

The Histories

Herodotus

TRANSLATED BY GEORGE RAWLINSON



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The Histories **by Herodotus** **translated by George Rawlinson**

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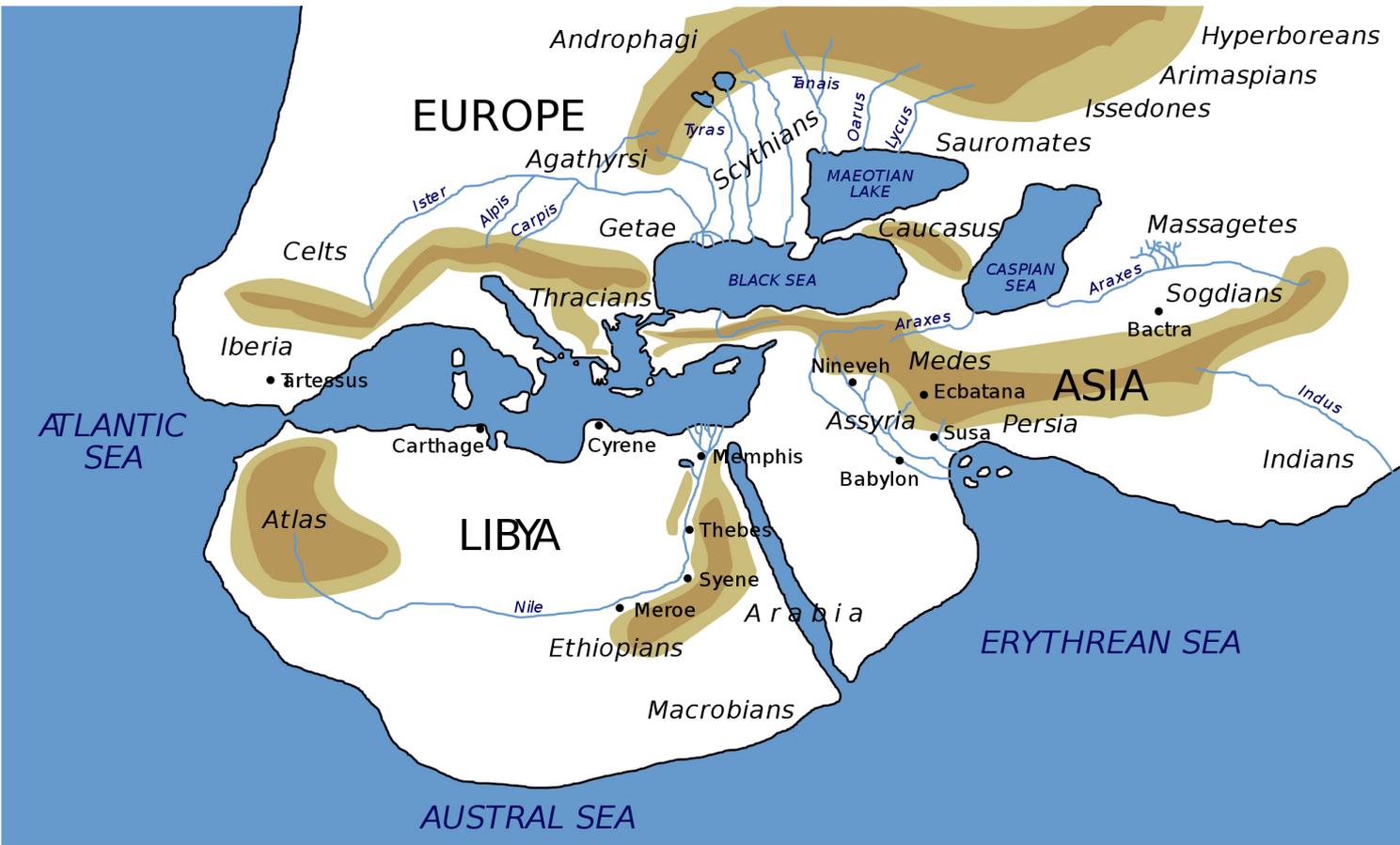
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Occupied world according to Herodotus

This edition is extremely abridged, so I am providing you with a full list of topics covered in the *Histories* for your convenience, particularly as the abridged edition skips over large chunks of the narrative.

Book I

- The rapes of Io, Europa, and Medea, which motivated Paris to abduct Helen. The subsequent Trojan War is marked as a precursor to later conflicts between peoples of Asia and Europe. (1.1–5)
- Colchis, Colchians and Medea. (1.2.2–1.2.3)
- The rulers of Lydia (on the west coast of Asia Minor, today modern Turkey): Candaules, Gyges, Ardys, Sadyattes, Alyattes, Croesus (1.6–7)
- How Candaules made his bodyguard, Gyges, view the naked body of his wife. Upon discovery, she ordered Gyges to murder Candaules or face death himself
- How Gyges took the kingdom from Candaules (1.8–13)
- The singer Arion's ride on the dolphin (1.23–24)
- Solon's answer to Croesus's question that Tellus was the happiest person in the world (1.29–33)
- Croesus's efforts to protect his son Atys, his son's accidental death by Adrastus (1.34–44)
- Croesus's test of the oracles (1.46–54)
- The answer from the Oracle of Delphi concerning whether Croesus should attack the Persians (famous for its ambiguity): If you attack, a great empire will fall.
- Peisistratos' rises and falls from power as tyrant of Athens (1.59–64)
- The rise of Sparta (1.65–68)
- A description the geographic location of several Anatolian tribes, including the Cappadocians, Matieni, Phrygians, and Paphlagonians. (1.72)
- The Battle of Halys; Thales predicts the solar eclipse of May 28, 585 BC (1.74)
- Croesus's defeat by Cyrus II of Persia, and how he later became Cyrus's advisor (1.70–92)
- The rulers of the Medes: Deioces, Phraortes, Cyaxares, Astyages, Cyrus II of Persia (1.95–144)
- The rise of Deioces over the Medes
- Astyages's attempt to destroy Cyrus, and Cyrus's rise to power
- Harpagus tricked into eating his son, his revenge against Astyages by assisting Cyrus
- The culture of the Persians
- The history and geography of the Ionians, and the attacks on it by Harpagus
- Pactyes' convinces the Lydians to revolt. Rebellion fails and he seeks refuge from Mazares in Cyme (Aeolis)
- The culture of Assyria, especially the design and improvement of the city of Babylon and the ways of its people
- Cyrus's attack on Babylon, including his revenge on the river Gyndes and his famous method for entering the city
- Cyrus's ill-fated attack on the Massagetæ, leading to his death

Book II (Euterpe)

- The proof of the antiquity of the Phrygians by the use of children unexposed to language
- The geography of Egypt
- Speculations on the Nile river
- The religious practices of Egypt, especially as they differ from the Greeks
- The animals of Egypt: cats, dogs, crocodiles, hippopotamuses, otters, phoenixes, sacred serpents, winged snakes, ibises
- The culture of Egypt: medicine, funeral rites, food, boats
- The kings of Egypt: Menes, Nitocris, Mœris, Sesostris, Pheron, Proteus
- Helen and Paris's stay in Egypt, just before the Trojan War (2.112–120)
- More kings of Egypt: Rhampsinit (and the story of the clever thief), Cheops (and the building of the Great Pyramid of Giza using machines), Chephren, Mycerinus, Asychis, Anysis, Sethôs
- The line of priests
- The Labyrinth
- More kings of Egypt: the twelve, Psammetichus (and his rise to power), Necôs, Psammis, Apries, Amasis II (and his rise to power)

Book III (Thalia)

- Cambyses II of Persia's (son of Cyrus II and king of Persia) attack on Egypt, and the defeat of the Egyptian king Psammetichus III.
- Cambyses's abortive attack on Ethiopia
- The madness of Cambyses
- The good fortune of Polycrates, king of Samos
- Periander, the king of Corinth and Corcyra, and his obstinate son
- The revolt of the two Magi in Persia and the death of Cambyses
- The conspiracy of the seven to remove the Magi
- The rise of Darius I of Persia.
- The twenty satrapies
- The culture of India and their method of collecting gold
- The culture of Arabia and their method of collecting spices
- The flooded valley with five gates
- Orçetes's (governor of Sardis) scheme against Polycrates
- The physician Democêdes
- The rise of Syloson governor of Samos
- The revolt of Babylon and its defeat by the scheme of Zopyrus

Book IV (Melpomene)

- The history of the Scythians (from the land north of the Black Sea)
- The miraculous poet Aristeas
- The geography of Scythia
- The inhabitants of regions beyond Scythia: Sauromatae, Budini, Thyssagetae, Argippaeans, Issedones, Arimaspi, Hyperboreans
- A comparison of Libya (Africa), Asia, and Europe
- The rivers of Scythia: the Ister, the Tyras, the Hypanis, the Borysthenes, the Panticaepes, the Hypacyris, the Gerrhus, and the Tanais

- The culture of the Scythians: religion, burial rites, xenophobia (the stories of Anacharsis and Scylas), population
- The beginning of Darius's attack on Scythia, including the pontoon bridge over the Bosphorus
- The brutal worship of Zalmoxis by the Getae
- The customs of the surrounding peoples: Tauri, Agathyrsi, Neuri, Androphagi (man-eaters), Melanchlaeni, Geloni, Budini, Sauromatae
- The wooing of the Amazons by the Scythians, forming the Sauromatae
- Darius's failed attack on Scythia and consequent retreat
- The story of the Minyae (descendants of the Argonauts) and the founding of Cyrene
- The kings of Cyrene: Battus I, Arcesilaus I, Battus II, Arcesilaus II, Battus III (and the reforms of Demonax), Arcesilaus III (and his flight, restoration, and assassination), Battus IV, and Arcesilaus IV (his revolt and death)
- The peoples of Libya from east to west
- The revenge of Arcesilaus' mother Pheretima

Book V (Terpsichore)

- The attack on the Thracians by Megabazus
- The removal of the Paeonians to Asia
- The slaughter of the Persian envoys by Alexander I of Macedon
- The failed attack on the Naxians by Aristagoras, tyrant of Miletus
- The revolt of Miletus against Persia
- The background of Cleomenes I, king of Sparta, and his half brother Dorieus
- The description of the Persian Royal Road from Sardis to Susa
- The introduction of writing to Greece by the Phoenicians
- The freeing of Athens by Sparta, and its subsequent attacks on Athens
- The reorganizing of the Athenian tribes by Cleisthenes
- The attack on Athens by the Thebans and Eginetans
- The backgrounds of the tyrants of Corinth Cypselus and his son Periander
- Aristagoras's failed request for help from Sparta, and successful attempt with Athens
- The burning of Sardis, and Darius's vow for revenge against the Athenians
- Persia's attempts to quell the Ionian revolt

Book VI (Erato)

- The fleeing of Histiaeus to Chios
- The training of the Ionian fleet by Dionysius of Phocaea
- The abandonment of the Ionian fleet by the Samians during battle
- The defeat of the Ionian fleet by the Persians
- The capture and death of Histiaeus by Harpagus
- The invasion of Greece under Mardonius and enslavement of Macedon
- The destruction of 300 ships in Mardonius's fleet near Athos
- The order of Darius that the Greeks provide him earth and water, in which most consent, including Aegina
- The Athenian request for assistance of Cleomenes of Sparta in dealing with the traitors
- The history behind Sparta having two kings and their powers
- The dethronement of Demaratus, the other king of Sparta, due to his supposed false lineage
- The arrest of the traitors in Aegina by Cleomenes and the new king Leotyichides

- The suicide of Cleomenes in a fit of madness, possibly caused by his war with Argos, drinking unmixed wine, or his involvement in dethroning Demaratus
- The battle between Aegina and Athens
- The taking of Eretria by the Persians after the Eretrians sent away Athenian help
- Pheidippides's encounter with the god Pan on a journey to Sparta to request aid
- The assistance of the Plataeans, and the history behind their alliance with Athens
- The Athenian win at the Battle of Marathon, led by Miltiades and other strategoi (This section starts roughly around 6.100)[8]
- The Spartans late arrival to assist Athens
- The history of the Alcmaeonidae and how they came about their wealth and status
- The death of Miltiades after a failed attack on Paros and the successful taking of Lemnos

Book VII (Polymnia)

- The amassing of an army by Darius after learning about the defeat at Marathon
- The quarrel between which son should succeed Darius in which Xerxes is chosen
- The death of Darius in 486 BC
- The defeat of the Egyptian rebels by Xerxes
- The advice given to Xerxes on invading Greece: Mardonius for invasion, Artabanus against (9-10)
- The dreams of Xerxes in which a phantom frightens him and Artabanus into choosing invasion
- The preparations for war, including building the Xerxes Canal and Xerxes' Pontoon Bridges across the Hellespont
- The offer by Pythius to give Xerxes all his money, in which Xerxes rewards him
- The request by Pythius to allow one son to stay at home, Xerxes's anger, and the march out between the butchered halves of Pythius's son
- The destruction and rebuilding of the bridges built by the Egyptians and Phoenicians at Abydos
- The siding with Persia of many Greek states, including Thessaly, Thebes, Melia, and Argos
- The refusal of aid after negotiations by Gelo of Syracuse, and the refusal from Crete
- The destruction of 400 Persian ships due to a storm
- The small Greek force (approx. 7,000) led by Leonidas I, sent to Thermopylae to delay the Persian army (~5,283,220 (Herodotus))
- The Battle of Thermopylae in which the Greeks hold the pass for 3 days
- The secret pass divulged by Ephialtes of Trachis, which Hydarnes uses to lead forces around the mountains to encircle the Greeks
- The retreat of all but the Spartans, Thespians, and Thebans (forced to stay by the Spartans).
- The Greek defeat and order by Xerxes to remove Leonidas's head and attach his torso to a cross

Book VIII (Urania)

- Greek fleet is led by Eurybiades, a Spartan commander who led the Greek fleet after the meeting at the Isthmus 481 BC,
- The destruction by storm of two hundred ships sent to block the Greeks from escaping
- The retreat of the Greek fleet after word of a defeat at Thermopylae
- The supernatural rescue of Delphi from a Persian attack
- The evacuation of Athens assisted by the fleet
- The reinforcement of the Greek fleet at Salamis Island, bringing the total ships to 378
- The destruction of Athens by the Persian land force after difficulties with those who remained
- The Battle of Salamis, the Greeks have the advantage due to better organization, and fewer losses due to ability to swim
- The description of the Angarum, the Persian riding post
- The rise in favor of Artemisia, the Persian woman commander, and her council to Xerxes in favor of returning to Persia
- The vengeance of Hermotimus, Xerxes' chief eunuch, against Panionius
- The attack on Andros by Themistocles, the Athenian fleet commander and most valiant Greek at Salamis
- The escape of Xerxes and leaving behind of 300,000 picked troops under Mardonius in Thessaly
- The ancestry of Alexander I of Macedon, including Perdiccas
- The refusal of an attempt by Alexander to seek a Persian alliance with Athens

Book IX (Calliope)

- The second taking of an evacuated Athens
- The evacuation to Thebes by Mardonius after the sending of Lacedaemonian troops
- The slaying of Masistius, leader of the Persian cavalry, by the Athenians
- The warning from Alexander to the Greeks of an impending attack
- The death of Mardonius by Aeimnestus
- The Persian retreat to Thebes where they are afterwards slaughtered (Battle of Plataea)
- The description and dividing of the spoils
- The speedy escape of Artabazus into Asia.
- The Persian defeat in Ionia by the Greek fleet (Battle of Mycale), and the Ionian revolt
- The mutilation of the wife of Masistes ordered by Amestris, wife of Xerxes
- The death of Masistes after his intent to rebel
- The Athenian blockade of Sestos and the capture of Artayctes
- The Persians' abortive suggestion to Cyrus to migrate from rocky Persis

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BOOK 1

THESE are the researches of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, which he publishes, in the hope of thereby preserving from decay the remembrance of what men have done, and of preventing the great and wonderful actions of the Greeks and the Barbarians from losing their due meed of glory; and withal to put on record what were their grounds of feud.

