



Titus Livius (Livy), *The History of Rome, Book 2* Benjamin Oliver Foster, Ph.D., Ed.

("Agamemnon", "Hom. Od. 9.1", "denarius")

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2. Matters of worship then received attention. Certain public sacrifices had habitually been performed by the kings in person, and that their [p. 223]absence might nowhere be regretted, a “king of¹ sacrifices” was appointed. [2] This priesthood they made subordinate to the pontifex, lest the office, in conjunction with the title, might somehow prove an obstacle to liberty, which was at that time their chief concern. Perhaps the pains they took to safeguard it, even in trivial details, may have been excessive. [3] For the name of one of the consuls, though he gave no other offence, was hateful to the citizens. “The Tarquinius had become too used to sovereignty. It had begun with Priscus; Servius Tullius had then been king; but not even this interruption had caused Tarquinius Superbus to forget the throne or regard it as another's; as though it had been the heritage of his family, he had used crime and violence to get it back; Superbus was now expelled, but the supreme power was in the hands of Collatinus. The Tarquinius knew not how to live as private citizens. Their name was irksome and a menace to liberty.” [4] Beginning in this way, with a cautious sounding of sentiment, the talk spread through the entire nation, and the plebs had become anxious and suspicious, when Brutus summoned them to an assembly. [5] There he first of all recited the oath which the people had taken, that they would suffer no king in Rome, nor any man who might be dangerous to liberty. This oath they must uphold, he said, with all their might, nor make light of anything which bore upon it. He spoke with reluctance, on the man's account, nor would he have broken silence unless he had been forced to do so by his love of country. [6] The Roman people did not believe that they had recovered absolute freedom. The royal family, the royal name [p. 225]were not only present in the state, but were² actually in authority, an obstacle and a stumbling-block in the way of liberty. [7] “This fear,” he cried, “do you yourself remove, Lucius Tarquinius, of your own free will! We are mindful—we confess it—that you drove out the kings; complete the good work you have begun, and rid us of the royal name. Your possessions shall not only be granted you by the citizens, at my instance, but if they are in any way inadequate they shall be generously increased. Depart our friend, and relieve the state of what is, perhaps, an idle fear. The people are persuaded that with the family of Tarquinius the kingship will vanish from amongst us.” [8] The consul was at first prevented from uttering a word by his astonishment at this strange and unexpected turn; then, when he tried to speak, the chief men of the state surrounded him, and with many entreaties made the same request. [9] The others had little influence over him, but when Spurius Lucretius, his superior in years and dignity, and his father-in-law besides, began to urge him, with mingled entreaty and advice, to permit himself to yield to the unanimous wish of his fellow-citizens, Collatinus became [10] alarmed lest when his year of office should have ended, his misfortunes might be increased by the confiscation of his property and the addition of yet other ignominies. He therefore resigned the consulship, and transferring all his possessions to Lavinium, withdrew from the Roman state. [11] In pursuance of a resolution of the senate, Brutus proposed to the people a measure which decreed the exile of all the Tarquinian race. To be his colleague the centuriate comitia, under his presidency, elected Publius Valerius, who had helped him to expel the kings.

[p. 227]

1 B.C. 509**2** B.C. 509

Livy. Books I and II With An English Translation. Cambridge. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann, Ltd. 1919.

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