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A university Latin instructor demonstrates the use of motivation techniques in teaching Caesar's account of the Gallic wars, the "Bellum Gallicum." Brought into play in order to show the work's sense and balance, its structural analysis, and its literary and historical context, are literary masterpieces of other periods, the essentials of literary style and criticism, journalism practices, aspects of cultural anthropology, and aesthetics definitions. (DS)

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CAESAR AND CULTURAL INTEGRATION

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There are at least two obvious ways by which we achieve an inter-relation and integration of culture in the classroom. Both, when properly practised, become our best means for avoiding academic malnutrition, that acute hidden hunger of our educational system which flourishes everywhere and is not to be concealed even in the most modern surroundings. One way, obviously, is by forced feeding from outside; by correlating any given subject matter with a comparable discipline, such as English literature with history.

Today, however, I wish to stress the second and more fundamental method of overcoming cultural anemia; without it even the other must fail. It is the method of instruction we all know well -- the one practised by the teacher who remains alive, not just in his own field, but mentally and intellectually in others, long after receiving his college degree. Perhaps the best teacher I ever had was such a man, one who had taken the old saying "Physician heal thyself" and had adapted it to mean, "Teacher teach thyself -- first and constantly, if you would teach others well." He lived by that maxim, so that regularly his waste-basket was filled with our uncorrected homework papers while he spent his days and evenings reading indulgently and omniverously in art, history, science, literature; he covered a wide range, but somehow it was all purposeful and adapted to his subject matter. Under his instruction who cared whether the classroom was dingy, crowded and rickety? He built with the splendors of the universal mind, provoking our potentialities in all possible directions and expressions of human thought. It is in terms of his standards that I have found that I could teach the Aeneid better after reading Wilson Knight on Shakespeare, than after reading his brother, William Knight, on Roman Virgil.

But, one may argue, while it is understandable that Shakespeare criticism can illuminate the Aeneid, how does it illuminate the densities of the Bellum Gallicum? And indeed, is Caesar's account really worth studying at all? I think the answer is "yes." First, it is an exercise in Latin, much to be preferred to the modern fabrications that pass for the language. Second, the Bellum Gallicum serves as a workmanlike vehicle for understanding more complex and more important literature and thought to come. It is, in fact, rich in material for analysis whether we view it as literature, history, biography, or whatever other aspect we choose. When it was suggested, therefore, that I speak to you, it occurred to me that we might well bring together some of these various approaches to an interpretation of the De Bello Gallico and see what riches we come away with. No doubt I shall constantly touch on points that are already obvious to you and which you have penetrated more deeply. In that case I can only beg your indulgence. Lately, however, my own inclination has been to apply to the Commentaries the criteria of the cultural anthropologist, especially to certain relevant passages. This is in consequence of a spate of reading in that particular field. The results, for me at least, have been a freshened outlook on an old problem: the validity of Caesar's conquest of Gaul. The following is a demonstration of how we came to certain conclusions during the course of classroom discussions.

It is precisely the fact that Caesar's Commentary is not the complex work of a genius, but the product of a very intelligent, well-educated gentleman of high literary standards, that makes it a most viable instrument for training

Latin students of adolescent years. Caesar's careful syntax is straight out of the grammar books (or perhaps we should say the grammar books are straight out of the Commentaries), and both are marked by the same kind of rigorous, antiseptic simplicity. The mature mind, of course, craves something more, and for that reason it never occurred to Quintilian to regard Caesar as a stylist, or the later stylists to use him as a model. But, somehow, the copy-book preciseness of that prose steadies and reassures the young; all that grammar so painfully acquired lesson by lesson is at last integrated on the page before them -- and it is the real thing. There are difficult passages to translate, to be sure, but they are just difficult enough to be grasped and mastered in a few weeks. Beyond that amount of time I found that the average college prep student simply becomes too bored to learn, and what frequently seems like a lack of fluency or effort on the part of the student is, in most cases, due to a block set up by sheer weariness with the same old stuff. This seems to happen even with the most conscientious and apt student who is, therefore, all the more self-deceived, for what he considers his ignorance is actually tedium at work.