[1] According to the Persians best informed in history, the Phœnicians began to quarrel. This people, who had formerly dwelt on the shores of the Erythræan Sea, having migrated to the Mediterranean and settled in the parts which they now inhabit, began at once, they say, to adventure on long voyages, freighting their vessels with the wares of Egypt and Assyria. They landed at many places on the coast, and among the rest at Argos, which was then pre-eminent above all the states included now under the common name of Hellas. Here they exposed their merchandise, and traded with the natives for five or six days; at the end of which time, when almost everything was sold, there came down to the beach a number of women, and among them the daughter of the king, who was, they say, agreeing in this with the Greeks, Io, the child of Inachus. The women were standing by the stern of the ship intent upon their purchases, when the Phœnicians, with a general shout, rushed upon them. The greater part made their escape, but some were seized and carried off. Io herself was among the captives. The Phœnicians put the women on board their vessel, and set sail for Egypt. Thus did Io pass into Egypt, according to the Persian story, which differs widely from the Phœnician: and thus commenced, according to their authors, the series of outrages.

[2] At a later period, certain Greeks, with whose name they are unacquainted, but who would probably be Cretans, made a landing at Tyre, on the Phœnician coast, and bore off the king's daughter,

Europé. In this they only retaliated; but afterwards the Greeks, they say, were guilty of a second violence. They manned a ship of war, and sailed to Aea, a city of Colchis, on the river Phasis; from whence, after despatching the rest of the business on which they had come, they carried off Medea, the daughter of the king of the land. The monarch sent a herald into Greece to demand reparation of the wrong, and the restitution of his child; but the Greeks made answer that, having received no reparation of the wrong done them in the seizure of Io the Argive, they should give none in this instance.

[3] In the next generation afterwards, according to the same authorities, Alexander the son of Priam, bearing these events in mind, resolved to procure himself a wife out of Greece by violence, fully persuaded, that as the Greeks had not given satisfaction for their outrages, so neither would he be forced to make any for his. Accordingly he made prize of Helen; upon which the Greeks decided that, before resorting to other measures, they would send envoys to reclaim the princess and require reparation of the wrong. Their demands were met by a reference to the violence which had been offered to Medea, and they were asked with what face they could now require satisfaction, when they had formerly rejected all demands for either reparation or restitution addressed to them.

[4] Hitherto the injuries on either side had been mere acts of common violence; but in what followed the Persians consider that the Greeks were greatly to blame, since before any attack had been made on Europe, they led an army into Asia. Now as for the carrying off of women, it is the deed, they say, of a rogue: but to make a stir about such as are carried off, argues a man a fool. Men of sense care nothing for such women, since it is plain that without their own consent they would never be forced away. The Asiatics, when the Greeks ran off with their women, never troubled themselves about the matter; but the Greeks, for the sake of a single Lacedaemonian girl, collected a vast armament, invaded Asia, and destroyed the kingdom of Priam. Henceforth they ever looked upon the Greeks as their open enemies. For Asia, with all the various tribes of barbarians that inhabit it, is regarded by the Persians as their own; but Europe and the Greek race they look on as distinct and separate.

[5] Such is the account which the Persians give of these matters. They trace to the attack upon Troy their ancient enmity towards the Greeks. The Phoenicians, however, as regards Io, vary from the Persian statements. They deny that they used any violence to remove her into Egypt; she herself, they say, having formed an intimacy with the captain, while his vessel lay at Argos, and perceiving herself to be with child, of her own free will accompanied the Phoenicians on their leaving the shore, to escape the shame of detection and the reproaches of her parents. Whether this latter account be true, or whether the matter happened otherwise, I shall not discuss further. I shall proceed at once to point out the person who first within my own knowledge inflicted injury on the Greeks, after which I shall go forward with my history, describing equally the greater and the lesser cities. For the cities which were formerly great have most of them become insignificant; and such as are at present powerful, were weak in the olden time. I shall therefore discourse equally of both, convinced that human happiness never continues long in one stay.

BOOK 7

[1] Now when tidings of the battle that had been fought at Marathon reached the ears of King Darius (of Persia), the son of Hystaspes, his anger against the Athenians, which had been already roused by their attack upon Sardis, waxed still fiercer, and he became more than ever eager to lead an army against Greece. Instantly he sent off messengers to make proclamation through the several states that fresh levies were to be raised, and these at an increased rate; while ships, horses, provisions, and transports were likewise to be furnished. So the men published his commands; and now all Asia was in commotion by the space of three years, while everywhere, as Greece was to be attacked, the best and bravest were enrolled for the service, and had to make their preparations accordingly.

...

[2] Darius, when he had thus appointed Xerxes his heir, was minded to lead forth his armies; but he was prevented by death while his preparations were still proceeding. He died in the year following the revolt of Egypt and the matters here related, after having reigned in all six-and-thirty years, leaving the revolted Egyptians and the Athenians alike unpunished. At his death the kingdom passed to his son Xerxes.

[5] Now Xerxes, on first mounting the throne, was coldly disposed towards the Grecian war, and made it his business to collect an army against Egypt. But Mardonius, the son of Gobryas, who was at the court, and had more influence with him than any of the other Persians, being his own cousin, the child of a sister of Darius, plied him with discourses like the following:-

"Master, it is not fitting that they of Athens escape scot-free, after doing the Persians such great injury. Complete the work which thou hast now in hand, and then, when the pride of Egypt is brought low, lead an army against Athens. So shalt thou thyself have good report among men, and others shall fear hereafter to attack thy country." Thus far it was of vengeance that he spoke; but sometimes he would vary the theme, and observe by the way, "that Europe was a wondrous beautiful region, rich in all kinds of cultivated trees, and the soil excellent: no one, save the king, was worthy to own such a land."

[6] All this he said, because he longed for adventures, and hoped to become satrap of Greece under the king; and after a while he had his way, and persuaded Xerxes to do according to his desires. Other things, however, occurring about the same time, helped his persuasions. For, in the first place, it chanced that messengers arrived from Thessaly, sent by the Aleuadae, Thessalian kings, to invite Xerxes into Greece, and to promise him all the assistance which it was in their power to give. And further, the Pisistratidae, who had come up to Susa, held the same language as the Aleuadae, and worked upon him even more than they, by means of Onomacritus of Athens, an oracle-monger, and the same who set forth the prophecies of Musaeus in their order. The Pisistratidae had previously been at enmity with this man, but made up the quarrel before they removed to Susa. He was banished from Athens by Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus, because he foisted into the writings of Musaeus a prophecy that the islands which lie off Lemnos would one day disappear in the sea. Lasus of Hermione caught him in the act of so doing. For this cause Hipparchus banished him, though till then they had been the closest of friends. Now, however, he went up to Susa with the sons of Pisistratus, and they talked very grandly of him to the king; while he, for his part, whenever he was in the king's company, repeated to him certain of the oracles; and while he took care to pass over all that spoke of disaster to the barbarians, brought forward the passages which promised them the greatest success. "'Twas fated," he told Xerxes, "that a Persian should bridge the Hellespont, and march an army from Asia into Greece." While Onomacritus thus plied Xerxes with his oracles, the Pisistratidae and Aleuadae did not cease to press on him their advice, till at last the king yielded, and agreed to lead forth an expedition.

[7] First, however, in the year following the death of Darius, he marched against those who had revolted from him; and having reduced them, and laid all Egypt under a far harder yoke than ever his father had put upon it, he gave the government to Achaemenes, who was his own brother, and son to Darius. This Achaemenes was afterwards slain in his government by Inaros, the son of Psammetichus, a Libyan.

[8] After Egypt was subdued, Xerxes, being about to take in hand the expedition against Athens, called together an assembly of the noblest Persians to learn their opinions, and to lay before them his own designs. So, when the men were met, the king spake thus to them:-

"Persians, I shall not be the first to bring in among you a new custom - I shall but follow one which has come down to us from our forefathers. Never yet, as our old men assure me, has our race reposed itself, since the time when Cyrus overcame Astyages, and so we Persians wrested the sceptre from the Medes. Now in all this God guides us; and we, obeying his guidance, prosper greatly. What need have I to tell you of the deeds of Cyrus and Cambyses, and my own father Darius, how many nations they conquered, and added to our dominions? Ye know right well what great things they achieved. But for myself, I will say that, from the day on which I mounted the throne, I have not ceased to consider by what means I may rival those who have preceded me in this post of honour, and increase

the power of Persia as much as any of them. And truly I have pondered upon this, until at last I have found out a way whereby we may at once win glory, and likewise get possession of a land which is as large and as rich as our own nay, which is even more varied in the fruits it bears - while at the same time we obtain satisfaction and revenge. For this cause I have now called you together, that I may make known to you what I design to do. My intent is to throw a bridge over the Hellespont and march an army through Europe against Greece, that thereby I may obtain vengeance from the Athenians for the wrongs committed by them against the Persians and against my father. Your own eyes saw the preparations of Darius against these men; but death came upon him, and balked his hopes of revenge. In his behalf, therefore, and in behalf of all the Persians, I undertake the war, and pledge myself not to rest till I have taken and burnt Athens, which has dared, unprovoked, to injure me and my father. Long since they came to Asia with Aristagoras of Miletus, who was one of our slaves, and, entering Sardis, burnt its temples and its sacred groves; again, more lately, when we made a landing upon their coast under Datis and Artaphernes, how roughly they handled us ye do not need to be told. For these reasons, therefore, I am bent upon this war; and I see likewise therewith united no few advantages. Once let us subdue this people, and those neighbours of theirs who hold the land of Pelops the Phrygian, and we shall extend the Persian territory as far as God's heaven reaches. The sun will then shine on no land beyond our borders; for I will pass through Europe from one end to the other, and with your aid make of all the lands which it contains one country. For thus, if what I hear be true, affairs stand: the nations whereof I have spoken, once swept away, there is no city, no country left in all the world, which will venture so much as to withstand us in arms. By this course then we shall bring all mankind under our yoke, alike those who are guilty and those who are innocent of doing us wrong. For yourselves, if you wish to please me, do as follows: when I announce the time for the army to meet together, hasten to the muster with a good will, every one of you; and know that to the man who brings with him the most gallant array I will give the gifts which our people consider the most honourable. This then is what ye have to do. But to show that I am not self-willed in this matter, I lay the business before you, and give you full leave to speak your minds upon it openly."

Xerxes, having so spoken, held his peace.

[9] Whereupon Mardonius took the word, and said: "Of a truth, my lord, thou dost surpass, not only all living Persians, but likewise those yet unborn. Most true and right is each word that thou hast now uttered; but best of all thy resolve not to let the Ionians who live in Europe - a worthless crew - mock us any more. It were indeed a monstrous thing if, after conquering and enslaving the Sacae, the Indians, the Ethiopians, the Assyrians, and many other mighty nations, not for any wrong that they had done us, but only to increase our empire, we should then allow the Greeks, who have done us such wanton injury, to escape our vengeance. What is it that we fear in them? - not surely their numbers? - not the greatness of their wealth? We know the manner of their battle - we know how weak their power is; already have we subdued their children who dwell in our country, the Ionians, Aeolians, and Dorians. I myself have had experience of these men when I marched against them by the orders of thy father; and though I went as far as Macedonia, and came but a little short of reaching Athens itself, yet not a soul ventured to come out against me to battle. And yet, I am told, these very Greeks are wont to wage wars against one another in the most foolish way, through sheer perversity and doltishness. For no sooner is war proclaimed than they search out the smoothest and fairest plain that is to be found in all the land, and there they assemble and fight; whence it comes to pass that even the conquerors depart with great loss: I say nothing of the conquered, for they are destroyed altogether. Now surely, as they are all of one speech, they ought to interchange heralds and messengers, and make up their differences by any means rather than battle; or, at the worst, if they must needs fight one against another, they ought to post themselves as strongly as possible, and so try their quarrels. But, notwithstanding that they have so foolish a manner of warfare, yet these Greeks, when I led my army against them to the very borders of Macedonia, did not so much as think of offering me battle. Who then will dare, O king! to meet thee in arms, when thou comest with all Asia's warriors at thy back, and with all her ships? For my part I do not believe the Greek people will be so foolhardy. Grant, however, that I am mistaken herein, and that they are foolish enough to meet us in open fight; in that case they will learn that there are no such soldiers in the whole world as we. Nevertheless

let us spare no pains; for nothing comes without trouble; but all that men acquire is got by painstaking."

When Mardonius had in this way softened the harsh speech of Xerxes, he too held his peace.

