

**PLUTARCH'S LIVES  
FOR BOYS AND GIRLS**



PELOPIDAS SETTING OUT FOR THEBES

# PLUTARCH'S LIVES

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

BEING SELECTED LIVES

FREELY RETOLD BY

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AND ILLUSTRATED BY

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YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

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## PREFACE

THIS book aims at presenting, for the reading of boys and girls, a version of certain selected narratives from the immortal Lives of Plutarch.

In making the selection, the writer has been guided by the wish to choose those lives which appear to him to be most likely to interest young readers, and which also exhibit most clearly, either by example or contrast, the beauty of patriotism and the nobility of the manly virtues of justice, courage, fortitude, and temperance.

The selected lives have been freely retold. The discursive reflections, in which Plutarch frequently indulges, have been generally omitted; so also have many proper names not necessary to the full understanding of the stories. But, while much has been omitted, the writer has not presumed to add matter, other than seemed necessary to explain the importance or bearing of events, or to make the narrative clear to young readers. He trusts, therefore, that the version here presented retains much of the manner and method of Plutarch, and especially that the distinctive quality of that author which, to many readers throughout the ages, has given form and substance and a living reality to the heroes of

ancient story, otherwise but the shadows of great names, has not been sacrificed.

He trusts, too, that his young readers may realise from Plutarch how little the essential things of life have changed during twenty centuries and more of the world's history; that, though trireme has given place to ironclad, and javelin-flight to bullet-hail, Salamis and Marathon called for the same wisdom, foresight, and courage as Trafalgar and Waterloo; and that to-day our country may demand from us, according to the measure of our abilities, service as unselfish and self-sacrificing as that which the noblest heroes of ancient Greece and Rome rendered to the lands whose history their deeds illumine for all time.

W. H. W.

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## ARISTIDES

*ARISTIDES lived during the earlier part of the fifth century before Christ, a time when the liberties of the Greek states and cities in Europe were threatened by the vast hosts of the Persian Empire. The Persians had already conquered and enslaved the Greek cities of Ionia, that is, the coast districts and adjacent islands of western Asia Minor. Moreover, the Greeks in Europe were by no means united in opposition to the Persians. Hence it appeared almost certain that the vast forces at the disposal of the Persian king would speedily overrun the Greek states, and that their liberties and their civilisation would be destroyed, or at any rate profoundly altered, by the rule of a despotic foreign king. Had such been the event of the war, the whole subsequent history of Europe through all the ages would have been changed, since our civilisation has its roots in the glorious achievements of Ancient Greece. For this reason the great victories in which the Greeks overthrew the vast Persian armies have a direct personal meaning for every one of us to this day.*

*In the three great battles by which Greece was saved, Marathon, Salamis and Plataea, Aristides played a distinguished part. The first of these, the battle fought in the plain between the mountains and the sea, where*

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*“The mountains look on Marathon  
And Marathon looks on the sea,”*

*showed that the Persians, who had never before been beaten by any army of Greeks, were not invincible. It proved indeed that their vast hosts could be conquered by a small number of Greeks who were inspired by staunch patriotism and dauntless courage.*

*The chief credit for the second of the great victories belongs to Themistocles, the great rival of Aristides. Not least among the glories of Aristides, however, is the lofty patriotism with which he put aside all feelings of personal enmity, and devoted himself to second the plans of his rival by which the sea-fight at Salamis was won, the Persian navy destroyed, and King Xerxes himself driven from Europe.*

*In the battle of Platæa the army which Xerxes had left behind was utterly destroyed and the dread of Persian conquest removed. In this battle the Spartan, Pausanias, was in chief command, but Aristides shared in the glory of the day, though, in truth, the victory was won by the valour of the Greek soldiers rather than by the skill of their generals.*

ARISTIDES was an Athenian by birth, but accounts vary as to his station in life. For while some say that he was always very poor, another writer contradicts this view, and endeavours to prove that his family possessed a fair estate.

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Some writers say that Aristides was from infancy brought up with Themistocles, who was destined to be his chief rival in the leadership of affairs at Athens. They tell us also that even in childhood the two were always at variance, not only in affairs of some importance but even in their sports and games, and that in their opposition they showed the differences in character which distinguished them throughout their careers. Themistocles was plausible, bold and artful, changeable in mood and yet impetuous in action. Aristides, on the other hand, was plain and straightforward, absolutely just and incapable of any falseness or deceit even in play.

When both had grown up, Themistocles proved himself a pleasant and agreeable companion. He made many friends, and his strength in public affairs depended largely upon his popularity. He did not hesitate to favour his friends, and when some one remarked of him that he would govern the Athenians very well if he would do so without respect of persons, he exclaimed, 'May I never sit upon the seat of judgment where my friends shall not receive more favour from me than strangers.'

Aristides, on the other hand, pursued an entirely different course in public affairs. He could not be persuaded to any act of injustice in order to oblige his friends, though he was willing to help them when what they requested was right and proper. He saw indeed that many, relying upon their interest with people in power, did things which could not be justified, but he, for his part, held that a good citizen should trust for his safety solely to the justice and rectitude of his actions.

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But, as Themistocles made many rash and dangerous proposals and always endeavoured to thwart him in every way, Aristides was, in his turn, obliged to oppose his rival similarly, partly in self-defence and partly to lessen the power of Themistocles, which was daily growing through his popularity. Indeed, with the latter purpose, he was sometimes induced to oppose proposals of Themistocles which were good in themselves. Thus, on one occasion, he strenuously and successfully opposed a motion of Themistocles which he nevertheless felt to be of advantage to the public. Conscious of the evil of this rivalry between them, he could not forbear saying as he went out of the assembly, 'Athenian affairs cannot prosper unless both Themistocles and myself are put to death.' Very often Aristides put forward his proposals by means of a third person, in order that the public welfare should not suffer through the opposition of Themistocles to him. His steadfastness amid the frequent changes of political affairs was wonderful. Honours did not elate him nor was he cast down by ill success; in either case he pursued his course, convinced that his country had a claim to the services which he rendered without thought of advantage to himself. Not only was he able to resist the promptings of favour and affection, but also the temptation to let enmity and revenge sway the scales of justice.

It is said that, on one occasion, when he was prosecuting an enemy and had brought his charge against him, the people were about to give sentence against the accused without waiting to hear his defence.

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Thereupon Aristides came to the assistance of his enemy, and entreated that he might be heard in accordance with the laws. Another time, when Aristides was himself the judge between two private persons, one of them observed that his opponent had injured Aristides many times. 'Tell me not,' said Aristides, 'what injury he has done to me, but what harm you have suffered from him, for I am trying your cause and not my own.'

Now about this time, when Aristides was in high reputation with his fellow-citizens, the Persian King Darius sent one of his generals to invade Greece. His pretext was the punishment of the Athenians for burning the city of Sardis in Asia Minor, but the real object of the invasion was the conquest of the whole of Greece. The Persian fleet arrived in the Bay of Marathon, and the invaders began to ravage the country round.

The Athenians now appointed a number of generals to command their army against the Persians. Of these Miltiades was the first in dignity, while in reputation and authority with the people Aristides stood next. Miltiades, in a council of war which was held, was in favour of attacking the enemy, and Aristides by seconding him added no little weight to his advice. Now it was the custom for the generals to command in turn, each for a day. But when it came to the turn of Aristides, he surrendered his right to Miltiades. Thus he stilled the spirit of contention, and induced the other generals to follow his example, so that Miltiades had supreme and continued command, and the other generals readily submitted to his orders.

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In the battle of Marathon the main body of the Athenian army was the hardest pressed, for the Persians made their fiercest attacks upon the tribes which were stationed there. Themistocles and Aristides belonged to these tribes, and fought at the head of them. In the spirit of emulation which inspired them, they fought with such fury that the Persians were put to flight, and sought refuge on board their ships. The Greeks, however, saw with alarm that these vessels of the enemy, instead of sailing by way of the isles to return to Asia, were being driven in by the winds and currents towards Attica. They feared, therefore, lest Athens, left undefended in their absence, might fall an easy prey to the Persians. Nine of the tribes marched homewards at once to defend their city, and such speed did they make that they reached Athens in one day.

Aristides was left behind at Marathon with his own tribe to guard the spoils and prisoners. He did not disappoint the general opinion of his probity, for though there was much treasure of gold and silver scattered about, and rich garments and other spoil of great price in the tents and in the ships which had been taken, he was neither inclined to take anything himself nor would he suffer others to do so. Notwithstanding his watchfulness, however, some enriched themselves with stolen plunder unknown to him. Among them was Callias, the torch-bearer. One of the defeated barbarians, happening to meet him in a quiet place, prostrated himself before him and, taking him by the hand, showed him a great quantity of gold that lay hidden in a well. Callias, not less cruel than unjust, took

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the gold, and then slew the barbarian lest he should tell others of the matter.

