4.24

At barbari, consilio Romanorum cognito praemisso equitatu et essedariis, quo plerumque genere in proeliiis uti consuerunt, reliquis copiis subsecuti nostros navibus egredi prohibebant. Erat ob has causas summa difficultas, quod naves propter magnitudinem nisi in alto constitui non poterant, militibus autem, ignotis locis, impeditis manibus, magno et gravi onere armorum oppressis simul et de navibus desiliendum et in auctibus consistendum et cum hostibus erat pugnandum, cum illi aut ex arido aut paulum in aquam progressi omnibus membris expeditis, notissimis locis, audacter tela coicerent et equos insuefactos incitarent. Quibus rebus nostri perterriti atque huius omnino generis pugnae imperiti, non eadem alacritate ac studio quo in pedestribus uti proeliis consuerant utebantur.

But the foreigners, the plan of the Romans known, their cavalry and soldiers having been sent forth, which kind they were accustomed to use very often in battles, with their remaining troops, having followed our men, they prevented them from marching out from their ships. There was on account of these causes the highest difficulty because on account of their large size, except on the deep, the ships were not able to be anchored, moreover, the soldiers surprised by the unknown places, the obstructed hands, the great and serious burden of their arms, at the same time they both had to dismount from their ships and had to take a position in the waves and had to fight with their enemies while those men, having progressed either from dry land or a little into water, all their limbs unimpeded, in most familiar places fearlessly threw their weapons and urged on trained horses. And by these things thoroughly terrified and entirely unexperienced in this kind of fight, our men were not using the same eagerness and enthusiasm which they had been accustomed to use in battles on foot.

consilio...cognito- Abl. Abs., PPP. n. abl. sg. praemisso equitatu et essedariis - Abl. Abs., PPP m. abl. sg. (agreeing with nearest subject) uti - Takes ablative quo...genere egredi - Pres. dep. inf. constitui - Pres. pass. inf. militibus...oppressis - Dat. of agent as the subject of the following passive periphrastics desiliendum, consistendum, erat pugnandum - Passive periphrastic expressing necessity alacritate ac studio - Abl. with utebantur quo - Abl. with uti
Quod ubi Caesar animadvertit, naves longas, quarum et species erat barbaris insitutio et motus ad usum expeditior, paulum removeri ab onerariis navibus et remis incitari et ad latus apertum hostium constitui atque inde fundis, sagittis, tormentis hostes propelli ac submoveri iussit; quae res magno usi nostris fuit. Nam et navium figura et remorum motu et insitato genere tormentorum permoti barbare constiterunt ac paulum modo pedem rettulerunt. Atque nostris militibus cunctantibus, maxime propter altitudinem maris, qui decimae legionis aquilam gerebat, obtstatus deos, ut ea res legioni feliciter eveniret, 'desilite', inquit, 'milites, nisi vultis aquilam hostibus proder; ego certe meum rei publicae atque imperatori officium praestitero.' Hoc cum voce magna dixisset, se ex navi proiecit atque in hostes aquilam ferre coepit. Tum nostri cohortati inter se, ne tantum dedecus admitteretur, universi ex navi desiluerunt. Hos item ex proximis primit navibus cum conspexissent, subsecuti hostibus appropinquarunt.

And when Caesar noticed this, he ordered that the long ships, of which both the appearance was more unusual to the foreigners and the movement was more unimpeded to use, to be withdrawn a little from ships equipped for loads and to be set in motion with oars and to be anchored near the open side of the enemy and from there that the enemies be routed and driven away with slings, arrows, and machines, and this thing was as a great use for our men. And for thoroughly moved by the shape of ships and the motion of oars and the unusual type of siege weapons, the foreigners drew up and retreated only a little. And our soldiers delaying, especially on account of the depth of the sea, the one who bore the eagle of the tenth legion, having entreated the gods that this thing turn out fortunately for the legion said, "Dismount, fellow soldiers, unless you wish to betray the eagle to the enemies. I will certainly have exhibited my duty to the republic and to the general." When he had said this with his great voice, he jumped from the ship and began to bear the eagle to the enemies. Then our men, having encouraged amongst each other that so great a dishonor not be committed, jumped all together from our ship. In a like manner when they had first perceived these men from the nearest ships, having followed the enemies closely, they approached.
It was fought sharply by both. Nevertheless, our men, because they were able neither to keep the ranks nor to stand firmly nor to follow their standards, and a different man from a different ship was gathering himself to whichever standards he had happened upon, were greatly disturbed; the enemies truly, with all shallows being familiar, when from the shore they had perceived some people one by one departing from the ship, attacked the hindered men, their horses excited, more people surrounded few, the others from the open side were throwing spears at the men all together. And when Caesar had noticed this, he ordered the skiffs of the long boats and also the scouting ships to be filled with soldiers, and which men he had perceived working hard, to these men he sent help. Our men, as soon as they stood on dry land, all their men having followed up, made an attack on the enemies and gave them to flight, and no longer were they able to pursue because the horsemen had not been able to hold their course and seize the island. This one thing was lacking for Caesar for his previous fortune.
Hostes proelio superati, simul atque se ex fuga receperunt, statim ad Caesarem legatos de pace miserunt; obsides sese daturos quaeque imperasset facturos polliciti sunt. Una cum his legatis Commius Atrebas venit, quem supra demonstraveram a Caesare in Britanniam praemissum. Hunc illi e navi egressum, cum ad eos oratoris modo Caesaris mandata deferret, comprehenderant atque in vincula coniecerunt; tum proelio facto remiserunt et in petenda pace eius rei culpam in multitudinem contulerunt et propter imprudentiam ut ignosceretur petiverunt. Caesar questus quod, cum ultro in continentem legatis missis pacem ab se petissent, bellum sine causa intulissent, ignoscere se imprudentiae dixit obsidesque imperavit; quorum illi partem statim dederunt, partem ex longinquieribus locis arcessitam paucis diebus sese daturos dixerunt. Interea suos in agros remigrare iussurunt, principesque undique convenire et se civitatesque suas Caesari commendare coeperunt.