[10] The other Persians were silent; all feared to raise their voice against the plan proposed to them. But Artabanus, the son of Hystaspes, and uncle of Xerxes, trusting to his relationship, was bold to speak:- "O king!" he said, "it is impossible, if no more than one opinion is uttered, to make choice of the best: a man is forced then to follow whatever advice may have been given him; but if opposite speeches are delivered, then choice can be exercised. In like manner pure gold is not recognised by itself; but when we test it along with baser ore, we perceive which is the better. I counselled thy father, Darius, who was my own brother, not to attack the Scyths, a race of people who had no town in their whole land. He thought however to subdue those wandering tribes, and would not listen to me, but marched an army against them, and ere he returned home lost many of his bravest warriors. Thou art about, O king! to attack a people far superior to the Scyths, a people distinguished above others both by land and sea. 'Tis fit therefore that I should tell thee what danger thou incurrst hereby. Thou sayest that thou wilt bridge the Hellespont, and lead thy troops through Europe against Greece. Now suppose some disaster befall thee by land or sea, or by both. It may be even so; for the men are reputed valiant. Indeed one may measure their prowess from what they have already done; for when Datis and Artaphernes led their huge army against Attica, the Athenians singly defeated them. But grant they are not successful on both elements. Still, if they man their ships, and, defeating us by sea, sail to the Hellespont, and there destroy our bridge - that, sire, were a fearful hazard. And here 'tis not by my own mother wit alone that I conjecture what will happen; but I remember how narrowly we escaped disaster once, when thy father, after throwing bridges over the Thracian Bosphorus and the Ister, marched against the Scythians, and they tried every sort of prayer to induce the Ionians, who had charge of the bridge over the Ister, to break the passage. On that day, if Histiaeus, the king of Miletus, had sided with the other princes, and not set himself to oppose their views, the empire of the Persians

would have come to nought. Surely a dreadful thing is this even to hear said, that the king's fortunes depended wholly on one man.

"Think then no more of incurring so great a danger when no need presses, but follow the advice I tender. Break up this meeting, and when thou hast well considered the matter with thyself, and settled what thou wilt do, declare to us thy resolve. I know not of aught in the world that so profits a man as taking good counsel with himself; for even if things fall out against one's hopes, still one has counselled well, though fortune has made the counsel of none effect: whereas if a man counsels ill and luck follows, he has gotten a windfall, but his counsel is none the less silly. Seest thou how God with his lightning smites always the bigger animals, and will not suffer them to wax insolent, while those of a lesser bulk chafe him not? How likewise his bolts fall ever on the highest houses and the tallest trees? So plainly does He love to bring down everything that exalts itself. Thus oftentimes a mighty host is discomfited by a few men, when God in his jealousy sends fear or storm from heaven, and they perish in a way unworthy of them. For God allows no one to have high thoughts but Himself. Again, hurry always brings about disasters, from which huge sufferings are wont to arise; but in delay lie many advantages, not apparent (it may be) at first sight, but such as in course of time are seen of all. Such then is my counsel to thee, O king!

"And thou, Mardonius, son of Gobryas, forbear to speak foolishly concerning the Greeks, who are men that ought not to be lightly esteemed by us. For while thou revilest the Greeks, thou dost encourage the king to lead his own troops against them; and this, as it seems to me, is what thou art specially striving to accomplish. Heaven send thou succeed not to thy wish! For slander is of all evils the most terrible. In it two men do wrong, and one man has wrong done to him. The slanderer does wrong, forasmuch as he abuses a man behind his back; and the hearer, forasmuch as he believes what he has not searched into thoroughly. The man slandered in his absence suffers wrong at the hands of both: for one brings against him a false charge; and the other thinks him an evildoer. If, however, it must needs be that we go to war with this people, at least allow the king to abide at home in Persia. Then let thee and me both stake our children on the issue, and do thou choose out thy men, and, taking with thee whatever number of troops thou likest,

lead forth our armies to battle. If things go well for the king, as thou sayest they will, let me and my children be put to death; but if they fall out as I prophesy, let thy children suffer, and thyself too, if thou shalt come back alive. But shouldst thou refuse this wager, and still resolve to march an army against Greece, sure I am that some of those whom thou leavest behind thee here will one day receive the sad tidings that Mardonius has brought a great disaster upon the Persian people, and lies a prey to dogs and birds somewhere in the land of the Athenians, or else in that of the Lacedaemonians; unless indeed thou shalt have perished sooner by the way, experiencing in thy own person the might of those men on whom thou wouldest fain induce the king to make war."

[11] Thus spake Artabanus. But Xerxes, full of wrath, replied to him:-

"Artabanus, thou art my father's brother - that shall save thee from receiving the due meed of thy silly words. One shame however I will lay upon thee, coward and faint-hearted as thou art - thou shalt not come with me to fight these Greeks, but shalt tarry here with the women. Without thy aid I will accomplish all of which I spake. For let me not be thought the child of Darius, the son of Hystaspes, the son of Arsames, the son of Ariaramnes, the son of Teispes, the son of Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, the son of Teispes, the son of Achaemenes, if I take not vengeance on the Athenians. Full well I know that, were we to remain at rest, yet would not they, but would most certainly invade our country, if at least it be right to judge from what they have already done; for, remember, it was they who fired Sardis and attacked Asia. So now retreat is on both sides impossible, and the choice lies between doing and suffering injury; either our empire must pass under the dominion of the Greeks, or their land become the prey of the Persians; for there is no middle course left in this quarrel. It is right then that we, who have in times past received wrong, should now avenge it, and that I should thereby discover what that great risk is which I run in marching against these men - men whom Pelops the Phrygian, a vassal of my forefathers, subdued so utterly, that to this day both the land, and the people who dwell therein, alike bear the name of the conqueror!"

[12] Thus far did the speaking proceed. Afterwards evening fell; and Xerxes began to find the advice of Artabanus greatly disquiet him. So he thought upon it during the night, and concluded at last that it was not for his advantage to lead an army into Greece. When he had thus made up his mind anew, he fell asleep. And now he saw in the night, as the Persians declare, a vision of this nature - he thought a tall and beautiful man stood over him and said, "Hast thou then changed thy mind, Persian, and wilt thou not lead forth thy host against the Greeks, after commanding the Persians to gather together their levies? Be sure thou doest not well to change; nor is there a man here who will approve thy conduct. The course that thou didst determine on during the day, let that be followed." After thus speaking the man seemed to Xerxes to fly away.

[13] Day dawned; and the king made no account of this dream, but called together the same Persians as before, and spake to them as follows:-

"Men of Persia, forgive me if I alter the resolve to which I came so lately. Consider that I have not yet reached to the full growth of my wisdom, and that they who urge me to engage in this war leave me not to myself for a moment. When I heard the advice of Artabanus, my young blood suddenly boiled; and I spake words against him little befitting his years: now however I confess my fault, and am resolved to follow his counsel. Understand then that I have changed my intent with respect to carrying war into Greece, and cease to trouble yourselves."

When they heard these words, the Persians were full of joy, and, falling down at the feet of Xerxes, made obeisance to him.

[14] But when night came, again the same vision stood over Xerxes as he slept, and said, "Son of Darius, it seems thou hast openly before all the Persians renounced the expedition, making light of my words, as though thou hadst not heard them spoken. Know therefore and be well assured, that unless thou go forth to the war, this thing shall happen unto thee thou art grown mighty and puissant in a short space, so likewise shalt thou within a little time be brought low indeed."

[15] Then Xerxes, greatly frightened at the vision which he had seen, sprang from his couch, and sent a messenger to call

Artabanus, who came at the summons, when Xerxes spoke to him in these words:-

"Artabanus, at the moment I acted foolishly, when I gave thee ill words in return for thy good advice. However it was not long ere I repented, and was convinced that thy counsel was such as I ought to follow. But I may not now act in this way, greatly as I desire to do so. For ever since I repented and changed my mind a dream has haunted me, which disapproves my intentions, and has now just gone from me with threats. Now if this dream is sent to me from God, and if it is indeed his will that our troops should march against Greece, thou too wilt have the same dream come to thee and receive the same commands as myself. And this will be most sure to happen, I think, if thou puttest on the dress which I am wont to wear, and then, after taking thy seat upon my throne, liest down to sleep on my bed."

[16] Such were the words of Xerxes. Artabanus would not at first yield to the command of the king; for he deemed himself unworthy to sit upon the royal throne. At the last however he was forced to give way, and did as Xerxes bade him; but first he spake thus to the king:-

"To me, sire, it seems to matter little whether a man is wise himself or willing to hearken to such as give good advice. In thee truly are found both but the counsels of evil men lead thee astray: they are like the gales of wind which vex the sea - else the most useful thing for man in the whole world - and suffer it not to follow the bent of its own nature. For myself, it irked me not so much to be reproached by thee, as to observe that when two courses were placed before the Persian people, one of a nature to increase their pride, the other to humble it, by showing them how hurtful it is to allow one's heart always to covet more than one at present possesses, thou madest choice of that which was the worse both for thyself and for the Persians. Now thou sayest that from the time when thou didst approve the better course, and give up the thought of warring against Greece, a dream has haunted thee, sent by some god or other, which will not suffer thee to lay aside the expedition. But such things, my son, have of a truth nothing divine in them. The dreams that wander to and fro among mankind, I will tell thee of what nature they are - I who have seen so many more years than

thou. Whatever a man has been thinking of during the day is wont to hover round him in the visions of his dreams at night. Now we during these many days past have had our hands full of this enterprise. If however the matter be not as I suppose, but God has indeed some part therein, thou hast in brief declared the whole that can be said concerning it - let it e'en appear to me as it has to thee, and lay on me the same injunctions. But it ought not to appear to me any the more if I put on thy clothes than if I wear my own, nor if I go to sleep in thy bed than if I do so in mine - supposing, I mean, that it is about to appear at all. For this thing, be it what it may, that visits thee in thy sleep, surely is not so far gone in folly as to see me, and because I am dressed in thy clothes, straightway to mistake me for thee. Now however our business is to see if it will regard me as of small account, and not vouchsafe to appear to me, whether I wear mine own clothes or thine, while it keeps on haunting thee continually. If it does so, and appears often, I should myself say that it was from God. For the rest, if thy mind is fixed, and it is not possible to turn thee from thy design, but I must needs go and sleep in thy bed, well and good, let it be even so; and when I have done as thou wishest, then let the dream appear to me. Till such time, however, I shall keep to my former opinion."

[17] Thus spake Artabanus; and when he had so said, thinking to show Xerxes that his words were nought, he did according to his orders. Having put on the garments which Xerxes was wont to wear and taken his seat upon the royal throne, he lay down to sleep upon the king's own bed. As he slept, there appeared to him the very same dream which had been seen by Xerxes; it came and stood over Artabanus, and said:-

"Thou art the man, then, who, feigning to be tender of Xerxes, seekest to dissuade him from leading his armies against the Greeks! But thou shalt not escape scathless, either now or in time to come, because thou hast sought to prevent that which is fated to happen. As for Xerxes, it has been plainly told to himself what will befall him, if he refuses to perform my bidding."

[18] In such words, as Artabanus thought, the vision threatened him, and then endeavoured to burn out his eyes with red-hot irons. At this he shrieked, and, leaping from his couch, hurried to Xerxes,

and, sitting down at his side, gave him a full account of the vision; after which he went on to speak in the words which follow:-

"I, O King! am a man who have seen many mighty empires overthrown by weaker ones; and therefore it was that I sought to hinder thee from being quite carried away by thy youth; since I knew how evil a thing it is to covet more than one possesses. I could remember the expedition of Cyrus against the Massagetae, and what was the issue of it; I could recollect the march of Cambyses against the Ethiops; I had taken part in the attack of Darius upon the Scyths - bearing therefore all these things in mind, I thought with myself that if thou shouldst remain at peace, all men would deem thee fortunate. But as this impulse has plainly come from above, and a heaven-sent destruction seems about to overtake the Greeks, behold, I change to another mind, and alter my thoughts upon the matter. Do thou therefore make known to the Persians what the god has declared, and bid them follow the orders which were first given, and prepare their levies. Be careful to act so that the bounty of the god may not be hindered by slackness on thy part."

Thus spake these two together; and Xerxes, being in good heart on account of the vision, when day broke, laid all before the Persians; while Artabanus, who had formerly been the only person openly to oppose the expedition, now showed as openly that he favoured it.

[19] After Xerxes had thus determined to go forth to the war, there appeared to him in his sleep yet a third vision. The Magi were consulted upon it, and said that its meaning reached to the whole earth, and that all mankind would become his servants. Now the vision which the king saw was this: he dreamt that he was crowned with a branch of an olive tree, and that boughs spread out from the olive branch and covered the whole earth; then suddenly the garland, as it lay upon his brow, vanished. So when the Magi had thus interpreted the vision, straightway all the Persians who were come together departed to their several governments, where each displayed the greatest zeal, on the faith of the king's offers. For all hoped to obtain for themselves the gifts which had been promised. And so Xerxes gathered together his host, ransacking every corner of the continent.

[20] Reckoning from the recovery of Egypt, Xerxes spent four full years in collecting his host and making ready all things that were needful for his soldiers. It was not till the close of the fifth year that he set forth on his march, accompanied by a mighty multitude. For of all the armaments whereof any mention has reached us, this was by far the greatest; insomuch that no other expedition compared to this seems of any account, neither that which Darius undertook against the Scythians, nor the expedition of the Scythians (which the attack of Darius was designed to avenge), when they, being in pursuit of the Cimmerians, fell upon the Median territory, and subdued and held for a time almost the whole of Upper Asia; nor, again, that of the Atridae against Troy, of which we hear in story; nor that of the Mysians and Teucrians, which was still earlier, wherein these nations crossed the Bosphorus into Europe, and, after conquering all Thrace, pressed forward till they came to the Ionian Sea, while southward they reached as far as the river Peneus.

[21] All these expeditions, and others, if such there were, are as nothing compared with this. For was there a nation in all Asia which Xerxes did not bring with him against Greece? Or was there a river, except those of unusual size, which sufficed for his troops to drink? One nation furnished ships; another was arrayed among the foot-soldiers; a third had to supply horses; a fourth, transports for the horse and men likewise for the transport service; a fifth, ships of war towards the bridges; a sixth, ships and provisions.