Of all the virtues of Aristides, the people were most impressed by his justice, because that merit was of most advantage to the commonwealth. Hence, though he was a poor man and a commoner, he was given the royal and divine title of *the Just*. The name at first brought him love and respect, but, as time went on, envy began to arise. Themistocles was chiefly the cause of this, for he insinuated that Aristides, by drawing all cases to himself for decision, was practically abolishing the courts of law, and that he was thus insensibly gaining sovereign power, even though he was without the guards and outside show of royalty. The victory of Marathon, too, had greatly swollen the pride of the individual citizens, and they resented the fact that one of their number had risen to such extraordinary honour above them. They assembled, therefore, at Athens from all the towns of Attica, and pronounced the banishment of Aristides by the Ostracism, disguising their envy of his virtue under the pretence of guarding against tyranny.

The Ostracism was wont to be conducted in the following manner. Each citizen wrote the name of the man he wanted to be banished upon a shell or a piece of a broken pot. This he deposited in a part of the market-place enclosed with a wooden rail. Afterwards the magistrates counted the shells, and if the number did not amount to six thousand the Ostracism stood for nothing. If there were that number, however, or more, the shells were sorted, and he whose name was found

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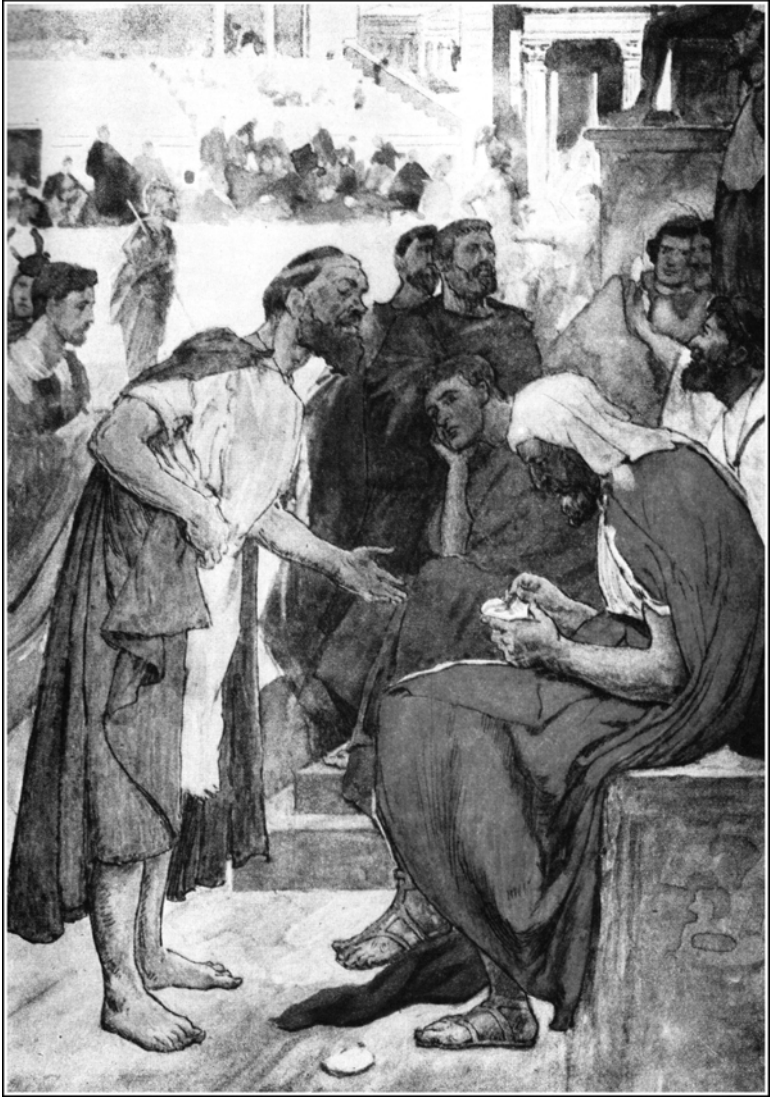
on the greatest number was banished for ten years, but was allowed to retain his property.

It is said that while the people were writing the names on their shells a certain citizen, who could not write, came up to Aristides, whom he did not know by sight. Handing him the shell, the citizen requested that he would write the name of Aristides upon it. His hearer was greatly surprised at this, and inquired whether Aristides had ever injured him. 'No,' said the fellow, 'and I don't even know him, but it wearies me to hear everybody call him "the Just."' Aristides made no answer, but taking the shell, wrote his own name upon it and returned it to the man.

When, in obedience to the decree of banishment, Aristides quitted Athens, he lifted his hands to heaven and prayed that the people of his native city might never see the day when trouble would force them to remember him.

That day, however, came three years afterwards when King Xerxes with his vast host was advancing by long marches upon Attica. The Athenians then reversed the decree and recalled all the exiles. Their chief inducement to do so, however, was their fear lest Aristides would join the enemy and by his influence persuade many of the citizens to side with the Persians. Those who feared this little knew the man. Before the order for his recall was issued, Aristides was already busily engaged in stirring up the Greeks to defend their liberty. And afterwards, when Themistocles was appointed to the command of the Athenian forces,





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Aristides supported him both in person and by his counsel, being ready in the public welfare to contribute to the glory of his greatest enemy. It was he that, sailing by night with great danger through the Persian fleet to Themistocles at Salamis, brought news that all the narrow straits were beset by the ships of the enemy. As soon as he reached the tent of Themistocles he desired to see him in private, and spoke thus to his rival: 'If you and I are wise, Themistocles, we shall now lay aside our vain and childish quarrels, and contend only as to which of us shall do most for the safety and preservation of Greece.' He approved also of the plans of Themistocles, and set himself to further them. His former rival especially begged his support in impressing upon the Spartan Eurybiades the necessity of fighting the Persian fleet at once in the narrow seas, for he knew that Aristides had more influence with the Spartan leader than he himself had. In the council of war which assembled on this occasion, a Corinthian officer who was present said to Themistocles, 'Aristides does not agree with your opinion, for he says nothing.' 'You are mistaken,' said Aristides, 'for I should not have been silent had I not considered the counsels of Themistocles the best for our situation.' Hence, it was determined to fight in accordance with this advice. Aristides then, seeing that a small island which lies in the straits over against Salamis was full of the enemy's troops, embarked a number of the bravest and most determined of his countrymen on board some small transports. With these troops he attacked the enemy upon the island so fiercely that they were all cut to pieces, except a few of

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the most important persons, who were made prisoners. Aristides then placed a strong guard round the island, so that, of those who were driven ashore there, none of the Greeks should perish and none of the Persians escape. For it was round about this island that the battle raged most fiercely.

After the battle Xerxes, alarmed at the report that the Greeks intended to break down the bridge of boats across the Hellespont and thus cut off his retreat, hastened thither with all speed. However, he left behind him three hundred thousand of his best troops under Mardonius.

With so great an army the Persians were still very formidable, and Mardonius wrote menacing letters to the Greeks in such terms as these: 'You have indeed at sea defeated landmen unused to naval war. There remain, however, the wide plains of the mainland, where we shall meet you with horse and foot.'

He wrote particularly to the Athenians, stating that he was empowered by King Xerxes to promise that their city should be rebuilt, that large sums of money should be paid the citizens, and that they should be given the sovereignty of Greece, if they would refrain from taking any further part in the war. When the Spartans heard of these proposals, they were very much alarmed lest the Athenians should accept them. They therefore sent ambassadors to offer shelter for the wives and children of the men of Athens and provision for the aged. Certainly the Athenians were in great distress, for they had lost both their city and their

country. Nevertheless, by the influence of Aristides, they returned such an answer as can never be too much admired. They declared that they could forgive their enemies for thinking that they could be bought for silver and gold, since the barbarians knew of nothing more excellent. But they could not altogether forgive the Spartans for having so poor an opinion of them, as to think it was necessary to bribe them to fight in the cause of Greece by the offer of a paltry supply of provisions.

Aristides, having drawn up the answer in the form of a decree, summoned the ambassadors, both of the Spartans and of Mardonius, to an audience. To the Spartans he gave this message: 'The people of Athens would not barter the liberties of Greece for all the gold that exists above or under the ground.' Then, turning to the envoys of Mardonius, he pointed to the sun and said. 'So long as the sun shines, so long will the Athenians wage war against the Persians, to avenge their country which has been laid waste, and their temples which have been profaned.'

