

# HISTORY OF GREECE.

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## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### FROM THE PEACE OF ANTALCIDAS TO THE END OF THE WAR BETWEEN SPARTA AND OLYNTHUS.

**T**HE position in which Sparta was standing at the end of the Peloponnesian war was so strong and commanding, that only a little moderation and prudence on her part seemed to be wanting, to secure her dominion over Greece, and the general tranquillity, for a long course of years. Yet not many, as we have seen, had passed, before she found herself engaged in a new struggle, which at one time threatened her safety, and, even when most prosperously conducted, added little to her glory, and did not compensate by any solid advantage for the sacrifices which it required. It is not easy to determine, how far this result must be ascribed to errors of policy committed by the Spartan government, or to causes which it could not control, or to the nature of the constitution, which every year changed the officers of state who had the principal share in the administration of affairs. But after making full abatement for unavoidable adverse circumstances, it can hardly be questioned that the Spartans were too much elated by success, that they overlooked the bounds of a reasonable ambition, and neglected the steps and the instruments by which they had risen to their lofty station. Their treatment of Athens was clearly injudicious. The ob-

ligation conferred by their resistance to the wishes of their allies, who proposed the harshest exercise of the rights of war against their fallen enemy, was cancelled by the sanction afterwards given to the atrocities of the Thirty ; and all the benefit that might have been derived from the support of that odious government was thrown away by the lenity which permitted its overthrow ; yet in such a manner as neither to excite any feelings of gratitude, nor even in any degree to weaken the impression of their previous hostility, which was shortly after renewed and confirmed by the ungenerous exaction of the loan by which they had endeavoured to avert the revolution. This unwise fluctuation was indeed the effect of a struggle between parties at home ; but it seems to have been assumed by all parties, that it was impossible Athens should ever again become formidable, and that she might safely be either trampled on, or restored to independence.

The war undertaken on behalf of the Asiatic Greeks seems to have been in itself a politic as well as an honourable measure. But the Spartan government appears not to have formed a clear view of its own designs, or to have been blinded by inordinate ambition to the danger as well as the difficulty of its enterprises. The war, so long as it was confined to the object of protecting the Asiatic colonies, might have been both safe and useful to Sparta : but even for this purpose it was necessary that she should not at the same time have been embarrassed by a contest in Greece : and when the views of her commander were enlarged to the conquest of Asia, it became time to consider whether, even if the resources of Sparta were adequate to this end, it could be accomplished without the ruin of her institutions. There was evidently some miscalculation at the outset of the expedition of Agesilaus, since it was found necessary to recall him in the midst of his triumphs ; even if Sparta did not involve herself in the unseasonable quarrel with her old allies, which broke out in the Corinthian war, through her own impru-

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dence. How far this was the case, depends on a question which we cannot now determine. It is not clear whether the animosity of Thebes was wholly provoked by the conduct of the Spartan government, or may rather be attributed to political changes, which arose at Thebes immediately on the close of the Peloponnesian war from other entirely unknown causes. But at least we can hardly acquit Sparta of an excessive confidence in her own strength, when we see her needlessly braving the united hostility of the principal powers to which she owed her success in her recent conflict with an enemy, who, though humbled and weakened, was neither conciliated nor subdued.

The peace of Antalcidas, though it did not restore to Sparta all that she had lost in the preceding interval subsequent to the Peloponnesian war, placed her in a situation in some respects more advantageous than that which she stood in at the beginning of this period. Athens indeed was no longer a subject existing only by sufferance of her sovereign, but was once more an independent and powerful state. She was however confined almost entirely to her natural resources, and forbidden to aspire to imperial rank. Thebes was irrecoverably lost as an ally. The injuries she had suffered were so deep, that it was scarcely possible the breach between her and Sparta could ever be amicably healed, or that a party favourable to the Spartan interests could ever prevail there so long as the state retained its independence. But the injury had disarmed the animosity which it provoked. Thebes was no longer anything more than the first of the Bœotian cities, and was surrounded by implacable and vigilant enemies, all connected by the firmest ties of interest with Sparta. Peloponnesus, now that Corinth was restored to the aristocratical party, was more than ever at the beck of her ancient mistress, who thus saw herself without a rival in Greece: and so long as her views were confined to this range, the Persian alliance, though less honourable, was likely to be more useful to her than that of

the Asiatic Greeks. Xenophon indeed would appear grossly to have deceived himself, or to have endeavoured to mislead his readers, if he meant to assert that Sparta had acquired any additional glory by the peace of Antalcidas<sup>1</sup>: but if his expression, as it seems it may do, only imports that her state was rendered much more flourishing by this transaction, his remark was undoubtedly true.