[22] And in the first place, because the former fleet had met with so great a disaster about Athos, preparations were made, by the space of about three years, in that quarter. A fleet of triremes lay at Elaeus in the Chersonese; and from this station detachments were sent by the various nations whereof the army was composed, which relieved one another at intervals, and worked at a trench beneath the lash of taskmasters; while the people dwelling about Athos bore likewise a part in the labour. Two Persians, Bubares, the son of Megabazus, and Artachaeus, the son of Artaeus, superintended the undertaking.

Athos is a great and famous mountain, inhabited by men, and stretching far out into the sea. Where the mountain ends towards the mainland it forms a peninsula; and in this place there is a neck of land about twelve furlongs across, the whole extent whereof,

from the sea of the Acanthians to that over against Torone, is a level plain, broken only by a few low hills. Here, upon this isthmus where Athos ends, is Sand, a Greek city. Inside of Sand, and upon Athos itself, are a number of towns, which Xerxes was now employed in disjoining from the continent: these are Dium, Olophyxus, Acrothoum, Thyssus, and Cleonae. Among these cities Athos was divided.

[23] Now the manner in which they dug was the following: a line was drawn across by the city of Sand; and along this the various nations parcelled out among themselves the work to be done. When the trench grew deep, the workmen at the bottom continued to dig, while others handed the earth, as it was dug out, to labourers placed higher up upon ladders, and these taking it, passed it on farther, till it came at last to those at the top, who carried it off and emptied it away. All the other nations, therefore, except the Phoenicians, had double labour; for the sides of the trench fell in continually, as could not but happen, since they made the width no greater at the top than it was required to be at the bottom. But the Phoenicians showed in this the skill which they are wont to exhibit in all their undertakings. For in the portion of the work which was allotted to them they began by making the trench at the top twice as wide as the prescribed measure, and then as they dug downwards approached the sides nearer and nearer together, so that when they reached the bottom their part of the work was of the same width as the rest. In a meadow near, there was a place of assembly and a market; and hither great quantities of corn, ready ground, were brought from Asia.

[24] It seems to me, when I consider this work, that Xerxes, in making it, was actuated by a feeling of pride, wishing to display the extent of his power, and to leave a memorial behind him to posterity. For notwithstanding that it was open to him, with no trouble at all, to have had his ships drawn across the isthmus, yet he issued orders that a canal should be made through which the sea might flow, and that it should be of such a width as would allow of two triremes passing through it abreast with the oars in action. He likewise gave to the same persons who were set over the digging of the trench, the task of making a bridge across the river Strymon.

[25] While these things were in progress, he was having cables prepared for his bridges, some of papyrus and some of white flax, a business which he entrusted to the Phoenicians and the Egyptians. He likewise laid up stores of provisions in divers places, to save the army and the beasts of burthen from suffering want upon their march into Greece. He inquired carefully about all the sites, and had the stores laid up in such as were most convenient, causing them to be brought across from various parts of Asia and in various ways, some in transports and others in merchantmen. The greater portion was carried to Leuce-Acte, upon the Thracian coast; some part, however, was conveyed to Tyrodiza, in the country of the Perinthians, some to Doriscus, some to Eion upon the Strymon, and some to Macedonia.

[45] And now, as he looked and saw the whole Hellespont covered with the vessels of his fleet, and all the shore and every plain about Abydos as full as possible of men, Xerxes congratulated himself on his good fortune; but after a little while he wept.

[46] Then Artabanus, the king's uncle (the same who at the first so freely spake his mind to the king, and advised him not to lead his army against Greece), when he heard that Xerxes was in tears, went to him, and said:-

"How different, sire, is what thou art now doing, from what thou didst a little while ago! Then thou didst congratulate thyself; and now, behold! thou weapest."

"There came upon me," replied he, "a sudden pity, when I thought of the shortness of man's life, and considered that of all this host, so numerous as it is, not one will be alive when a hundred years are gone by."

"And yet there are sadder things in life than that," returned the other. "Short as our time is, there is no man, whether it be here among this multitude or elsewhere, who is so happy, as not to have felt the wish - I will not say once, but full many a time - that he were dead rather than alive. Calamities fall upon us; sicknesses vex and harass us, and make life, short though it be, to appear long. So death, through the wretchedness of our life, is a most sweet refuge to our race: and God, who gives us the tastes that we enjoy of pleasant times, is seen, in his very gift, to be envious."

[47] "True," said Xerxes; "human life is even such as thou hast painted it, O Artabanus! But for this very reason let us turn our thoughts from it, and not dwell on what is so sad, when pleasant things are in hand. Tell me rather, if the vision which we saw had not appeared so plainly to thyself, wouldst thou have been still of the same mind as formerly, and have continued to dissuade me from warring against Greece, or wouldst thou at this time think differently? Come now, tell me this honestly."

"O king!" replied the other, "may the dream which hath appeared to us have such issue as we both desire! For my own part, I am still full of fear, and have scarcely power to control myself, when I consider all our dangers, and especially when I see that the two things which are of most consequence are alike opposed to thee."

[48] "Thou strange man!" said Xerxes in reply - "what, I pray thee, are the two things thou speakest of? Does my land army seem to thee too small in number, and will the Greeks, thinkest thou, bring into the field a more numerous host? Or is it our fleet which thou deemest weaker than theirs? Or art thou fearful on both accounts? If in thy judgment we fall short in either respect, it were easy to bring together with all speed another armament."

[49] "O king!" said Artabanus, "it is not possible that a man of understanding should find fault with the size of thy army or the number of thy ships. The more thou addest to these, the more hostile will those two things, whereof I spake, become. Those two things are the land and the sea. In all the wide sea there is not, I imagine, anywhere a harbour large enough to receive thy vessels, in case a storm arise, and afford them a sure protection. And yet thou wilt want, not one such harbour only, but many in succession, along the entire coast by which thou art about to make thy advance. In default then of such harbours, it is well to bear in mind that chances rule men, and not men chances. Such is the first of the two dangers; and now I will speak to thee of the second. The land will also be thine enemy; for if no one resists thy advance, as thou proceedest farther and farther, insensibly allured onwards (for who is ever sated with success?), thou wilt find it more and more hostile. I mean this, that, should nothing else withstand thee, yet the mere distance, becoming greater as time goes on, will at last produce a famine. Methinks it is best for men, when they take counsel, to be timorous, and imagine all possible calamities, but when the time for action comes, then to deal boldly."

[50] Whereto Xerxes answered - "There is reason, O Artabanus! in everything which thou hast said; but I pray thee, fear not all things alike, nor count up every risk. For if in each matter that comes before us thou wilt look to all possible chances, never wilt thou achieve anything. Far better is it to have a stout heart always, and suffer one's share of evils, than to be ever fearing what may happen,

and never incur a mischance. Moreover, if thou wilt oppose whatever is said by others, without thyself showing us the sure course which we ought to take, thou art as likely to lead us into failure as they who advise differently; for thou art but on a par with them. And as for that sure course, how canst thou show it us when thou art but a man? I do not believe thou canst. Success for the most part attends those who act boldly, not those who weigh everything, and are slack to venture. Thou seest to how great a height the power of Persia has now reached - never would it have grown to this point if they who sate upon the throne before me had been like-minded with thee, or even, though not like-minded, had listened to councillors of such a spirit. 'Twas by brave ventures that they extended their sway; for great empires can only be conquered by great risks. We follow then the example of our fathers in making this march; and we set forward at the best season of the year; so, when we have brought Europe under us, we shall return, without suffering from want or experiencing any other calamity. For while on the one hand we carry vast stores of provisions with us, on the other we shall have the grain of all the countries and nations that we attack; since our march is not directed against a pastoral people, but against men who are tillers of the ground."

[51] Then said Artabanus - "If, sire, thou art determined that we shall not fear anything, at least hearken to a counsel which I wish to offer; for when the matters in hand are so many, one cannot but have much to say. Thou knowest that Cyrus the son of Cambyses reduced and made tributary to the Persians all the race of the Ionians, except only those of Attica. Now my advice is that thou on no account lead forth these men against their fathers; since we are well able to overcome them without such aid. Their choice, if we take them with us to the war, lies between showing themselves the most wicked of men by helping to enslave their fatherland, or the most righteous by joining in the struggle to keep it free. If then they choose the side of injustice, they will do us but scant good; while if they determine to act justly, they may greatly injure our host. Lay thou to heart the old proverb, which says truly, 'The beginning and end of a matter are not always seen at once.'

[52] "Artabanus," answered Xerxes, "there is nothing in all that thou hast said, wherein thou art so wholly wrong as in this, that thou suspectest the faith of the Ionians. Have they not given us the

surest proof of their attachment - a proof which thou didst thyself witness, and likewise all those who fought with Darius against the Scythians? When it lay wholly with them to save or to destroy the entire Persian army, they dealt by us honourably and with good faith, and did us no hurt at all. Besides, they will leave behind them in our country their wives, their children, and their properties - can it then be conceived that they will attempt rebellion? Have no fear, therefore, on this score; but keep a brave heart and uphold my house and empire. To thee, and thee only, do I intrust my sovereignty."

[53] After Xerxes had thus spoken, and had sent Artabanus away to return to Susa, he summoned before him all the Persians of most repute, and when they appeared, addressed them in these words:-

"Persians, I have brought you together because I wished to exhort you to behave bravely, and not to sully with disgrace the former achievements of the Persian people, which are very great and famous. Rather let us one and all, singly and jointly, exert ourselves to the uttermost; for the matter wherein we are engaged concerns the common weal. Strain every nerve, then, I beseech you, in this war. Brave warriors are the men we march against, if report says true; and such that, if we conquer them, there is not a people in all the world which will venture thereafter to with. stand our arms. And now let us offer prayers to the gods who watch over the welfare of Persia, and then cross the channel."

[61] Now these were the nations that took part in this expedition. The Persians, who wore on their heads the soft hat called the tiara, and about their bodies, tunics with sleeves of divers colours, having iron scales upon them like the scales of a fish. Their legs were protected by trousers; and they bore wicker shields for bucklers; their quivers hanging at their backs, and their arms being a short spear, a bow of uncommon size, and arrows of reed. They had likewise daggers suspended from their girdles along their right thighs. Otanes, the father of Xerxes' wife, Amestris, was their leader. This people was known to the Greeks in ancient times by the name of Cephensians; but they called themselves and were called by their neighbours, Artaeans. It was not till Perseus, the son of Jove and Danae, visited Cepheus the son of Belus, and, marrying his daughter Andromeda, had by her a son called Perses (whom he left behind him in the country because Cepheus had no male offspring), that the nation took from this Perses the name of Persians.

[62] The Medes had exactly the same equipment as the Persians; and indeed the dress common to both is not so much Persian as Median. They had for commander Tigranes, of the race of the Achaemenids. These Medes were called anciently by all people Arians; but when Media, the Colchian, came to them from Athens, they changed their name. Such is the account which they themselves give.

The Cissians were equipped in the Persian fashion, except in one respect:- they wore on their heads, instead of hats, fillets. Anaphes, the son of Otanes, commanded them.

The Hyrcanians were likewise armed in the same way as the Persians. Their leader was Megapanus, the same who was afterwards satrap of Babylon.

[63] The Assyrians went to the war with helmets upon their heads made of brass, and plaited in a strange fashion which it is not easy to describe. They carried shields, lances, and daggers very like the Egyptian; but in addition, they had wooden clubs knotted with iron, and linen corselets. This people, whom the Greeks call Syrians, are called Assyrians by the barbarians. The Chaldaeans served in their ranks, and they had for commander Otaspes, the son of Artachaeus.

[64] The Bactrians went to the war wearing a head-dress very like the Median, but armed with bows of cane, after the custom of their country, and with short spears.

The Sacae, or Scyths, were clad in trousers, and had on their heads tall stiff caps rising to a point. They bore the bow of their country and the dagger; besides which they carried the battle-axe, or sagaris. They were in truth Amyrgian Scythians, but the Persians called them Sacae, since that is the name which they give to all Scythians. The Bactrians and the Sacae had for leader Hystaspes, the son of Darius and of Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus.

[65] The Indians wore cotton dresses, and carried bows of cane, and arrows also of cane with iron at the point. Such was the equipment of the Indians, and they marched under the command of Pharnazathres the son of Artabates.

[66] The Arians carried Median bows, but in other respects were equipped like the Bactrians. Their commander was Sisamnes the son of Hydarnes.

The Parthians and Chorasmians, with the Sogdians, the Gandarians, and the Dadicae, had the Bactrian equipment in all respects. The Parthians and Chorasmians were commanded by Artabazus the son of Pharnaces, the Sogdians by Azanes the son of Artaeus, and the Gandarians and Dadicae by Artyphius the son of Artabanus.

[67] The Caspians were clad in cloaks of skin, and carried the cane bow of their country and the scymitar. So equipped they went to the war; and they had for commander Ariomardus the brother of Artyphius.

The Sarangians had dyed garments which showed brightly, and buskins which reached to the knee: they bore Median bows, and lances. Their leader was Pherendates, the son of Megabazus.

The Pactyans wore cloaks of skin, and carried the bow of their country and the dagger. Their commander was Artyntes, the son of Ithamatres.

[68] The Utians, the Mycians, and the Paricanians were all equipped like the Pactyans. They had for leaders, Arsamenes, the son of Darius, who commanded the Utians and Mycians; and Siromitres, the son of Oeobazus, who commanded the Paricanians.

[69] The Arabians wore the zeira, or long cloak, fastened about them with a girdle; and carried at their right side long bows, which when unstrung bent backwards.

The Ethiopians were clothed in the skins of leopards and lions, and had long bows made of the stem of the palm-leaf, not less than four cubits in length. On these they laid short arrows made of reed, and armed at the tip, not with iron, but with a piece of stone, sharpened to a point, of the kind used in engraving seals. They carried likewise spears, the head of which was the sharpened horn of an antelope; and in addition they had knotted clubs. When they went into battle they painted their bodies, half with chalk, and half with vermilion. The Arabians, and the Ethiopians who came from the region above Egypt, were commanded by Arsames, the son of Darius and of Artystone daughter of Cyrus. This Artystone was the best-beloved of all the wives of Darius; and it was she whose statue he caused to be made of gold wrought with the hammer. Her son Arsames commanded these two nations.

[70] The eastern Ethiopians - for two nations of this name served in the army - were marshalled with the Indians. They differed in nothing from the other Ethiopians, save in their language, and the character of their hair. For the eastern Ethiopians have straight hair, while they of Libya are more woolly-haired than any other people in the world. Their equipment was in most points like that of the Indians; but they wore upon their heads the scalps of horses, with the ears and mane attached; the ears were made to stand upright, and the mane served as a crest. For shields this people made use of the skins of cranes.