After this failure to win over the Athenians, Mardonius invaded Attica a second time, and the Athenians again retired to Salamis. Aristides was then despatched as ambassador to hasten the sending of the Spartan levies to their assistance. Afterwards he was appointed general of the Athenian forces, and, with eight thousand foot, marched to Platæa. There he was joined by the Spartans under Pausanias, who was commander-in-chief of all the allies, and by the troops of the other Greek states, who daily arrived in

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large numbers. The Persian army, which occupied an immense tract of ground, was encamped along the river Asopus. Within the camp they had fortified a space ten furlongs square, in which were stored their baggage and other things of value.

When the posts of the allies in the order of battle came to be assigned, a great dispute arose between the Athenians and the people of another town, for both claimed to be placed upon the left wing. Aristides, however, sought to compose the quarrel. 'This is no time,' said he, 'to dispute with our allies as to our relative bravery. Let us say to the Spartans and to the rest of the Greeks, that we are ready to do honour to any position by our actions. For we are here, not to quarrel with friends, but to fight our enemies, not to boast of the courage of our ancestors, but to show forth our own valour in the cause of Greece.' The council of war, however, decided in favour of the Athenians, and gave them the command upon the left wing, the Spartans being stationed on the right. When the armies were thus encamped near one another, Mardonius, in order to test the courage of the Greeks, ordered his cavalry, in which lay his chief strength, to skirmish with the enemy. Nearly all the Greeks were encamped on the slopes of a mountain on steep and stony ground, and could not therefore be well attacked by the enemy's cavalry. The Megarensians, however, three thousand in number, were posted in the plain. They were thus exposed alone to the attack of the horsemen, who charged them on every side. The greatly superior numbers of the Persians

threatened to crush them, and they were obliged to send a messenger to Pausanias beseeching assistance.

Pausanias was at a loss what to do. He saw that relief was needed at once, for the camp of the Megarensians was darkened by the shower of darts and arrows rained upon it. He knew, however, that his own heavily armed Spartans were not fitted to act against cavalry. He therefore endeavoured to get the other generals and officers to volunteer to go to the aid of their distressed comrades. All declined with the exception of Aristides, who offered the services of his Athenians, and at once gave orders to one of the most active of his officers to advance to the rescue with a chosen band of three hundred men and some archers.

The Athenians were ready in a moment, and hastened to the attack. The general of the Persian cavalry, a man remarkable for his strength and graceful carriage, saw them approaching, and immediately spurred his horse and charged them. The Athenians received the attack of the Persian leader and his followers firmly, and a sharp conflict ensued. At length, however, the Persian general's horse threw his rider, who was so heavily armed that he could not recover himself. Indeed, for the same reason, he could not easily be slain by the Athenians, so thickly was he covered all over with plates of gold, brass, and iron. At last, however, the visor of his helmet leaving part of his face exposed, he was despatched by a spear-thrust in the eye. The fall of their leader decided the combat, and the Persians broke and fled.

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Not many of the enemy were slain in this action. Nevertheless, the fight appeared important to the Greeks, for the general who was killed was second only to Mardonius himself in courage and in authority with the Persians, who loudly mourned his loss.

After this engagement with the cavalry, both sides forbore from fighting for a long time, for Greeks and Persians were alike assured by their diviners that victory would rest with the side which stood upon the defensive. At last, however, Mardonius, finding that he had only a few days' provisions left, and seeing also that the Greek army was daily increased by the arrival of fresh troops, grew uneasy at the delay. He resolved to cross the river at daybreak the next day and fall upon the Greeks, whom he hoped to find unprepared.

But at midnight a horseman quietly approached the Greek camp, and addressing the sentinels bade them call Aristides to him. The Athenian general came at once, and the stranger said to him: 'I am the King of Macedon, who out of friendship to you have come through great dangers to prevent your fighting under the disadvantage of a surprise. Mardonius will attack you to-morrow, for scarcity of provisions forces him to risk a battle or see his army perish with hunger. He must fight, therefore, though the soothsayers seek to prevent him from doing so.' Aristides promised that if the Greeks were victorious, the whole army should be acquainted with the generous daring of the King of Macedon in coming to give the warning. At present, however, it was decided that only Pausanias should be given the intelligence of the enemy's intention.

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Aristides therefore went immediately to the tent of the commander-in-chief and laid the whole matter before him. At once the other chief officers were sent for, and were ordered to get their troops under arms and drawn up in order of battle. At the same time, Pausanias, it is said, informed Aristides that he intended to change the position of the Athenians from the left wing to the right. His object was to bring the Athenians against the Persians, because they had already had experience in fighting them, and would on this occasion fight with the more confidence because of their previous success.

All the Athenian officers, except Aristides, thought that Pausanias was acting in a very high-handed manner in thus moving them up and down without consulting them, while he left the other allies in their allotted posts. Aristides, however, reproved them. 'You contended,' said he, 'for the command of the left wing, and now, when the Spartans of their own free will offer you the right wing, which is in effect the leadership of the whole army, you are dissatisfied.'

Influenced by these words, the Athenians readily agreed to change places with the Spartans, and nothing was now heard among them but words of encouragement and confident anticipations of victory. 'The Persians,' said they, 'bring neither bolder hearts nor stouter bodies to battle than at Marathon. We recognise the same gay clothes and the display of gold, the same effeminate bodies and unmanly souls. And, for our part, we bring against them the same weapons and the same strength that have conquered them before. Bold in the memory of our victories, we fight them again



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for the trophies of Marathon and Salamis, and for the glory of the people of Athens.' But, while the change of posts was being carried out, the movement was perceived by the Thebans, who were serving with the Persians, and intelligence of it was given to Mardonius. The Persian general thereupon immediately changed the position of his wings, and this was followed by yet another change on the part of Pausanias. Thus the day passed in marchings, backwards and forwards, without the two armies coming to action at all.

In the evening the Greeks held a council of war, and determined, because their water supply in the position they now occupied was disturbed and fouled by the enemy's horse, to move their camp during the night. Accordingly, when darkness had fallen, the officers began to march off their men to the new position which had been chosen. The movement, however, led to great confusion, for the men followed unwillingly, and many regardless of discipline made off to the city of Plataea. The Spartans, too, were left behind, for one of their officers, a man of undaunted courage, bluntly called the retirement a disgraceful flight, and declared that for his part he would not quit his post, but would remain where he was with his troops, and fight it out alone with Mardonius.

In vain Pausanias urged that the retirement was made in agreement with the decision of all the allies. Taking up a large stone, the officer cast it at the feet of his general. 'There,' cried he, 'is my vote for battle, and I despise the timorous counsels of others.' The commander was at a loss what to do, but at length sent word to the

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Athenians, who by this time were advancing, to halt a while. He then set off to join them with the other troops, hoping that by doing so he should in the end induce the stubborn Spartan officer to follow him.

By this time day had dawned, and Mardonius, who was aware of the movement of the Greeks, set his army in order of battle and bore down upon the unsupported Spartans. The Persians and their allies rushed to the fight with loud shouts of triumph and clanging of arms, as if they expected rather the plundering of a mob of fugitives than a battle. And indeed it seemed like to be so, for though Pausanias halted and ordered every one to his post, yet for some reason he did not give the order for battle, and hence the Greeks did not engage readily. Moreover, even after the battle was begun, the Greek forces remained scattered in small bodies.

Meanwhile, Pausanias sacrificed to the gods. The omens, however, were unfavourable, and he therefore ordered his Spartans to lay down their shields at their feet and await his order. Then, while the Persian cavalry was still advancing, he offered other sacrifices. At last the enemy came within bowshot, and a number of the Spartans were wounded by their arrows. Among them was one who was held to be the tallest and finest man in the whole army. As he was on the point of dying this brave soldier exclaimed, 'I do not lament dying for Greece, but bitter it is to die without sword-stroke at the enemy.' In this trying ordeal the firmness and steadiness of the Spartans were wonderful. They stood as marks for the enemy's archers calmly awaiting the orders of their general.

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At length the omens for which Pausanias had waited and prayed appeared, and the diviners promised him victory. Then at once his orders to charge rang out, and the Spartan phalanx leapt into life, like some fierce animal erecting his bristles and preparing to put forth his mighty strength. Then did the barbarians see that they had to deal with men who were ready to shed their last drop of blood, and covering themselves with their targets, they shot their arrows thickly upon the advancing Spartans. Steadily, in a close compact body, the phalanx bore down upon them, their targets were thrust aside, and pike-thrusts at faces and breasts brought many of them to the ground. But even when overthrown they fought desperately, breaking the pikes with their naked hands, and leaping to their feet again they stood the quarrel out with sword and battle-axe.

