

WHO WERE THE 'VIRI MILITARES'?*

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It has become the accepted view that a certain group of 'viri militares' can be identified among the legates who governed the consular military provinces in the Roman empire.¹ The question of these 'specialist soldiers' is relevant to the understanding of how appointments to military commands were made, and, more generally, to the political history of the empire. For it can be argued that 'viri militares' were important not only because they were responsible for the defence of the empire and could raise revolts with their armies, but also because, as a group, they were particularly influential with the emperor. And so Professor Sir Ronald Syme, to whose work we owe most for the concept of 'viri militares', speaks of a 'paramount oligarchy' that was 'drawn in the main from the men who govern the armed provinces of Caesar'.² Now, Syme recognized a wide variety of factors that might influence the selection of consular legates. However, his theory of 'viri militares' tends to be repeated without qualification as accepted doctrine, and in the hands of those who do not mark his caution lends itself to a rather schematic approach and mechanical solutions.³ This incurs the danger to which Syme himself has adverted: 'Historians in all ages become liable through their profession to certain maladies or constraints. They cannot help making persons and events more logical than reality'.⁴

In this context there is room for further enquiry, and this paper seeks to investigate the category of the 'viri militares' from Vespasian to Severus Alexander, and their place in Roman society, through an examination of the consular legates, their likely military experience and the criteria for their appointment. It will be evident that this study pursues themes and methods suggested by Professor Syme's own work. If it is necessary to disagree with some of his conclusions, this will be done only with awareness of how much is owed to the stimulation of his original ideas and meticulous scholarship.

For the sake of clarity we may begin with Syme's succinct and categorical definition of 'viri militares'. 'There is an especially favoured class of "viri militares"—men who pass straight to the consulate after only two posts, viz. a legionary command and a praetorian province'. 'The successful "vir militaris" . . . can reach the consulate a dozen years from the quaestorship, seven or eight years from the praetorship. That is to say he is consul at 37 or 38'.⁵

Now, in several places Tacitus uses the words *vir militaris* and similar phrases. What did he understand by this? In some of the passages he is clearly referring to ordinary soldiers or junior officers.⁶ There are four passages relevant to senatorial commanders. (i) *H* 2. 75. 1: 'versabatur ante oculos Germanici exercitus robur, notum viro militari'. Tacitus means only that Vespasian had the limited experience and knowledge available to one who had commanded armies. (ii) *A* 15. 26. 3: Corbulo spoke 'multa auctoritate, quae viro militari pro facundia erat'. Tacitus is saying simply that Corbulo's prestige and reputation as a good general served instead of eloquence to convince his audience. And the statement is hardly a generalization (*erat* not *est* is used); he means 'this individual' with military experience. (iii) *Ag.* 9. 2: 'credunt plerique militaribus ingeniis subtilitatem deesse . . .' This is surely a commonplace not derived from contemporary Roman experience, and reflects the common belief that men of some military talent lack finesse.⁷ (iv) *Ag.* 40. 4: 'ceterum uti militare nomen, grave inter otiosos . ..'. The idea that energetic military commanders are envied and disliked by civilians is surely another commonplace. Tacitus quite clearly uses the phrase *vir militaris* to refer to anyone who had some

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¹ E. B. Birley, *PBA* 39 (1953), 197; *JRS* 40 (1950), 60; R. Syme, *JRS* 43 (1953), 152; 47 (1957), 133; 48 (1958), 2; *Hist.* 14 (1965), 342; *Danubian Papers* (1971); G. Alföldy, *Bj* 169 (1969), 233.

² *Tacitus* (1958), 50.

³ The cautious views of Syme have become doctrine for W. Eck, 'Zu den prokonsularen Legationen in der Kaiserzeit', *Epig. Stud.* 9 (1972), 24. For a schematic solution to the problem, see J. Fitz, *Acta Antiqua* 9 (1961), 193; 11 (1963), 306.

⁴ *Tacitus*, 435.

⁵ *JRS* 47, op. cit., 134-5.

⁶ *H* 3. 73. 2; *A* 4. 42. 2; 15. 10. 1; 15. 67. 3.

⁷ cf. *Cornelii Taciti De Vita Agricolae*, ed. R. M. Ogilvie and I. A. Richmond (1967), 159.

experience of military life or had chanced to make a reputation in warfare. There is no real sign that such men were regarded as a homogeneous group with special characteristics.

In fact the accepted view of 'viri militares' owes much to prosopographical studies—the investigation of the careers of consular legates in the empire. As this paper makes extensive use of career inscriptions, it is requisite to sound a note of caution about this type of source material. A list of offices carved on stone can tell us only that a man held these posts; it cannot tell us why he held them, if their tenure is indicative of excellence or merit, if he acquitted himself well in them, how he was appointed to them. The limitations of the evidence must be recognized. In what follows, section I deals with the view that 'viri militares' held only a legionary legateship and the governorship of a praetorian province before the consulate, and examines the significance of these posts. Section II discusses the idea of an early consulate for the 'vir militaris'. Section III considers the general military experience of *legati Augusti*, section IV the reasons for the importance of the consular commands and section V the general attitude of the Romans to service of the State.

I

The Appendix lists 73 men, between the Flavians and Severus Alexander, who held one or more consular legateships, and whose pre-consular career is known in detail. The amount of evidence increases all the time with the discovery of new inscriptions, and this list is not necessarily complete. However, the number of complete careers of consular legates that may come to light is not likely to be large enough to distort the figures used in this study.⁸ The proposed criteria for identifying 'viri militares' are rigorous—they must hold only a legionary legateship and a praetorian province before the consulate. But only 9 (12%) out of the 73 show this pattern.⁹ Of these indeed, 2, Iulius Quadratus Bassus and Lollius Urbicus, had found time to be legate of a proconsul in their pre-praetorian career. In addition, Urbicus, instead of holding a praetorian province, was legate of Hadrian in the Jewish war. Again, Memmius Macrinus was sent by Hadrian on a recruiting mission in Italy after his praetorship, and before he had held any other posts. The definitions cited above give the impression that 'viri militares' were a large group, comprising at least a substantial proportion of senators in important commands.¹⁰ But if only 12% of consular commanders can be identified as 'viri militares' on the criterion of praetorian posts held, surely the tenure of a *legatus legionis* post followed only by the governorship of a praetorian province cannot be the typical approach to a consular command. In fact 43 out of the 73 hold 3 or more regular praetorian posts; several hold as many as 6.¹¹ Furthermore 54 (c. 73%) out of the 73 hold some praetorian civil post in their career.¹² This does not suggest the existence of a military caste, but ordinary senators who served the state in whatever capacity it demanded.

It is necessary now to examine the significance of the legionary legateship and the praetorian provinces in the careers of consular legates. Undoubtedly a high proportion

⁸ The 73 men listed form a sample of about 12/15 per cent of the presumed consular legates in the period under review. There were about 10 consular provinces from 70–98, giving c. 300 posts, and 11/12 provinces from 98–235, giving over 1,600 posts. Therefore a total of c. 2,000 posts at an average tenure of c. 2½–3 years (see below, n. 149) means that there were about 650–800 posts to be filled. 26 of the 73 men in the list held two legateships; 7 held three. Hence we know the careers of c. 106 legates in 70–235.

⁹ Nos. 1, 8, 30, 31, 36, 40, 43, 50, 71. The numbers correspond to the number given to each senator in the Appendix.

¹⁰ e.g. Professor Birley's attempt, o.c. (n. 1), 204 f., to explain away all examples that do not fit his definition that consular legates must hold only two praetorian posts, presupposes a belief that this

pattern of praetorian career was normal for most consular legates.

¹¹ Nos. 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, 41, 42, 44, 45, 49, 52, 53, 56, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 73. Those holding 6 posts or more: nos. 7 (8 posts), 9 (7), 18 (6), 32 (6), 33 (8), 73 (7?). Cf. Birley, o.c. (n. 1), 204: '... men who had to serve in three or more posts at that stage in their careers were plainly not strong candidates for consular appointments'.

¹² Those not holding any civil posts in their praetorian career are: nos. 1, 8, 10 (no posts at all), 14, 15, 17 (?), 28, 31, 36, 40, 43, 46 (no posts at all), 48, 50, 51 (?), 54 (?), 56, 65, 68. (?) indicates that the career is perhaps not complete. For no. 54 see literature cited in Appendix.

of consular commanders served as *legatus legionis* (58 out of the 73).¹³ However, if we may assume an average tenure of 2–3 years in this post, about 8–10 legionary legates would be required every year.¹⁴ Not many senators held two such posts, and not all praetors, of whom there were 18 annually, would wish to continue in the career. It stands to reason therefore that most praetorian senators who wished to continue in the *cursus* would be legionary legate at some time. Thus, the tenure of this post need not imply anything about the direction of a man's future career, and its presence in the career of a consular legate does not necessarily mean that it was thought an essential prerequisite for the performance of his duties in a consular province.

Particular importance is attached to the imperial praetorian provinces. ' Consular legates are drawn in the main from the governors of the imperial praetorian provinces ' .¹⁵ To this group should be added the prefects of the public treasury. This post is commonly seen as equipollent to a praetorian province, and plays the same part in a man's career.¹⁶ For generally it immediately precedes the consulate. Out of the 15 examples in my list of 73, 12 hold the post just before the consulate, 1 does not do so, and 2 are doubtful.¹⁷ But it is hard to see how three years spent keeping the books would prepare a man for a consular command. It seems that *c.* 16% of the legates in the list were conveyed to the consulate by a post that could contribute little to their ability to govern a military province. In fact of the 73 legates in the list, only 38 or 39 (*c.* 53%) can be identified in an imperial praetorian province before the consulate.¹⁸ Now, a praetorian legateship, or the command of a legion, or the prefecture of the public treasury are the posts that most regularly convey senators to the consulate. In the second century these occupied 13, 23 and 2 men respectively each year. In that case one might expect *c.* 35% of those proceeding to the consulate to be men who had held a praetorian governorship. And so the fact that over 50% of the men in the list had held a praetorian province has some significance. But it merely indicates the prominent place at the apex of the praetorian career which the tenure of such a post, with its wide responsibilities, was bound to occupy.

It is true that senators who held an armed praetorian province comprise *c.* 63% of those who governed praetorian provinces,¹⁹ although up to the second half of the second century there were 8 civil and only 4 or 5 military praetorian provinces—Arabia, Numidia,²⁰ Pannonia Inferior, Dacia and Iudaea. (Iudaea became consular perhaps as early as 123; ²¹ in Marcus' reign Raetia and Noricum acquired a legion and a praetorian legate). But this perhaps indicates only that a province containing troops was naturally more important in imperial deliberations and would most often be given to men with the emperor's outstanding favour who would subsequently tend to obtain more of the important posts in his gift. In general it should be emphasized that the evidence for the legates of praetorian military provinces in subsequent consular legateships is surprisingly slight. Only 33% of the senators in the list had actually served in an armed praetorian province, and it is legitimate to ask how far a civil governorship e.g. that of Agricola in Aquitania, could prepare a future consular legate for his duties in that post. Moreover, to take Numidia and

¹³ Those who reasonably certainly were not *legatus legionis*: nos. 4, 10, 12, 13, 21, 34, 46, 47, 48, 55, 58, 70, 73. It is legitimate to include *equites* here since most held the usual praetorian posts after their adlection. Note that nos. 24 and 54 are doubtful and that no. 57 was *legatus legionis* when he was of quaestorian rank.

¹⁴ See below, n. 80, for length of tenure. There were *c.* 23 posts for legionary legates in the second century.

¹⁵ Syme, *Tacitus*, 649.

¹⁶ Syme, *Hist.* 14 (1965), 358.