[71] The Libyans wore a dress of leather, and carried javelins made hard in the fire. They had for commander Massages, the son of Oarizus.

[72] The Paphlagonians went to the war with plaited helmets upon their heads, and carrying small shields and spears of no great size. They had also javelins and daggers, and wore on their feet the buskin of their country, which reached half way up the shank. In the same fashion were equipped the Ligyans, the Matienians, the Mariandynians, and the Syrians (or Cappadocians, as they are called by the Persians). The Paphlagonians and Matienians were under the command of Dotus the son of Megasidrus; while the

Mariandynians, the Ligyans, and the Syrians had for leader Gobryas, the son of Darius and Artystone.

[73] The dress of the Phrygians closely resembled the Paphlagonian, only in a very few points differing from it. According to the Macedonian account, the Phrygians, during the time that they had their abode in Europe and dwelt with them in Macedonia, bore the name of Brigians; but on their removal to Asia they changed their designation at the same time with their dwelling-place.

The Armenians, who are Phrygian colonists, were armed in the Phrygian fashion. Both nations were under the command of Artochmes, who was married to one of the daughters of Darius.

[74] The Lydians were armed very nearly in the Grecian manner. These Lydians in ancient times were called Maeonians, but changed their name, and took their present title from Lydus the son of Atys.

The Mysians wore upon their heads a helmet made after the fashion of their country, and carried a small buckler; they used as javelins staves with one end hardened in the fire. The Mysians are Lydian colonists, and from the mountain-chain of Olympus, are called Olympieni. Both the Lydians and the Mysians were under the command of Artaphernes, the son of that Artaphernes who, with Datis, made the landing at Marathon.

[75] The Thracians went to the war wearing the skins of foxes upon their heads, and about their bodies tunics, over which was thrown a long cloak of many colours. Their legs and feet were clad in buskins made from the skins of fawns; and they had for arms javelins, with light targes, and short dirks. This people, after crossing into Asia, took the name of Bithynians; before, they had been called Strymonians, while they dwelt upon the Strymon; whence, according to their own account, they had been driven out by the Mysians and Teucrians. The commander of these Asiatic Thracians was Bassaces the son of Artabanus.

[76] The . . . had made small shields made of the hide of the ox, and carried each of them two spears such as are used in wolf-hunting. Brazen helmets protected their heads; and above these they wore the ears and horns of an ox fashioned in brass. They had also crests on their helms; and their legs were bound round with purple bands. There is an oracle of Mars in the country of this people.

[77] The Cabalians, who are Maeonians, but are called Lasonians, had the same equipment as the Cilicians - an equipment which I shall describe when I come in due course to the Cilician contingent.

The Milyans bore short spears, and had their garments fastened with buckles. Some of their number carried Lycian bows. They wore about their heads skull-caps made of leather. Badres the son of Hystanes led both nations to battle.

[78] The Moschians wore helmets made of wood, and carried shields and spears of a small size: their spear-heads, however, were long. The Moschian equipment was that likewise of the Tibarenians, the Macronians, and the Mosynoecians. The leaders of these nations were the following: the Moschians and Tibarenians were under the command of Ariomardus, who was the son of Darius and of Parmys, daughter of Smerdis son of Cyrus; while the Macronians and Mosynoecians. had for leader Artayctes, the son of Cherasmis, the governor of Sestos upon the Hellespont.

[79] The Mares wore on their heads the plaited helmet peculiar to their country, and used small leathern bucklers, and javelins.

The Colchians wore wooden helmets, and carried small shields of raw hide, and short spears; besides which they had swords. Both Mares and Colchians were under the command of Pharandates, the son of Teaspes.

The Alarodians and Saspirians were armed like the Colchians; their leader was Masistes, the son of Siromitras.

[80] The Islanders who came from the Erythraean Sea, where they inhabited the islands to which the king sends those whom he banishes, wore a dress and arms almost exactly like the Median. Their leader was Mardontes the son of Bagaesus, who the year after perished in the battle of Mycale, where he was one of the captains.

[81] Such were the nations who fought upon the dry land, and made up the infantry of the Persians. And they were commanded by the captains whose names have been above recorded. The marshalling and numbering of the troops had been committed to them; and by them were appointed the captains over a thousand, and the captains over ten thousand; but the leaders of ten men, or a hundred, were named by the captains over ten thousand. There were other officers

also, who gave the orders to the various ranks and nations; but those whom I have mentioned above were the commanders.

Of all the troops the Persians were adorned with the greatest magnificence, and they were likewise the most valiant. Besides their arms, which have been already described, they glittered all over with gold, vast quantities of which they wore about their persons. They were followed by litters, wherein rode their concubines, and by a numerous train of attendants handsomely dressed. Camels and sumpter-beasts carried their provision, apart from that of the other soldiers.

[84] All these various nations fight on horseback; they did not, however, at this time all furnish horsemen:-

[85] The wandering tribe known by the name of Sagartians - a people Persian in language, and in dress half Persian, half Pactyan, who furnished to the army as many as eight thousand horse. It is not the wont of this people to carry arms, either of bronze or steel, except only a dirk; but they use lassoes made of thongs plaited together, and trust to these whenever they go to the wars. Now the manner in which they fight is the following: when they meet their enemy, straightway they discharge their lassoes, which end in a noose; then, whatever the noose encircles, be it man or be it horse, they drag towards them; and the foe, entangled in the toils, is forthwith slain. Such is the manner in which this people fight; and now their horsemen were drawn up with the Persians.

[108] Xerxes, as I have said, pursued his march from Doriscus against Greece; and on his way he forced all the nations through which he passed to take part in the expedition. For the whole country as far as the frontiers of Thessaly had been (as I have already shown) enslaved and made tributary to the king by the conquests of Megabazus, and, more lately, of Mardonius. And first, after leaving Doriscus, Xerxes passed the Samothracian fortresses, whereof Mesambria is the farthestmost as one goes toward the west. The next city is Stryme, which belongs to Thasos. Midway between it and Mesambria flows the river Lissus, which did not suffice to furnish water for the army, but was drunk up and failed. This region was formerly called Gallaica; now it bears the name of Briantica; but in strict truth it likewise is really Ciconian.

[127] On reaching Therma Xerxes halted his army, which encamped along the coast, beginning at the city of Therma in Mygdonia, and stretching out as far as the rivers Lydias and Haliacmon, two streams which, mingling their waters in one, form the boundary between Bottiaea and Macedonia. Such was the extent of country through which the barbarians encamped. The rivers here mentioned were all of them sufficient to supply the troops, except the Echeidorus, which was drunk dry.

[128] From Therma Xerxes beheld the Thessalian mountains, Olympus and Ossa, which are of a wonderful height. Here, learning that there lay between these mountains a narrow gorge through which the river Peneus ran, and where there was a road that gave an entrance into Thessaly, he formed the wish to go by sea himself, and examine the mouth of the river. His design was to lead his army by the upper road through the country of the inland Macedonians, and so to enter Perrhaebia, and come down by the city of Gonnus; for he was told that that way was the most secure. No sooner therefore had he formed this wish than he acted accordingly. Embarking, as was his wont on all such occasions, aboard a Sidonian vessel, he gave the signal to the rest of the fleet to get under weigh, and quitting his land army, set sail and proceeded to the Peneus. Here the view of the mouth caused him to wonder greatly; and sending for his guides, he asked them whether it were possible to turn the course of the stream, and make it reach the sea at any other point.

[129] Now there is a tradition that Thessaly was in ancient times a lake, shut in on every side by huge hills. Ossa and Pelion- ranges which join at the foot- do in fact inclose it upon the east, while Olympus forms a barrier upon the north, Pindus upon the west, and Othrys towards the south. The tract contained within these mountains, which is a deep basin, is called Thessaly. Many rivers pour their waters into it; but five of them are of more note than the rest, namely, the Peneus, the Apidanus, the Onochonus, the

Enipeus, and the Pamisus. These streams flow down from the mountains which surround Thessaly, and, meeting in the plain, mingle their waters together, and discharge themselves into the sea by a single outlet, which is a gorge of extreme narrowness. After the junction all the other names disappear, and the river is known as the Peneus. It is said that of old the gorge which allows the waters an outlet did not exist; accordingly the rivers, which were then as well as the Lake Boebeis, without names but flowed with as much water as at present, made Thessaly a sea. The Thessalians tell us that the gorge through which the water escapes was caused by Neptune; and this: is likely enough; at least any man who believes that Neptune causes earthquakes, and that chasms so produced are his handiwork, would say, upon seeing this rent, that Neptune did it. For it plainly appeared to me that the hills had been torn asunder by an earthquake.

[130] When Xerxes therefore asked the guides if there were any other outlet by which the waters could reach the sea, they, being men well acquainted with the nature of their country, made answer:-

"O king! there is no other passage by which this stream can empty itself into the sea save that which thine eye beholds. For Thessaly is girt about with a circlet of hills."

Xerxes is said to have observed upon this -

"Wise men truly are they of Thessaly, and good reason had they to change their minds in time and consult for their own safety. For, to pass by others matters, they must have felt that they lived in a country which may easily be brought under and subdued. Nothing more is needed than to turn the river upon their lands by an embankment which should fill up the gorge and force the stream from its present channel, and lo! all Thessaly, except the mountains, would at once be laid under water."

The king aimed in this speech at the sons of Aleuas, who were Thessalians, and had been the first of all the Greeks to make submission to him. He thought that they had made their friendly offers in the name of the whole people. So Xerxes, when he had viewed the place, and made the above speech, went back to Therma.

[145] The Greeks who were well affected to the Grecian cause, having assembled in one place, and there consulted together, and interchanged pledges with each other, agreed that, before any other step was taken, the feuds and enmities which existed between the different nations should first of all be appeased. Many such there were; but one was of more importance than the rest, namely, the war which was still going on between the Athenians and the Eginetans. When this business was concluded, understanding that Xerxes had reached Sardis with his army, they resolved to despatch spies into Asia to take note of the king's affairs. At the same time they determined to send ambassadors to the Argives, and conclude a league with them against the Persians; while they likewise despatched messengers to Gelo, the son of Deinomenes, in Sicily, to the people of Corcyra, and to those of Crete, exhorting them to send help to Greece. Their wish was to unite, if possible, the entire Greek name in one, and so to bring all to join in the same plan of defence, inasmuch as the approaching dangers threatened all alike. Now the power of Gelo was said to be very great, far greater than that of any single Grecian people.

[146] So when these resolutions had been agreed upon, and the quarrels between the states made up, first of all they sent into Asia three men as spies. These men reached Sardis, and took note of the king's forces, but, being discovered, were examined by order of the generals who commanded the land army, and, having been condemned to suffer death, were led out to execution. Xerxes, however, when the news reached him, disapproving the sentence of the generals, sent some of his bodyguard with instructions, if they found the spies still alive, to bring them into his presence. The messengers found the spies alive, and brought them before the king, who, when he heard the purpose for which they had come, gave orders to his guards to take them round the camp, and show them all the footmen and all the horse, letting them gaze at everything to their hearts' content; then, when they were satisfied, to send them away unharmed to whatever country they desired.

[147] For these orders Xerxes gave afterwards the following reasons. "Had the spies been put to death," he said, "the Greeks would have continued ignorant of the vastness of his army, which surpassed the common report of it; while he would have done them a very small injury by killing three of their men. On the other hand, by the return of the spies to Greece, his power would become known; and the Greeks," he expected, "would make surrender of their freedom before he began his march, by which means his troops would be saved all the trouble of an expedition." This reasoning was like to that which he used upon another occasion. While he was staying at Abydos, he saw some corn-ships, which were passing through the Hellespont from the Euxine, on their way to Egina and the Peloponnese. His attendants, hearing that they were the enemy's, were ready to capture them, and looked to see when Xerxes would give the signal. He, however, merely asked "whither the ships were bound?" and when they answered, "For thy foes, master, with corn on board, "We too are bound thither," he rejoined, "laden, among other things, with corn. What harm is it, if they carry our provisions for us?"

So the spies, when they had seen everything, were dismissed, and came back to Europe.

[148] The Greeks who had banded themselves together against the Persian king, after despatching the spies into Asia, sent next ambassadors to Argos. The account which the Argives give of their own proceedings is the following. They say that they had information from the very first of the preparations which the barbarians were making against Greece. So, as they expected that the Greeks would come upon them for aid against the assailant, they sent envoys to Delphi to inquire of the god what it would be best for them to do in the matter. They had lost, not long before, six thousand citizens, who had been slain by the Lacedaemonians under Cleomenes the son of Anaxandridas; which was the reason why they now sent to Delphi. When the Pythoness heard their question, she replied -

Hated of all thy neighbors, beloved of the blessed Immortals,
Sit thou still, with thy lance drawn inward, patiently watching;
Warily guard thine head, and the head will take care of the
body.

This prophecy had been given them some time before the envoys came; but still, when they afterwards arrived, it was permitted them to enter the council-house, and there deliver their message. And this answer was returned to their demands - "Argos is ready to do as ye require, if the Lacedaemonians will first make a truce for thirty years, and will further divide with Argos the leadership of the allied army. Although in strict right the whole command should be hers, she will be content to have the leadership divided equally."

[149] Such, they say, was the reply made by the council, in spite of the oracle which forbade them to enter into a league with the Greeks. For, while not without fear of disobeying the oracle, they were greatly desirous of obtaining a thirty years' truce, to give time for their sons to grow to man's estate. They reflected, that if no such truce were concluded, and it should be their lot to suffer a second calamity at the hands of the Persians, it was likely they would fall hopelessly under the power of Sparta. But to the demands of the Argive council the Lacedaemonian envoys made answer - "They would bring before the people the question of concluding a truce. With regard to the leadership, they had received orders what to say, and the reply was that Sparta had two kings, Argos but one - it was not possible that either of the two Spartans should be stripped of his dignity - but they did not oppose the Argive king having one vote like each of them." The Argives say that they could not brook this arrogance on the part of Sparta, and rather than yield one jot to it, they preferred to be under the rule of the barbarians. So they told the envoys to be gone, before sunset, from their territory, or they should be treated as enemies.