Meanwhile, the Athenians at a distance remained at the halt, as they had been ordered. But the tumult of battle reached them and, moreover, an officer sent by Pausanias informed them of the position of affairs. At once they hurried to the assistance of the Spartans, and as they were crossing the plain, the Greeks who fought on the Persian side came up to attack them. As soon as he saw them, Aristides advanced a long way in front of his own troops, and with a loud voice called upon them to give up this unnatural war and not to oppose their fellow-Greeks, who were risking their lives for the common country of all their race. But he found that the foe paid no heed to his words, but continued their hostile advance. He had therefore to await the attack of this body of Greeks, who were about five thousand

in number, instead of going to the assistance of the Spartans as he had intended.

Thus the battle resolved itself into two actions, the Spartans against the Persians, and the Athenians against the traitor Greeks, of whom the Thebans made up the chief part. The former of these two actions was the first decided, for the Persians were broken and routed and their general slain by a blow on the head with a stone, as the oracles had foretold. The barbarians then fled before the Spartans to their camp, which they had beforehand fortified with wooden walls. Soon after the Athenians routed the Thebans, killing some three hundred of their most distinguished men on the spot. Just at this time the news came that the Persians were shut up in their wooden fortifications, and the Athenians, leaving the defeated Greeks to escape, hastened to join in the siege.

Their assistance was timely, for the Spartans were unskilled in the storming of walls, and therefore made but slow progress. The Athenians, however, soon took the camp, and there was made great slaughter of the enemy. It is said that out of three hundred thousand men barely forty thousand escaped. On the other hand, only one thousand three hundred and sixty of those who fought in the cause of Greece were killed. Of these fifty-two were Athenians, while the Spartans lost ninety-one.

This great victory at Platæa went near to being the ruin of Greece, for the Athenians and the Spartans began to contend as to which of the two had gained the

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chief glory of the day, and to which should be given the honour of erecting the trophy for the victory. Indeed, it is likely that the quarrel would have been decided by arms had not Aristides exerted himself to pacify the other Athenian generals, and to persuade them to leave the matter to be decided by the general body of the allies. Accordingly a general council was called, and, in order to avoid civil war, it was decided to award the palm of valour to neither of the disputants, but to a third place. In the end Plataea, the scene of the battle, was pitched upon for this purpose, it being a place which could not excite the envy of either Athens or Sparta. To this proposal Aristides first agreed on behalf of Athens, and was followed by Pausanias, who accepted it for Sparta.

Thus the allies were reconciled. Eighty talents were then set aside for the Plataeans, and with it they built a temple and set up a statue of the goddess Athene. There annually they celebrated the victory with solemn services and sacrifices, and with a libation to the memory of the men who died for the liberties of Greece.

Some time after these events Aristides was sent, with Cimon as a colleague, in command of the Athenians, to continue the war against the Persians. He found that the pride and insolence of Pausanias and the other Spartan generals were making them very unpopular with the allies. For Pausanias scarcely even spoke to the officers of the forces of the other states without anger and bitterness, and he punished many of the men severely, flogging some, and ordering others to stand all day with an iron anchor upon their shoulders.

In all things he gave first place to Spartans, and would not allow any of the allies to supply themselves with forage, or sleeping-straw, or drinking-water, until the Spartans had first been supplied. Indeed, he stationed servants with rods to drive off any who should attempt to take these things before it suited his pleasure. Aristides went in vain to remonstrate with him. The only answer of Pausanias was to knit his brows and say that he had no leisure to hear such complaints.

Aristides, on the other hand, treated all with courtesy and kindness, and prevailed on his colleague Cimon to behave with equal affability. Hence the sea-captains and officers of the allies, particularly those from the islands, tired of the harshness and severity of the Spartans, besought Aristides to take the chief command. Two of the officers indeed boldly attacked Pausanias's galley at the head of the fleet. They told him that the best thing he could do was to retire, and that nothing but the memory of the great victory which fortune had permitted him to win at Plataea, prevented the Greeks from wreaking upon him a just vengeance for his treatment.

The end of the matter was that the allies left the standards of the Spartans and ranged themselves under the ensigns of Athens. The people of Sparta took the matter in a noble and wise spirit. They saw that power had spoiled their generals, and they therefore sent no more in their place, for they thought it more important that a lesson in moderation and regard for right and justice should be given than that they should retain the chief command of the Greek forces.

## ARISTIDES

The allies now further begged that the Athenians would allow Aristides to fix the amounts which each state and each city should be called upon to provide for the purposes of the war. This power, which in a way made him master of Greece, was given to him. But in his hands authority was not abused. He went forth to his task poor and returned from it poor, having arranged matters with such equal justice that the allies blessed the settlement as 'the happy fortune of Greece.'

Indeed, though Aristides had extended the influence of Athens over so many allied cities and states, he continued poor to the end, and gloried in his noble poverty no less than in the laurels he had won. This was clearly proved in the case of Callias, the torch-bearer, his near relation, who was prosecuted by certain enemies. When the accusers had alleged what they had to bring against him, which was nothing very serious, they brought in other matters which had nothing to do with the case, and thus addressed the judges: 'You know Aristides, who is justly the admiration of all Greece. You have seen how mean his garb is, and that his home is almost bare of necessaries. Yet this Callias, the richest man in Athens, is his own cousin. He, nevertheless, allows his noble relative, of whose influence he has availed himself, to live in utter wretchedness.'

Callias perceived that the charge thus dragged into the case was likely to prejudice the judges against him. He therefore called upon Aristides, who testified in the court that Callias had many times offered him considerable sums of money, but that he had always refused the proffered gifts, with some such words as

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these: 'Aristides has more glory in his poverty than Callias in his riches. We see every day many who spend freely for good or ill, but it is hard to find one who bears poverty with a noble spirit. And he only is ashamed of poverty who is poor against his will.' When he had thus given evidence, there was not a man in court who did not feel that it was indeed better to be poor with Aristides than rich with Callias.

His conduct with regard to Themistocles furnishes a striking instance of his uprightness. For when Themistocles was accused of crimes against the state, Aristides had the opportunity of revenging himself upon the man who had been his constant opponent and the chief cause of his banishment. But, while many others of the leading men in Athens joined in the outcry against Themistocles and aided in driving him into exile, Aristides alone made no accusation against him. As he had not envied his rival in his prosperity, so neither did he rejoice at his misfortunes.

Aristides died in the year of the banishment of Themistocles. It is said that his funeral was conducted at the public charge, since he did not leave behind him enough money to defray the cost, and that the city of Athens further gave marriage portions to his daughters, and a gift of land and money to his son.



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*PLUTARCH, who loved comparisons and contrasts, is careful to bring out into strong relief the difference in character between Themistocles and his great rival Aristides. But, however much inferior Themistocles may have been to Aristides in the virtues of justice and simplicity, he was undoubtedly the greatest man of his age in foresight and in fertility of resource; possibly a worse man than Aristides, but certainly a greater statesman. To British boys and girls, justly proud of the great deeds of those heroes of our own race, who*

*“Left us a kingdom none can take,  
The realm of the circling sea,”*

*it should be especially interesting to find how clearly this old Greek statesman, sailor, and soldier realised the value of sea-power, how steadfastly he pursued his object of making Athens a great naval power, and how skilfully he used the weapon he had forged to shatter the Persian fleet at Salamis. This battle, the crowning achievement of Themistocles, ranks among the very greatest sea-fights in history, both in the importance of its results and the completeness of the triumph. Salamis shattered the naval power of Persia as completely as Trafalgar ruined the*

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*French at sea, and Salamis made the final victory at Plataea possible, just as Trafalgar prepared the way for the victories of Wellington. The completeness of the triumph is well expressed by Byron in one stanza of the Isles of Greece:*

*“A king sat on the rocky brow  
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;  
And ships, by thousands, lay below,  
And men in nations; all were his!  
He counted them at break of day,—  
And when the sun set where were they?”*

*The banishment of Themistocles on unproved charges was a bitter reward for his unexampled services to Athens. But it at least served to show that, however great his arrogance and pride may have been, his resentment did not so far overcome his patriotism as to lead him, like another Coriolanus, to avenge himself actively upon his native city.*

*In the words of one of the greatest of the Greek historians, Themistocles was ‘of all men the best able to decide upon the spur of the moment the right thing to be done.’*

THE lofty honours which Themistocles attained were in nowise due to the advantages of birth. On his father's side he sprang from an Athenian family which was but of the middle class, while on his mother's side he is said by some to have been of alien blood. But be that as it may, he early showed his ingenuity

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in overcoming difficulties. For it was a rule of the city of Athens that the base-born lads should assemble for their sports at a separate wrestling place outside the city walls. But Themistocles induced some of the noble Athenian youths of his acquaintance to join him in the wrestling at this place. Thus he contrived to break down one of the distinctions between himself and those of pure Athenian descent.