Nevertheless her new position, as we have already observed, was an artificial and precarious one. What had been done was to dissolve the power of Greece nearly into its first elements. These elements might be again combined together, and directed against Sparta. The single legitimate object of her policy was to keep them disunited, and as far as possible subservient to her. But both vigilance and moderation were necessary for this end. Her power would be the more stable the less it was felt. Every case in which it was wantonly and oppressively exercised, tended to spread general alarm, and to rouse a spirit of resistance, which could not long want means and opportunities. But the Spartan government was again blinded by ambition and resentment, and was tempted by the prospect of immediate advantage to sacrifice all that it had gained by the peace of Antalcidas.

A cautious policy would have dictated the expediency of at least covering all acts of aggression with some pretext derived from the character which Sparta assumed of conservator of the peace. But her very first measure was one for which she did not plead any pretence but her own interests or vindictive feelings, and which must have given the greater umbrage, as it was avowedly the beginning of a series of retaliations, by which she proposed to chastise those of her allies who had offended her during the war. The first victim selected as an example of this system was Mantinea, which was obnoxious on account of her democratical constitution and her attachment to Argos, and had not disguised the

<sup>1</sup> Hell. v. 1. 36. *οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι, πολὺ ἐπικυδέστεροι ἐγίνοντο ἐκ τῆς ἐπ' Ἀνταλκίδου εἰρήνης καλουμένης.*

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reluctance with which she had hitherto served the Spartan cause. It may be remembered that, after the destruction of the Mora, Agesilaus made a forced march past the walls of Mantinea, to spare his troops the mortification of witnessing the joy which he expected to see expressed there at the recent disaster. But it seems that the only overt act of hostility which could be alleged against the Mantineans, was, that they had supplied Argos with corn during the war. The other grounds of complaint were still slighter, and more difficult of proof; that they had sometimes evaded their share of service in the Spartan army, under false pretexts, and had discharged its duties with manifest ill-will. These however were considered at Sparta as reasons sufficient to justify the demand, that the Mantineans should throw down their walls; and when they refused to give this pledge of obedience, preparations were immediately made for invading their territory.

This invasion, however contrary to the spirit of the peace of Antalcidas, does not appear to have violated the Greek international law; for a truce which had been concluded for thirty years between the two states after the battle of 418, had, at least according to the Spartan calculation, expired. Yet it seems as if Agesilaus did not approve of the expedition; for he obtained leave to decline the command on a plea which can scarcely have been more than a pretext. The Mantineans had rendered important services to Sparta in the last Messenian war, which had been conducted by his father Archidamus; and he affected to consider this as an obligation conferred on his family. It might have been thought that if such an excuse was admitted, the threatened hostilities ought to have been withheld on the same ground. Agesipolis however took the command, though his father Pausanias was connected by ties of personal friendship with the chiefs of the democratical party at Mantinea, against whom the blow was especially aimed; for the destruction of the walls would have placed them at the mercy of Sparta, and conse-