[174] The Greeks, on their return to the Isthmus, took counsel together concerning the words of Alexander, and considered where they should fix the war, and what places they should occupy. The opinion which prevailed was that they should guard the pass of Thermopylae; since it was narrower than the Thessalian defile, and at the same time nearer to them. Of the pathway, by which the Greeks who fell at Thermopylae were intercepted, they had no knowledge, until, on their arrival at Thermopylae, it was discovered to them by the Trachinians. This pass then it was determined that they should guard, in order to prevent the barbarians from penetrating into Greece through it; and at the same time it was resolved that the fleet should proceed to Artemisium, in the region of Histiaeotis, for, as those places are near to one another, it would be easy for the fleet and army to hold communication. The two places may be thus described.

[175] Artemisium is where the sea of Thrace contracts into a narrow channel, running between the isle of Sciathus and the mainland of Magnesia. When this narrow strait is passed you come to the line of coast called Artemisium; which is a portion of Euboea, and contains a temple of Artemis (Diana). As for the entrance into Greece by Trachis, it is, at its narrowest point, about fifty feet wide. This however is not the place where the passage is most contracted; for it is still narrower a little above and a little below Thermopylae. At Alpini, which is lower down than that place, it is only wide enough for a single carriage; and up above, at the river Phoenix, near the town called Anthela, it is the same. West of Thermopylae rises a lofty and precipitous hill, impossible to climb, which runs up into the chain of Oeta; while to the east the road is shut in by the sea and by marshes. In this place are the warm springs, which the natives call "The Cauldrons"; and above them stands an altar sacred

to Hercules. A wall had once been carried across the opening; and in this there had of old times been a gateway. These works were made by the Phocians, through fear of the Thessalians, at the time when the latter came from Thesprotia to establish themselves in the land of Aeolis, which they still occupy. As the Thessalians strove to reduce Phocis, the Phocians raised the wall to protect themselves, and likewise turned the hot springs upon the pass, that so the ground might be broken up by watercourses, using thus all possible means to hinder the Thessalians from invading their country. The old wall had been built in very remote times; and the greater part of it had gone to decay through age. Now however the Greeks resolved to repair its breaches, and here make their stand against the barbarian. At this point there is a village very nigh the road, Alpeni by name, from which the Greeks reckoned on getting corn for their troops.

[177] These places, therefore, seemed to the Greeks fit for their purpose. Weighing well all that was likely to happen, and considering that in this region the barbarians could make no use of their vast numbers, nor of their cavalry, they resolved to await here the invader of Greece. And when news reached them of the Persians being in Pieria, straightway they broke up from the Isthmus, and proceeded, some on foot to Thermopylae, others by sea to Artemisium.

[178] The Greeks now made all speed to reach the two stations; and about the same time - the Delphians, alarmed both for themselves and for their country, consulted the god, and received for answer a command to "pray to the winds, for the winds would do Greece good service." So when this answer was given them, forthwith the Delphians sent word of the prophecy to those Greeks who were zealous for freedom, and, cheering them thereby amid the fears which they entertained with respect to the barbarian, earned their everlasting gratitude. This done, they raised an altar to the winds at Thyia (where Thyia, the daughter of Cephissus, from whom the region takes its name, has a precinct), and worshipped them with sacrifices. And even to the present day the Delphians sacrifice to the winds, because of this oracle.

[179] The fleet of Xerxes now departed from Therma; and ten of the swiftest sailing ships ventured to stretch across direct for

Sciathus, at which place there were upon the look-out three vessels belonging to the Greeks, one a ship of Troezen, another of Egina, and the third from Athens. These vessels no sooner saw from a distance the barbarians approaching than they all hurriedly took to flight.

[180] The barbarians at once pursued, and the Troezenian ship, which was commanded by Prexinus, fell into their hands. Hereupon the Persians took the handsomest of the men-at-arms, and drew him to the prow of the vessel, where they sacrificed him; for they thought the man a good omen to their cause, seeing that he was at once so beautiful, and likewise the first captive they had made. The man who was slain in this way was called Leo; and it may be that the name he bore helped him to his fate in some measure.

[183] Meantime three of the ten vessels sent forward by the barbarians advanced as far as the sunken rock between Sciathus and Magnesia, which is called "The Ant," and there set up a stone pillar which they had brought with them for that purpose. After this, their course being now clear, the barbarians set sail with all their ships from Therma, eleven days from the time that the king quitted the town. The rock, which lay directly in their course, had been made known to them by Pammon of Scyros. A day's voyage without a stop brought them to Sepias in Magnesia, and to the strip of coast which lies between the town of Casthanaea and the promontory of Sepias.

[184] As far as this point then, and on land, as far as Thermopylae, the armament of Xerxes had been free from mischance; and the numbers were still, according to my reckoning, of the following amount. First there was the ancient complement of the twelve hundred and seven vessels which came with the king from Asia - the contingents of the nations severally - amounting, if we allow to each ship a crew of two hundred men, to 241,400 - Each of these vessels had on board, besides native soldiers, thirty fighting men, who were either Persians, Medes, or Sacans; which gives an addition of 36,210. To these two numbers I shall further add the crews of the penteconters; which may be reckoned, one with another, at fourscore men each. Of such vessels there were (as I said before) three thousand; and the men on board them accordingly would be 240,000. This was the sea force brought by the king from Asia; and it amounted in all to 517,610 men. The number of the foot soldiers was 1,700,000; that of the horsemen 80,000; to which must be added the Arabs who rode on camels, and the Libyans who fought in chariots, whom I reckon at 20,000. The whole number, therefore, of the land and sea forces added together amounts to 2,317,610 men. Such was the force brought from Asia, without including the camp followers, or taking any account of the provision- ships and the men whom they had on board.

[185] To the amount thus reached we have still to add the forces gathered in Europe, concerning which I can only speak from conjecture. The Greeks dwelling in Thrace, and in the islands off the coast of Thrace, furnished to the fleet one hundred and twenty ships; the crews of which would amount to 24,000 men. Besides these, footmen were furnished by the Thracians, the Paeonians, the

Eordians, the Bottiaean, by the Chalcidean tribes, by the Brygians, the Pierians, the Macedonians, the Perrhaebians the Enianians, the Dolopians, the Magnesians, the Achaeans and by all the dwellers upon the Thracian sea-board; and the forces of these nations amounted, I believe, to three hundred thousand men. These numbers, added to those of the force which came out of Asia, make the sum of the fighting men 2,641,610.

[186] Such then being the number of the fighting men, it is my belief that the attendants who followed the camp, together with the crews of the corn-barks, and of the other craft accompanying the army, made up an amount rather above than below that of the fighting men. However I will not reckon them as either fewer or more, but take them at an equal number. We have therefore to add to the sum already reached an exactly equal amount. This will give 5,283,220 as the whole number of men brought by Xerxes, the son of Darius, as far as Sepias and Thermopylae.

[187] Such then was the amount of the entire host of Xerxes. As for the number of the women who ground the corn, of the concubines, and the eunuchs, no one can give any sure account of it; nor can the baggage-horses and other sumpter-beasts, nor the Indian hounds which followed the army, be calculated, by reason of their multitude. Hence I am not at all surprised that the water of the rivers was found too scant for the army in some instances; rather it is a marvel to me how the provisions did not fail, when the numbers were so great. For I find on calculation that if each man consumed no more than a choenix of corn a day, there must have been used daily by the army 110,340 medimni, and this without counting what was eaten by the women, the eunuchs, the sumpter-beasts, and the hounds. Among all this multitude of men there was not one who, for beauty and stature, deserved more than Xerxes himself to wield so vast a power.

[199] King Xerxes pitched his camp in the region of Malis called Trachinia, while on their side the Greeks occupied the straits. These straits the Greeks in general call Thermopylae (the Hot Gates); but the natives, and those who dwell in the neighbourhood, call them Pylae (the Gates). Here then the two armies took their stand; the one master of all the region lying north of Trachis, the other of the country extending southward of that place to the verge of the continent.

[200] The Greeks who at this spot awaited the coming of Xerxes were the following:- From Sparta, three hundred men-at-arms; from Arcadia, a thousand Tegeans and Mantineans, five hundred of each people; a hundred and twenty Orchomenians, from the Arcadian Orchomenus; and a thousand from other cities: from Corinth, four hundred men; from Phlius, two hundred; and from Mycenae eighty. Such was the number from the Peloponnese. There were also present, from Boeotia, seven hundred Thespians and four hundred Thebans.

[204] The various nations had each captains of their own under whom they served; but the one to whom all especially looked up, and who had the command of the entire force, was the Lacedaemonian, Leonidas. Now Leonidas was the son of Anaxandridas, who was the son of Leo, who was the son of Eurycratidas, who was the son of Anaxander, who was the son of Eurycrates, who was the son of Polydorus, who was the son of Alcamenes, who was the son of Telecles, who was the son of Archelaus, who was the son of Agesilaus, who was the son of Doryssus, who was the son of Labotas, who was the son of Echestratus, who was the son of Agis, who was the son of Eurysthenes, who was the son of Aristodemus, who was the son of Aristomachus, who was the son of Cleodaeus, who was the son of Hyllus, who was the son of Hercules.

Leonidas had come to be king of Sparta quite unexpectedly.

[205] Having two elder brothers, Cleomenes and Dorieus, he had no thought of ever mounting the throne. However, when Cleomenes died without male offspring, as Dorieus was likewise deceased, having perished in Sicily, the crown fell to Leonidas, who was older than Cleombrotus, the youngest of the sons of Anaxandridas, and, moreover, was married to the daughter of Cleomenes. He had now come to Thermopylae, accompanied by the three hundred men which the law assigned him, whom he had himself chosen from among the citizens, and who were all of them fathers with sons living. On his way he had taken the troops from Thebes, whose number I have already mentioned, and who were under the command of Leontiades the son of Eurymachus. The reason why he made a point of taking troops from Thebes, and Thebes only, was that the Thebans were strongly suspected of being

well inclined to the Medes. Leonidas therefore called on them to come with him to the war, wishing to see whether they would comply with his demand, or openly refuse, and disclaim the Greek alliance. They, however, though their wishes leant the other way, nevertheless sent the men.

[206] The force with Leonidas was sent forward by the Spartans in advance of their main body, that the sight of them might encourage the allies to fight, and hinder them from going over to the Medes, as it was likely they might have done had they seen that Sparta was backward. They intended presently, when they had celebrated the Carneian festival, which was what now kept them at home, to leave a garrison in Sparta, and hasten in full force to join the army. The rest of the allies also intended to act similarly; for it happened that the Olympic festival fell exactly at this same period. None of them looked to see the contest at Thermopylae decided so speedily; wherefore they were content to send forward a mere advanced guard. Such accordingly were the intentions of the allies.

[207] The Greek forces at Thermopylae, when the Persian army drew near to the entrance of the pass, were seized with fear; and a council was held to consider about a retreat. It was the wish of the Peloponnesians generally that the army should fall back upon the Peloponnese, and there guard the Isthmus. But Leonidas, who saw with what indignation the Phocians and Locrians heard of this plan, gave his voice for remaining where they were, while they sent envoys to the several cities to ask for help, since they were too few to make a stand against an army like that of the Medes.

[208] While this debate was going on, Xerxes sent a mounted spy to observe the Greeks, and note how many they were, and see what they were doing. He had heard, before he came out of Thessaly, that a few men were assembled at this place, and that at their head were certain Lacedaemonians, under Leonidas, a descendant of Hercules. The horseman rode up to the camp, and looked about him, but did not see the whole army; for such as were on the further side of the wall (which had been rebuilt and was now carefully guarded) it was not possible for him to behold; but he observed those on the outside, who were encamped in front of the rampart. It chanced that at this time the Lacedaemonians held the outer guard, and were seen by the spy, some of them engaged in

gymnastic exercises, others combing their long hair. At this the spy greatly marvelled, but he counted their number, and when he had taken accurate note of everything, he rode back quietly; for no one pursued after him, nor paid any heed to his visit. So he returned, and told Xerxes all that he had seen.

[209] Upon this, Xerxes, who had no means of surmising the truth - namely, that the Spartans were preparing to do or die manfully - but thought it laughable that they should be engaged in such employments, sent and called to his presence Demaratus the son of Ariston, who still remained with the army. When he appeared, Xerxes told him all that he had heard, and questioned him concerning the news, since he was anxious to understand the meaning of such behaviour on the part of the Spartans. Then Demaratus said -

"I spake to thee, O king! concerning these men long since, when we had but just begun our march upon Greece; thou, however, didst only laugh at my words, when I told thee of all this, which I saw would come to pass. Earnestly do I struggle at all times to speak truth to thee, sire; and now listen to it once more. These men have come to dispute the pass with us; and it is for this that they are now making ready. 'Tis their custom, when they are about to hazard their lives, to adorn their heads with care. Be assured, however, that if thou canst subdue the men who are here and the Lacedaemonians who remain in Sparta, there is no other nation in all the world which will venture to lift a hand in their defence. Thou hast now to deal with the first kingdom and town in Greece, and with the bravest men."

Then Xerxes, to whom what Demaratus said seemed altogether to surpass belief, asked further "how it was possible for so small an army to contend with his?"

"O king!" Demaratus answered, "let me be treated as a liar, if matters fall not out as I say."

[210] But Xerxes was not persuaded any the more. Four whole days he suffered to go by, expecting that the Greeks would run away. When, however, he found on the fifth that they were not gone, thinking that their firm stand was mere impudence and recklessness, he grew wroth, and sent against them the Medes and Cissians, with

orders to take them alive and bring them into his presence. Then the Medes rushed forward and charged the Greeks, but fell in vast numbers: others however took the places of the slain, and would not be beaten off, though they suffered terrible losses. In this way it became clear to all, and especially to the king, that though he had plenty of combatants, he had but very few warriors. The struggle, however, continued during the whole day.

[211] Then the Medes, having met so rough a reception, withdrew from the fight; and their place was taken by the band of Persians under Hydarnes, whom the king called his "Immortals": they, it was thought, would soon finish the business. But when they joined battle with the Greeks, 'twas with no better success than the Median detachment - things went much as before - the two armies fighting in a narrow space, and the barbarians using shorter spears than the Greeks, and having no advantage from their numbers. The Lacedaemonians fought in a way worthy of note, and showed themselves far more skilful in fight than their adversaries, often turning their backs, and making as though they were all flying away, on which the barbarians would rush after them with much noise and shouting, when the Spartans at their approach would wheel round and face their pursuers, in this way destroying vast numbers of the enemy. Some Spartans likewise fell in these encounters, but only a very few. At last the Persians, finding that all their efforts to gain the pass availed nothing, and that, whether they attacked by divisions or in any other way, it was to no purpose, withdrew to their own quarters.