¹⁷ Immediately preceding the consulate: nos. 7, 11, 21, 25, 35, 37, 47, 55, 58, 62, 67, 72. Doubtful: 4, 63. Not immediately preceding: 33.

¹⁸ In what follows those in an armed province are italicized: 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 14 (?), 16, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 38, 42, 43, 45, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 64, 65, 68, 69, 71,

(C. Iulius Severus (no. 35) is excluded since he was *legatus Augusti* of the usually proconsular Bithynia, and this crisis move cannot be seen as typical of appointments to imperial praetorian provinces). In these figures the tenure of the legateship of the *III Augusta* is taken as equivalent to a praetorian province. Those in this category are: 8, 16, 29, 43, 45, 68. In this I follow Professor Syme and other scholars, who classify the post in this way. It is not until Severan times that it can properly be termed the legateship of Numidia.

¹⁹ See n. 18.

²⁰ This term is used throughout for convenience.

²¹ See H. G. Pflaum, *Israel Exploration Journal* 19 (1969), 225; E. Schürer, *History of the Jewish People in the age of Jesus Christ I*, ed. Vermes and Millar (1973), 514, 518; L. J. F. Keppie, *Latomus* 32 (1973), 859. Cf. p. 184 below.

Dacia as specific illustrations,²² from A.D. 98–235 there are 47 attested legates of the *III Augusta*, and subsequently of Numidia; these include 4 *incerti* and there are four or five gaps.²³ Of the 47, only 10 (c. 21%) are attested in consular provinces.²⁴ From Trajan to Antoninus Pius, indeed, only 4 consular legates are known who had previously served in Numidia, as Professor Syme points out.²⁵ Finally, of the 73 legates in the list, only 6 had been legate of the *III Augusta* (see Appendix). For Dacia, from 120 to 161 there are 10 attested legates, with possibly 4 gaps. Of these, 5 are attested in subsequent consular provinces.²⁶

By themselves these figures offer little support for the contention that consular legates were drawn in the main from the imperial praetorian provinces. They suggest that these provinces, and in particular the military provinces, cannot have played a major role in the careers of the so-called 'viri militares', or consular legates in general. It might, however, be argued that an emperor like Trajan, who had himself commanded armies, would show especial appreciation of military talent and experience. Hence it is worth while to examine the careers of consular legates in this reign.²⁷ The most striking impression is that many of the identifiable legates were men of culture and learning. Iavolenus Priscus was a distinguished jurist, and was possibly appointed to Syria by Trajan.²⁸ This is paralleled by the case of Salvius Iulianus, honoured 'propter insignem doctrinam' by Hadrian and sent to govern Lower Germany by Pius.²⁹ It is a significant paradox that jurists should be found in military commands, for the legal profession required long and diligent study. Such men cannot be seen as professional soldiers. Presumably they accepted a command if an outstanding need arose or because of their own ambitions. Licinius Sura, who was undoubtedly the most important man in the reign, and accompanied Trajan on his campaigns, was praised by Martial as an orator.³⁰ In the same category, perhaps, is L. Fabius Iustus to whom Tacitus dedicated the *Dialogus*.³¹ Pompeius Falco, man of letters and friend of Pliny, was consular legate of Lower Moesia under Trajan, who may also have appointed him to Britain.³² Avidius Quietus and Sosius Senecio, both consular legates, and Vibius Maximus (Prefect of Egypt), were renowned for their literary interests.³³ Hadrian himself, despite his attested interest in military affairs, was not a specialized soldier. He was involved in literary pursuits and even composed some verse.³⁴ Indeed, where evidence exists, Trajan's legates do not display the characteristics of a group of dedicated soldiers. They have variegated backgrounds and, as Syme points out, 'seem to form a heterogeneous company'.³⁵ This evidence also helps to show the conventional, commonplace nature of the literary references noted above, that men who commanded armies lacked finesse and found oratory hard going.³⁶

What is known of the praetorian careers of Trajan's legates? Between 92 and 106, 37 consular legates are attested in office—a reasonable sample for the period.³⁷ But the

²² The evidence for Noricum and Raetia is very poor; see G. Winkler, *Die Reichsbeamten von Noricum* (1969); E. Ritterling, *Fasti des röm. Deutschland* (1932). There is little evidence for Arabia before the Severi; see H. G. Pflaum, *Syria* 34 (1957), 130.

²³ Evidence in B. E. Thomasson, *Die Statthalter der röm. Prov. Nordafrikas* (1960), 161 f. And see now *RE* Supp. 13, 318 f.

²⁴ L. Minicius Natalis, P. Metilius Secundus, Sex. Iulius Maior, T. Memmius Macrinus, C. Prastina Pacatus Messallinus, Vespronius Candidus, Q. Anicius Faustus, Claudius Gallus, M. Valerius Senecio, Ti. Iulius Pollienus Auspex (?).

²⁵ *Hist.* 14 (1965), 357, n. 67.

²⁶ Evidence in A. Stein, *Die Reichsbeamten von Dazien* (1944), 19 f. And see the review by Syme, *Danubian Papers*, 160 f. Those attested in further commands after the consulate: Iulius Severus, Papirius Aelianus, Curtius Iustus, Sedatius Severianus, M. Statius Priscus.

²⁷ The evidence is conveniently assembled in *Tacitus*, App. 14–6.

²⁸ *PIR*² I 114.

²⁹ *RE* 1A, 2023, 14.

³⁰ 6. 64. 13. Cf. Plin., *Ep.* 4. 30. 11; 7. 27. 15.

³¹ I. I.

³² Plin., *Ep.* 4. 27; 7. 22; 9. 15; *ILS* 1035–6.

³³ Avidius Quietus—*Tacitus*, 52; Sosius Senecio—*Tacitus*, 505; Vibius Maximus—*Statius*, *Silvae* 4. 7. 52 f.

³⁴ See H. Bardon, *Les Empereurs et les lettres latines d'Auguste à Hadrien* (1940), 415 f.

³⁵ *Tacitus*, 52. Cf. G. Alföldy, o.c. (n. 1), 234 and 239 f. He appears to believe in a 'halb-dilettantische Heeresführung'. But he accepts the usual views on deliberate patterns of promotion for consular legates (240 f.).

³⁶ See above, p. 11 f.

³⁷ *Tacitus*, 645 f. From the 37 it is reasonable to remove the 3 *incerti*, who may be identical with named legates in the list. 5 of the remaining 34 held at least two consular posts. Therefore c. 39 named legates are known in 92–106, when (assuming a tenure of c. 2½ years) there should be about 60, i.e. a sample of about 66 per cent.

evidence offers little support for the idea that consular commanders should hold a praetorian governorship and a *legatus legionis* post. Only 11 of 37 are recorded in any praetorian posts. 7 or possibly 8 of these held a praetorian legateship; 3 certainly did not.³⁸ Although the evidence is slight, these figures have some significance. But it must also be emphasized that there is little sign of any specialized soldiers among this group. Only 3 had served in an armed praetorian province (Syme: nos. 16, 19, 30). 2 served as *iuridici* in their praetorian career, and indeed Priscus was a distinguished jurist (nos. 11, 16). Antius Iulius Quadratus (no. 18) had no military experience, but had held 5 civil posts including a praetorian proconsulate, and was rather elderly.³⁹ 4 out of the 8 are not clearly attested in command of a legion (nos. 15, 18, 30, 32).⁴⁰ Only Quadratus Bassus (no. 19) and Licinius Sura (no. 14)—and he only if it be assumed that he is the subject of *ILS* 1022)⁴¹ in any way fit the usual view of the military man.

Furthermore, the careers of those who can be defined as the 'younger Trajanic marshals'⁴² give little impression that they were specialized 'viri militares'. Of the 7 whose careers are fully known, only 4 are attested in consular provinces. Quadratus Bassus (see above) emerges as the only example of a well-trying soldier. L. Catilius Severus was prefect of both treasuries in turn, *praef. frum. dand.*, curator of a road and legate of a legion before becoming consul. This is hardly the rapid advance of the proven military man. Despite his many civil posts, he was appointed to the new province of Cappadocia and the two Armenias at a crucial time in the Parthian war. Although Minicius Natalis and Pompeius Falco held a preponderance of military posts in their praetorian careers, both were unemployed after their consulates (106 and 108 respectively) until about 116, when they received consular posts.⁴³ This is very strange if they were specially-promoted military men. Of the 3 not attested in consular commands, the careers of 2 (Priscus and Maximus) are a complete mystery, while Proculus is attested in two consular civil posts. In fact several of Trajan's legates (with their careers fully known) had little or no military experience. Calvisius Ruso became a consular legate after being proconsul of Asia and holding no praetorian posts at all. Neratius Priscus became legate of Pannonia, although his only praetorian post was prefect of the public treasury.⁴⁴ The predominantly civil careers of Antius Iulius Quadratus and L. Catilius Severus have been discussed above.

In view of the contention that the tenure of posts in senatorial provinces did not indicate the likelihood of future military commands,⁴⁵ it is interesting to note that, although only 2 of Trajan's legates are known to have served as praetorian proconsul or legate of a praetorian proconsul (nos. 18, 19), one of these is Quadratus Bassus, possibly the most distinguished commander of the reign. Moreover, as the imperial praetorian provinces were naturally more prestigious than those of the Senate, it is reasonable that, normally, men whom the emperor favoured (not necessarily for military ability) were reserved for the former, and did not let their names go forward for sortition. After this an emperor would prefer to employ in the higher posts men whom he knew, rather than those advanced by sortition.

The examination of the consular legates of Trajan's reign has thus tended to confirm the evidence of the list of 73 senators. Although most consular legates certainly held some military praetorian post, either an armed province, or (more often) the legateship of a legion, only about one quarter of them held both.⁴⁶ And, as will be suggested below, the military experience to be gained in these posts may often not have been great.⁴⁷ Furthermore, it is demonstrable that the number of consular legates who reached their commands after

³⁸ *Tacitus*, 649. Syme's no. 15 is uncertain, since the inscription is very fragmentary and a legateship cannot be restored with confidence. In the following section the numbers in brackets are those used by Syme in App. 14.

³⁹ *PIR*² I 507. And see *Tacitus*, 53. Despite *IGR* 4. 336 (Syme, no. 3), it is only an assumption from Quadratus' career that he was a friend of Trajan.

⁴⁰ Only Antius Iulius Quadratus (see n. 39) is known definitely not to have commanded a legion.

⁴¹ C. P. Jones, *JRS* 60 (1970), 98 argues for Sosius Senecio

⁴² *Tacitus*, App. 16. Those attested in consular provinces: Iulius Quadratus Bassus, L. Minicius Natalis, Pompeius Falco, Catilius Severus.

⁴³ *Tacitus*, 243.

⁴⁴ Ruso—*PIR*² C 350; Neratius Priscus—*ILS* 1034, and see Syme, *Hermes* 85 (1957), 480.

⁴⁵ See *Tacitus*, 67, n. 5; E. Birley, *o.c.* (n. 1), 198-9; W. Eck *Epig. Stud.* 9 (1972), 24 f. See below p. 24.

⁴⁶ See below, n. 61.

⁴⁷ pp. 19 f.

holding only two praetorian posts, viz. a legionary legateship and the command of a province (armed or unarmed), was strikingly small. In general, neither of these posts was a necessary condition of advancement to the great commands. It is of course reasonable that the tenure of a praetorian province was seen as an indication of imperial favour that would also confer the consulate. Thus Agricola held Aquitania with 'spes consulatus'.⁴⁸ The governorship of such provinces was after all one of the most prestigious posts which a man could hold in the praetorian career. It is quite another matter to say that it was a necessary or even regular part of the career of 'predestined *virii militares*'.⁴⁹ Hence, while it may be a plausible hypothesis that individuals on occasion placed emphasis on the military aspects of the praetorian career, and, with the emperor's approval, brought special expertise to the tenure of a consular command, it is not possible to speak of a systematic attempt to promote such men, or of a class of military men with a distinctive career.