He was indeed a lad of lively spirit, quick of apprehension, and keenly interested in affairs of state. Even his holidays and times of leisure he spent, not as other boys are wont to do, in idleness or play, but in composing speeches and practising the delivery of these orations. Hence his schoolmaster was wont to say, 'You, Themistocles, are destined to be something out of the ordinary. Great you will be one way or the other, either for good or for evil.'

But though he applied himself eagerly to subjects which appeared to him to be of real importance, he paid but slight attention to merely graceful or pleasing studies. This neglect of the lighter accomplishments brought upon him, in later years, ridicule, which called from Themistocles a proud retort. 'True it is,' said he, 'that I cannot play upon the lute or tune a harp. This only can I do—make a small and obscure city great and glorious.'

The story is told that his father wished to dissuade him from taking part in politics, and to this end took the youth down to the seashore. There he pointed out to his son the old galleys lying forsaken and rotting on

the beach, and told him that thus did political parties treat their leaders when they had no further use for them. But the youth, fired with a passion for renown, was not to be persuaded, and very early in life began to take the keenest interest in political affairs. From the outset he was determined to become the greatest man in the state, and, full of ambition and of confidence in himself, he eagerly joined in schemes to oust those who were then the leaders in the state.

Themistocles especially opposed and attacked Aristides, and the breach between them was widened by the difference between their characters. For Aristides was of a gentle and honourable nature, caring much for the interest and safety of the state, but little for his own profit and glory. Themistocles, on the other hand, was at this time madly inflamed with a craving for personal renown, so that the great deeds of others filled him with envy. It is said that after Miltiades had defeated the Persians in the great battle of Marathon, Themistocles withdrew himself from the society of his friends, and lay sleepless at night for envy of the glory which Miltiades had won.

But unworthy envy did not diminish his wisdom nor cloud his foresight. For, while others thought that the victory of Marathon had put an end to the war, Themistocles saw that it was but the beginning of a still greater struggle. Fully impressed by this opinion, he set himself to prepare for the conflict, so that he might stand forth as the champion of the whole of Greece. And he sought by all means in his power to make his city ready for the day of trial.

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Not only did Themistocles foresee the coming struggle with the mighty power of Persia, he saw also the means by which the invasion could be defeated. To him alone was given the foresight to perceive that the fate of Athens, and indeed of the whole of Greece, would be decided upon the sea. He found his city so weak in her land forces that they were unable to contend even with the troops of the neighbouring states. Small, therefore, was the hope that they could successfully resist the vast armies of the Persian king. But Themistocles saw that by building a powerful Athenian fleet the means would be provided of foiling the Persian invasion, and of making his native city the mistress of Greece. Thenceforth, by slow but unswerving steps, he laboured unceasingly to turn the thoughts of his fellow-citizens towards the sea.

In the first measures which he took towards this end, Themistocles showed great wisdom. For it happened that the Athenians were at war with the Æginetans, and that the latter, by reason of the number of their ships, held sway upon the waters. Now it was the custom at this time for the Athenians to divide among themselves the money which was derived from the produce of certain silver mines. In this position of affairs, Themistocles came forward with the proposal that the people should forgo the distribution among themselves, and should, out of patriotism, devote the money to the building of ships to be used against the Æginetans. In urging this course upon them he made no mention of the Persians, whose coming invasion was ever in his mind, for he well knew that men are more

ready to provide against an immediate, though smaller, danger than against a greater peril which is still remote. And since the minds of the Athenians were inflamed with anger against the Æginetans, Themistocles had his way. The citizens consented to the sacrifice, and with the money thus provided, a hundred ships were built which afterwards did good service against the Persian fleet.

Thenceforward, step by step, the sea-power of Athens was built up under the influence of Themistocles, so that, as Plato says, he changed the Athenians from steady land-soldiers to storm-tossed mariners. Some there were who reproached him with the change, saying that he took from his countrymen the spear and the shield, and bound them, as in servitude, to the rowing-bench and the oar. But the wisdom of Themistocles is sufficiently shown by events. For it was from the sea that deliverance came unto the Greeks, and the city of Athens, after it had been destroyed, was reestablished by the galleys which the foresight of Themistocles had provided.

Meanwhile, Themistocles sought by all means the favour of the people. He is said to have been eager to acquire riches, in order that he might be liberal in giving to others and in providing splendid entertainments. He was able to salute each citizen by name, and this proof of his notice greatly pleased the common people. Moreover, in disputes between private persons, he showed himself a just and upright judge. Thus his favour with the people increased, and his party, having gained the upper hand

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over the faction of Aristides, procured the banishment of his rival from Athens.

At length the time of danger which Themistocles had long foreseen and for which he had long prepared arrived. The vast hosts of the King of Persia were set in motion and advanced upon Greece. Meanwhile, the Athenians were eagerly discussing the choice of a commander, and there appeared a danger lest the popular choice should fall upon one who was indeed a man of eloquent tongue, but who was faint-hearted and a slave to the love of riches. Under such leadership all must have been lost, but Themistocles, it is said, averted the danger by buying off the orator's claims by the payment of a sum of money.

During the advance of the Persian host, Themistocles in many ways gave evidence of the resolute spirit with which he faced the danger. Thus, when the Persian King Xerxes sent messengers and an interpreter into Greece demanding from the Greeks earth and water in token of subjection, Themistocles caused the interpreter to be seized and put to death for daring to utter the barbarian orders in the Greek tongue. And when another came, bearing gold with which to bribe the Greeks to espouse the Persian cause, Themistocles issued an order by which the agent of Xerxes and all his descendants were declared infamous. But most of all to the credit of Themistocles was his success in persuading the Grecian states to lay aside their quarrels among themselves during the Persian war, and to present a united front against the common foe.

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When the command of the forces of Athens had been given to Themistocles, he at once endeavoured to persuade the citizens to leave the city and to take to their ships, in order that they might fight the enemy as far as might be from Greece. But, as many opposed this plan, he led a large land force into Thessaly. The army, however, returned without accomplishing anything of importance; and when it was known that Thessaly and the states even to the very borders of Attica were going over to the Persians, the Athenians were more ready to listen to the advice of Themistocles, and to fight the matter out at sea.

They therefore sent him with the ships to guard the straits of Artemisium against the advance of the Persian fleet, and there the Athenians were joined by the ships of the allied Greek states. The majority of the allies wished that Eurybiades should have the supreme command, and begin the fight with his Spartans. To this the Athenians were loath to consent. For, as the number of their ships exceeded that of all the other allies together, they considered the post of honour their rightful due. Themistocles, however, seeing the danger of any division among the allies at this time, persuaded his fellow-citizens to submit, telling them that, if they acquitted themselves manfully in the war, their allies would of their own free will award them the post of honour in the future. Thus the moderation of Themistocles upon this occasion prevented disunion among the Greeks, and contributed to the deliverance of his country. Moreover, through him the Athenians



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gained the lofty glory of alike surpassing their enemies in valour and their allies in wisdom.

But, when the vast armada of Persia appeared in sight, Eurybiades was astonished at the prodigious number of vessels, the more so as he learnt that two hundred other ships of the enemy were hidden from view by an island which lay between them and the Grecian fleet. He despaired of conquering so vast a navy, and was anxious to retreat to the coasts of the southern peninsula of Greece, where he might have the support of his land forces. Against this timorous policy Themistocles exerted all his arguments, and it was only by his urgent advice and his stratagems that the fleet of the Greeks was kept together to face the foe.

No decisive result arose from the battles of Artemisium which followed. But from them the Athenians drew this great advantage. They learnt in the press of actual battle that neither the numbers of the foe, nor the splendour of their arms and ornaments, nor their boastful barbaric shoutings were terrible to men of resolute courage. Such things they learnt to despise, and they learnt, too, to come to close grips with their foes and fight them hand-to-hand. Therefore the poet Pindar rightly says of the fights at Artemisium, that in those conflicts with the invaders Athens laid the foundation-stones of liberty.

Soon, however, there came to the fleet at Artemisium the news that Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans had fallen in heroic fight in the Pass of Thermopylæ, and that the Persian king was master

of all the passes into Greece by land. Thereupon the Grecian fleet retreated, and to the Athenians, elated by the valour they had displayed, was given the command of the rear, as the post of most danger and honour. As the fleet sailed along Themistocles caused to be set up, at all likely places along the coast, stones bearing inscriptions calling upon the Ionians, who were serving with the Persians, to come to the aid of the Greeks from whom they were descended. This he did hoping that the Ionians would indeed come to the succour of their kinsmen, or that, at the least, the Persians might be made to doubt the fidelity of the Ionians, and thus dissension be spread in the ranks of the enemy.