quently of their political adversaries. We learn through Diodorus, that they applied to Athens for succour, but without effect. This is less surprising than that Sparta should have sought and obtained aid from Thebes. This fact indeed is not mentioned either by Xenophon or Diodorus; but it is recorded by Plutarch<sup>1</sup>, with details which seem to leave no room for doubt, for he relates that an engagement took place between the invaders and the Mantineans, in which the two great Thebans, whose names will soon become familiar to us, fighting side by side, narrowly escaped death. When we remember the dispositions which prevailed at Thebes towards Sparta at the time of the treaty, we can hardly understand a proceeding which seems to imply a renewal of the ancient alliance; and we are left to a doubtful conjecture, whether at this time the fear which the Thebans entertained of the Spartan power was stronger than their resentment, or the party friendly to Sparta had recovered a temporary ascendancy. The battle however is also mentioned by Pausanias<sup>2</sup>; but Xenophon only relates that Agesipolis, finding that he could not shake the enemy's resolution by the ravages which he committed in their territory, proceeded to invest the city with a trench and a wall. The Mantineans prepared to sustain a siege; and as the last year's harvest had been unusually abundant, and the place was plentifully victualled, Agesipolis, dreading the cost and tediousness of a long blockade, resorted to a fresh expedient. The Ophis, a small stream, but at times swollen to a considerable size, flowed through the town, and Agesipolis, taking advantage of an extraordinary flood<sup>3</sup>, raised an embankment, by which he forced it back, and laid the low grounds at the foot of the adjacent walls under water. Their basements, as well as those of the houses, were built, as was usual throughout Greece, of unbaked bricks, and they soon began to crack and totter. It was according to Pau-

<sup>1</sup> Pelop. 4.<sup>2</sup> VIII. 8. 7.<sup>3</sup> Diodor. xv. 12.

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sanias by a like device that Cimon made himself master of Eion on the Strymon. The besieged however still held out for a time, and propped up their sinking walls with wooden buttresses, and only sent an offer of submission when they found that the water was gaining upon them, so that longer delay would expose them to the horrors of a storm. But they were now informed that the conquerors would no longer be content with the rasing of the walls: they required that Mantinea should cease to exist as a city, and that its population should be dispersed among the four villages out of which it had been collected in the capital.<sup>1</sup> It was too late to dispute about any terms short of death or slavery; and the besieged capitulated. The popular leaders expected no mercy; but Pausanias exerted his influence with his son in their behalf, and they were permitted to go into exile. There were about sixty who took the benefit of this indulgence, and as they left the city along a road lined with the hostile troops, Agesipolis had some difficulty in sheltering them from the rage of their political enemies. The conditions were then executed. The aristocratical Mantineans, Xenophon observes, regretted the destruction of their houses, which put them to the expense of building new ones. But they were consoled for this loss by the power which they thus acquired in the villages near which their estates lay; and they cheerfully contributed their contingents to the Spartan levies. The Spartans affected to treat each village as a separate state, and on these occasions sent a different officer (a *xenagus*) to each, to collect its forces.

The only remark which this transaction draws from Xenophon is, that the event might serve as a warning, not to build a town so that a river should run through it. We do not know why he did not add the alternative: or to build the walls with more solid masonry.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. I. p. 412. So in 1162 the population of Milan was distributed by Frederic I. among four villages, which were to be upward of eight miles apart from one another. Diodorus (xv. 5.) says that the Mantineans were made to migrate *εις τὰς ἀρχαίας πέντε κώμας*. But one of these was the site of Mantinea.

But it seems more important to observe, that this attack on Mantinea was an act of mere open violence, and that, as Xenophon does not throw out any hint that it was sanctioned by the terms of the peace of Antalcidas, we have no reason to suppose that the Spartans themselves pretended to put such a construction on it.<sup>1</sup> Such a pretence would indeed have been too glaringly inconsistent with their declared motives; and it would have been difficult to show why on the same principle Tegea likewise was not dissolved into the nine hamlets of which it was originally composed. On the other hand it seems that, by a liberal interpretation of the treaty, Plataea was held entitled to resume its place among the Bœotian cities. The remains of the ancient people returned from Athens and Scione to the glorious land of their forefathers, and rebuilt their walls. Whether Sparta permitted them to retain their connexion with Athens, may perhaps be doubted.<sup>2</sup>

The temper manifested by the Spartan government in these proceedings, held out encouragement to every party throughout Greece, which was discontented with the state of things at home, and desired a change consistent with the interests of Sparta, to address itself to her for assistance. The first application was made by the exiles of Phlius, who now hoped to be restored to their native city. They seem to have belonged to the same party which we mentioned as in banishment from Phlius, when we last had occasion to notice the affairs of that little state.<sup>3</sup> For that was a party deemed to be so much attached to Sparta, that its adversaries had ground to fear that she might exert her power in their behalf. But it also appears to have been subsequently reinforced by other exiled adherents of the same cause; for they claimed Spartan aid on the ground that, since their banishment, Phlius had ceased to contribute its

<sup>1</sup> We should indeed not have thought of it, if Wachsmuth (1. 2. p. 240.) had not described Sparta as enforcing the terms of the treaty against Mantinea.