II

The second part of the accepted definition requires that 'virii militares' were hurried on to an early consulate so that they could hold the important commands as quickly as possible. They should receive the consulate at 37 or 38, the norm being about 42. The evidence for an investigation of this question is disappointingly slight. J. Morris has argued that the ages of about 10% (180 names) of all known consuls can be established.⁵⁰ Even this may be too generous, since the ages of several of these men can be ascertained only on the hypothesis that the offices of *quaestor* or *tribunus plebis* were held 'suo anno', i.e. in the first year in which a senator was entitled to hold them. It is by no means certain that this assumption is valid in every case. What is more, even if a man did reach the consulate quickly, it is often difficult to prove why he did so. It need not be due to his reputed merits in war.

Professor Syme names six senators to exemplify the tendency for 'virii militares' to receive an early consulate:—Agricola, Larcus Priscus, Iulius Proculus, Pompeius Falco, Quadratus Bassus, L. Minicius Natalis.⁵¹ Agricola was consul at 36. But this can be explained in terms other than the rapid advancement of a 'vir militaris'. Agricola was well trusted by the new regime. Mucianus gave him a special assignment in 69, and Tacitus says that he was quick to go over to Vespasian's side.⁵² It is possible that Agricola was an early partisan of the emperor, and therefore in line for speedy promotion. Furthermore, as Morris points out, Agricola was adlected 'inter patricios' in 73 (at the age of 32) and was rewarded with the consulate (normally at 32 for patricians) at 36. This can be seen rather as a delayed patrician consulate, because he was not yet of patrician rank when it would have befallen him.⁵³

Iulius Proculus and Pompeius Falco were consul at 38. But both these ages are calculated on the assumption noted above, and cannot therefore be regarded as certain. Proculus, in any case, is not attested in a consular province; he held two civil posts after his consulate and on no definition can be called a 'vir militaris'. Falco, if he became consul at 38, did not necessarily owe this to his reputed military ability. It may be explained on the hypothesis that 'annus coeptus' and the 'ius trium liberorum' have reduced the normal age.⁵⁴ Of the other three men, Larcus Priscus is not recorded in any consular post, and there is no certain evidence for the consular age of Bassus and Natalis.

The other evidence for consular legates in general indicates that most were over 40 when they became consul. It appears that few held offices in the *cursus* before they were legally eligible. This means that if, for example, the dates of a man's consulate and quaestorship are known, one can determine his minimum possible age at the consulate; and that is sufficient for the present enquiry. On this basis the age of 21 consular legates can be calculated securely enough to make investigation worth while. 14 held the consulate

⁴⁸ Tac., *Ag.* 9. 1.

⁴⁹ For the phrase, cf. Syme, *JRS* 48 (1958), 2.

⁵⁰ *Listy Filologické* 87 (1964), 316. There are about 1,800 known consuls.

⁵¹ Tacitus, 650—the first five in this list are classi-

fied by Syme as 'virii militares'. To which add Agricola (p. 656).

⁵² *Ag.* 7. 5 and 7. 3.

⁵³ o.c. (n. 50), 322.

⁵⁴ On these privileges see Morris, o.c. (n. 50), 317.

at about the normal age; some were much older.⁵⁵ Ummidius Quadratus was c. 50, Verginius Rufus was 48, Staius Priscus, who began his career as an *eques*, was probably over 50; P. Mummius Sisenna was about 48. Calvisius Ruso and Antius Iulius Quadratus were fairly elderly before their consular commands under Trajan. Most of the seven⁵⁶ who had an early consulate can be satisfactorily explained in terms other than the deliberate advancement of the military man. Vitellius had illustrious ancestry and Galba was patrician—sufficient reason for their early consulates. Trajan too was patrician; the exceptionally early tenure of the consulate by Hadrian can be accounted for by his family connection with Trajan. Q. Veranius received his consulate as a reward, but not necessarily for military activity.⁵⁷ The conclusion is clear. Where evidence offers, neither the so-called 'viri militares' nor consular legates in general received early consulates. In fact it was normally the men of high birth who held the consulship at an early age, and they tended not to command armies.⁵⁸

It has been shown that the two central tenets of the 'viri militares' doctrine, viz. the tenure of only two praetorian posts, and an early consulate, are not really supported by the available evidence. The examination of the careers of consular legates (70–235) suggests very different conclusions. Indeed the accepted doctrine has an element of paradox. The object (it is claimed) was to produce quickly men of experience and ability for consular commands. But the more quickly a man is promoted, the fewer posts he will hold and the less experience he will have. If a man were being specially groomed for the duties of commanding an army in a consular province, one might expect that he should serve in two or three legionary legateships or armed praetorian provinces. In fact, iterated legionary commands are very rare,⁵⁹ and there are only three examples of the tenure of two praetorian provinces.⁶⁰ It is remarkably difficult to find a purely military emphasis in the praetorian career of most consular legates. Indeed, it is precisely those men who held several military and civil praetorian posts who would be best suited for the duties of a consular legate. For the legate must be capable of dealing with the army in his province and fulfilling the normal civil duties which pertained to his office.

III

If one assumes that proved military ability was a major criterion in the appointment of a consular legate, it is necessary to presuppose that the legates had acquired good military experience in previous posts. But the military tribunate, a legionary command and the command of an armed praetorian province were the only military posts in the *cursus*. About 75% of senators would arrive in a consular province with service in only two military posts, the tribunate and one of the other two available. For only 20 out of the 73 hold both a legionary command and an armed praetorian province.⁶¹ Only 3 held two legionary commands and a military province.⁶² This being so, what military experience would be obtained by a senator who served as *tribunus militum*, and in one or both of the two regular praetorian military posts open to him? Was there any systematic attempt to prepare men in these posts for higher commands?

⁵⁵ Some of the men in this list are not recorded in any praetorian posts and are not contained in the sample of 73. A few of them date from before 70. The 14 are: Ummidius Quadratus (over 50); Vespasian (41), Verginius Rufus (48); Corellius Rufus (c. 42); L. Iulius Ursus Servianus (c. 42); Rutilius Gallicus (c. 42); Glitius Agricola (42); P. Mummius Sisenna Rutilianus (c. 41); Claudius Maximus (over 43); M. Staius Priscus (over 50); Didius Iulianus (41); P. Helvius Pertinax (48); L. Septimius Severus (43); P. Mummius Sisenna (c. 48).

⁵⁶ Those cited in the text and Plautius Silvanus Aelianus (*PIR*¹ P 363), Iulius Frontinus (*PIR*² I 322).

⁵⁷ A. E. Gordon, *Quintus Veranius, Consul A.D. 49* (1952), 246–54.

⁵⁸ For example, between 96/7 and 138/9, of the 60 men who held datable consular legateships, only

5 had been *consules ordinarii*: Trajan (91); Cornelius Palma and Sosius Senecio (99); P. Mummius Sisenna (133); Calpurnius Artilianus (135). Only 1 is known to have been of consular family—Trajan. Evidence in W. Eck, *Senatoren von Vespasian bis Hadrian* (1970).

⁵⁹ Nos. 14, 15, 33, 56, 65, 67.
⁶⁰ Possibly Pompeius Falco (*ILS* 1035–6); *CIL* 3. 254; Iunius Faustinus Postumianus—*PIR*² I 751.

⁶¹ Nos. 1(?), 2, 8, 16, 24, 29, 31, 32, 33, 36, 42, 43, 45, 49, 50, 53, 56, 59, 64, 65. It should be noted that Hadrian (no. 1) had an unusual career, being *comes* of Trajan in Dacia when he was still *quaestor*, and legate of a legion when still holding the office of *praetor*. His appointments may owe more to the desirability of placing a kinsman and friend in militarily important posts, than to the needs of the administration. Nos. 14 and 54 are doubtful.

⁶² Nos. 33, 56, 65.

(i) Professor E. Birley claimed that 'the strongest candidate for military commands' started his career in certain posts of the XXvirate.⁶³ But it is surely impossible to suppose that at an age when they had never seen an army or performed any public service, young men were marked out as great generals of the future. Tenure of a certain XXvirate office may indicate imperial favour towards a young man's family; it cannot indicate that he was expected to become a consular legate.

(ii) The fundamental problem about the military tribunate is the length of tenure. If it lasted for only one year it could not provide much training for the nascent general. Professor Birley argued for a tenure of more than one year on the grounds that there were about 27 posts available for a *laticlavus* and only 20 candidates every year in the XXvirate.⁶⁴ But, (a) it is not necessary to believe that every legion had a *laticlavus* in service all the time; (b) it is possible to argue that any tribune of senatorial birth was a *laticlavus*, not that each legion had to have one and only one *laticlavus*. Now, Pliny speaks of a six-months equestrian tribunate (*sestris*), as being in the governor's power to bestow.⁶⁵ The term *sestris* suggests that the normal tenure was one year,⁶⁶ and the senatorial tribunate can probably be taken as comparable to the equestrian in this respect. Very few tribunes are known to have served as tribune in more than one legion, as e.g. Hadrian served in three.⁶⁷ However it might be argued that some men served a second term in the same legion, and it must be admitted that no certain solution to the problem is attainable. And so it is unsafe to use the length of tenure as an argument for or against the amount of military experience the tribunate imparted. Other evidence must be examined.

Now, the tribunate was no doubt intended to give young men some military experience. Augustus believed that they should not be 'expers castrorum'.⁶⁸ Pliny says that in the tribunate the young learnt 'imperare parendo, duces agere dum sequuntur'.⁶⁹ But all this may mean no more than that a gentleman should at least have seen an army before entering the Senate. Dio says of one Iulius Calvester, *κεχιλαρχηκῶς ἐς βουλευίας ἐλπίδα*.⁷⁰ Thus the military tribunate could be seen merely as a means of preparing a young man for membership of the Senate. Statius, writing about the tribunate of Crispinus, the son of Vettius Bolanus, says, 'He who opens the way for you to the eagles and the camp, will also grant that you hold all the ranks of office, be surrounded by the proud *fascēs* and sit upon your father's curule chair'.⁷¹ Crispinus, who is only 16 years old, is expected to become a great soldier, but his tribunate is seen as the first step to future honours in the whole sphere of Roman civil life, not as a specifically military training: 'En! ingens reserat tibi limen honorum Caesar et Ausonii committit munia ferri'. When Statius concludes, 'Vade alacer maioraque disce mereri', he means a distinguished career in all the offices of the Roman state. Furthermore, it is known from Pliny that a good performance in the tribunate could help a man when he sought higher civil offices.⁷²

There is no sign of formal training in the post. It depended on the individual what he made of it. Pliny spent some of his time auditing the accounts of the *auxilia* in Syria.⁷³ Trajan, on the other hand, was alleged to have spent ten years as tribune.⁷⁴ Pliny's *Panegyric* is not the most reliable of sources for the details of Trajan's career, and we may reasonably doubt that the young Trajan was quite as enthusiastic as this.⁷⁵ That is not to deny that some men who were attracted to the military arts, would seek to benefit as much as possible from their tribunate. Agricola, when tribune in Britain, got to know the army and the province. But Tacitus thought this worth mentioning—for many young men

⁶³ o.c. (n. 1), 204 f.

⁶⁴ o.c. (n. 1), 200-1.

⁶⁵ *Ep.* 4. 4. 2. See A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny* (1966), 269.

