Then Caesar, although his column of march was already at the gates, said to his companions: “We must delay the march for the moment and put our minds to a battle, as we have always wanted. We are mentally prepared to fight; we shall not easily get the chance again.” And hurriedly he led his forces out in battle order.

(86) Pompey too, as was later discovered, had decided to settle matters by a battle, on the urging of all his advisers. He had even said in council within the preceding few days that Caesar’s army

would be routed before the battle-lines met. When there was general astonishment at this, he said: "I know I am promising something almost incredible; but here is the logic of my plan, so that you can go out to battle in better heart. I have convinced our cavalry of this, and they have confirmed that they will do it, namely attack Caesar's right wing on its open flank when the armies are nearly upon each other; they will outflank his line, take it in rear, throw his army into confusion, and rout it before a single weapon of ours is hurled at the enemy. In this way we shall finish off the war without any danger to our legions and virtually without bloodshed. This is really not difficult, as we are so strong in cavalry." At the same time he instructed them to be mentally ready for the next day and, since the opportunity of fighting now existed, as they had often repeatedly asked, not to disappoint the hopes held both by themselves and by the rest.

(87) Labienus spoke next, and because he had a low opinion of Caesar's forces enthusiastically praised Pompey's plan: "Do not think, Pompey," he said, "that this is the army which conquered Gaul and Germany. I took part in all the battles and my view is not put forward without consideration or based on facts beyond my knowledge. A very small fraction of that army remains; a large proportion has died (something which was bound to occur given the number of battles), many fell victim to disease in the autumn in Italy, many have gone home, and many were left behind on embarkation. Or have you not heard that cohorts were put together in Brundisium from men who had stayed behind because they were sick? These forces you see have been reconstituted from the levies of recent years in Cisalpine Gaul, and a good number of them are Transpadane settlers." With these words, he swore not to return to camp unless victory was theirs, and urged the rest to do the same. Pompey praised him for this, and took an oath in the same terms; and not one of the rest hesitated to do likewise. After these proceedings in council were over, they separated with high hopes and much cheerfulness; and they imagined they had already secured victory, because they thought it impossible in a matter of such importance and from a general of such experience to receive assurances that were groundless.