[212] During these assaults, it is said that Xerxes, who was watching the battle, thrice leaped from the throne on which he sate, in terror for his army.

Next day the combat was renewed, but with no better success on the part of the barbarians. The Greeks were so few that the barbarians hoped to find them disabled, by reason of their wounds, from offering any further resistance; and so they once more attacked them. But the Greeks were drawn up in detachments according to their cities, and bore the brunt of the battle in turns - all except the Phocians, who had been stationed on the mountain to guard the pathway. So, when the Persians found no difference

between that day and the preceding, they again retired to their quarters.

[219] The Greeks at Thermopylae received the first warning of the destruction which the dawn would bring on them from the seer Megistias, who read their fate in the victims as he was sacrificing. After this deserters came in, and brought the news that the Persians were marching round by the hills: it was still night when these men arrived. Last of all, the scouts came running down from the heights, and brought in the same accounts, when the day was just beginning to break. Then the Greeks held a council to consider what they should do, and here opinions were divided: some were strong against quitting their post, while others contended to the contrary. So when the council had broken up, part of the troops departed and went their ways homeward to their several states; part however resolved to remain, and to stand by Leonidas to the last.

[220] It is said that Leonidas himself sent away the troops who departed, because he tendered their safety, but thought it unseemly that either he or his Spartans should quit the post which they had been especially sent to guard. For my own part, I incline to think that Leonidas gave the order, because he perceived the allies to be out of heart and unwilling to encounter the danger to which his own mind was made up. He therefore commanded them to retreat, but said that he himself could not draw back with honour; knowing that, if he stayed, glory awaited him, and that Sparta in that case would not lose her prosperity. For when the Spartans, at the very beginning of the war, sent to consult the oracle concerning it, the answer which they received from the Pythoness was "that either Sparta must be overthrown by the barbarians, or one of her kings must perish." The prophecy was delivered in hexameter verse, and ran thus:-

O ye men who dwell in the streets of broad Lacedaemon! Either your glorious town shall be sacked by the children of Perseus, Or, in exchange, must all through the whole Laconian country Mourn for the loss of a king, descendant of great Heracles. He cannot be withstood by the courage of bulls nor of lions, Strive as they may; he is mighty as Jove; there is nought that shall stay him, Till he have got for his prey your king, or your glorious city.

The remembrance of this answer, I think, and the wish to secure the whole glory for the Spartans, caused Leonidas to send the allies away. This is more likely than that they quarrelled with him, and took their departure in such unruly fashion.

[221] To me it seems no small argument in favour of this view, that the seer also who accompanied the army, Megistias, the Acarnanian - said to have been of the blood of Melampus, and the same who was led by the appearance of the victims to warn the Greeks of the danger which threatened them - received orders to retire (as it is certain he did) from Leonidas, that he might escape the coming destruction. Megistias, however, though bidden to depart, refused, and stayed with the army; but he had an only son present with the expedition, whom he now sent away.

[222] So the allies, when Leonidas ordered them to retire, obeyed him and forthwith departed. Only the Thespians and the Thebans remained with the Spartans; and of these the Thebans were kept back by Leonidas as hostages, very much against their will. The Thespians, on the contrary, stayed entirely of their own accord, refusing to retreat, and declaring that they would not forsake Leonidas and his followers. So they abode with the Spartans, and died with them. Their leader was Demophilus, the son of Diadromes.

[223] At sunrise Xerxes made libations, after which he waited until the time when the forum is wont to fill, and then began his advance. Ephialtes had instructed him thus, as the descent of the mountain is much quicker, and the distance much shorter, than the way round the hills, and the ascent. So the barbarians under Xerxes began to draw nigh; and the Greeks under Leonidas, as they now went forth determined to die, advanced much further than on previous days, until they reached the more open portion of the pass. Hitherto they had held their station within the wall, and from this had gone forth to fight at the point where the pass was the narrowest. Now they joined battle beyond the defile, and carried slaughter among the barbarians, who fell in heaps. Behind them the captains of the squadrons, armed with whips, urged their men forward with continual blows. Many were thrust into the sea, and

there perished; a still greater number were trampled to death by their own soldiers; no one heeded the dying. For the Greeks, reckless of their own safety and desperate, since they knew that, as the mountain had been crossed, their destruction was nigh at hand, exerted themselves with the most furious valour against the barbarians.

[224] By this time the spears of the greater number were all shivered, and with their swords they hewed down the ranks of the Persians; and here, as they strove, Leonidas fell fighting bravely, together with many other famous Spartans, whose names I have taken care to learn on account of their great worthiness, as indeed I have those of all the three hundred. There fell too at the same time very many famous Persians: among them, two sons of Darius, Abrocomes and Hyperanthes, his children by Phratagune, the daughter of Artanes. Artanes was brother of King Darius, being a son of Hystaspes, the son of Arsames; and when he gave his daughter to the king, he made him heir likewise of all his substance; for she was his only child.

[225] Thus two brothers of Xerxes here fought and fell. And now there arose a fierce struggle between the Persians and the Lacedaemonians over the body of Leonidas, in which the Greeks four times drove back the enemy, and at last by their great bravery succeeded in bearing off the body. This combat was scarcely ended when the Persians with Ephialtes approached; and the Greeks, informed that they drew nigh, made a change in the manner of their fighting. Drawing back into the narrowest part of the pass, and retreating even behind the cross wall, they posted themselves upon a hillock, where they stood all drawn up together in one close body, except only the Thebans. The hillock whereof I speak is at the entrance of the straits, where the stone lion stands which was set up in honour of Leonidas. Here they defended themselves to the last, such as still had swords using them, and the others resisting with their hands and teeth; till the barbarians, who in part had pulled down the wall and attacked them in front, in part had gone round and now encircled them upon every side, overwhelmed and buried the remnant which was left beneath showers of missile weapons.

[226] Thus nobly did the whole body of Lacedaemonians and Thespians behave; but nevertheless one man is said to have

distinguished himself above all the rest, to wit, Dienece the Spartan. A speech which he made before the Greeks engaged the Medes, remains on record. One of the Trachinians told him, "Such was the number of the barbarians, that when they shot forth their arrows the sun would be darkened by their multitude." Dienece, not at all frightened at these words, but making light of the Median numbers, answered "Our Trachinian friend brings us excellent tidings. If the Medes darken the sun, we shall have our fight in the shade." Other sayings too of a like nature are reported to have been left on record by this same person.

[227] Next to him two brothers, Lacedaemonians, are reputed to have made themselves conspicuous: they were named Alpheus and Maro, and were the sons of Orsiphantus. There was also a Thespian who gained greater glory than any of his countrymen: he was a man called Dithyrambus, the son of Harmatidas.

[228] The slain were buried where they fell; and in their honour, nor less in honour of those who died before Leonidas sent the allies away, an inscription was set up, which said:-

Here did four thousand men from Pelops' land
Against three hundred myriads bravely stand.

This was in honour of all. Another was for the Spartans alone:-

Go, stranger, and to Lacedaemon tell
That here, obeying her behests, we fell.

This was for the Lacedaemonians. The seer had the following:-

The great Megistias' tomb you here may view,
Whom slew the Medes, fresh from Spercheius' fords.
Well the wise seer the coming death foreknew,
Yet scorned he to forsake his Spartan lords.

These inscriptions, and the pillars likewise, were all set up by the Amphictyons, except that in honour of Megistias, which was inscribed to him (on account of their sworn friendship) by Simonides, the son of Leoprepes.

[234] Thus fought the Greeks at Thermopylae. And Xerxes, after the fight was over, called for Demaratus to question him; and began as follows:-

"Demaratus, thou art a worthy man; thy true-speaking proves it. All has happened as thou didst forewarn. Now then, tell me, how many Lacedaemonians are there left, and of those left how many are such brave warriors as these? Or are they all alike?"

"O king!" replied the other, "the whole number of the Lacedaemonians is very great; and many are the cities which they inhabit. But I will tell thee what thou really wishest to learn. There is a town of Lacedaemon called Sparta, which contains within it about eight thousand full-grown men. They are, one and all, equal to those who have fought here. The other Lacedaemonians are brave men, but not such warriors as these."

"Tell me now, Demaratus," rejoined Xerxes, "how we may with least trouble subdue these men. Thou must know all the paths of their counsels, as thou wert once their king."

[235] Then Demaratus answered - "O king! since thou askest my advice so earnestly, it is fitting that I should inform thee what I consider to be the best course. Detach three hundred vessels from the body of thy fleet, and send them to attack the shores of Laconia. There is an island called Cythera in those parts, not far from the coast, concerning which Chilon, one of our wisest men, made the remark that Sparta would gain if it were sunk to the

bottom of the sea - so constantly did he expect that it would give occasion to some project like that which I now recommend to thee. I mean not to say that he had a foreknowledge of thy attack upon Greece; but in truth he feared all armaments. Send thy ships then to this island, and thence affright the Spartans. If once they have a war of their own close to their doors, fear not their giving any help to the rest of the Greeks while thy land force is engaged in conquering them. In this way may all Greece be subdued; and then Sparta, left to herself, will be powerless. But if thou wilt not take this advice, I will tell thee what thou mayest look to see. When thou comest to the Peloponnese, thou wilt find a narrow neck of land, where all the Peloponnesians who are leagued against thee will be gathered together; and there thou wilt have to fight bloodier battles than any which thou hast yet witnessed. If, however, thou wilt follow my plan, the Isthmus and the cities of Peloponnese will yield to thee without a battle."

[237] Xerxes replied - "A citizen does indeed envy any fellow-citizen who is more lucky than himself, and often hates him secretly; if such a man be called on for counsel, he will not give his best thoughts, unless indeed he be a man of very exalted virtue; and such are but rarely found. But a friend of another country delights in the good fortune of his foreign bond-friend, and will give him, when asked, the best advice in his power. Therefore I warn all men to abstain henceforth from speaking ill of Demaratus, who is my bond-friend."

[238] When Xerxes had thus spoken, he proceeded to pass through the slain; and finding the body of Leonidas, whom he knew to have been the Lacedaemonian king and captain, he ordered that the head should be struck off, and the trunk fastened to a cross. This proves to me most clearly, what is plain also in many other ways - namely, that King Xerxes was more angry with Leonidas, while he was still in life, than with any other mortal. Certes, he would not else have used his body so shamefully. For the Persians are wont to honour those who show themselves valiant in fight more highly than any nation that I know. They, however, to whom the orders were given, did according to the commands of the king.

I return now to a point in my History, which at the time I left incomplete. The Lacedaemonians were the first of the Greeks to hear of the king's design against their country; and it was at this time that they sent to consult the Delphic oracle, and received the answer of which I spoke a while ago. Demaratus framed the following contrivance. He took a pair of tablets, and, clearing the wax away from them, wrote what the king was purposing to do upon the wood whereof the tablets were made; having done this, he spread the wax once more over the writing, and so sent it. By these means, the guards placed to watch the roads, observing nothing but a blank tablet, were sure to give no trouble to the bearer. When the tablet reached Lacedaemon, there was no one, I understand, who could find out the secret, till Gorgo, the daughter of Cleomenes and wife of Leonidas, discovered it, and told the others. "If they would scrape the wax off the tablet," she said, "they would be sure to find the writing upon the wood." The Lacedaemonians took her advice, found the writing, and read it; after which they sent it round to the other Greeks. Such then is the account which is given of this matter.

BOOK 8

[7] They detached two hundred of their ships from the rest, and - to prevent the enemy from seeing them start - sent them round outside the island of Sciathos, to make the circuit of Euboea by Caphareus and Geraestus, and so to reach the Euripus. By this plan they thought to enclose the Greeks on every side; for the ships detached would block up the only way by which they could retreat, while the others would press upon them in front. With these designs therefore they dispatched the two hundred ships, while they themselves waited - since they did not mean to attack the Greeks upon that day, or until they knew, by signal, of the arrival of the detachment which had been ordered to sail round Euboea. Meanwhile they made a muster of the other ships at Aphetæ.

[8] Now the Persians had with them a man named Scyllias, a native of Scione, who was the most expert diver of his day. At the time of the shipwreck off Mount Pelion he had recovered for the Persians a

great part of what they lost; and at the same time he had taken care to obtain for himself a good share of the treasure. He had for some time been wishing to go over to the Greeks; but no good opportunity had offered till now, when the Persians were making the muster of their ships. In what way he contrived to reach the Greeks I am not able to say for certain: I marvel much if the tale that is commonly told be true. 'Tis said he dived into the sea at Aphetæ, and did not once come to the surface till he reached Artemisium, a distance of nearly eighty furlongs. Now many things are related of this man which are plainly false; but some of the stories seem to be true. My own opinion is that on this occasion he made the passage to Artemisium in a boat.

However this might be, Scyllias no sooner reached Artemisium than he gave the Greek captains a full account of the damage done by the storm, and likewise told them of the ships sent to make the circuit of Euboea.

[9] So the Greeks on receiving these tidings held a council, whereat, after much debate, it was resolved that they should stay quiet for the present where they were, and remain at their moorings, but that after midnight they should put out to sea, and encounter the ships which were on their way round the island. Later in the day, when they found that no one meddled with them, they formed a new plan, which was to wait till near evening, and then sail out against the main body of the barbarians, for the purpose of trying their mode of fight and skill in manoeuvring.

[10] When the Persian commanders and crews saw the Greeks thus boldly sailing towards them with their few ships, they thought them possessed with madness, and went out to meet them, expecting (as indeed seemed likely enough) that they would take all their vessels with the greatest ease. The Greek ships were so few, and their own so far outnumbered them, and sailed so much better, that they resolved, seeing their advantage, to encompass their foe on every side. And now such of the Ionians as wished well to the Grecian cause and served in the Persian fleet unwillingly, seeing their countrymen surrounded, were sorely distressed; for they felt sure that not one of them would ever make his escape, so poor an opinion had they of the strength of the Greeks. On the other hand, such as saw with pleasure the attack on Greece, now vied eagerly

with each other which should be the first to make prize of an Athenian ship, and thereby to secure himself a rich reward from the king. For through both the hosts none were so much accounted of as the Athenians.