⁶⁶ The Thorigny inscription (H. G. Pflaum, *Le Marbre de Thorigny* (1948), 26 ff.) records that Sollemnis received a 'sestris' post, apparently at half pay. His pay was 25,000 HS; if it can be assumed that the full equestrian tribunate brought 50,000, this would fit in well with the lowest procuratorial salary.

⁶⁷ *ILS* 308; 1061 (no. 44); L. Marius Maximus (no. 42).

⁶⁸ Suet., *Aug.* 38. 2.

⁶⁹ *Ep.* 8. 14. 4 f.

⁷⁰ 67. 11. 4.

⁷¹ *Silv.* 5. 2. 164 f., 173, 180. Note that lines 8-9 refer only to the start of service in the first military post, i.e. the tribunate, not the 'opening of a soldier's career' as Mozley translates (*Loeb*, p. 289).

⁷² *Ep.* 3. 20. 5, 'testes et laudatores dabat, vel eum sub quo militaverat'. This is for the praetorship.

⁷³ *Ep.* 7. 31. 1. For the duties of the post in general see *Dig.* 49. 16. 12. 2.

⁷⁴ Plin., *Pan.* 15. 3.

⁷⁵ Tacitus, 31.

turned their tribunate into a debauch.⁷⁶ Perhaps the enthusiastic tribune was not very common. Certainly, some legates preferred as tribune not dour soldiers, but learned and elegant companions.⁷⁷ Finally, if there were no formal training, it stands to reason that the military experience to be gained in this post would depend on the incidence of wars. Obviously that could not be predicted, and though the needs of frontier defence were perhaps a frequent problem, in time of general peace the military experience gained would perhaps be minimal.

(iii) The same consideration applies to the legionary commands and the armed praetorian provinces. In time of peace, how could military experience be gained? Of prime importance is the length of tenure of the *legatus legionis* post. G. Alföldy, from a study of the Rhine armies, suggested 2–3 years.⁷⁸ But there are vast gaps in the *Fasti*, and four of his five ' certain ' cases may have a tenure of only 1–2 years.⁷⁹ However, in the few cases cited by Ritterling in *RE*, where definite evidence exists, tenure is certainly more than one year, e.g. Titus, Aurelius Fulvus, Spicius Cerialis and T. Iulius Maximus all hold a legionary command for at least three years; Fulvus held it for about five.⁸⁰ And as no evidence suggests annual tenure as a rule, it may be plausibly suggested, but not proved, that the norm was about two or three years. That may be long enough to learn the art of soldiering, but it would depend on the individual and the circumstances. There are perhaps three relevant considerations:

(a) Although it was probably normal from the mid-first century for the post of *legatus legionis* to be filled by men of praetorian rank, as late as 97 it could still be held by a senator of quaestorian status.⁸¹ Apparently it was not the sole preserve of ex-praetors until the second century. Even then it was not regarded as essential for a consular commander. Carus Peto, appointed as legionary legate by Hadrian, declined the post (' a cuius cura se excusavit '), but became legate of Upper Germany under Pius.⁸² The inscription of a third-century consular legate has ' iuridicus vice legionis ', implying that he had omitted the post.⁸³ The language of these examples may suggest that the omission was abnormal. But out of the 73 men in the list, at least 13 did not hold the post, i.e. about 18%.⁸⁴ Notable examples are Salvius Iulianus and Dasumius Tullius Tuscus, who each governed two consular provinces without having been legate of a legion.⁸⁵ It seems that this post cannot be an essential part of any preparation of men for consular commands.

(b) The post had formal military responsibilities, and was potentially very important, as can be seen from the vital role which fell to Cerialis in the rebellion of Boudicca.⁸⁶ Agricola himself served in Britain in the long war against the Brigantes.⁸⁷ Vettius Valens, Arrian's legate in Cappadocia in the time of Hadrian, commanded the right wing in the battle against the Alani.⁸⁸ The war against the Jews in 66–70 provided great scope for the legionary legates to acquire military experience.⁸⁹ All these examples depended on the situation and the willingness of the legate to extend responsibility.⁹⁰ There is no sign of any formal training or a regular test of the legionary commander's abilities. When Cerialis placed Agricola in charge of small bodies of troops, and then larger, depending on the outcome,⁹¹ it was essentially an informal exercise of his personal discretion. Presumably governors sent reports to the emperor on the general competence of their officers. But if

⁷⁶ *Ag.* 5. 2.

⁷⁷ Observe Pliny's recommendation of Voconius Romanus to a consular commander—*Ep.* 2. 13. 6 ff.; cf. 8. 23. 5.

⁷⁸ *Epig. Stud.* 3 (1967), 85.

⁷⁹ Antistius Rusticus, 79–81; L. Munatius Gallus, 98–9; Tullius Varro 122–3/4; M. Priscus Plarianus, 122–3 or 123–4; Cn. Iunior Iustus, 234–5.

⁸⁰ *RE*, s.v. 'legio', cols. 1529, 1537, 1546 f. Titus served in Iudaea from 66–9.

⁸¹ *ILS* 1055—the son of Larcus Lepidus, who was himself a legionary legate of quaestorian rank under Vespasian (*ILS* 987). Corbulo's son-in-law was legate of quaestorian rank under Nero (*Tac.*, *A* 15. 28. 3). Nero indeed appointed to legionary commands men beaten in the elections for the praetorship (*A* 14. 28).

⁸² *ILS* 1071.

⁸³ *AE* 1957. 161.

⁸⁴ See above, n. 13.

⁸⁵ *ILS* 8973; 1081. This is not a phenomenon of the reign of Pius. Cf. nos. 10 and 34 under Trajan.

⁸⁶ *Tac.*, *A* 14. 32–3. This was not a distinguished performance.

⁸⁷ *Tac.*, *Ag.* 8. 2 f.

⁸⁸ Ἐκτάξις κατὰ Ἀλανῶν 5; 24.

⁸⁹ e.g. Josephus, *BJ* 2. 510; 3. 289; 6. 131 f.; 6. 237.

⁹⁰ Tacitus thought it worth mentioning that Agricola avoided all ' contentio ' with his colleagues (9. 5), and did not stand in the way of his subordinates' glory (22. 4). Perhaps this was not very common, cf. 8. 2.

⁹¹ See n. 87.

the *legatus legionis* had been called on to do little of note in warfare, such reports cannot have included much about his military ability. Possibly, only if he had proved himself manifestly unsuitable for higher posts, would his future be jeopardized. Even a disastrous legionary legateship need not impair a man's career. Cerialis found his disgraceful conduct in Britain no impediment to his subsequent advancement. He was a relative of Vespasian.⁹²

(c) It should be stressed that the legionary legate had certain administrative duties, which no doubt figured prominently in any assessment of his character and ability. Formally the *legatus legionis* was the governor's deputy, and assumed complete control of the province in his absence. Hence C. Iulius Severus, legate of *IV Scythica*, conducted the affairs of Syria in the absence of the legate to deal with the Jewish revolt in 135.⁹³ C. Vettius Sabinianus was designated 'Leg. XIII Gem. cum iurisdictione Pan. Sup.'⁹⁴ It seems that he was given jurisdiction on the death of, or during the absence of the governor on operations outside the province. These examples show that the legionary legate was regarded as the natural choice to assume the jurisdiction of a governor who could no longer exercise it. No doubt such appointments were unusual, but they indicate that the legionary legateship was not considered in purely military terms. An interesting question arises. Could *legati Augusti* delegate legal jurisdiction to their *legati legionum*? Now, it seems clear that legates of proconsuls exercised only mandated jurisdiction.⁹⁵ Hence, although they have *imperium* (implied in the title 'pro praetore'), they appear to have no jurisdiction of their own. In the same way, since it can be argued that the emperor was theoretically proconsul of his provinces, it is plausible to suppose that *legati Augusti pro praetore*, although, like the *legati proconsulum*, having *imperium*,⁹⁶ would receive only mandated jurisdiction, and could not therefore delegate it to their *legati legionum*, as Roman law held that mandated jurisdiction could not in turn be mandated to another.⁹⁷

However, this runs contrary to the accepted view that *imperium*, although it is not the only source of jurisdiction, is by its own nature one such source.⁹⁸ And it would be an anomaly if consular legates could not delegate, since proconsuls and the Prefect of Egypt had this right.⁹⁹ Indeed it is hard to see how they could avoid it. It is true that *iuridici* are known to have been appointed in Britain and Spain. But this does not mean that legionary legates were thought unsuitable for judicial duties. In Britain, when *iuridici* were first appointed, probably under the Flavians,¹⁰⁰ the three or four legionary legates and their legions were stationed in the North and West.¹⁰¹ The most civilized area, which presumably gave rise to most litigation, was in the South and East. The governor himself will have been busy with military matters during the policy of expansion followed between 70 and the recall of Agricola; even during the winter he would be occupied with the building of forts and the provision of supplies. Perhaps he and his legionary legates had little time for civil duties. Spain was a large and disparate province which perhaps imposed too many burdens on the governor and single legionary legate. It is true that from the mid-second century the *iuridicus* was styled 'per Asturiam et Gallaeciam',¹⁰² which is precisely where the legion was stationed. But this should not be taken to mean that the legate of the legion was thought unsuitable for legal duties. For under Severus several *iuridici* combined their jurisdiction with the command of the legion.¹⁰³ Other consular legates must have required assistance with their legal duties, especially in a civilized and presumably litigious province like Syria, where apparently there was no *iuridicus*. In this province the legions were evenly spaced throughout the interior and their legates cannot often have been fully occupied with military duties. It is natural to suppose that on many occasions the governor

⁹² *RE* 19. 1138, 'Petilius' (8). And note the case of Funisulanus Vettonianus (*PIR*² F 570), who was legate with Caesennius Paetus at Rhandaia, and went on to govern three consular provinces under the Flavians.

⁹³ *ILS* 8826 = *IGR* 3. 174; cf. *ILS* 1055 (see Syme, *Tacitus*, 631); cf. Josephus, *B \ddot{J}* 7. 58.

⁹⁴ *AE* 1920. 45.

⁹⁵ *D* 1. 16. 13 (Pomponius); 1. 16. 4. 6 (Ulpian); 1. 16. 5 (Ulpian); 16. 6. pr.-2. Interpolation is unlikely, since in the fifth and sixth centuries there were no proconsuls and the question had no practical relevance.

I am particularly indebted to Professor Brunt for advice on the following section.

⁹⁶ Implied again in their title 'pro praetore'.

⁹⁷ *D* 1. 21. 5. pr. (Paul); 2. 1. 5 (Iulianus).

⁹⁸ Jolowicz, *Historical Introduction to the Study of Roman Law*³, ed. Nicholas (1971), 47, n. 9.

⁹⁹ *D* 1. 17 (Ulpian) for the Prefect of Egypt. For proconsuls, see n. 95.

¹⁰⁰ cf. *ILS* 1011 and 1015.

¹⁰¹ cf. Ogilvie and Richmond, o.c. (n. 7), 76 f.

¹⁰² G. Alföldy, *Fasti Hispanienses* (1969), 81 f.

¹⁰³ Alföldy, o.c. 90, 94, 97.

must have delegated jurisdiction to his legionary legates. In addition, the *iuridici* of praetorian status show that it was thought desirable, at least on some occasions, to use men of high status to decide important cases.¹⁰⁴ In that event the legionary legates would be particularly suitable and readily available in time of peace. Indeed it may be that *iuridici* were appointed in provinces where the *legati legionis* were least likely to be able to cope, and where the level of judicial activity justified the appointment of a separate official.

