

Julius Caesar (ca.100-44 B.C.): He came, he saw, he conquered



- 1) How does this article from *Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia* (1927) DIFFER from your textbook's presentation of Caesar?
- 2) How & why was Caesar SUCCESSFUL as a general and a politician?
- 3) What factors led to his DOWNFALL? Why is he important in understanding the end of the Republic and the beginning of the Roman Empire under Augustus?

Excerpt from William Shakespeare's tragedy, *Julius Caesar* (1600)

CINNA

O Caesar,--

CAESAR

Hence! wilt thou lift up Olympus?

DECIUS BRUTUS

Great Caesar,--

CAESAR

Doth not Brutus bootless kneel?

CASCA

Speak, hands for me!

CASCA first, then the other Conspirators and BRUTUS stab

CAESAR

CAESAR

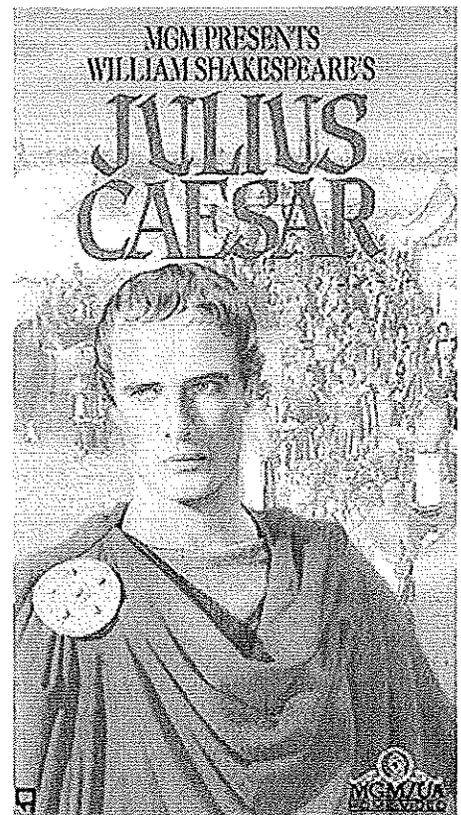
Et tu, Brute! Then fall, Caesar.

Dies

CINNA

Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!

Run hence, proclaim, cry it about the streets.



interest-ordinary ing it up a process of water, l has its surface as f the sun lant give stems are storage of protected it safely

cacti (as e United ve is the belonging tems and columns It often nd looks is cactus y flowers. nd has a lians use a forked Wood- of this r digging

n of very lat stems r, a good common there are ll alike in branches ions and ll fleshy the base spines of nishment r. The reddish ped fruit sying to Opuntia, Australia have run l's great- ling their niles and l farming

chiefly in Mexico, n South named, rious and

beautiful varieties are prized as hothouse plants, among them the "night-blooming cereus," whose lovely waxlike blossoms open in a single night and wither at the approach of sunlight.

From the juicy stems of the cactus primitive peoples long ago learned to distil both medicines and intoxicating drinks. It was long known that were it not for the prickly spines the cactus would furnish excellent fodder for cattle, and Luther Burbank spent many years in experimentation to produce a spineless cactus.

Scientific name of giant cactus, *Cereus giganteus*; a common species of edible prickly pear is the *Opuntia engelmanni*; the globe cactus is *Echinocactus horisonthalomius*.

CADMUS. Once upon a time Zeus, the chief of the Greek gods, took upon himself the shape of a bull and carried off the maiden Europa, from whom, according to the story, the continent of Europe was named. Her brother Cadmus, together with his mother and brothers, were sent to recover her. After a long vain search, Cadmus, weary of the hopeless task of outwitting Zeus, consulted the Delphic oracle, who told him to give up his quest, follow a cow which he should meet, and when she lay down, to take that spot for the site of a city.

