After electing the consuls, they appoint military tribunes, fourteen from those who have seen five years' service and ten from those who have seen ten. As for the rest, a cavalry soldier must serve for ten years in all and an infantry soldier for sixteen years before reaching the age of forty-six, with the exception of those whose census is under four hundred drachmae, all of whom are employed in naval service. In case of pressing danger twenty years' service is demanded from the infantry. No one is eligible for any political office before he has completed ten years' service. The consuls, when they are about to enroll soldiers, announce at a meeting of the popular assembly the day on which all Roman citizens of military age must present themselves, and this they do annually. On the appointed day, when those liable to service arrive in Rome, and assemble on the Capitol, the junior tribunes divide themselves into four groups, as the popular assembly or the consuls determine, since the main and original division of their forces is into four legions. The four tribunes first nominated are appointed to the first legion, the next three to the second, the following four to the third, and the last three to the fourth. Of senior tribunes the first two are appointed to the first legion, the next three to the second, the next two to the third, and the three last to the fourth. The division and appointment of the tribunes having thus been so made that each legion has the same number of officers, those of each legion take their seats apart, and they draw lots for the tribes, and summon them singly in the order of the lottery. From each tribe they first of all select four lads of more or less the same age and physique. When these are brought forward the officers of the first legion have first choice, those of the second choice, those of the third choice, those of the third third, and those of the fourth last. Another batch of four is now brought forward, and this time the officers of the second legion have first choice and so on, those of the first choosing last. A third batch having been brought forward the tribunes of the third legion choose first, and those of the second last. By thus continuing to give each legion first choice in turn, each gets men of the same standard.

The enrollment having been completed in this manner, those of the tribunes on whom this duty falls collect the newly-enrolled soldiers, and picking out of the whole body a single man whom they think the most suitable make him take the oath that he will obey his officers and execute their orders as far as is in his power. Then the others come forward and each in his turn takes his oath simply that he will do the same as the first man…

The tribunes in Rome, after administering the oath, fix for each legion a day and place at which the men are to present themselves without arms and then dismiss them. When they come to the rendezvous, they choose the youngest and poorest to form the velites; the next to them are made hastati; those in the prime of life principes; and the oldest of all triarii, these being the names among the Romans of the four classes in each legion distinct in age and equipment.

The youngest soldiers or velites are ordered to carry a sword, javelins, and a target (parma). The target is strongly made and sufficiently large to afford protection, being circular and measuring three feet in diameter. They also wear a plain helmet, and sometimes cover it with a wolf's skin or something similar both to protect and to act as a distinguishing mark by which their officers can recognize them and judge if they fight pluckily or not. The wooden shaft of the javelin measures about two cubits in length and is about a finger's breadth in thickness; its head is a span long hammered out to such a fine edge that it is necessarily bent by the first impact, and the enemy is unable to return it. If this were not so, the missile would be available for both sides.

The next in seniority called hastati are ordered to wear complete panoply. The Roman panoply consists firstly of a shield (scutum), the convex surface of which measures two and a half feet in width and four feet in length, the thickness at the rim being a palm's breadth. It is made of two planks glued together, the outer surface being then covered first with canvas and then with calf-skin. Its upper and lower rims are strengthened by an iron edging which protects it from descending blows and from injury when rested on the ground. It also has an iron boss (umbo) fixed to it which turns aside the most formidable blows of stones, pikes, and heavy missiles in general. Besides the shield they also carry a sword, hanging on the right thigh and called a Spanish sword. This is excellent for thrusting, and both of its edges cut effectually, as the blade is very strong and firm. In addition they have two pilum, a brass helmet, and greaves. The
pila are of two sorts - stout and fine. Of the stout ones some are round and a palm's length in diameter and others are a palm square. Fine pila, which they carry in addition to the stout ones, are like moderate-sized hunting-spears, the length of the haft in all cases being about three cubits. Each is fitted with a barbed iron head of the same length as the haft. This they attach so securely to the haft, carrying the attachment halfway up the latter and fixing it with numerous rivets, that in action the iron will break sooner than become detached, although its thickness at the bottom where it comes in contact with the wood is a finger's breadth and a half; such great care do they take about attaching it firmly. Finally they wear as an ornament a circle of feathers with three upright purple or black feathers about a cubit in height, the addition of which on the head surmounting their other arms is to make every man look twice his real height, and to give him a fine appearance, such as will strike terror into the enemy. The common soldiers wear in addition a breastplate of brass a span square, which they place in front of the heart and call the heart-protector (pectorale), this completing their accoutrements.