Finally, the evidence for the legionary legate's *officium* does not exclude the possibility that he exercised legal jurisdiction. Domaszewski held that the *legatus legionis* was accompanied by none of the officials normally appointed for capital jurisdiction.¹⁰⁵ But in the first place, it is not necessary to suppose that the legionary legate exercised capital jurisdiction (*legati proconsulum* did not).¹⁰⁶ Secondly, the evidence for the *commentarienses* of provincial governors is very poor, and therefore it need not be significant if *legati legionis* are found with none.¹⁰⁷ In fact several inscriptions seem to show *commentarienses* of a legion, and it is merely an assumption of scholars that these officials really belonged to the consular legate.¹⁰⁸ The one inscription that does mention a 'commentariensis consularis leg. VII Cl. Prov. Moes. Sup.',¹⁰⁹ may indicate only that a legionary could be seconded to serve in the governor's *officium*. It is reasonable to conclude that the evidence does not confute, and to some extent supports, a contention that *legati legionis* exercised delegated legal jurisdiction as part of their duties. If this is so, it is a further indication that they were not expected to be mere soldiers. Obviously the first duty of the legionary legate was to command his legion and see to its needs. But he might also be required to fulfil important civil responsibilities, which could perhaps form a significant part of his activities in time of peace. Similarly, although the governor of an armed praetorian province must have devoted much of his time to supervision of the frontiers, at least in time of peace he could hardly avoid the routine civil duties of a provincial governor. In many cases both these posts will have contributed little to the military experience of the prospective consular legate.

(iv) It is necessary at this point to turn in more detail to the question of the praetorian military provinces. Is it possible to trace any pattern of promotion or planned attempts to give experience to consular legates? Prosopographers have argued for a close correlation between the praetorian province of Pannonia Inferior and the consular province, and similarly between Dacia Superior and Moesia.¹¹⁰ J. Fitz believed in a 'pannonisches Karriereschema' that saw the pattern—*leg. leg.* in Pannonia, *leg. Aug. pr. pr.* in Pannonia Inf., consul, *leg. Aug. pr. pr.* in Pannonia Superior (perhaps preceded by another Danubian province). He named only eight examples that could be taken to justify this elaborate idea.¹¹¹ Of these Attius Macro is not attested in a consular province. No legionary legateship is attested for Iallius Bassus, and Neratius Priscus almost certainly did not hold this post in his career. Claudius Claudianus held his legionary command in Dacia, Pontius Laelianus Larcius Sabinus perhaps in Germany. Claudius Maximus held a legionary legateship in Pannonia, and subsequently governed the praetorian and then the consular province. But after his legionary command he was *iuridicus pr. pr. utriusque Pannoniae* and was also curator of the *Via Aurelia* in his praetorian career. After his consulate he was *curator aed. sac.*¹¹² This hardly suggests the rapid advancement of the man specially trained for military duties in Pannonia. Furthermore, C. Vettius Sabinianus, although technically complying with Fitz's scheme, was seconded from his legionary command to exercise purely judicial duties in Pannonia. And his long praetorian career contained six

¹⁰⁴ In the republic men to whom jurisdiction was delegated did not have to be high officials, cf. Mommsen, *Staatsrecht* 1, 231, n. 3; 232, n. 3.

¹⁰⁵ *Die Rangordnung des römischen Heeres* (ed. B. Dobson, 1967), 73.

¹⁰⁶ *D* 1. 16. 6 pr. Indeed there is no way of telling if the suggested jurisdiction of the *legatus legionis* was *contentiosa* or *voluntaria*.

¹⁰⁷ Domaszewski, o.c. (n. 105), 31 lists only 10 cases where the *commentarienses* of a provincial governor are known.

¹⁰⁸ *CIL* 2. 4122; 3. 4452; *ILS* 2383.

¹⁰⁹ Von Premerstein, *RE* s.v. *a comment.* (col. 762. 7).

¹¹⁰ Birley, *Carnuntum Jahrb.* 3 (1957), 7-8; Syme, *Hist.* 14 (1965), 357; J. Fitz, o.c. (n. 3).

¹¹¹ o.c. (1961), 193-4; (1963), 308, 317. Fitz originally confined his scheme to time of war, but he later dropped this qualification (1963, 308).

¹¹² *ILS* 1062. This acephalous inscription is usually associated with Statilius Maximus. But Syme, o.c. (n. 110), 352 f.) strongly supports Fitz's suggestion that it should be referred to Claudius Maximus. The *iuridicus* post is exceptional, probably being held under L. Aelius Caesar.

civilian posts.¹¹³ This leaves only Nonius Macrinus from Fitz's 8 examples. And so, out of 15 legates of Pannonia Inferior up to 214 whose careers are known,¹¹⁴ only 3 even technically comply with his ideas, and 2 of these in no way support his contentions. Fitz comments on his evidence, 'deren kleine Anzahl durch ihre Einstimmigkeit gewissermassen aufgewogen wird'.¹¹⁵ This is hardly accurate, or acceptable in method. Fitz's approach may appear extreme, and Professor Syme has branded it as 'far too schematic'.¹¹⁶ There is more support, however, among scholars for the view that legates of Pannonia Inferior normally progressed to the consular province.¹¹⁷ This cannot be maintained. Between 103-235, there are 21 governors attested in Pannonia Superior.¹¹⁸ The pre-consular career of 14 of these is known in sufficient detail. 6 certainly, and possibly 7, had previously served in Pannonia Inferior. 2 of the 6 certain cases had governed other consular provinces before returning to Pannonia.¹¹⁹ In fact Iallius Bassus was legate of Pannonia Superior about 11 years after governing the lower province. After that interval, this cannot be significant. 7, or possibly 8, men certainly did not hold Pannonia Inferior before their legateship in the consular province.¹²⁰ Among these, L. Aelius Caesar, who governed both provinces together, Dasumius Tullius Tuscus and Cassius Dio had no military experience whatever before entering the province. Septimius Severus had held only one military post, the legionary legateship—in Syria in time of peace. These figures suggest that it is impossible to believe in any deliberate or consistent policy of preparing future legates of Pannonia Superior through the tenure of the lower province.

In the case of Dacia Superior and its supposed correlation with the two Moesian provinces, there is not enough evidence to allow any convincing conclusions. From 120-61 there are 10 legates known by name. Only 5 of these are recorded in any subsequent posts. Of the 5, 3 proceeded to either Moesia Superior or Inferior, 2, so far as is known, never entered these provinces.¹²¹

Both these illustrations demonstrate how weakly-based are the arguments for patterns of promotion in the careers of consular legates. In fact the word 'career' is itself misleading, with its connotations of service in one post for a continuous span of years. This is not to deny that sometimes for a particular post men were selected for known experience in military affairs. For example, it seems that during the long wars in Marcus' reign men who had held praetorian posts in the critical Northern provinces frequently returned there after the consulate, and were moved round to various points of crisis, e.g. Postumius Aquilinus, Claudius Fronto, C. Vettius Sabinianus, Servilius Fabianus Maximus, Iallius Bassus, Helvius Pertinax.¹²² Such appointments were only common sense in time of military crisis. But it is essential to note that most of these men tended to hold one or more of the usual consular civil posts before proceeding to the great commands. Even Claudius Fronto, in his busy military career spent in the East and on the Danube, had time to be *curator operum publicorum*.¹²³ Many of the *equites* who were adlected into the Senate on this period, and pursued notable military careers, still held either praetorian or consular civil posts.¹²⁴ The outstanding example is C. Vettius Sabinianus, whose career has been discussed above. It is worth noting in addition that he held several special assignments in the Danube area, earning military decorations. But after his consulship in 175, he became curator of Puteoli and *curator operum publicorum* before proceeding to Tres Daciae c. 180.¹²⁵

¹¹³ See n. 94.

¹¹⁴ Evidence in Fitz, o.c., 1963 (n. 3); cf. Syme, *Danubian Papers*, 225; A. Dobó, *Die Verwaltung der römischen Provinz Pannonien von Augustus bis Diocletianus* (1968).

¹¹⁵ op. cit., 1961, p. 195.

¹¹⁶ *Danubian Papers*, p. 188, 190, referring in the first instance to his treatment of the legates of Lower Moesia.

¹¹⁷ See n. 110.

¹¹⁸ Evidence in W. Reidinger, *Die Statthalter des ungeteilten Pannoniens und Oberpannoniens* (1956). And see n. 138.

¹¹⁹ Six certain cases: nos. 33, 48, 49, 54, 64, and M. Iallius Bassus. Uncertain case: Claudius Claudianus (no. 14) who perhaps governed both

provinces together. Those who held other posts before returning to Pannonia: no. 33 and Iallius Bassus.

¹²⁰ Nos. 21, 23, 45, 61, Commodus Orfitianus, L. Aelius Caesar, Cassius Dio. The doubtful case: Claudianus (no. 14).

¹²¹ Evidence in A. Stein, o.c. (n. 26), 19 f. Those who proceed to Moesia: nos. 20, 36, 65. Those who do not: 50, 59.

¹²² Nos. 56, 15, 33, 62, 28. For Bassus see *PIR*² I 4.

¹²³ *ILS* 1097-98 record his remarkable career, 'ad postremum pro r.p. fortiter pugnans ceciderit.'

¹²⁴ Catonius Vindex (no. 12); C. Iulius Vettius Sabinianus (no. 33); Staius Priscus (no. 65).

¹²⁵ See n. 94.

In conclusion a few general remarks on the nature of the praetorian career are requisite. It can be said that those who sought the honour of holding praetorian posts also accepted certain obligations—to serve the emperor in whatever capacity he demanded. It seems clear that emperors expected senators of praetorian rank who had their favour, to assume responsibility in any aspect of the administration. The progress of a man's career would depend on a great variety of factors such as social status, patronage and the number of posts to be filled. The great diversity of praetorian careers suggests strongly that the Romans had little idea of specialized or carefully planned careers, designed to give them specific experience in certain areas of public service. Of the senators in this study 44 held both civil and military posts in their praetorian career. Only 22 men devoted a career entirely to civil or military duties, and even here there is little trace of a purely military specialization—of the 22 examples, 9 held civil posts alone.¹²⁶ In addition 2 men reached a consular province without holding any praetorian office.¹²⁷ This means that about 15% of the consular legates in the list arrived in their commands without having held any praetorian military post.¹²⁸ Furthermore, 30 senators held regular posts in Rome, Italy and the provinces, while 36 spent their career entirely in Rome and Italy or the provinces.¹²⁹ There is little sign here of a deliberate attempt to give future consular legates either general or specialist experience for the posts that they might hold in Rome and the provinces after their consulate. Finally, a variety of posts could convey a senator to the consulate. The prefecture of the public treasury, the prefecture of the corn dole, curatorships, legionary legateships and praetorian provinces all served as a path to this honour. Their relative importance has been discussed above.¹³⁰

In general, there are no clearly discernible patterns of promotion. Out of the 73 senators in the list, only a small group of five hold exactly the same combination of praetorian posts.¹³¹ The conclusion should be that there was no systematic rule of promotion via the tenure of certain posts, beyond that imposed by any hierarchical system of offices. This is not as chaotic as it seems. The *cursus* ensured that only men of some standing and prestige were available for these posts, and the emperor could be expected to know something about them. Roman insistence on the rights of seniority and status would ensure that, unofficially at least, certain types of office were normally held at a certain point in the praetorian career. Hence there would be a degree of order and uniformity; and so, usually a man would not be asked to serve as *curator viae* after he had been prefect of the public treasury, or as praetorian proconsul after he had governed an imperial praetorian province.