As the oracle prophesied, Cadmus met the cow and followed her to Boeotia. When the cow lay down to rest, Cadmus sent his followers to a spring to bring water, for he intended to sacrifice the cow to the gods and needed water for the sacrifice. A dragon, sacred

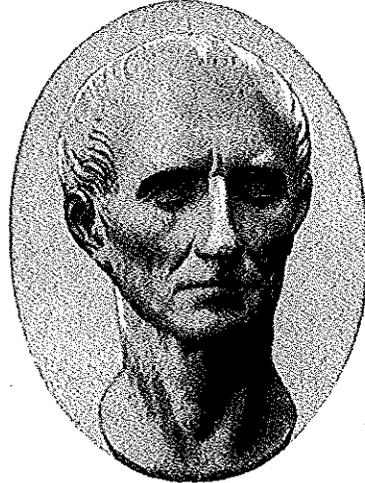
to Ares (Mars), lay in hiding near the spring, and killed Cadmus' comrades. Quickly Cadmus rushed upon the dragon and slew it. Then the goddess Athena (Minerva) appeared and ordered him to sow the dragon's teeth like seed in the ground. Cadmus obeyed, and immediately there sprang up armed men who fought among themselves until only five remained. These became Cadmus' subjects, and helped him to build the citadel of his new city, Thebes. A later legend says that Cadmus brought the Phoenician alphabet into Greece and so became "the father of letters."

CAEDMON (*kād'mōn*) (died 680 A. D.). The earliest English Christian poet, Caedmon, lived and sang at a time when the language was called Anglo-Saxon and was very different from the English of today. It is said that he was an uneducated cowherd and that once there appeared to him in sleep one who said to him: "Caedmon, sing me some song." "I cannot sing," was the answer. "But you shall sing to me." "What," asked Caedmon, "shall I sing?" "Sing the beginning of created things."

In the morning Caedmon told his dream to the abbess of Whitby, and he put into verse for her a part of the Scriptures. In recognition of his genius, he was made an inmate of the monastery and educated, and he spent the remainder of his life writing poems called 'Paraphrases' on the Bible histories and on other religious subjects.

ROME'S GREAT GENERAL, Who "Came, Saw, Conquered"

CAESAR, CAIUS JULIUS (102-44 B.C.). Though the daggers of the assassins brought the career of Julius Caesar to an untimely end and left his life-work unfinished, he stands as one of the few men who have changed the history of the world. A soldier of unsurpassed ability, a scholar and writer of the first rank, and a statesman of prodigious insight, Caesar was the greatest genius Rome ever produced. Amid the chaos of a powerless and outworn system of government, he laid the foundations of a new order on which was to arise the greatest of all ancient empires and preserved the civilization which has become our own inheritance today.



JULIUS CAESAR
Soldier, Scholar, Statesman

When Caesar was a young man he was captured by pirates in the eastern Mediterranean. When they told him he must give them 20 talents for ransom or they would put him to death, he laughingly said:

"What! Only 20 talents? I will give you 50 talents for my life!"

While messengers were gone to Miletus for the

money, he joked with his captors and vowed to hang them all some fine day. The pirates were greatly amused at his high spirits. They had no idea that he would come back to carry out his threat. But Caesar was a man of his word, and within a few weeks after his release the whole pirate band was captured and suffered the death they merited.

How Caesar Won the Roman People

Hiding his serious self under this mask of lighthearted gaiety, Caesar made himself a favorite with the people of Rome. When he was overseer of public games (66 B.C.), he increased his popularity by preparing magnificent spectacles in the Great Circus for the pleasure-loving Romans, at the cost of a crushing burden of debt for himself. The dignified Roman

senators would have laughed to scorn the suggestion that this careless young fop would some day be the conqueror of the world, the most powerful man in Rome. That there was shrewd purpose under his smiling exterior—that Caesar saw the rottenness of the existing government, the need of a strong

central power to save Rome's power from decay, that he felt himself to be the man to bring this change about—no one realized. But such was his aim, and as a part of his plan he formed a political alliance with the two most powerful men in Rome, the wealthy Crassus and the popular general Pompey. Caesar's election as consul in 59 B.C. was the result, and the senators, who were now beginning to be alarmed, were glad to see him sent after his year of office to be proconsul in Gaul, the country we now call France.