The enemies, having been conquered in battle, as soon as they recovered themselves from flight, immediately sent envoys to Caesar concerning peace; they promised that they would give hostages and would do what he had demanded. Together with these envoys, Commius, an Atrebatian, came, whom I had described before sent by Caesar to Britain. These men had arrested this man having departed from his ship when he reported the commands of Caesar in the manner of an ambassador to them and had put him in chains; then, the battle having been done, they returned him and in seeking peace they ascribed the guilt of this thing to the many men and on account of their ignorance they sought that it be forgiven. Caesar, having lamented because, although, envoys sent to the continent, they had voluntarily sought peace from him, without cause they had waged war, said that he forgave the indiscretion and ordered hostages, of whom they immediately gave to that man a part, they said they would give the part summoned from more remote places in a few days. Meanwhile they ordered their men to return to the fields, and their chiefs everywhere began to come together and to surrender themselves and their states to Caesar.
His rebus pace confirmata, post diem quartum quam est in Britanniam ventum naves XVIII, de quibus supra demonstratum est, quae equites sustulerant, ex superiore portu leni vento solverunt. Quae cum adpropinquarent Britanniae et ex castris viderentur, tanta tempestas subito coorta est ut nulla earum cursum tenere posset, sed aliae eodem unde erant prefectae referrentur, aliae ad inferiorem partem insulae, quae est propius solis occasum, magno suo cum periculo deicerunt; quae tamen anchoris iactis cum fluctibus complerentur, necessario adversa nocte in altum proiectae continentem petierunt.

Peace strengthened by these things, after the fourth day on which it was come into Britain, eighteen ships, about which before it was described, which had taken horsemen on board, sailed with a gentle wind from the upper port. And when these men arrived to Britain and were seen from the camps, so great a storm suddenly broke out that none of them was able to hold course, but some were borne back to the same place from which they had set out, others were cast down to the lower part of the island, which is nearer to the setting of the sun with its great danger; those, which nevertheless, anchors thrown, were filled with waves, by necessity with night opposite, having been carried on the deep, sought the continent.

4.29

Eadem nocte accidit ut esset luna plena, qui dies a maritimos aestus maximos in Oceano efficere consuevit, nostrisque id erat incognitum. Ita uno tempore et longas naves, quibus Caesar exercitum transportandum curaverat, quas Caesar in aridum subduxerat, aestus compleverat, et onerarias, quae ad anchoras erant deligatae, tempestas adflictabat, neque ulla nostris facultas aut administrandi aut auxiliandi dabatur. Compluribus navibus fractis, reliquae cum essent funibus, anchoris reliquisque armamentis amissis ad navigandum inutiles, magna, id quod nesses erat accidere, totius exercitus perturbatio facta est. Neque enim naves erant aliae quibus reportari possent, et omnia deerrant quae ad reficiendas naves erant usui, et, quod omnibus constabat hiemari in Gallia oportere, frumentum in his locis in hiemem provisum non erat.

On the same night it happened that the moon was full, a day which was accustomed to making the greatest tides of the sea on the ocean, and this was unknown to our men. In this way at one time both the tide had filled the long ships by which he had taken care of transporting the army and which Caesar had led up to dry land, and a tempest harassed the freight ships, which had been moored to anchors, and not was any opportunity of either waiting upon or helping given to our men. Very many ships having been broken, since the remaining, with their ropes, anchors, and the remaining gear having been lost, were useless for sailing, a thing which was necessary to happen, a great disturbance of the whole army was made. And not indeed were there other ships by which they were able to be carried, and all things were lacking which were as a use for repairing ships, and because it was evident to all to be necessary to [be] winter[ed] in Gaul, grain had not been provided in these places for the winter.