Consequently, to obviate the inevitable tedium, I usually paced the reading fast and intensively for a part of each class and then for the rest of the time treated the Bellum Gallicum as the modest work of literature that it is, and subjected it to whatever tests of the literary criticism it would bear. The most elementary of these, yet always the hardest for the uninitiated to grasp, is the concept of form and structure as integral to any work of art; as that conscious and deliberate act which distinguishes, for example, a beautiful landscape painting from a beautiful bit of scenery, which is only an accident of nature. It seemed easiest, in teaching Caesar, to introduce them to this fundamental rhetorical concept, by using single sentences as examples of form, by breaking them down clause by clause, phrase by phrase and sometimes even word by word to show how the several parts match, interrelate, yet vary just enough to keep from being mechanically perfect. This quotation demonstrates my pet example of Caesar's rhetorical. It may well be one of yours:

A B
Erat ob has causas summa difficultas quod naves propter

magnitudinem nisi in alto constitui non poterant, militibus
C C C
autem, ignotis locis, impeditis manibus, magno et gravi
D D
onere armorum pressis, simul et de navibus desilendum et
D
in fluctibus consistendum et cum hostibus erat pugnandum;
A B
cum illi, aut ex arido aut paulum in aquam progressi,
C C D
omnibus membris expeditis, notissimis locis, audacter
D
tela conicerent et equos insuefactos incitarent.

De Bello Gallico, IV, 24

After practising this kind of thing a bit, the students are asked to search in the same way any reading they are doing for pleasure in English, but not a translated work. The student who returns after a week-end of reading Pride and Prejudice or the Spoils of Poynton has no difficulties with the assignment. But

what an amu ing and pathetic contrast is provided by the one who has searched in vain the averaje latest best seller or one of the endless outpourings of the publishing syndicates.

Thus, by observing the interaction and interrelation of the part of a small thing like a sentence, the students begin to grasp the possibilities of the function of structure for effect and beauty. It is a good time to broach to them, probably for their first time, the ideas of Aristotle on the subject of form in aesthetics, particularly since we owe to that ancient philosopher many of our ideas on art. How important for them to realize that great men for a ry long period of intellectual history, have expended much thought on the notion that a work of art is a work of art because it has a beginning, a middle and an end, that these parts must flow logically and explicably from each other. The world's artistic productions have hinged on the degree to which the artist consciously uses or breaks from the accepted notions of structure, so that we have the range between the baroque formalism of a Rubens and the non-objective freedom of a Jackson Pollack; the four movement classical structure of a Haydn sonata to the free variations of a Schoenberg Fantasy.

But what is the structure of our unpretentious little commentary? First, after some complete texts have been passed around the classroom, it should be made clear to the student that what we have is probably the popular edition that was worked up from the epistolae, the despatches sent at the end of each year to the Senate. From this text the student will easily see that the structure is loose and episodic. But lest he think this suffices to explain the structure of any work of literature, we try to provide a contrast. We use the Aeneid as an example of an episodic narrative, but one which starts in medias res. From this same work we can also point out how the parts may be many, and related not only logically to the framework, but are also used to reiterate and reinforce the central theme, to flash the whole form and skeletal structure, as it were. This diagram, drawn up by Prof. George Duckworth in the AJPh for 1954 demonstrates this admirably:

Structure and Balance in the Aeneid

I. Juno and Storm

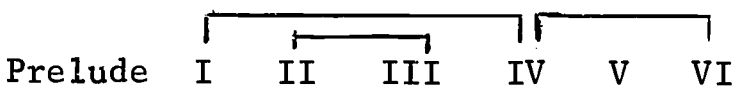
II. DESTRUCTION OF TROY

III. Interlude (of wandering)

IV. TRAGEDY OF LOVE

V. Games (lessening of tension)

VI. FUTURE REVEALED



VII. Juno and War

VIII. BIRTH OF ROME

IX. Interlude (at Trojan camp)

X. TRAGEDY OF WAR

XI. Truce (lessening of tension)

XII. FUTURE ASSURED

One can also demonstrate the interrelation of parts in other works. I have found the scheme of the Hippolytus of Euripides especially effective for it shows how a drama need not fall apart in the middle simply because the heroine, an integral character, dies at that point. But indeed, her death galvanizes the rest of the action.