Finally, there is a real difficulty in making an evaluation and comparison of the careers of those senators who did not reach the consular provinces. For if it could be shown that the praetorian careers of consular legates were completely different from those of all other senators in public service, this might imply that prospective legates were somehow chosen in advance. But the careers of senators who did not serve in consular provinces are hard to identify. Few inscriptions which record a man's career as far as the consulate, or one consular civil post, can be demonstrated to be complete. The subject may have set up the inscription when or just after he was consul; he may have died or fallen from favour before he could take up a consular command. Nevertheless, the following points should be noted. (i) Consular legates occupy c. 51% of the regular praetorian posts available in

¹²⁶ The Appendix sets out the praetorian careers of the legates in the list. It is not intended to give a comprehensive account of the order in which the posts were held. However, under their separate headings, the civil and military posts are listed in order of tenure. Those who hold only civil posts are: nos. 4, 13, 21, 34, 47, 55, 58, 70, 73. Those who hold only military posts: 1, 8, 14, 15, 31, 36, 40, 43, 48, 50, 56, 65, 68. Of the 7 senators not considered in this analysis, 2 held no posts at all (nos. 10, 46), the careers of 2 others are perhaps known incompletely, (nos. 17, 51), 1 is doubtful (no. 54), and 2 are equestrians who held only one praetorian post, but both civil and military offices as *equites* (nos. 12, 28).

¹²⁷ Nos. 10 and 46.

¹²⁸ See n. 126.

¹²⁹ Rome, Italy and the provinces: 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 18, 20, 23, 25, 27, 32, 33, 37, 41, 42, 44, 49, 52, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 72, 73. Rome, Italy or the provinces: 1, 4, 5, 8, 14, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31, 34, 36, 38, 39, 40, 43, 45, 47, 48, 50, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 61, 65, 68, 69, 70, 71. For nos. 10, 12, 17, 28, 46, 51, 54, see n. 126.

¹³⁰ pp. 13 f.

¹³¹ Nos. 1, 31, 36, 43, 50, who all hold a legionary command and a praetorian military province, though not the same province. Nos. 30 and 71 hold a legionary command and a praetorian unarmed province. Nos. 37 and 72 were *legatus legionis* and prefect of the public treasury. Such coincidences between only 2 senators are not significant.

70-235, yet comprise only *c.* 27% of all ex-praetors in the same period.¹³² This may suggest that the careers of consular legates are not typical.¹³³ But the argument is not sound, for a variety of factors would ensure that a high proportion of praetors did not seek further posts in the praetorian career.¹³⁴ Hence, the ex-praetors who occupied *c.* 49% of praetorian posts but did not reach the consular provinces, may have numbered no more than those ex-praetorians who occupied the remaining 51% and did eventually become consular legates. And so, individually, the former would be required to hold about the same number of posts as the latter. (ii) The evidence examined above told strongly against any idea that consular legates were selected early and prepared for their commands through the tenure of certain praetorian posts. This is confirmed by the haphazard nature of their praetorian careers and the lack of a strong military emphasis. It is reasonable to suppose that many senators, when they entered on their praetorian career, had no immediate ambition beyond the consulate. They would not know if they wanted to accept the responsibility of a consular province, and a decision on their future would, at the very earliest, be taken after their legionary command or praetorian governorship. As these posts came at the end of a praetorian career, it follows that there must have been a considerable similarity in the careers of those who eventually went on to a consular province and those who did not. (iii) As noted above, scholars infer from the fact that consular legates rarely hold a praetorian proconsulate that the holders of such posts were not normally destined for military commands.¹³⁵ But the tenure of a praetorian proconsulate shows merely that at the outset of a man's career he did not have the emperor's full favour, and, having served in the less prestigious posts, found it difficult to catch his eye again. It does not indicate that he had been appointed to such a post because he was thought unable or disinclined to command an army. (iv) As the praetorian military provinces were few in number and very prestigious, it can be surmised that an emperor would appoint to these posts men he was reasonably sure would be willing to accept the responsibility of higher posts of any type. In general, it may be concluded that there are no real grounds for supposing that potential consular legates were deliberately given a distinctive praetorian career. It may be of course that men of energy and ambition, who actively desired consular commands, would be more inclined to accept the most demanding posts in their praetorian career.

IV

In the light of the preceding sections it is legitimate to ask what attitude emperors and senators had to the great consular commands. As regards Britain, 34 legates from 47-214 are known by name. 17 hold one or more consular provinces before Britain, 8 hold Britain first, 6 possibly do so, 3 are completely uncertain.¹³⁶ Those who hold Britain first

¹³² In the second century there were perhaps about 70 praetorian posts available every year: 13 praetorian provinces, 8-9 proconsuls, 2 *iuridici*, *c.* 23 *legati legionum*, 2 *praefecti aer. Sat.*, 3 *praefecti aer. mil.*, 2 *praefecti frum. dand.*, 10 (?) *curatores viarum*, 2 (?) *adiutores* of consular *curatores*, an uncertain number of *curatores civitatum*. An average tenure of *c.* 2½ years is assumed for these posts. This produces *c.* 4,600-4,700 available posts in the period. There were perhaps *c.* 800 consular legates in office in 70-235 (see above, n. 8), and the 73 consulars on the list on average each held 3 praetorian posts: hence a total of *c.* 2,400 posts. Between 70-235 there will have been 2,970 praetors (18 × 165). The other figures noted above are very approximate.

¹³³ If we deduct the 800 presumed consular legates from the total number of praetors and if we assume that most ex-praetors continued in the career, *c.* 2,100 men (who never reached consular commands) will be responsible for holding *c.* 2,300 praetorian posts (see above note). This would produce an average of just over one post per man. The average for consular legates is three.

¹³⁴ Men of high birth would pass straight from praetorship to consulship. In the same category can be placed men who gained conspicuous imperial favour; others perhaps fell from the emperor's favour after the praetorship, or were simply disinclined to accept more posts (cf. e.g. Pliny, *Ep.* 10. 12. 2 and 5. 14. 2). Finally, the careers of some would be interrupted by death or illness.

¹³⁵ See n. 45.

¹³⁶ Evidence in A. R. Birley, *Epig. Stud.* 4 (1967), 63. With Britain as first consular post: App. no. 30, and Ostorius Scapula, Q. Veranius, Petronius Turpilianus, Trebellius Maximus, Vettius Bolanus, Iulius Frontinus, P. Mummius Sisenna. With Britain possibly as first consular post: nos. 46, 50, Suetonius Paulinus, Avidius Quietus, Calpurnius Agricola, L. Ulpius Marcellus. Those holding Britain after one or more consular posts: nos. 28, 36, 37, 40, 51, 52, 53, 56, 65, Didius Gallus, Caerelius Priscus, Valerius Pudens, Appius Bradua, Clodius Albinus, Virius Lupus, Alfenus Senecio, Pollienius Auspex. Uncertain: Sallustius Lucullus, Metilius Nepos, Ulpius Marcellus.

belong mainly to the first century. It seems that from the second century an informal convention arose whereby the province was conceived to have a certain status in its own right. More senior consulars would be sent there. But this was never a rule; in the second century P. Mummius Sisenna governed Britain first after his consulate.¹³⁷ It may be significant that the time of the province's greater status does not coincide with that of its greatest military responsibility, surely in the first 40 years after the invasion. By the second century Britain will have reflected more of the influence of Roman civilization. Did the status of a consular province depend more on its level of civilization and the administrative burden it imposed, than on its presumed military responsibility and number of troops?

If the latter considerations predominated, it is hard to see how Upper Pannonia was not the most prestigious of consular provinces. Its military responsibilities were immense; it contained three legions and guarded the approaches to Italy. Furthermore, from the point of an emperor's personal security it was vital, for the governor was best placed of all for an advance on Italy. Surely then it should receive as governor well-trying men of proved competence and loyalty. There are 21 known legates in 103-235; 7 hold the province immediately after the consulate, 6 certainly hold at least one other province first, 8 are doubtful.¹³⁸ Professor Birley contended that the province was normally held first after the consulate, and was of junior status.¹³⁹ It can be seen that so definite a view is untenable. But it is equally true that, if 7 out of 21 legates held Upper Pannonia as their first consular post, it cannot normally have been regarded as the crown of the consular career. It seems reasonable to look for the explanation in the relatively uncivilized nature of a province which had few large urban or cultural centres.¹⁴⁰ Dio, perhaps drawing on his own experiences as legate, was highly critical of the culture of the Pannonians and called them *κακοβιώτατοι ἀνθρώπων*.¹⁴¹

It is precisely the most civilized of the consular provinces, Syria and Hispania Tarraconensis, which appear as the crown of the consular career. There are 22 legates of Hispania Tarraconensis recorded in office from 70-235.¹⁴² Of these only 2 are definitely attested in further consular legateships after Spain—both in Syria. 8 reasonably certainly ended their career as consular legates in Tarraconensis.¹⁴³ On the other hand 9 men are attested as having held at least one consular command before coming to Spain. 2 men had held two commands, another, three.¹⁴⁴ While such statistics cannot be entirely conclusive, they at least suggest that Spain was regarded as a very senior consular province. Yet, with its solitary legion, it could hardly claim great military significance in the second century. But as one of the oldest Roman provinces it was highly civilized and had many civil responsibilities. It was eminently suitable for a Roman gentleman of considerable standing and prestige.

Tacitus says that Syria was 'maioribus reservata'.¹⁴⁵ It appears that this distinguished post required men at the height of their career. Career statistics offer some support (out of 37 known legates from 70-235, 10 probably ended their career in Syria, 4 certainly did

¹³⁷ Birley, o.c. (n. 136), 71.

¹³⁸ Evidence in W. Reidinger, o.c. (n. 118). He lists 22 legates, but Syme, *Danubian Papers*, 185, rejects P. Alfius Maximus. Those holding the province first after the consulate: nos. 14, 45, 48, 49, 54, 61, L. Aelius Caesar. Those who hold Pannonia after at least one other consular province: nos. 21, 23, 33, Iallius Bassus, Commodus Orfitianus, Cassius Dio.

¹³⁹ o.c. (n. 110), 9 f.; A. Mócsy, 'Pannonia', *RE* Supp. 9 (1962), 516-776.

¹⁴⁰ M. Rostovtzeff, *SEHRE*² (1957), 244 f.

¹⁴¹ 49. 36. 2 f. On this passage, cf. F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (1964), 209. It may be argued that Britain was not much more civilized than Pannonia in the second century. But there does seem to have been more urban development in Britain and the process of Romanization seems to have made good progress by the end of the second century. (See S. Frere, *Britannia*² (1974), p. 134, 342 f. and

esp. 344-5). If any case, Britain was hardly regarded as the crown of a legate's career. Out of 20 named legates in 100-214, 6 ended their career in Britain (28, 40, 46, 53, Mummius Sisenna, Valerius Pudens); 4, and perhaps 5 held another consular province (36, 37, 65, Calpurnius Agricola, and perhaps Appius Bradua). Rest uncertain.

¹⁴² Evidence in Alföldy, o.c. (n. 102), 17 f., 202 f., 216 f.

¹⁴³ Those attested in further posts: Cornelius Palma; Aufidius Victorinus. Those ending their career in Spain: Plautius Silvanus Aelianus, M. Arrecinus Clemens, Salvius Iulianus, Vitrasius Pollio, Flavius Titianus, Lollianus Gentianus, Atrius Clonius, (Ti Iulius?) Pollienius Auspex.

¹⁴⁴ Plautius Silvanus Aelianus (1), Valerius Festus (1), Salvius Iulianus (1), Vitrasius Pollio (1), Victorinus (1), *Ignotus* (1), Iunius Postumianus (2), Atrius Clonius (2), Pollienius Auspex (3).