By this time Xerxes had advanced some distance southward, devastating the country and destroying the cities, and daily the danger to Athens became more imminent as he approached the borders of Attica. The Athenians urgently, but in vain, implored the allies to join them in opposing the Persian host beyond the northern borders of their state. For the thoughts of all the allies were engrossed with the defence of the Peloponnesus, the southern peninsula of Greece, which they hoped to secure by building a rampart across the narrow Isthmus of Corinth.

Thus the Athenians, enraged by their betrayal and cast down by their desertion, were left to their own resources. To fight alone against such a host was hopeless; one course only remained to them—to abandon their beloved city and to take to their ships. But this the common people were very unwilling to do, not seeing how even victory in the future would

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profit them, if their homes were left desolate, and the temples of their gods and the tombs of their forefathers abandoned to the fury of the barbarians.

In this position of affairs Themistocles, being at a loss how to persuade the people by any use of human reason, had recourse to signs and wonders. The serpent of Athene, patron goddess of Athens, disappeared mysteriously from the inner sanctuary of her temple. Acting upon the suggestion of Themistocles, the priests declared that the disappearance signified that the goddess herself had departed from the city and had gone down before them to the sea. Moreover, Themistocles made use of an oracle, which declared that when 'all else was captured the wall of wood alone should remain.' He urged upon the citizens that by 'walls of wood' the oracle could mean nothing but ships; moreover that, in speaking further of 'divine Salamis,' the oracle revealed that the island of Salamis should one day be the scene of some great good fortune to the Greeks. So at length Themistocles prevailed upon the Athenians to leave their beloved city and set sail for Salamis.

A decree was therefore passed that Athens should be left to the protection of its patron goddess, and that all citizens able to bear arms, having first sent away their dependents to some place of safety, should embark on board the ships. In accordance with this decree, most of the Athenians sent their parents, wives and children to Trœzen, where they were received with ready goodwill and hospitality.

Thus the whole city of Athens was embarked

upon board ship. It was indeed a sight to awaken both pity and admiration, to see the citizens thus send away their beloved ones, and, without yielding to their tears and embraces, themselves man the fleet and pass over to the island of Salamis. Especially was compassion stirred on account of the many old men who, by reason of their great age and infirmity, were left behind in the abandoned city. Nor, indeed, could even the dogs and other tame animals be seen without pity. For they ran piteously along the shore, when the ships put off, as if imploring their masters to take them. One dog, so it is said, leaped into the sea and swam beside his master's galley even until the fleet came to Salamis, where the faithful creature lay down exhausted and died.

The recall of Aristides was not the least of the great actions of Themistocles at this time. Perceiving that the people regretted the absence of their former leader in this crisis of their affairs, he procured the passing of a decree to the effect that those Athenians who had been banished might return to aid the cause of Greece. Thus Aristides, who had formerly been banished through the party of Themistocles, was now restored by his influence.

On account of the greatness of Sparta, its admiral Eurybiades was given the command of the whole of the Greek fleet which assembled off Salamis. He was, however, unfitted for the command, for he was faint-hearted in the presence of danger. And at this juncture he wished to weigh anchor and to set sail for the Isthmus of Corinth, near which the army of the Greeks was encamped. Themistocles exerted all his influence in

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opposition to this proposal. He saw that the only hope of the Greeks was to fight the battle in the narrow straits, where the Persians would largely lose the advantage of their vast numbers. On one occasion Eurybiades, to check the eagerness of the Athenian commander to engage the enemy, reminded him that, in the Olympic sports, those who started before the signal for the race was given, received the lash. 'True,' replied Themistocles, 'but those who lag behind at the start do not win the race.' On another occasion, Eurybiades, whose patience was tried by the persistent arguments of Themistocles, lifted his staff as if to strike the Athenian. Thereupon Themistocles said calmly, 'Strike if you will, but at least hear me.' The Spartan could not but admire such self-command, and in spite of himself listened to the Athenian's further arguments against retreat. But one of the officers who stood by broke in with the taunting words: 'It ill becomes you Athenians, who have no city of your own, to advise us to give up our homes and abandon our countries.' Themistocles sharply retorted: 'Base fellow art thou to use such a taunt! True it is that we have left our houses and our walls, for we will not endure to be made slaves for the sake of such things. But in these two hundred ships here ready to defend you all, we still possess the finest city in Greece.'

While Themistocles, standing upon the deck of one of the ships, reasoned thus, it is said that an owl, a bird sacred to the goddess Athene, the protectress of Athens, came and perched upon the mast. By this fortunate omen the Greeks were encouraged to prepare for the fight.

But presently the Persian ships appeared in such numbers that they hid the neighbouring coasts from view. At the same time Xerxes himself was seen marching his land forces down to the shore. Amazed at the sight of such vast armaments the Greeks forgot the counsels of Themistocles. Once again the Peloponnesians, despairing of present victory, bent their thoughts upon the defence of the Isthmus. They resolved to retreat that very night, and gave orders to that effect to the pilots.

Thus Themistocles at the last moment was faced by the prospect of the failure of his plans, and of the loss of the advantage of position in the narrow straits upon which his hopes of victory were based. He therefore had recourse to craft. There was with him an attendant who, though he was a Persian captive, was nevertheless devoted to his master. Themistocles secretly sent this servant to the Persian king with a message saying that the Athenian leader intended to betray his country, and to go over to the Persians. Further, to persuade the king that he really intended to play the traitor, Themistocles informed him of the intention of the Greeks, and besought him to prevent their escape. Xerxes fell into the trap thus artfully prepared for him. Overjoyed at the news, he did as Themistocles had desired and foreseen, and gave orders that all the passages to the open sea should be beset to prevent the escape of the enemy.

Aristides, who was then in a neighbouring island, was the first to perceive that the Grecian fleet was thus surrounded. At great risk he sailed by night through the midst of the Persian ships and bore the

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news to Themistocles. The Athenian commander took his former enemy into his confidence and told him of the measures he had taken. Aristides approved the wisdom of his action, and supported him in advising the Greeks that their only hope of safety lay in engaging the enemy. The allies, however, would scarcely believe that they were surrounded, until the crew of a galley which deserted from the Persians confirmed the truth of the report. Then indeed they saw that there remained for them nothing but to fight, and anger and necessity alike fired them for the combat.

At daybreak the Persian king seated himself upon a rocky height overlooking the narrow waters below. He sat, confident of victory, upon a throne of gold, while around him were many scribes whose business it was to write down the events of the battle. Beneath him he saw his fleet of twelve hundred great ships, and a vast number of smaller vessels, blocking up the entrances to the narrow strait between the island of Salamis and the mainland.

The wisdom which Themistocles had displayed in the choice of a place for the battle was no less shown in his choice of the most favourable time for the combat. For, at a certain time in each day, it usually happened that a brisk wind blew in from the open sea, and raised high waves in the narrow channel. The rough water was no inconvenience to the Grecian ships, which lay low in the water and were solidly built. But the Persian ships, which had lofty sterns and decks and were clumsy and unwieldy, were with difficulty managed in the high waves. Until this wind arose Themistocles shunned