Structure of the Hippolytus of Euripides

a^1	Prologue-- Aphrodite. Warning of Hippolytus by servant.	Strophe I
b^1	Revelation of Phaedra to Nurse.	Strophe II
c^1	Accusation of Phaedra by Hippolytus	Strophe III
D	Death of Phaedra and Entrance of Theseus	
c^2	Accusation of Hippolytus by Theseus	Strophe IV
b^2	Messinger's speech: Revelation of Artemis to Theseus	
c^2	Epilogue--Artemis. Warning of Theseus by Artemis	

Perhaps though, we are unfair to Caesar in using these illustrations from works of genius, which Caesar was not, Today perhaps, we might best describe his writing as skilled and sober journalism, as he tells with critical, if not always strictly honest detail, the events of his campaigns. The same description, though written with greater veracity perhaps, applies to the brilliant correspondence of Pliny on the eruption of Vesuvius. Such accounts remained in literary circulation and served as models for this particular type of reporting until the time when newspapers, journals, and pamphlets were evolved to serve as the proper vehicles for it. Excellent journalism existed long before the invention of the first newspaper and influenced writers such as Defoe, who was among the first to establish that medium as a distinct mode of expression. For that reason, therefore, one class that was reading the De Bello Gallico was assigned to read at the same time for their English, Defoe's Journal of the Plague Year and the Apparition of Mrs. Veal. And their next assignment after Caesar was the aforementioned correspondence of Pliny.

Since journalism plays such an extremely important role in all our lives we felt justified in making much of it in class, particularly at the tag end of the period when the day's assignment was done. We considered, for example, the changes in literary style in modern times, how they have been affected by the demands of the narrow, columnar format of the newspaper and news magazines for terse, simple sentences. So conditioned have we become now by the physical arrangements of these media that the short sentence is considered the most desirable for all forms of contemporary literature. This works, of course, for both good and evil. Then, for contrast, we considered the work of a fine craftsmanlike reporter like Meyer Berger of the New York Times who in the past won a number of national awards for his journalism.

But it is of course a mistake to let the students regard the De Bello Gallico as merely journalistic. It is, after all, an historical account and one that follows within a tradition of ancient historiography. It is well to point out that Caesar consciously modeled his Commentaries on the great work of the Father of History, as when he uses Herodotus' favorite device of putting imaginary speeches into the mouths of principal historical figures, speeches which are based partly on second-hand reports and partly on what he imagined would most likely have been said by those personages under those same circumstances. In addition this always seems like a good occasion for dwelling further on the continuity of ancient literary tradition by pointing out that the Greek historian, was, in turn, persuaded into using this device by the early 5th century developments in Greek tragedy. This influence was no doubt strengthened after Herodotus' first visit to Athens and his friendship with Sophocles. Thus, Greek drama to this day has left its psychological mark on historiography, for the speeches of principal figures, no longer imaginary ones of course, are quoted as a regular and effective part of historical writing.

There is no doubt that Caesar knew the History of Herodotus well for it has left distinct traces in his own writing. Herodotus, you may remember, began his career as a geographer, and in the course of his travels became interested, though only incidentally at first, in the customs and beliefs of the various peoples he visited; then finally, from sociology he turned to history. But it was due to this geographical tradition established by Herodotus that Caesar felt bound to begin his first dispatch with his most famous sentence: "All Gaul is divided," etc., and then to include early in his chapter on Britain a description of the triangular disposition of that island. Furthermore, it was because the sociological and anthropological tradition, also established by Herodotus, that Caesar had no compunction about interrupting his military and political narrative here and there in Bks. 5 and 6 to discourse on the customs of the Britons and the Gauls. But in his plain reporting of what he observed, or was told, Caesar made a better cultural anthropologist than he knew, as we shall have further occasion to see.

