

Caesar *Bellum Civile* 1.68-9

Caesar decides to lead his men to the Ebro River to cut off his adversaries from grain. He has to go overland via very rugged terrain, since the enemy blocks the roads to both nearby rivers. To traverse the valleys and hills, Caesar's men need to disarm. They pass their weapons forward and help one another in the climb. The soldiers relish the challenge because they can see the advantage to be gained by cutting off the enemy from the river. Initially the enemy soldiers, under the command of Afranius, are overjoyed by the sight of Caesar's men retreating, and they run out of the camp and hurl abuse at them for running away and retreating to Ilerda.

Caesar exploratis regionibus albente caelo omnes copias castris educit magnoque circuitu nullo certo itinere exercitum ducit. Nam quae itinera ad Hiberum atque Octogesam pertinebant castris hostium oppositis tenebantur. Ipsi erant transcendendae valles maximae ac difficillimae; saxa multis locis praerupta iter impediabant, ut arma per manus necessario traderentur, militesque inermes sublevatique alii ab aliis magnam partem itineris conficerent. Sed hunc laborem recusabat nemo, quod eum omnium laborum finem fore existimabant, si hostem Hiberno intercludere et frumento prohibere potuissent. Ac primo Afraniani milites visendi causa laeti ex castris procurrebant contumeliosisque vocibus prosequebantur nostros: necessarii victus inopia coactos fugere atque ad Ilerdam reverti.

Vocabulary

albeo, albere – be white; dawn

conficio, -ere, confeci, confectum – complete; make; effect

contumeliosus-a-um – insulting, outrageous

inermis – unarmed

inopia, -ae, f. – lack

oppono, -ere, opposui, oppositum – set before, interpose

praeruptus-a-um – steep, headlong

sublevo, -are, -avi, -atum - support; lift up

victus, -us, m. – sustenance

viso, -ere, -i, -um – look at; go and see