

them, they were considered as their deliverers; and if we reflect upon the immense sums it cost the Carthaginians to maintain in that country, a war which proved fatal to them, it will appear that injustice is very improvident, and is not mistress of all the promises.

The founding of Alexandria had very much lessened the trade of Carthage. In the first ages, superstition used to banish, in some measure, all foreigners from Egypt; and after the Persians had conquered this kingdom, they had bent their whole thoughts to the weakening of their new subjects; but under the Grecian monarchs, Egypt possessed almost the whole commerce of the universe (*a*), and that of Carthage began to decay.

Such powers, as are established by commerce, may subsist for a long series of years in their humble condition, but their grandeur is of short duration; they rise by little and little, and in an imperceptible manner, for they do not perform any particular exploit which may make a noise, and signalize their power: but when they have once raised themselves to so exalted a pitch, that it is impossible but all must see them, every one endeavours to deprive this nation of an advantage which it had snatched, as it were, from the rest of the world.

The Carthaginian cavalry was preferable to that of the Romans, for these two reasons; first, because the horses of Numidia and Spain were better than those of Italy; secondly, because the Roman cavalry was but indifferently provided with arms; for the Romans, as (*b*) Polybius informs us, did not in-

(*a*) See more of this hereafter in chap. vi.

(*b*) Book vi.