However, first we take care to regard Caesar's role as historian a little more closely, for his Commentaries are not just history. They are the report of events by the man who made them happen. This is historiography by the conqueror himself. Perhaps this is not the time to take up the question as to whether Caesar acted rightly or wrongly, morally speaking, in taking Gaul. This is a large moral-historical problem. But it is a question that should certainly be faced, and at length, in the classroom. The actions of the Caesars of this world should never go unquestioned, lest we fall prey to the mechanical conception that such careers and conquests are inevitable part of the iron will of history. We have had enough evidence in our own lifetime of how one or two men of iron will can take considerable advantage of history. The De Bello Gallico is not only historiography, it is the apologia of Caesar, first in his dispatches, as an accounting of his actions to the Roman Senate, and secondly, in the edited Commentaries, as an accounting to the world. The Commentaries, then, are hardly objective historiography; they are a perfect example of the use of particular and generally accurate details combined and submitted in one objective, third person, to give structure and credence to a myth: the myth whereby the ruthless conquest of one people by another seems justified. But Caesar gives himself away, and beautifully, at one point. You are probably anticipating me in recalling the circumstances of the first compaign, in which he forced the migrant Helvetians to return to their former habitations. Caesar's reasons for intercepting them were, as you remember in Ch. 10, because he considered it a great danger that such warlike people should become neighbors to the Roman people, "ut homines bellicosos, populi Romani inimicos" -- so far, all well and good, his action would seem like a justifiable defense measure. But then Caesar

committed a blunder in literary tactics: he could not resist revealing his real motive for interfering, for he describes that area for which the Helvetians were aiming as though it were a choice fruit ready for plucking by the first to reach for it: "locis patentibus maximeque frumentariis," "places that lay wide-open, and very rich in wheat." All of Gaul, the part that was already Roman and the rest that was not, was to be Caesar's prey, none of it was to be the Helvetian's.

Such a statement and its enormous historical implications is easily passed over by unsophisticated young minds, but I really know of no better opportunity at this level of Latin for training them to read between the lines, for comprehending not only literature but the making of history. For by 51 B.C. Caesar had found or, rather made, his Gallic Campaign an occasion for plucking not only that fruit, but for stripping clean the whole tree of Gaul.

At that point in the discussion, someone in class usually rushes in to bolster the faltering moral argument by cultural and economic indication -- Whatever Caesar did was for the good of civilization. They may quote, for instance, from Ullman and Henry's New Second Latin Book, an old war horse of a text:

> "Caesar ... drove the Germans out of Gaul ... and fixed the frontier of Gaul at the Rhine. Had it not been for Caesar's conquest of Gaul, the country extending from the Rhine to the Pyrenees and from the Alps to the ocean might have become an extension of Germany, embracing the Spanish peninsula as well. The subjugation of Gaul by the Romans gave the Greco-Italic culture time to become thoroughly rooted, not only in Gaul, but also in Spain before the breakup of the Roman Empire. Belgium, France, Portugal, and Spain became Latin instead of Teutonic."

Historically this is true. But before we let the students bestow the cultural accolade on Caesar as a matter of course, we try to consider the question a little further. It is pointed out, for instance that in driving back the Germans, Caesar did not stop an invasion such as the Greeks stopped at Marathon and Salamis, with the possibility of despotism which might have crippled the mind of every Greek. To have cut off Greece from the hour of her fullest development would have been tragedy enough, but to have then forced her to adhere to the tyranny of a restored and medized Hippias -- that would have been a cultural setback indeed. Persia, with its undesirable, well-organized and developed form of government, once entrenched, would have inevitably effected the life and thought of the area. In contrast, the barbarian, the ill-organized Teuton, may have invaded Italy, may have wrought havoc for a time, and then either would have retreated as the Gauls had done before in 390 B.C., or he would have stayed to learn, as he was to do again and repeatedly after the collapse of the Roman Empire. At that time, the motley peoples of the invasions of Italy were absorbed locally and integrated culturally to produce in due time, the Italian Renaissance, a higher stage of civilization than the Roman. The students who can draw on their European history course soon acknowledge the truth of this.