[11] The Greeks, at a signal, brought the sterns of their ships together into a small compass, and turned their prows on every side towards the barbarians; after which, at a second signal, although inclosed within a narrow space, and closely pressed upon by the foe, yet they fell bravely to work, and captured thirty ships of the barbarians, at the same time taking prisoner Philaon, the son of Chersis, and brother of Gorgus king of Salamis, a man of much repute in the fleet. The first who made prize of a ship of the enemy was Lycomedes the son of Aeschreas, an Athenian, who was afterwards adjudged the meed of valour. Victory however was still doubtful when night came on, and put a stop to the combat. The Greeks sailed back to Artemisium; and the barbarians returned to Aphetæ, much surprised at the result, which was far other than they had looked for. In this battle only one of the Greeks who fought on the side of the king deserted and joined his countrymen. This was Antidorus of Lemnos, whom the Athenians rewarded for his desertion by the present of a piece of land in Salamis.

[12] Evening had barely closed in when a heavy rain - it was about midsummer - began to fall, which continued the whole night, with terrible thunderings and lightnings from Mount Pelion: the bodies of the slain and the broken pieces of the damaged ships were drifted in the direction of Aphetæ, and floated about the prows of the vessels there, disturbing the action of the oars. The barbarians, hearing the storm, were greatly dismayed, expecting certainly to perish, as they had fallen into such a multitude of misfortunes. For before they were well recovered from the tempest and the wreck of their vessels off Mount Pelion, they had been surprised by a sea-fight which had taxed all their strength, and now the sea-fight was scarcely over when they were exposed to floods of rain, and the rush of swollen streams into the sea, and violent thunderings.

[13] If, however, they who lay at Aphetæ passed a comfortless night, far worse were the sufferings of those who had been sent to make the circuit of Euboea; inasmuch as the storm fell on them out at sea, whereby the issue was indeed calamitous. They were sailing

along near the Hollows of Euboea, when the wind began to rise and the rain to pour: overpowered by the force of the gale, and driven they knew not whither, at the last they fell upon rocks - Heaven so contriving, in order that the Persian fleet might not greatly exceed the Greek, but be brought nearly to its level. This squadron, therefore, was entirely lost about the Hollows of Euboea.

[14] The barbarians at Aphetæ were glad when day dawned, and remained in quiet at their station, content if they might enjoy a little peace after so many sufferings. Meanwhile there came to the aid of the Greeks a reinforcement of fifty-three ships from Attica. Their arrival, and the news (which reached Artemisium about the same time) of the complete destruction by the storm of the ships sent to sail round Euboea, greatly cheered the spirits of the Greek sailors. So they waited again till the same hour as the day before, and, once more putting out to sea, attacked the enemy. This time they fell in with some Cilician vessels, which they sank; when night came on, they withdrew to Artemisium.

[15] The third day was now come, and the captains of the barbarians, ashamed that so small a number of ships should harass their fleet, and afraid of the anger of Xerxes, instead of waiting for the others to begin the battle, weighed anchor themselves, and advanced against the Greeks about the hour of noon, with shouts encouraging one another. Now it happened that these sea-fights took place on the very same days with the combats at Thermopylae; and as the aim of the struggle was in the one case to maintain the pass, so in the other it was to defend the Euripus. While the Greeks, therefore, exhorted one another not to let the barbarians burst in upon Greece, these latter shouted to their fellows to destroy the Grecian fleet, and get possession of the channel.

[16] And now the fleet of Xerxes advanced in good order to the attack, while the Greeks on their side remained quite motionless at Artemisium. The Persians therefore spread themselves, and came forward in a half-moon, seeking to encircle the Greeks on all sides, and thereby prevent them from escaping. The Greeks, when they saw this, sailed out to meet their assailants; and the battle forthwith began. In this engagement the two fleets contended with no clear advantage to either - for the armament of Xerxes injured itself by its own greatness, the vessels falling into disorder, and oft-times

[35] Now when the Delphians heard what danger they were in, great fear fell on them. In their terror they consulted the oracle concerning the holy treasures, and inquired if they should bury them in the ground, or carry them away to some other country. The god, in reply, bade them leave the treasures untouched - "He was able," he said, "without help to protect his own." So the Delphians, when they received this answer, began to think about saving themselves. And first of all they sent their women and children across the gulf into Achaea; after which the greater number of them climbed up into the tops of Parnassus, and placed their goods for safety in the Corycian cave; while some effected their escape to Amphissa in Locris. In this way all the Delphians quitted the city, except sixty men, and the Prophet.

[36] When the barbarian assailants drew near and were in sight of the place, the Prophet, who was named Aceratus, beheld, in front of the temple, a portion of the sacred armour, which it was not lawful for any mortal hand to touch, lying upon the ground, removed from the inner shrine where it was wont to hang. Then went he and told the prodigy to the Delphians who had remained behind. Meanwhile the enemy pressed forward briskly, and had reached the shrine of Minerva Pronaia, when they were overtaken by other prodigies still more wonderful than the first. Truly it was marvel enough, when warlike harness was seen lying outside the temple, removed there by no power but its own; what followed, however, exceeded in strangeness all prodigies that had ever before been seen. The barbarians had just reached in their advance the chapel of Minerva Pronaia, when a storm of thunder burst suddenly over their heads - at the same time two crags split off from Mount Parnassus, and rolled down upon them with a loud noise, crushing vast numbers beneath their weight - while from the temple of Minerva there went up the war-cry and the shout of victory.

[38] All these things together struck terror into the barbarians, who forthwith turned and fled. The Delphians, seeing this, came down from their hiding-places, and smote them with a great slaughter, from which such as escaped fled straight into Boeotia. These men, on their return, declared (as I am told) that besides the marvels mentioned above, they witnessed also other supernatural sights. Two armed warriors, they said, of a stature more than human, pursued after their flying ranks, pressing them close and slaying them.

[41] So while the rest of the fleet lay to off this island, the Athenians cast anchor along their own coast. Immediately upon their arrival, proclamation was made that every Athenian should save his children and household as he best could; whereupon some sent their families to Egina, some to Salamis, but the greater number to Troezen. This removal was made with all possible haste, partly from a desire to obey the advice of the oracle, but still more for another reason. The Athenians say that they have in their Acropolis a huge serpent, which lives in the temple, and is the guardian of the whole place. Nor do they only say this, but, as if the serpent really dwelt there, every month they lay out its food, which consists of a honey-cake. Up to this time the honey-cake had always been consumed; but now it remained untouched. So the priestess told the people what had happened; whereupon they left Athens the more readily, since they believed that the goddess had already abandoned the citadel. As soon as all was removed, the Athenians sailed back to their station.

[42] And now, the remainder of the Grecian sea-force, hearing that the fleet which had been at Artemisium, was come to Salamis, joined it at that island from Troezen - orders having been issued previously that the ships should muster at Pogon, the port of the Troezenians. The vessels collected were many more in number than those which had fought at Artemisium, and were furnished by more cities. The admiral was the same who had commanded before, to wit, Eurybiades, the son of Eurycleides, who was a Spartan, but not of the family of the kings: the city, however, which sent by far the greatest number of ships, and the best sailers, was Athens.

[54] Xerxes, completely master of Athens, despatched a horseman to Susa, with a message to Artabanus, informing him of his success hitherto. The day after, he collected together all the Athenian exiles who had come into Greece in his train, and bade them go up into the citadel, and there offer sacrifice after their own fashion. I know not whether he had had a dream which made him give this order, or whether he felt some remorse on account of having set the temple on fire. However this may have been, the exiles were not slow to obey the command given them.

[55] I will now explain why I have made mention of this circumstance: there is a temple of Erechtheus the Earth-born, as he is called, in this citadel, containing within it an olive-tree and a sea. The tale goes among the Athenians, that they were placed there as witnesses by Neptune and Minerva, when they had their contention about the country. Now this olive-tree had been burnt with the rest of the temple when the barbarians took the place. But when the Athenians, whom the king had commanded to offer sacrifice, went up into the temple for the purpose, they found a fresh shoot, as much as a cubit in length, thrown out from the old trunk. Such at least was the account which these persons gave.

[56] Meanwhile, at Salamis, the Greeks no sooner heard what had befallen the Athenian citadel, than they fell into such alarm that some of the captains did not even wait for the council to come to a vote, but embarked hastily on board their vessels, and hoisted sail as though they would take to flight immediately. The rest, who stayed at the council board, came to a vote that the fleet should give battle at the Isthmus. Night now drew on; and the captains, dispersing from the meeting, proceeded on board their respective ships.

[71] The same night the land army of the barbarians began its march towards the Peloponnese, where, however, all that was possible had been done to prevent the enemy from forcing an entrance by land. As soon as ever news reached the Peloponnese of the death of Leonidas and his companions at Thermopylae, the inhabitants flocked together from the various cities, and encamped at the Isthmus, under the command of Cleombrotus, son of Anaxandridas, and brother of Leonidas. Here their first care was to block up the Scironian Way; after which it was determined in council to build a wall across the Isthmus. As the number assembled amounted to many tens of thousands, and there was not one who did not give himself to the work, it was soon finished. Stones, bricks, timber, baskets filled full of sand, were used in the building; and not a moment was lost by those who gave their aid; for they laboured without ceasing either by night or day.

[76] I cannot say that there is no truth in prophecies, or feel inclined to call in question those which speak with clearness, when I think of the following:-

When they shall bridge with their ships to the sacred strand of
Diana

Girt with the golden falchion, and eke to marine Cynosura,
Mad hope swelling their hearts at the downfall of beautiful
Athens

Then shall godlike Right extinguish haughty Presumption,
Insult's furious offspring, who thinketh to overthrow all things.
Brass with brass shall mingle, and Mars with blood shall
empurple

Ocean's waves. Then - then shall the day of Grecia's freedom
Come from Victory fair, and Saturn's son all-seeing.

When I look to this, and perceive how clearly Bacis spoke, neither venture myself to say anything against prophecies, nor do approve of others impugning them.

[78] Meanwhile, among the captains at Salamis, the strife of words grew fierce. As yet they did not know that they were encompassed,

[85] What part the several nations, whether Greek or barbarian, took in the combat, I am not able to say for certain; Artemisia, however, I know, distinguished herself in such a way as raised her even higher than she stood before in the esteem of the king. For after confusion had spread throughout the whole of the king's fleet, and her ship was closely pursued by an Athenian trireme, she, having no way to fly, since in front of her were a number of friendly vessels, and she was nearest of all the Persians to the enemy, resolved on a measure which in fact proved her safety. Pressed by the Athenian pursuer, she bore straight against one of the ships of her own party, a Calyndian, which had Damasithymus, the Calyndian king, himself on board. I cannot say whether she had had any quarrel with the man while the fleet was at the Hellespont, or no - neither can I decide whether she of set purpose attacked his vessel, or whether it merely chanced that the Calyndian ship came in her way - but certain it is that she bore down upon his vessel and sank it, and that thereby she had the good fortune to procure herself a double advantage. For the commander of the Athenian trireme, when he saw her bear down on one of the enemy's fleet, thought immediately that her vessel was a Greek, or else had deserted from the Persians, and was now fighting on the Greek side; he therefore gave up the chase, and turned away to attack others.

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[88] Thus in the first place she saved her life by the action, and was enabled to get clear off from the battle; while further, it fell out that in the very act of doing the king an injury she raised herself to a greater height than ever in his esteem. For as Xerxes beheld the fight, he remarked (it is said) the destruction of the vessel, whereupon the bystanders observed to him - "Seest thou, master, how well Artemisia fights, and how she has just sunk a ship of the enemy?" Then Xerxes asked if it were really Artemisia's doing; and they answered, "Certainly; for they knew her ensign": while all made sure that the sunken vessel belonged to the opposite side. Everything, it is said, conspired to prosper the queen - it was especially fortunate for her that not one of those on board the Calyndian ship survived to become her accuser. Xerxes, they say, in reply to the remarks made to him, observed - "My men have behaved like women, my women like men!"

[97] Xerxes, when he saw the extent of his loss, began to be afraid lest the Greeks might be counselled by the Ionians, or without their advice might determine to sail straight to the Hellespont and break down the bridges there; in which case he would be blocked up in Europe, and run great risk of perishing. He therefore made up his mind to fly; but, as he wished to hide his purpose alike from the Greeks and from his own people, he set to work to carry a mound across the channel to Salamis, and at the same time began fastening a number of Phoenician merchant ships together, to serve at once for a bridge and a wall. He likewise made many warlike preparations, as if he were about to engage the Greeks once more at sea. Now, when these things were seen, all grew fully persuaded that the king was bent on remaining, and intended to push the war in good earnest. Mardonius, however, was in no respect deceived; for long acquaintance enabled him to read all the king's thoughts.

[119] ...Xeres returned into Asia by the same road as the rest of the army.

[120] I will add a strong proof of this. It is certain that Xerxes on his way back from Greece passed through Abdera, where he made a contract of friendship with the inhabitants, and presented them with a golden scymitar, and a tiara broidered with gold. The Abderites declare - but I put no faith in this part of their story - that from the time of the king's leaving Athens, he never once loosed his girdle till he came to their city, since it was not till then that he felt himself in safety. Now Abdera is nearer to the Hellespont than Eion and the Strymon, where Xerxes, according to the other tale, took ship.

[122] After the first-fruits had been sent to Delphi, the Greeks made inquiry of the god, in the name of their whole body, if he had received his full share of the spoils and was satisfied therewith. The god made answer that all the other Greeks had paid him his full due, except only the Eginetans; on them he had still a claim for the prize of valour which they had gained at Salamis. So the Eginetans, when they heard this, dedicated the three golden stars which stand on the top of a bronze mast in the corner near the bowl offered by Croesus.

[123] When the spoils had been divided, the Greeks sailed to the Isthmus, where a prize of valour was to be awarded to the man who, of all the Greeks, had shown the most merit during the war. When the chiefs were all come, they met at the altar of Neptune, and took the ballots wherewith they were to give their votes for the first and for the second in merit. Then each man gave himself the first vote, since each considered that he was himself the worthiest; but the second votes were given chiefly to Themistocies. In this way, while the others received but one vote apiece, Themistocles had for the second prize a large majority of the suffrages.