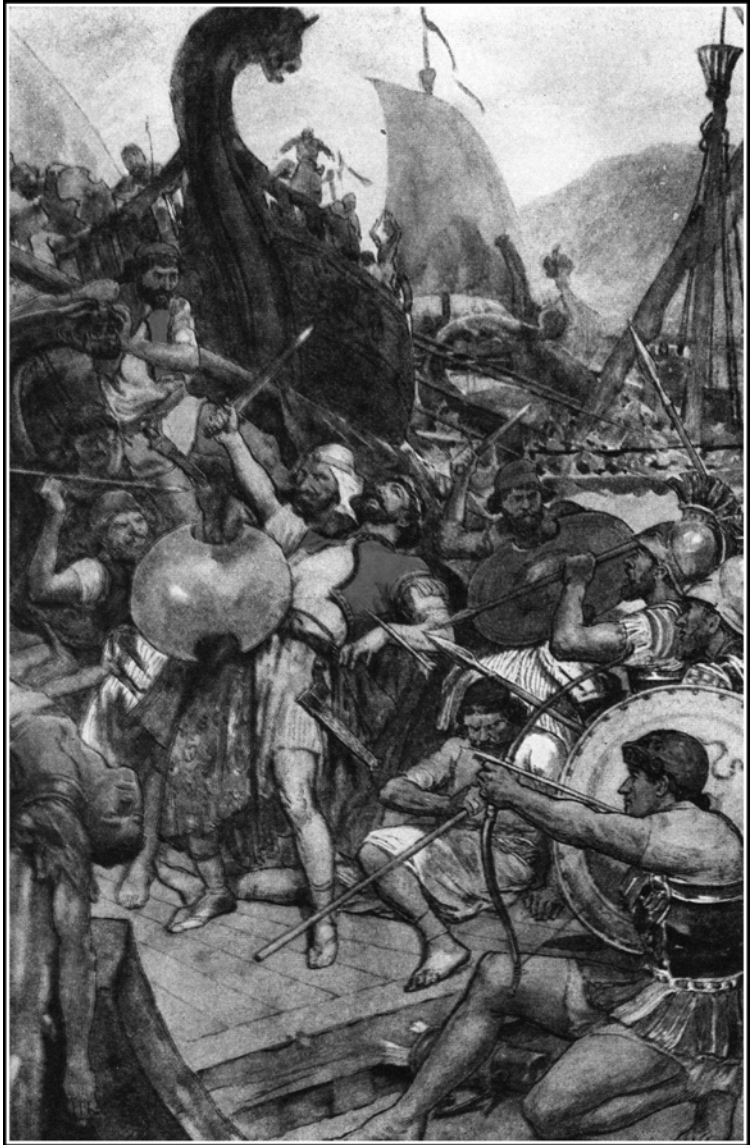
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an engagement, but when the Persian ships, pitching violently in the heavy sea, exposed their sides to attack, the Greeks fell upon them furiously.

Throughout the fight all paid special attention to the actions of Themistocles, as being the most skilful of the Greek leaders. Against him, too, the Persian admiral, by far the bravest of the brothers of Xerxes, chiefly directed his efforts. The Persian's ship was very lofty, and from her decks darts and arrows were rained as from the walls of a castle. But a Grecian ship bore down upon her, and the vessels meeting prow to prow, the brazen ram of each transfixing the timbers of its opponent. Thus the two ships were firmly fixed together, and across the bridge thus formed the Persian admiral leapt to board the Grecian galley. But the Greek pikes were ready to receive him: he was transfixing and his dead body thrust into the sea. As it floated among others it was recognised by a follower of the Persians, and was carried to his brother the king.

So the fight raged furiously. And, on account of the narrowness of the straits, but few of the Persian ships could come against the Greeks at any one time. Indeed, their very numbers often threw the Persian fleet into confusion, since the ships interfered with the movements of one another. Thus the Greeks equalled them in the fighting line, and fought with them all through the day. When evening fell the Persian fleet was utterly broken, and great numbers of its ships were sunken or captured. Thus was won the battle of Salamis, the greatest naval victory of ancient days, and one of the most wonderful sea-fights of all time. The victory was





DEATH OF THE PERSIAN ADMIRAL AT SALAMIS

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gained, of course, by the valour of all the Greeks, but especially by the wisdom and skill of Themistocles.

After the battle, Xerxes, full of rage at the unexpected defeat of his fleet, tried to build a great dam across the narrow strait between the mainland and the island of Salamis, so as to shut in the Greeks completely. Meanwhile Themistocles, in order to test the opinion of Aristides, proposed to him that they should set sail to the Hellespont and destroy the bridge of boats across that strait by which Xerxes had crossed from Asia into Europe and by which he could alone retreat. Aristides by no means agreed with this plan. 'Hitherto,' said he, 'we have had to do with a slothful foe steeped in luxury, but if we shut him up in Europe necessity will drive him to fight desperately. So, awakened by danger, and taught by his past errors, he may yet win victory with his vast land forces. Therefore, instead of breaking down that bridge, we should rather build him another one, if by so doing we may hasten his departure.' This indeed was the real opinion of Themistocles, and he set about to contrive means to hasten the Persian king's retreat.

He therefore sent one of Xerxes' servants, who had been taken prisoner, with a message to the king saying that the Greeks intended to sail to the Hellespont to break down the bridge, and that Themistocles, who was really his friend, advised him to hasten into Asia with all speed before they could do so. Further, the message said that Themistocles, in order to provide time for the safe passage of the Hellespont, would by every means seek to delay the pursuit by the Grecian fleet.

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This message filled Xerxes with terror at his own danger, and he retired from Europe with the greatest possible speed.

Not even envy could refuse to admit that the chief credit for the wonderful success at Salamis was due to Themistocles. The Spartans indeed awarded the prize of valour to their own admiral, Eurybiades, but to Themistocles they assigned the award of wisdom. Both they crowned with the olive wreath. Moreover, they presented the Athenian with the finest chariot in their city, and when he departed ordered three hundred of their youths to attend him to the borders of their state.

At the next Olympic games the attention of the spectators was distracted from the sports and the champions when Themistocles entered the ring. All had eyes but for him, greeted him with loud applause, and pointed him out to strangers with admiration.

All this praise was very grateful to Themistocles, who was by nature greedy of fame and glory, as is shown by some of his memorable acts and sayings. For example, when he was elected admiral by the Athenians, he put off all manner of business, public and private, until the day upon which he was to embark, so that the multitude of affairs he then had to transact might impress the people with a great idea of his importance.

On one occasion, walking on the seashore with a friend, he came upon a number of dead bodies washed up by the sea, and upon them were chains and

ornaments of gold. 'You,' said he to his companion, 'may take these things, for you are not Themistocles.'

He was accustomed to say that the Athenians did not pay him any sincere respect, but that they sheltered themselves under him in times of danger, as men take refuge from a storm beneath a spreading plane-tree which, when fair weather came again, they would strip of leaves and branches.

A certain officer, who considered that he had done the state worthy service, ventured to set up a comparison between himself and Themistocles. Thereupon the latter answered him with this fable:

'Once upon a time there happened a dispute between the *Feast-Day* and the *Day after the Feast*. The latter claimed to be the most important as being a day of bustle and commotion, whereas the *Feast-Day* was a day of easy enjoyment. "You are right," said the *Feast-Day*, "but if I had not been before you, you would not have been at all."

'In like manner,' said Themistocles to the officer, 'if it had not been for me, where would you have been?'

It chanced that his son was able to get his own way with his mother. 'This child,' said Themistocles, laughing, 'is greater than any man in Greece, for he rules his mother, his mother rules me, I rule the Athenians, and the Athenians rule Greece.'

When two citizens sought his daughter in marriage, he preferred the one who was a man of worth to the other, whose chief merit was his wealth, for, said

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he, 'I prefer that she should marry a man without money rather than money without a man.'

In this pointed way he often expressed himself. The next enterprise of Themistocles, after the great actions which have been related, was the rebuilding and fortifying of the city of Athens. When that was completed, he proceeded to construct and fortify the Piræus as the harbour of the town. Further, he joined Athens and the Piræus by a line of communication. Thus he strengthened the city as a naval and maritime power.

He had indeed a design in his mind, after the retreat of Xerxes, to make Athens the sole naval power in Greece. The fleet of the allies having gone into winter quarters, Themistocles announced to his fellow-citizens in full assembly that he had hit upon a plan which would be greatly to the advantage of the state, but which he could not communicate to the whole body of citizens. The Athenians therefore told him to inform Aristides alone of his project, and to abide by his decision as to whether it should be put into practice. To him, accordingly, Themistocles disclosed his plan of treacherously burning the allied fleet in its winter quarters. Such a plan was repugnant to the noble spirit of Aristides, and he informed the citizens that the plan was indeed to their advantage, but that no proposal could be more unjust. The Athenians therefore commanded Themistocles to think no more about it.

But about this time Themistocles stirred up powerful enemies. He displeased the Spartans by

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opposing their plans, and they therefore gave their support to those Athenians who were opposed to his party. Moreover, he offended the allies by sailing round the Grecian islands, and exacting contributions of money from them.

In Athens, too, envy readily gave ear to evil reports, and the displeasure of many was increased by the arrogance of Themistocles and by his insistence upon his own services to the state. 'Are you weary,' he would say when this displeasure was expressed, 'of so often receiving benefits from the same man?'

At length the Athenians, unable any longer to tolerate the high distinction which Themistocles had attained, pronounced against him the Ostracism, or ten years' banishment, as they had done to other great men whose power had become a burden to them.