It now seems that, while there has always been a proper estimate, a thorough appreciation of the results of the Romanization of Gaul, there has been a concomitant underestimation of the cultural potentialities of the Gauls and the Germans on their own. This is, however, an understandable miscalculation, for until very recently there has not been much understanding of the developmental role of primitive man in general. We are still too apt to regard the barbarian, such as the Briton and the Teuton, as a moron in a permanent state of savagery,

incapable of anything but destruction until he is physically controlled and deliberately cultivated by the forces of civilization. Yet these very Teutons whom Caesar vigorously excluded from Gaul as he would a pack of wild beasts, 150 years later, as we learn from Tacitus' Germania, these Teutons by their own efforts and quite without Roman enlightenment showed that they were making rapid strides toward civilized ways. We can now appreciate how this came about by applying the knowledge very recently synthesized for us by such gifted cultural anthropologists as V. Gordon Childe in his various studies, and A. S. Diamond in his book The Evolution of Law and Order, William Seagle, in his Quest for Law. They point out, for example, how in those 150 years, the German barbarians had progressed from a culture based on hunting, warfare and cattle-keeping and with no concern for agriculture to one that had learned, as Tacitus tells us, not only to keep cattle but also to till the fields effectively, to live in villages and to prefer the circulation of coins to the bartering of goods. These are extremely important steps toward civilization and were taken at great speed.

And as for the Britons whom Caesar regarded as more advanced than the Germans, though more backward than the Gauls, they were even further along on their path toward self-education. When it is pointed out to the students, for example, that not long before Caesar's time in parts of England, a stage of cannibalism had still been an economic necessity, then Britain's progress by 55 B.C. is even more commendable. We urge the young readers to ignore the blue warpaint, which somehow for them, as for Caesar, connotes the depth of savagery, and remember that the Britons already were concerned with the use of iron tallies for money, and were already reliant on bronze for weapons; that they had learned to support large herds of cattle and to combine this with agriculture; they had a highly developed religious system to which even the more advanced Gauls returned for instruction: that they had already arrived at the period of the Early Codes, if by the standards of historical jurisprudence

As for the Gauls, they were already at the intermediate stage of the Central Codes. And the students better grasp what is meant by this term if it is pointed out that this was the stage Greece was at just before the legislation of Solon, and of Rome just before the Laws of the Twelve Tables. It represents a stage of cultural development in which government and administration has evolved courts and laws, where larger issues are decided by popular assemblies, where war taxes are levied, where society has already become split into distinct classes, where there is an increasing inequality of wealth and the whole economy is well on its way to feudalism. The Gauls, they will also recall, wrote with Greek letters, educated their students for years on end, had scientific interest in astronomy, and what is more, had already found it an economic and cultural necessity to invent the fortnight, a more accurate and functional division of time than the reckoning by seasons. It is here, we might add, that the student who has had ancient and medieval history has the advantage in properly evaluating this data. He can determine for himself that in Central Gaul, at least, barbarism was at its close and civilization, Gallic Civilization, had begun. But at that point Caesar and his Romans stepped in and forced and altered the original direction of the culture.

In other words, the student comes to realize that between the western half of the European continent and the S.E. Mediterranean, there was a cultural lag of only a few centuries, which is but a moment's time as compared with the millenia of cultural development since ancient times that lay behind for the whole continent. From Caesar's own description we can judge that Gaul and Germany, and on their own,

had already arrived at that stage where culture progresses at an enormously accelerated pace. The local economy was established and flourishing, which meant that the population of these areas would soon greatly increase, and from the central towns Gallic cities would soon arise, along with the invention of all the essential urban appurtenances necessary to maintain them. By this time the class has finally reached the interesting conclusion that the Romans did not have to bring civilization to the Gauls, but rather, they gave that civilization which the Gauls were on the way to achieving, an added and particular coloration. The very reason why the Romanization of Gaul came so easily and thoroughly was that the area was so very ready for civilization.

But, the students' picture of Britain must be different. They soon realize that there where the cultural lag was greater than in Gaul, there was also greater resistance to Romanization, and it was a long-range resistance, too. How long this resistance lasted and the forms it took can be seen most readily when they examine the reception of Latin words into the English language. Such a study proves to be of more than linguistic benefit, valuable though that discipline is in itself. In contrast to the readier absorption of Latin vocabulary in Spain and Gaul, as we learn from Johnson's book Common English Words of Latin Origin, the Britons, by virtue of the fact that they were reduced to practical slavery after their conquest in A.D. 43 retained scarcely a Latin word even after nearly 400 years of occupation. It is as though they spat out whatever Latin they had ever had to learn upon the boots of the last retreating legionary. What few words did remain explain this resistance, for they are forms derived from military vocabulary: Such as; vallum, fossa and in particular castra, which survived in the names of a few former encampments, Gloucester, Chester, Worcester.