Here was Caesar's chance to prepare for the changes in Rome which he knew must come. While in Gaul he built up a well-trained army, subdued all Gaul, put down a dangerous uprising under a leader named Vercingetorix, made a successful invasion across the Rhine, and twice led his army into Britain. He did not conquer any part of Britain, but he paved the way for the Roman occupation of that island a century later. During these years of war and conquest, Caesar not only showed his ability as a great leader and organizer, but endeared himself to his soldiers so that they would follow him anywhere. He worked with them, fought with them, and endured the same hardships. When at one time his soldiers mutinied at the appalling dangers they were called upon to face, Caesar shamed them into obedience by declaring that if all others deserted him, he would go on with the faithful Tenth Legion alone.

Crassus was now dead and Pompey, jealous of the growing power of Caesar, had veered around to the side of the Senate. Caesar was commanded to dis-

band his army, but knowing that this would mean his political ruin he refused. Instead, he led his loyal forces across the little river Rubicon, in northern Italy, which was the southern boundary of his

province, and marched against Rome. From this action, which amounted to a declaration of war against the Senate, comes our expression to "cross the Rubicon," meaning to take action which will inevitably bring certain consequences.

During the five years of civil war which followed Caesar's appearance at Rome, he put down rebellions in Spain, decisively defeated Pompey at Pharsalus (in Greece), and was successful in overthrowing his opponents in Egypt, Africa, and Asia Minor. It was from Asia Minor that he sent his famous message to the Senate: "I came, I saw, I conquered."

Caesar was now master of all the Roman world. Recognizing that the old institutions of the republic were outworn and dead in all but name, he sought

to build a new and stronger order in which the supreme power should be in the hands of one capable man. He had himself made dictator for life, took the title of "imperator," assumed the powers of all the leading offices of the state, and set on foot many far-reaching reforms. But there were still many of the old oligarchy who could not tolerate the idea of a one-man rule, even though it brought good government, and they plotted to take his life.

The senate was to hold a meeting on March 15 (called by the Romans "the ides of March"), and the plotters determined that the dictator should die on

THE SURRENDER OF VERGINGETORIX



This brave and able Gallic chief was the deadliest foe Rome had met since the days of Hannibal. When Caesar's generalship had made further resistance hopeless, Vercingetorix rode full-armed to Caesar's camp and surrendered himself as a sacrifice for his people. Caesar brought him to Rome to grace his triumph and to suffer death at the foot of the Capitol.

CALPURNIA WARNS CAESAR OF HIS DEATH



The artist has drawn for us a thrilling scene from Shakespeare's play. Pacing with her lord the marble portico of their palace in the middle of the night, Calpurnia, wife of Caesar, is endeavoring to persuade him not to go to the Senate on the morrow, the fateful Ides of March. She tells him of a frightful dream that has just awakened her. "Fierce fiery warriors," she says, "fought upon the clouds, in ranks and squadrons and right forms of war, which drizzled blood upon the capitol." But Caesar disregarded her warning and also that of the soothsayer or priest, and the next day he was murdered.

that day. Among the conspirators was Caesar's friend Marcus Junius Brutus, a Roman of such stern virtue that he was ready to sacrifice his friend and benefactor to what he believed to be the cause of liberty. Caesar was warned by a soothsayer to "beware the Ides of March," and his wife begged him to remain home from the Senate that day; but the conspirators persuaded him to attend the meeting.

No sooner was Caesar in the Senate chamber than he was surrounded by the conspirators. At a signal they drew their daggers and attacked him. At first Caesar defended himself, but when no one came to his assistance, and he saw his friend Brutus with a dagger in his hand, he gave up the struggle, and with the words, "Thou too, Brutus!" (*et tu, Brute!*) he fell at the foot of Pompey's statue. Thus Rome lost

her greatest statesman and soldier, while the would-be saviors of the Republic did not accomplish their purpose, for 14 years later Caesar's nephew Augustus became Emperor of Rome. The next four emperors also belonged to the family of the Caesars, and the imperial name thus gained such dignity that it was retained henceforward as a title of honor, surviving to the World War of 1914-18 as the official title (Kaiser) of the German and Austrian rulers.

Julius Caesar left his mark on literature as well as on history. In the midst of his busiest campaigns his unquenchable energy found time to record the events in which he was taking part. His history of the Gallic wars is familiar to every student of Latin, and is usually one of the first books he reads, because of its interest and simplicity of style.

contained in the Easy Reference Fact-Index at the end of this work