<sup>2</sup> To Wachsmuth, however (1. 2. p. 271.), it appears unquestionable that they continued in a relation of isopolity to Athens.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. IV. p. 419.



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contingents to the armies of the confederacy, and had refused to receive the Spartans within its walls. The ephors were well disposed to comply with their wishes ; but, though they no longer thought fit to exercise the forbearance which they had shown when the party now in power intrusted them with the citadel, they assumed an appearance of mildness and moderation which they had neglected in the recent case of Mantinea. Instead of an imperious demand, they sent a bland message, importing that the exiles were friends of Sparta, and had been guilty of no offence, and requesting their recall as a favour. But after the example of Mantinea, the government of Phlius could not mistake the force of this gentle language ; and it saw that its chance of successful resistance to the will of Sparta was the slighter, as the exiles had still left many kinsmen and friends behind them. It therefore thought it safest to yield with a good grace, and repealed the decree of banishment. By the same decree, however, their property had been confiscated, and it had been subsequently purchased by private persons. It now became necessary, for the sake of tranquillity, to restore it to its late owners ; and the method adopted for the satisfaction of all the parties concerned was to refund the price to the purchasers from the treasury.<sup>1</sup> All disputes which might arise out of the conflict of old and new claims were to be referred to an impartial tribunal.

Though Xenophon gives no other instance of a similar interference, there may have been some foundation for the statement of Diodorus, who represents the peace of Antalcidas as the occasion of a general reaction in the states which had previously acknowledged the Spartan supremacy, attended with the banishment of many friends of Sparta, who were afterwards forcibly restored by her interposition.<sup>2</sup> But early in 382, the attention of the Spartan government was drawn towards a more

<sup>1</sup> It does not appear that this arrangement was prescribed, as Manso represents (Sparta iii. 1. p. 111.), by Sparta.

<sup>2</sup> xv. 5.

important object by an embassy from the Chalcidian cities, Acanthus and Apollonia. Their envoys came to solicit protection against the power of Olynthus, which was threatening their independence. The Chalcidian cities, which seem from the first to have been linked closely together by their common origin and interests, had, as we have seen, been brought into a still closer union by their struggle with Athens. The issue of the Peloponnesian war released them from all control and apprehension with regard to their old mistress and enemy, and left them at full liberty to regulate their own concerns. But the struggle had begun with a great step toward the aggrandisement of Olynthus, which henceforth assumed the first place among them, and in the year following the peace of Nicias, further strengthened herself by the acquisition of Mecyberna<sup>1</sup>, a port town only between two and three miles off. It was natural that with these advantages she should aspire to the rank of an imperial state, and it appears that, not long at least after the end of the war, she had succeeded in forming a confederacy among the kindred cities, of which she was acknowledged as the head. The terms which she granted to them would have been liberal, if they had been cities of a different origin from her own. They were admitted to that kind of political connection which the Greeks described by the word *sympolity*.<sup>2</sup> Their citizens enjoyed all the civil rights of citizens of the sovereign city. They were capable of acquiring property in land in the Olynthian territory, and of allying themselves with Olynthian families; but they were excluded from all the political privileges which were exercised in the Olynthian assembly, and were compelled to submit to the laws, and, it seems also, to adopt the constitution of the ruling state. It was to be expected that several of the Chalcidian towns should prefer political independence to any advantages that might result to them from such an union with Olynthus: even if the state of parties

<sup>1</sup> Thucydides v. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Hell. v. 2. 12. ἐφ' ᾧ τε τοῖς ἀντοῖς χεῖρσθαι νόμοις καὶ συμπολιτεύειν.