From each of the classes except the youngest they elect ten centurions according to merit, and then they elect a second ten. All these are called centurions, and the first man elected has a seat in the military council. The centurions then appoint an equal number of rearguard officers (optiones). Next, in conjunction with the centurions, they divide each class into ten companies, except the velites, and assign to each company two centurions and two optiones from among the elected officers. The velites are divided equally among all the companies; these companies are called ordinis or manipuli or vexilla, and their officers are called centurions or ordinum ductores. Finally these officers appoint from the ranks two of the finest and bravest men to be standard-bearers (vexillarii) in each maniple... They wish the centurions not so much to be venturesome and daredevil as to be natural leaders, of a steady and sedate spirit. They do not desire them so much to be men who will initiate attacks and open the battle, but men who will hold their ground when worsted and hard-pressed and be ready to die at their posts.

In like manner they divide the cavalry into ten squadrons (turnae) and from each they select three officers (decuriones), who themselves appoint three rear-rank officers (optiones). The first commander chosen commands the whole squadron, and the two others have the rank of decuriones, all three bearing this title... The cavalry are now armed like that of Greece, but in old times they had no cuirasses but fought in light undergarments, the result of which was that they were able to dismount and mount again at once with great dexterity and facility, but were exposed to great danger in close combat, as they were nearly naked. Their lances too were unserviceable in two respects... Since therefore their arms did not stand the test of experience, they soon took to making them in the Greek fashion,... since the lance is so constructed as to be steady and strong, and also that it may continue to be effectively used... And the same applies to the Greek shields, which being of solid and firm texture do good service both in defence and attack. The Romans, when they noticed this, soon learnt to copy the Greek arms...

The tribunes having thus organized the troops and ordered them to arm themselves in this manner, dismiss them to their homes. When the day comes on which they have all sworn to attend at the place appointed by the consuls...

After forming the camp the tribunes meet and administer an oath, man by man, to all in the camp, whether freemen or slaves. Each man swears to steal nothing from the camp and even if he finds anything to bring it to the tribunes. They next issue their orders to the maniples of the hastati and principes of each legion, entrusting to two maniples the care of the ground in front of the tents of the tribunes; for this ground is the general resort of the soldiers in the daytime, and so they see to its being swept and watered with great care. ...

They also have an admirable method of encouraging the young soldiers to face danger. After a battle in which some of them have distinguished themselves, the general calls an assembly of the troops, and bringing forward those whom he considers to have displayed conspicuous valour, first of all speaks in laudatory terms of the courageous deeds of each and of anything else in their previous conduct which deserves commendation, and afterwards distributes the following rewards. To the man who has wounded an enemy, a spear; to him who has slain and stripped an enemy, a cup if he be in the infantry and horse trappings if in the cavalry, although the gift here was originally only a spear. These gifts are not made to men who have wounded or stripped an enemy in a regular battle or at the storming of a city, but to those who during skirmishes or in similar circumstances, where there is no necessity for engaging in single combat, have voluntarily and deliberately thrown themselves into the danger. To the first man to mount the wall at the assault on a city, he gives a crown of gold. So also those who have shielded and saved any of the citizens or allies receive
honorary gifts from the consul, and the men they saved crown their preservers, if not under their own free will under compulsion from the tribunes who judge the case. The man thus preserved also reverences his preserver as a father all through his life, and must treat him in every way like a parent. By such incentives they excite to emulation and rivalry in the field not only the men who are present and listen to their words, but those who remain at home also. For the recipients of such gifts, quite apart from becoming famous in the army and famous too for the time at their homes, are especially distinguished in religious processions after their return, as no one is allowed to wear decorations except those on whom these honours for bravery have been conferred by the consul; and in their houses they hand up the spoils they won in the most conspicuous places, looking upon them as tokens and evidences of their valour.

Considering all this attention given to the matter of punishments and rewards in the army and the importance attached to both, no wonder that the wars in which the Romans engage end so successfully and brilliantly. As pay the foot-soldier receives two obols a day, a centurion twice as much, and a cavalry-soldier a drachma. The allowance of corn to a foot-soldier is about two-thirds of an Attic medimnus a month, a cavalry-soldier receive seven medimni of barley and two of wheat. Of the allies the infantry receive the same, the cavalry one and one-third medimnus of wheat and five of barley, these rations being a free gift to the allies; but in the case of the Romans the quaestor deducts from their pay the price fixed for their corn and clothes and any additional arm they require…