

: Selected Quotations from: Memorable Deeds and Sayings: A Thousand Tales from Ancient Rome by Valerius Maximus as translated by Henry John Walker, Hackett Classics, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. (2004).

Due on

Chapter 1

1.12 In the consulship of Publius Cornelius and Baebius Tamphilus our ancestors showed great scruples in their respect for religion.²⁶ When farm-hands were digging rather deeply in a field under the Janiculum belonging to a scribe called Lucius Petillius, they found two stone chests. An inscription on one revealed that it contained the body of Numa Pompilius.²⁷ In the others were found seven Latin books about the law of the pontiffs, and as many Greek books about the discipline of philosophy. They ordered that the Latin books should be preserved with the greatest care, but they felt that the Greek ones might in some way tend to undermine religion. Following senate instructions, the city praetor, Quintus Petillius, ordered the sacrificial attendants to make a fire and burn the books in public.²⁸ The men of those days did not want to retain anything in this state that might take people's minds away from the worship of the gods.

²⁶Publius Cornelius Cethegus and Marcus Baebius Tamphilus were consuls in 181 B.C.

²⁷Numa Pompilius was the second king of Rome (715-673 B.C.) and was believed to have invented most of its religious rituals.

²⁸Quintus Petillius Spurinus (consul, 176 B.C.) was city praetor in 181 B.C.