For some time the fallen leader sheltered himself in other Grecian cities. But it chanced that Pausanias, who had rendered great services to Greece, was now nevertheless plotting to go over to the Persians. Seeing that Themistocles was driven into exile, Pausanias conceived that he would be filled with anger against the Athenians, and ventured to tell him of the intended treason. Themistocles refused to have any share in it, but nevertheless kept the secret which had been entrusted to him and gave no information to the Greeks. Hence, when the plot was discovered and writings concerning it were found, great suspicion fell upon Themistocles. The charge being brought against him, he answered by letter saying, 'I, Themistocles, who was born to command and

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not to serve others, could not sell myself, and Greece with me, into servitude to the enemy.' Nevertheless, his enemies prevailed, and messengers were sent to seize him and bring him before the states of Greece. For some time he was forced to wander from place to place in Greece and the neighbouring countries, always pursued by the hatred of his fellow-countrymen. At length he was driven to seek refuge in Asia within the domains of the Persian king.

There he was in great peril, for the king had by proclamation offered a reward of two hundred talents to any one who should capture him. For a few days he lay hid in a little town where he was known to none save his host. But, being warned in a dream, he determined to take the risk of setting out to the court of the Persian king. Now the Persians are very jealous to keep their women folk from the gaze of other men, and for this reason their wives and daughters are kept closely shut up at home, and, when they travel, are borne along in carriages covered in on all sides. To provide for his safety, Themistocles was carried in such a conveyance, and the attendants were told to give out that they were carrying an Ionian lady to a gentleman at court.

Arrived thither, Themistocles prepared for the dangerous experiment of presenting himself before the Persian king. He applied first to an officer of the court, whom he told that he was a Greek desirous of having audience with the king on matters of high importance. He was informed that he could only come before the king if he bore himself, not according to the manner of the Greeks, who loved liberty and equality above all things,

but according to the manner of the Persians, who were accustomed to prostrate themselves before the king as before the very image of the deity that rules all things. Themistocles having professed himself ready to adopt the Persian custom, the officer asked him, 'Who shall we say that you are? By your conversation you seem to be no ordinary man.' 'That,' replied Themistocles, 'no man must know before the king himself.'

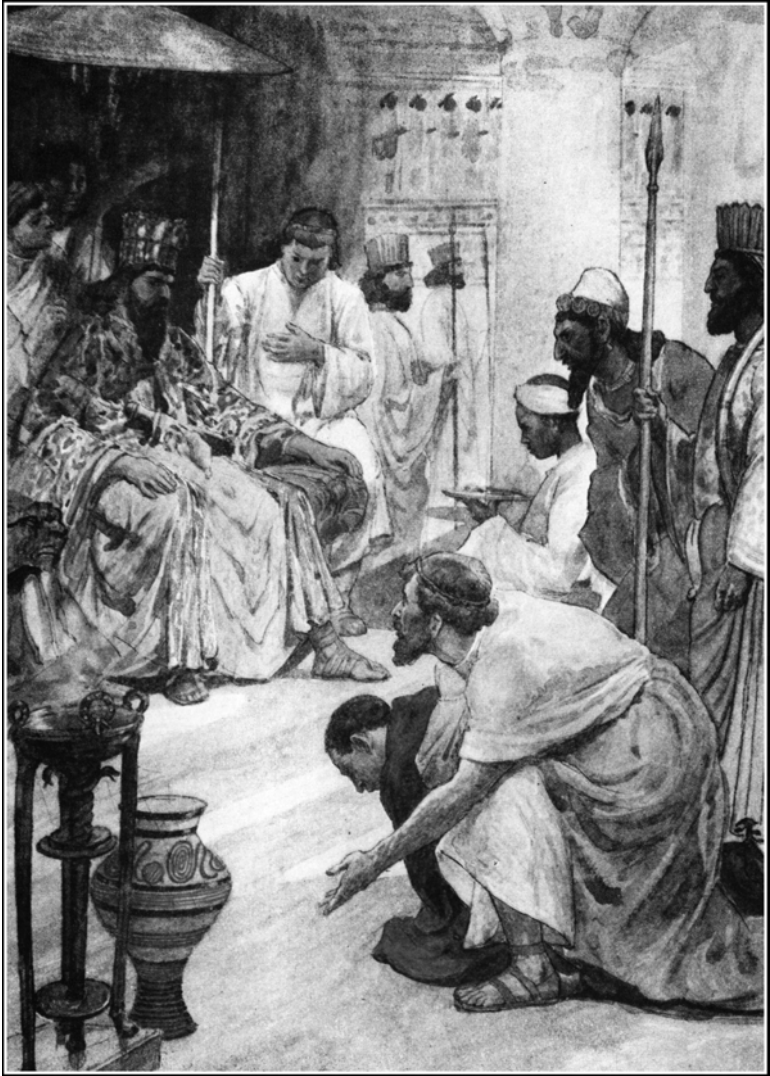
So the Athenian was brought before the king, prostrated himself and stood silent. Then the king commanded an interpreter to ask the Greek who he was, and the question being put, Themistocles answered:

'I, who now come to address myself unto you, O king, am Themistocles the Athenian, an exile driven from Greece. The Persians have suffered much from me, but, after I had delivered Greece and saved Athens, I did them a great service in preventing the pursuit of their army. And as my present misfortunes are, so is my attitude of mind. If you will favour me, I will welcome your favour; if you cherish anger against me, I will submit to it.'

The king admired his courage, but gave him no answer. But privately among his friends he rejoiced at the submission of Themistocles as the most fortunate of all events, and prayed to the gods that his enemies might ever be smitten with the madness of driving away into exile their greatest men. So much was he filled with joy that, it is said, even in his sleep he cried out thrice, 'Themistocles the Athenian is mine.'

As soon as it was day the king gave orders





THEMISTOCLES AT THE PERSIAN COURT

that Themistocles should be brought before him. The Athenian expected no favour, for the guards when they heard his name reviled him, and one of the officers as he passed said, 'The king's good fortune has brought thee hither, thou wily serpent of Greece.' But when he had come into the presence and had prostrated himself, the king spoke graciously to him, saying that since Themistocles had given himself up, the two hundred talents offered for his taking were due to him. Further, the king assured the Athenian of protection, and commanded him to utter all that he had to propose with regard to Greece. Themistocles answering said, 'A man's conversation is like a piece of tapestry, which, when spread open displays the figures upon it, but when folded, the designs are lost to view.' Therefore he besought the king to give him time that he might learn the Persian tongue, in order to unfold his mind freely to the king without the help of an interpreter.

The king, pleased with the answer, gave him a year as he desired. Moreover, the monarch honoured him beyond all other strangers, taking him a-hunting and conversing freely with him. For his support there were granted to him three, as some say, or, as others have it, five cities. For these reasons Themistocles incurred the envy of some of the Persian nobles, the more so as about this time a number of them who attended upon the king were dismissed from their posts, and it was suspected that the conversations of Themistocles with the monarch were the cause.

It happened that during this time Themistocles had occasion to travel to the seacoast. A certain Persian

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noble, who had long designed to kill him and had prepared murderers for the purpose, determined to carry out his plan when Themistocles should reach a certain place, the name of which, being interpreted, signifies the Lion's Head. But, as Themistocles lay asleep one day at noon-tide, he dreamt that the mother of the gods appeared unto him and said, 'Beware, Themistocles, of the Lion's Head, lest the Lion crush you.' Themistocles awoke much disturbed in mind, and having returned thanks to the goddess, left the highroad so as to avoid the place of danger, and took up his quarters for the night at a place beyond it. It chanced that on the way one of the horses which carried his tent fell into a river. A party of servants were therefore left behind to spread out the hangings to dry. In the darkness the murderers approached with drawn swords, and taking the hangings to be the tent wherein Themistocles was sleeping, lifted them up with the intention of slaying him. While they were doing this, the servants who had been left behind fell upon them and secured them. Thus the danger was avoided, and Themistocles in gratitude to the goddess built a temple in her honour, and made his daughter the priestess of it.

Warned by this and other occurrences of the envy of the Persians, Themistocles settled down in the city of Magnesia. There he long abode in riches and honour, for the king, engaged in the affairs of other parts of his domains, gave but little attention to the concerns of Greece. But when Egypt revolted from his rule, the Athenians came to the help of the Egyptians, and the fleet of Athens rode triumphant as mistress of the seas.

Then the Persian king felt himself forced to take active measures against the Greeks and to prevent the further growth of their power. He therefore set his armies in motion, and sent forth his generals, and despatched messengers to Themistocles, commanding him to take the field against his countrymen.

But neither resentment against his fellow-citizens who had banished him, nor the honours and dignities which the Persians had showered upon him, could persuade Themistocles to take command of an expedition against his native land. Possibly he may have doubted the result of the war, but above all he was unwilling to tarnish the glory of his achievements for Athens and the whole of Greece. Therefore, having sacrificed to the gods and taken leave of his friends, he took poison, and so died in the city of his exile.