¹⁴⁵ *Ag.* 40. 1.

not),¹⁴⁶ and this statement of Tacitus should be accepted. He had experience of Roman government and ought to have known about such matters. Now, although Syria contained four legions for part of the first century, and three up to the time of Severus, militarily it was not the most important province of the empire. There were three Parthian wars within 100 years in the second century, but two were due to Roman aggression. The military hub of the empire was surely in the Danube lands, at least before the advent of the Persians. There are possibly two reasons for Syria's prestigious position, beyond the number of troops it entailed. (i) It was the most civilized of the armed provinces, and the legate must be competent to deal with vast civil responsibilities. (ii) It was far distant from Rome; the legate would need to make vital decisions without reference to the emperor. And on the borders lay Parthia, virtually the only civilized power on the frontiers of the empire. And so the legate must also be capable of intricate diplomacy with the intelligent envoys of a sophisticated power. Therefore, unless considerations of an emperor's personal security intervened,¹⁴⁷ the post would require men of outstanding seniority and prestige from public service. At the same time, Syria's proximity to Rome's traditionally greatest enemy, and its large army, would impart a true feeling of military grandeur and responsibility to the legate, who could be seen to be fulfilling every aspect of the duties of a Roman senator. It is surely significant for Roman ideas that such provinces as Spain and Syria were seen as the peak of a consular legate's career. What made a province important in the eyes of its governor and the man who appointed him, was not necessarily its troops and military duties, but the whole complex of its administrative demands and obligations, and the prestige to be obtained there.

If good military experience and ability were the main criteria for the appointment of consular commanders, one might expect that men presumed to have these qualities would have long military careers in the consular provinces. It would be desirable for the commanders of Rome's armies to acquire experience of the duties imposed by a major command involving several legions. But only 7 legates out of the 73 are attested in more than two consular provinces.¹⁴⁸ The average tenure of a consular province was *c.* 2½–3 years,¹⁴⁹ and so few consulars would spend more than six years in provincial commands. Men like Funisulanus Vettonianus who governed Dalmatia, Pannonia and Moesia Superior in succession, or Iulius Quadratus Bassus, who was employed continuously in three consular posts from 105 to his death in 117,¹⁵⁰ were the exception rather than the rule. It is a further reason for doubting that emperors systematically hurried certain men through the *cursus* in order that they might hold the consular legateships, if the holders of such posts retired after six years in office. In this context it is misleading to talk of 'military men', 'generals' or 'marshals'.

Why did consular legates rarely hold more than two posts? Two reasons can be suggested. (i) After the consulate there were more consulars than posts of suitable status for them to hold. If one assumes that senators still wanted to command armies, there will have been pressure on emperors to find posts for men of general ability and energy. Senators believed that the meritorious should be given scope to display their talent; and so it was incumbent upon any emperor not to let a few men monopolize the most prestigious posts. (ii) Some emperors at least would be concerned about personal security. It might

¹⁴⁶ Evidence in G. A. Harrer, *Studies in the History of the Roman Province of Syria* (1915); *RE* s.v. 'Syria' (1932); J. F. Gilliam, *AJP* 79 (1958), 225. Those who probably ended their career in Syria: nos. 7, 11, 29, 34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 54, M. Ulpianus Traianus (G. W. Bowersock, *JRS* 63 (1973), 133–5). Those who did not end their career in Syria:—28, 31, Alfenus Senecio (for whom see A. R. Birley, *o.c.* (n. 136), 79–80); Atrius Clonius. No. 27 and Atrius Clonius ended their career in Hispania Tarraconensis.

¹⁴⁷ See below, pp. 26–7.

¹⁴⁸ Those with more than two commands: nos. 25, 28, 31, 36, 37, 65, 72. 26 senators are definitely registered in 2 posts: nos. 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 21, 22, 23, 29, 33, 39, 40, 41, 42, 51, 52, 53, 56, 58, 60, 62, 68, 69 (?), 70. Those italicized reasonably certainly

held only 2 posts. The remaining 40 are registered in one post, but only about one-quarter of these careers is demonstrably complete. The balance of the evidence seems to suggest that the tenure of 2 posts was usual.

¹⁴⁹ This is only a conjecture, but some examples can support it. The legates of Britain are fully known from 43–84. 11 legates in 41 years produces an average of 3.7, or 3.4 if we deduct Agricola's unusually long tenure. Syme in *Danubian Papers*, 216, lists 26 legates of Lower Moesia, 92–162, and notes one gap. This produces 2.5 years for the average tenure. Thomasson lists 37 legates in Numidia *c.* 110–200. His conjectural names might equal the number of gaps in the *Fasti*. This gives an average tenure of 2.7 years.

¹⁵⁰ Nos. 25, 31.

not be advisable to let a senator occupy the same post for a number of years, or gain a close rapport with the armies of the empire.¹⁵¹ In certain reigns the personal trust of the emperor must have been the main criterion in many appointments. Even Syria did not always receive legates of outstanding prestige. An emperor might prefer a dull and unambitious man. According to Dio, Commodus appointed Niger to Syria precisely because he was a mediocrity.¹⁵² In addition one can surmise that some senators were not keen to spend more than six years in the provinces. It was at the centre of power in Rome that influence could be exercised and real power gained.

V

It is reasonable to conclude with some evidence of how the Romans themselves viewed the senatorial career. The tradition of the Republic expected a senator to serve the state in whatever capacity it demanded, and be proficient in it.¹⁵³ That tradition persisted in the empire. Men made their reputation by performing both civil and military functions as required. Hence Pliny's praise of Vestricius Spurinna—' quoad honestum fuit, obiti officia, gessit magistratus, provincias rexit, multoque labore hoc otium meruit'.¹⁵⁴ Similarly Flavius Sabinus earns the praise of Tacitus—' quinque et triginta stipendia in re publica fecerat domi militiaeque clarus'.¹⁵⁵ Significantly, although Tacitus was well aware that Agricola had made his name through the military arts, he stresses that he was well-versed in all the qualities appropriate to a Roman gentleman. His conduct in his civil duties in Aquitania and Britain forms a considerable part of his glory.¹⁵⁶ In the context of Roman society, ideas of specialization and professionalism are largely anachronistic. Of course, as in any society, some men made a name for themselves in certain fields, e.g. the younger Pliny in financial affairs, and Quadratus Bassus in the military arts. Even here it is salutary to remember that Pliny at least went through the motions of holding a military tribunate and that Bassus at one stage had held the unexciting post of legate of a proconsul.

In conclusion, there was no group of specialist ' viri militares ' with a distinctive career and special promotion. The careers of consular legates in general show little marked military emphasis, and there are few signs of any deliberate attempt to prepare them specifically for military commands. The military experience to be gained in the praetorian career and its importance as a criterion in appointments to consular posts have probably been exaggerated. The senatorial career was built around traditional Roman conceptions of office-holding and service of the state. The men who governed the great consular provinces were, in general, all-round amateurs who, although they had often been well tried in a variety of civil and military posts, arrived in their command individually through the operation of numerous variable factors in upper-class life, and the personal trust and favour of the emperor, rather than through any regular plan of promotion. The conclusions are important for showing how one aspect of Roman ' government ' worked—in the appointments to military commands that were vital not only to the security of the empire, but also to the personal survival of the emperor.

Finally, there was no military oligarchy or ' high command ', comprising men of similar career, training, outlook and aspirations. Each post was an individuality and implied no formal position in the emperor's counsels or in any military hierarchy. The legate enjoyed power only as long as he stayed with his army in the province. He would not meet with his colleagues in the consular commands to discuss common interests or concert military policy. In fact the position of the consular legates was strangely paradoxical. Although they were potentially among the most powerful men in the empire, since they could raise revolts with their armies, the fact that they did not form a coherent group reduced the ability of the individual to influence politics. Often the real power lay not in the tenure of a

¹⁵¹ Cf. Tiberius' dilemma, Tac., *A* 1. 80. 2.

¹⁵² 74. 6. 1.

¹⁵³ Cic., *De Off.* 1. 71; 116; 2. 45-9; *Pro Sest.* 139; *Tusc.* 3. 2. 3. Sallust, *Bell. Jug.* 3. 1. It is noticeable that, although Cicero had little military experience before his command in Cilicia, he never

hints that the military responsibilities daunted him.

¹⁵⁴ *Ep.* 3. 1. 12. He also wrote elegant verse—

ibid. 7.

¹⁵⁵ *H* 3. 75. 1.

¹⁵⁶ *Ag.* 9. 2 f.; 19; 40. 4.

seemingly important post, but in the ability of those close to the emperor to secure his attention and favour—the 'interior potentia'.¹⁵⁷ And, in the last analysis, as Tiberius perceived, Rome was the 'caput rerum'.¹⁵⁸

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APPENDIX

Consular Legates (70–235), and their Praetorian Posts: (a) Military posts (b) Civil posts. Numbers in brackets indicate that a post was held on more than one occasion.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. P. Aelius Hadrianus—Syme, <i>Tacitus</i> , 233 f. <i>cos. suff.</i> 108. | (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Pan. Inf.
(b) None. |
| 2. L. Aemilius Carus— <i>PIR</i> ² A 338. <i>cos.</i> ? | (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Arabiae.
(b) Curator viae. |
| 3. L. Annius Honoratus— <i>PIR</i> ² A 659. <i>cos.</i> ? | (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Curator viae; iuridicus; praef. aer. mil.; curator civitatis. |
| 4. C. Arrius Antoninus— <i>PIR</i> ² A 1088. <i>cos. suff.</i> 170. | (a) None.
(b) Iuridicus; praef. aer. sat.; curator civ. (3). |
| 5. T. Avidius Quietus—G. Alföldy, <i>Epig. Stud.</i> 3 (1967), no. 24. <i>cos.</i> ? | (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Procos. Achaiae? |
| 6. C. Bruttius Praesens— <i>IRT</i> 545. <i>cos. II ord.</i> 139. | (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Curator viae; leg. pr. pr. Ciliciae. |
| 7. T. Burbuleius Optatus Ligarianus— <i>PIR</i> ² B 174. <i>cos.</i> ? | (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Curator viae; curator civ.(3); logistes Syriae; procos. Siciliae; praef. aer. sat. |
| 8. T. Caesernius Memmius Macrinus— <i>PIR</i> ² C 183. <i>cos. suff.</i> 140. | (a) Missus ad dilectum; leg. leg.; leg. <i>III Aug.</i>
(b) None. |
| 9. C. Caesonius Rufinianus— <i>PIR</i> ² C 210. <i>cos.</i> ? | (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Leg. Asiae; curator civ. (3); procos. Achaiae; leg. pr. pr. Lusitaniae. |
| 10. P. Calvisius Ruso— <i>PIR</i> ² C 350. <i>cos. suff.</i> 79? | (a) None.
(b) None. |
| 11. L. Catilius Severus— <i>PIR</i> ² C 558. <i>cos. suff.</i> 110; <i>cos. II ord.</i> 120. | (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Leg. Asiae; praef. frum. dand.; curator viae; praef. aer. mil.; praef. aer. sat. |
| 12. M. Macrinus Avitus Catonius Vindex—Pflaum, <i>Carrières</i> , no. 188. <i>cos.</i> ? | (a) <i>Eques.</i>
(b) Curator civ. |
| 13. Tib. Claudius Candidus— <i>PIR</i> ² C 823. <i>cos.</i> ? | (a) None.
(b) Curator civ.; leg. Asiae; logistes. |
| 14. Tib. Claudius Claudianus— <i>PIR</i> ² C 834. <i>cos. suff.</i> 199. | (a) Leg. leg. (2); praef. vex.; leg. pr. pr. Pann. Inf. (?).
(b) None. |
| 15. M. Claudius Fronto— <i>PIR</i> ² C 874. <i>cos. suff.</i> 165 or 166. | (a) Leg. leg. (2); special command; missus ad dilectum.
(b) None. |
| 16. Claudius Gallus— <i>AE</i> 1957. 123 and <i>PIR</i> ² C 878. <i>cos.</i> ? | (a) Leg. leg.; praepos. vex.; leg. <i>III Aug.</i>
(b) Curator civ. |
| 17. Tib. Claudius Iulianus— <i>PIR</i> ² C 902. <i>cos. suff.</i> 159. | (a) Leg. leg.
(b) None (?) |
| 18. P. Cluvius Maximus Paullinus—Smallwood (1966), no. 200. <i>cos.</i> ? | (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Praef. frum. dand.; leg. Asiae; leg. Africae (?); procos. Siciliae; curator viae. |
| 19. P. Cornelius Anullinus— <i>PIR</i> ² C 1322. <i>cos. suff.</i> 176. | (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr.?
(b) Leg. of a proconsul; procos. Baeticae. |
| 20. C. Curtius Iustus— <i>PIR</i> ² C 1613. <i>cos.</i> ? | (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Daciae Sup.
(b) Praef. frum. dand.; curator viae; procos.? |
| 21. L. Dasumius Tullius Tuscus— <i>PIR</i> ² D 16. <i>cos. suff.</i> 152. | (a) None.
(b) Praef. aer. sat. |

¹⁵⁷ Tac., *H* 1. 2. 3.