Then we study briefly how Latin became more palatable after 449 when the Jutes, Angles and Saxons were invited to help the Britons repulse the Picts and Scots, and the Northerners from the continent brought with them not only their own tongue but vocabulary they had picked up from Roman traders; words such as "knife" "kettle," "cook" and "cup." Similarly, when the Roman missionaries came with Augustine in 597 and were received at Canberbury by Aethelbert of Kent, more Latin vocabulary infiltrated, under peaceful and pious conditions. It is clear to all at that point how we owe to that ecclesiastical period our words for "candle," "creed," and "temple." But monks also lead a fairly domesticated, practical existence, involving the use of concrete objects like "caps," "boxes," "plants" and "pillows," the names of which had come down from Latin and were absorbed by the Britons. This then, we learn, was the extent of the influence of the Native Romans, pagan and Christian, upon the inhabitants of Britain: from a whole culture and literature -- a handful of words.

Nor did the situation change much with the Norman Conquest; again there was the same cultural resistance to the conqueror. For a full two hundred years after 1066, there co-existed in England two languages; the Norman French with its rich horde of Latin derivatives, and the Celtic. And as it is pointed out, the royal court spoke the former exclusively, and the rest of the population the latter, exclusively. It was only after the Normans in England were cut off from the continent and finally identified with the native population that Norman French became not only acceptable, but indeed, fashionable. It overran the countryside so that the English spirit counteracted and, finally, in 1363 passed a law requiring that the language of the law courts, at least, be the native one. But

in the meantime anyone with any pretensions to learning or fashion took care to say "noble" instead of "aethel," "precious" instead of "dearworth," and "despair" for "unhope." These were the very words which the French earlier under similar conditions of fashion, had adapted from the Latin "nobilis," "pretiosus," and "desperare."

But the real influence of Latin upon English came, as we all know, at the time of the Renaissance. And it is one of those glorious moments in teaching when it can be pointed out that it came with great effect because it was welcomed with open arms. As a teacher of Latin, I point with pride to the fact that no Englishman of any status at all was without his Latin learnings and some even attained Greek. But Latin vocabulary or derivatives at this time did not displace existing English words; instead they were added as synonyms which vastly enriched the language by doublets such as "anger" and "ire," "bodily" and "corporal," "behead" and "decapitate," or even by triplets such as "kingly," "royal," and "regal," or "blessing," "benison," and "benediction."

What most students at this level do not normally realize is how classical learning itself was swept in with a whole tide of linguistic and literary interests, so that many a Latin root entered the language by way of contemporary English curiosity, or need for Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and French. Chaucer, for example, considerably enriched the English language himself by virtue of having learned Spanish and Italian, the Romance languages necessary to his trade as a wine-merchant The results, if I am not mistaken, make the English lexicon the thickest on the Modern Language shelf. But enough of this etymological survey which is, truth be told, too brief for the students and redundant for you.

But the student will by this time have gotten the point which the cultural anthropologist, the etymologist and historian have taught us: that given enough peace and prosperity peoples will multiply, civilization and culture will arise and flourish in due time. Foreign culture and learning is neither given nor received through plunder or enslavement, but only through acceptance -- through love, or the love of fashion.

Whenever we finish learning from our Caesar, the students and I, we always reassemble with the Britons on those cliffs, where blue and ready, they met the first Latin wave, and where so much has happened since. And to integrate, to sum up what has happened in English cultural history we read aloud Dover Beach, that poem dedicated to the lovers of learning. From Caesar's Britons to Matthew Arnold comprises the full range of meaning from barbarism to civilization, from ignorance to the fruition of knowledge. Let me remind you of portions of it now:

> The sea is calm tonight.
> The tide is full, the moon lies fair
> Upon the straits; -- on the French coast the light
> Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand
> Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
>
> ---
>
> Sophocles long ago
> Heard it on the Aegean, and it brought
> Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow,
> Of human misery, we
> Find also in the sound a thought
> Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.