¹⁵⁸ *A* 1. 47. 1.

22. M. Didius Severus Iulianus—*PIR*² D 77. *cos. suff. c.* 175. (a) Leg. leg. (b) Leg. of a proconsul (2); leg. pr. pr. Belgicae.
23. L. Fabius Cilo—*PIR*² F 27. *cos. suff.* 193; *cos. II ord.* 204. (a) Leg. leg. (b) Procos; praef. aer. mil.; leg. pr. pr. Galatiae.
24. Q. Fuficius Cornutus—*PIR*² F 497. *cos.?* (a) Leg. leg. (?); leg. pr. pr. Pan. Inf. (b) Iuridicus.
25. L. Funisulanus Vettonianus—*PIR*² F 570. *cos.?* (a) Leg. leg. (b) Curator viae; curator aquarum; praef. aer. sat.
26. Q. Glitius Agricola—*PIR*² G 181. *cos. suff.* 97; *cos. II ord.* 103. (a) Leg. leg. (b) Iuridicus; leg. pr. pr. Belgicae.
27. Q. Hediuss Lollianus Gentianus—*PIR*² H 42. *cos.?* (a) Leg. leg. (b) Curator civ.
28. P. Helvius Pertinax—*PIR*² H 73. *cos. suff.* 175? (a) Leg. leg. (*equus*). (b) None.
29. C. Octavius Iavolenus Priscus—*PIR*² I 14. *cos. suff.* 86. (a) Leg. leg.; leg. *III Aug.* (b) Iuridicus.
30. Cn. Iulius Agricola—*PIR*² I 126. *cos. suff.* 77. (a) Leg. leg. (b) Leg. pr. pr. Lugdunensis.
31. C. Iulius Quadratus Bassus—*PIR*² I 508. *cos. suff.* 105. (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Iudaeae. (b) None.
32. C. Iulius Castinus—*PIR*² I 566. *cos.?* (a) Leg. leg.; dux vex.; leg. pr. pr. Pan. Inf. (b) Curator civ.; curator viae; iuridicus; procos. Cretae.
33. C. Vettius Sabinianus Iulius Hospes—*AE* 1920. 45. *RE* s.v. 'Vettius' (43). *cos. suff. c.* 175. (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Pan. Inf.; praepos. vex. (b) Leg. Asiae; leg. ad ordinandos status Cycladum; iuridicus; leg. rationibus putandis trium Galliarum; leg. leg. cum iurisdicatu; praef. aer. sat.
34. C. Antius Iulius Quadratus—*PIR*² I 507. *cos. suff.* 94. *cos. II ord.* 105. (a) None. (b) Leg. procos. Bithyniae; leg. Asiae (2); leg. Cappadociae etc.; procos. Cretae; leg. pr. pr. Lyciae.
35. C. Iulius Severus—*PIR*² I 573. *cos. suff. c.* 139. (a) Leg. leg. (b) Leg. Asiae; procos. Achaeae; leg. pr. pr. Bithyniae; praef. aer. sat.
36. Sex. Iulius Severus—*PIR*² I 576. *cos. suff.* 127. (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Daciae. (b) None.
37. Cn. Iulius Verus—*PIR*² I 618. *cos. suff.* 154. (a) Leg. leg. (b) Praef. aer. sat.
38. C. Iunius Faustinus Postumianus—*PIR*² I 751. *cos.?* (a) Leg. leg. (b) Iuridicus; leg. pr. pr. Lusitaniae; leg. pr. pr. Belgicae.
39. A. Bucius Lappius Maximus—*PIR*² L 84. *cos. suff.* 86. (a) Leg. leg. (b) Procos. Bithyniae.
40. Q. Lollius Urbicus—*PIR*² L 327. *cos. suff.* by 138. (a) Leg. leg.; leg. exped. Iudaic. (b) None.
41. L. Marius Maximus—*RE* 14. 1828 (48). *cos. suff.* 198 or 199; *cos. II ord.* 223. (a) Leg. leg.; dux. (b) Curator viae; curator civ.
42. L. Marius Perpetuus—A. Stein, *Die Legaten von Moesien*, p. 54. *ILS* 1165. *cos.?* (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Arabiae. (b) Curator civ. (2).
43. P. Metilius Secundus—*RE* 15. 1402 (20). *cos. suff. c.* 123. (a) Leg. leg.; leg. *III Aug.* (b) None.
44. L. Minicius Natalis Quadronius Verus—*RE* 15. 1836 (19). *cos.?* (a) Leg. leg. (b) Praef. alim.; curator viae.
45. L. Minicius Natalis—*RE* 15. 1828 (18). *cos. suff.* 106. (a) Leg. leg.; leg. *III Aug.* (b) Leg. Africae.
46. L. Neratius Marcellus—A. R. Birley, *Epig. Stud.* 4 (1967), 68. *cos. suff.* 95; *cos. II ord.* 129. (a) None. (b) None.

47. L. Neratius Priscus—R. Syme, *Hermes* 85 (1957), 480. *cos. suff.* 97.
48. L. Neratius Priscus—Syme, o.c., 492–3. *cos.?*
49. M. Nonius Macrinus—Reidinger, o.c. (n. 118), 79 f. *cos. suff.* 154.
50. Papirius Aelianus Aem. Tuscillus—*Epig. Stud.* 4 (1967), 72. *cos.?*
51. Petillius Cerialis—*RE* 19. 1138 (8); G. Townend, *JRS* 51 (1961), 58. *cos. suff.* 70.
52. A. Platorius Nepos—*RE* 20. 2. 2545 (2). *cos. suff.* 119.
53. Q. Roscius Coelius Pompeius Falco—*ILS* 1035–36. *RE* 21.2. 2270 (76). *cos. suff.* 108.
54. M. Pontius Laelianus Larcus Sabinus—Reidinger, p. 76 ff; A. Dobó, *Die Verwaltung der röm. Prov. Pannonien*, 54–5; *ILS* 1094. *cos. suff.* 144.
55. C. Popilius Carus Peto—*RE* 22. 1. 65 (37). *cos. suff. c.* 147.
56. Q. Postumius Aquilinus—*PIR*² A 754. *cos.?*
57. Q. Iulius Cordinus Rutilius Gallicus—*RE* 1A. 1255; *AE* 1920. 55. *cos.?*
58. L. Salvius Iulianus—*RE* 1A. 2023 (14). *cos. ord.* 148.
59. M. Sedatius Severianus—*RE* 2A. 1006 (1). *cos.?*
60. P. Septimius Geta—G. Alföldy, *Bj* 168 (1968), 151. *cos. II ord.* 203.
61. L. Septimius Severus—*RE* 2A. 1940 (13). T. D. Barnes, *Hist.* 16 (1967), 87. *cos. suff.* 190.
62. M. Servilius Fabianus Maximus—*PIR*¹ S 415. *cos. suff.* 158.
63. P. Mummius Sisenna Rutilianus—*RE* 16. 529 (25). *cos. suff.* 146.
64. Claudius (?) Maximus—*RE* 3A. 2193 (24); R. Syme, *Hist.* 14 (1965), 352 f.; *cos. suff.* 143 or 144.
65. M. Stadius Priscus—*Epig. Stud.* 4 (1967), 73. *cos. ord.* 159.
66. C. Octavius Suetrius Sabinus—Barbieri, *L'Albo*, no. 387. *cos. ord.* 214.
67. P. Tullius Varro—*ILS* 1047. *cos.?*
68. C. Calpetanus Rantius Valerius Festus—G. Alföldy, *Fasti Hispanienses* (1969), 21 f. *cos. suff.* 71.
69. Q. Venidius Marius Maximus Calvinianus—*PIR*¹ V 245. *cos.?*
70. T. Pomponius Proculus Vitrasius Pollio—*PIR*¹ P 558; R. Syme, *JRS* 43 (1953), 159. *cos. II ord.* 159.
71. Incertus—*ILS* 1022. This probably refers to Licinius Sura or Sosius Senecio. See n. 41.
- (a) None.
(b) Praef. aer. sat.
- (a) Leg. pr. pr. Pan. Inf.
(b) None.
- (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Pan. Inf.
(b) Curator alvei Tiberis.
- (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Dac. Apul.
(b) None.
- (a) Leg. leg.; dux in civil war.
(b) None (?)
- (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Curator viae; leg. pr. pr. Thraciae.
- (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Iudaeae.
(b) Leg. leg. pr. Lyciae.
- (a) Leg. leg. (?); leg. pr. pr. Pan. Inf.
(b) Curator civ. (?).
- (a) None.
(b) Curator viae; praef. aer. sat.
- (a) Leg. leg. (2); leg. pr. pr. Arabiae.
(b) None.
- (a) Leg. leg. (of quaestorian rank).
(b) Leg. pr. pr. Galatiae.
- (a) None.
(b) Praef. aer. sat.; praef. aer. mil.
- (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Daciae.
(b) curator viae.
- (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Procos. Siciliae; leg. pr. pr. Lusitaniae; curator (?).
- (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Leg. iuridicus in Hispania; leg. pr. pr. Lugdunensis; procos. Siciliae.
- (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Leg. Asiae; curator viae; praef. aer. sat.
- (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Praef. aer. sat.; praef. alim.
- (a) Leg. leg.; leg. pr. pr. Pan. Inf.
(b) Curator viae; iuridicus.
- (a) Leg. leg. (2); leg. pr. pr. Daciae.
(b) None.
- (a) Leg. leg.; comes of the emperor; praepos. vex. (His very brief tenure of Raetia was perhaps consular, cf. Caerellius Priscus—*CIL* 13. 6806).
(b) Legatus Africae; curator civ.; curator viae; iuridicus.
- (a) Leg. leg. (2).
(b) Procos. Baeticae; praef. aer. sat.
- (a) Leg. *III Aug.*
(b) None.
- (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Leg. pr. pr. Ciliciae; leg. pr. pr. Syriae Phoenices (?).
- (a) None.
(b) Praef. alim.
- (a) Leg. leg.
(b) Leg. pr. pr. Belgicae.

72. *Incertus*—*ILS* 1057.

(a) Leg. leg.

(b) Praef. aer. sat.

73. *Incertus*—*AE* 1957. 161. Possibly from the time of Severus Alexander.

(a) None.

(b) Curator (?); curator viae; iuridicus (2);
curator viae; curator civ. (2).