75 AD

CIMON
507?-449 B.C.

Plutarch
translated by John Dryden

Plutarch (46-120) - Greek biographer, historian, and philosopher, sometimes known as the encyclopaedist of antiquity. He is most renowned for his series of character studies, arranged mostly in pairs, known as "Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans" or "Parallel Lives." Cimon (75 AD) - A study of the life of the Greek general, Cimon.

CIMON

PERIPOLTAS the prophet, having brought the King Opheltas, and those under his command, from Thessaly into Boeotia, left there a family, which flourished a long time after; the greater part of them inhabiting Chaeronea, the first city out of which they expelled the barbarians. The descendants of this race, being men of bold attempts and warlike habits, exposed themselves to so many danger's in the invasions of the Mede, and in battles against the Gauls, that at last they were almost wholly consumed.

There was left one orphan of this house, called Damon, surnamed Peripoltas, in beauty and greatness of spirit surpassing all of his age, but rude and undisciplined in temper. A Roman captain of a company that wintered in Chaeronea became passionately fond of this youth, who was now pretty nearly grown a man.

And finding all his approaches, his gifts, his entreaties, alike repulsed, he showed violent inclinations to assault Damon. Our native Chaeronea was then in a distressed condition, too small and too poor to meet with anything but neglect.

Damon, being sensible of this, and looking upon himself as injured already, resolved to inflict punishment. Accordingly, he and sixteen of his companions conspired against the captain; but that the design might be managed without any danger of being discovered, they all daubed their faces at night with soot. Thus disguised and inflamed with wine, they set upon him by break of day, as he was sacrificing in the market-place; and having killed him, and several others that were with him, they fled out of the city, which was extremely alarmed and troubled at the murder. The council assembled immediately, and pronounced sentence of death against Damon and his accomplices. This they did to justify the city to the Romans. But that evening, as the magistrates were at supper together, according to the custom, Damon and his confederates, breaking into the hall, killed them, and then fled again out of the town. About this time, Lucius Lucullus chanced to be passing that way with a body of troops, upon some expedition, and this disaster having but recently happened, he stayed to examine the matter. Upon inquiry, he found the city was in no wise faulty, but rather that they themselves had suffered; therefore he drew out the soldiers, and carried them away with him.

Yet Damon continuing to ravage the country all about, the citizens, by messages and decrees, in appearance favourable, enticed him

into the city, and upon his return, made him Gymnasiarch; but afterwards as he was anointing himself in the vapour baths, they set upon him and killed him. For a long while after apparitions continuing to be seen, and groans to be heard in that place, so our fathers have told us, they ordered the gates of the baths to be built up; and even to this day those who live in the neighbourhood believe that they sometimes see spectres and hear alarming sounds. The posterity of Damon, of whom some still remain, mostly in Phocis, near the town of Stiris, are called Asbolomeni, that is, in the Aeolian idiom, men daubed with soot: because Damon was thus besmeared when he committed this murder.

But there being a quarrel between the people of Chaeronea and the Orchomenians, their neighbours, these latter hired an informer, a Roman, to accuse the community of Chaeronea as if it had been a single person of the murder of the Romans, of which only Damon and his companions were guilty; accordingly, the process was commenced, and the cause pleaded before the Praetor of Macedon, since the Romans as yet had not sent governors into Greece.

The advocates who defended the inhabitants appealed to the testimony of Lucullus, who, in answer to a letter the praetor wrote to him, returned a true account of the matter-of-fact. By this means the town obtained its acquittal, and escaped a most serious danger. The citizens, thus preserved, erected a statue to Lucullus in the market-place, near that of the god Bacchus.

We also have the same impressions of gratitude; and though removed from the events by the distance of several generations, we yet feel the obligation to extend to ourselves: and as we think an image of the character and habits to be a greater honour than one merely representing the face and the person, we will put Lucullus's life amongst our parallels of illustrious men, and without swerving from the truth, will record his actions. The commemoration will be itself a sufficient proof of our grateful feeling, and he himself would not thank us, if in recompense for a service which consisted in speaking the truth, we should abuse his memory with a false and counterfeit narration. For as we would wish that a painter who is to draw a beautiful face, in which there is yet some imperfection, should neither wholly leave out, nor yet too pointedly express what is defective, because this would deform it, and that spoil the resemblance; so since it is hard, or indeed perhaps impossible, to show the life of a man wholly free from blemish, in all that is excellent we must follow truth exactly, and give it fully; any lapses or faults that occur, through human passions or political necessities, we may regard rather as the shortcomings of some

particular virtue, than as the natural effects of vice; and may be content without introducing them, curiously and officiously, into our narrative, if it be but out of tenderness to the weakness of nature, which has never succeeded in producing any human character so perfect in virtue as to be pure from all admixture and open to no criticism. On considering with myself to whom I should compare Lucullus I find none so exactly his parallel as Cimon.

They were both valiant in war, and successful against the barbarians; both gentle in political life, and more than any others gave their countrymen a respite from civil troubles at home, while abroad each of them raised trophies and gained famous victories. No Greek before Cimon, nor Roman before Lucullus, ever carried the scene of war so far from their own country; putting out of the question the acts of Bacchus and Hercules, and any exploit of Perseus against the Ethiopians, Medes, and Armenians, or again of Jason, of which any record that deserves credit can be said to have come down to our days. Moreover in this they were alike, that they did not finish the enterprises they undertook. They brought their enemies near their ruin, but never entirely conquered them. There was yet a great conformity in the free good-will and lavish abundance of their entertainments and general hospitalities, and in the youthful laxity of their habits. Other points of resemblance, which we have failed to notice, may be easily collected from our narrative itself.

Cimon was the son of Miltiades and Hegesipyle, who was by birth a Thracian, and daughter to the King Olorus, as appears from the poems of Melanthius and Archelaus, written in praise of Cimon. By this means the historian Thucydides was his kinsman by the mother’s side; for his father’s name also, in remembrance of this common ancestor, was Olorus, and he was the owner of the gold mines in Thrace, and met his death, it is said, by violence, in Scapte Hyle, a district of Thrace; and his remains having afterwards been brought into Attica, a monument is shown as his among those of the family of Cimon, near the tomb of Elpinice, Cimon’s sister. But Thucydides was of the township of Halimus, and Miltiades and his family were Laciadae. Miltiades, being condemned in a fine of fifty talents of the state, and unable to pay it, was cast into prison, and there died.

Thus Cimon was left an orphan very young, with his sister Elpinice, who was also young and unmarried. And at first he had but an indifferent reputation, being looked upon as disorderly in his habits, fond of drinking, and resembling his grandfather, also called Cimon, in character, whose simplicity got him the surname

of Coalemus. Stesimbrotus of Thasos, who lived near about the same time with Cimon, reports of him that he had little acquaintance either with music, or any of the other liberal studies and accomplishments, then common among the Greeks; that he had nothing whatever of the quickness and the ready speech of his countrymen in Attica; that he had great nobleness and candour in his disposition, and in his character in general resembled rather a native of Peloponnesus than of Athens; as Euripides describes Hercules: “—Rude And unrefined, for great things well endued:” for this may fairly be added to the character which Stesimbrotus has given of him.

They accused him, in his younger years, of cohabiting with his own sister Elpinice, who, indeed, otherwise had no very clear reputation, but was reported to have been over-intimate with Polygnotus the painter; and hence, when he painted the Trojan women in the porch, then called the Plesianactium, and now the Poecile, he made Laodice a portrait of her. Polygnotus was not an ordinary mechanic, nor was he paid for his work, but out of a desire to please the Athenians painted the portico for nothing. So it is stated by the historians, and in the following verses by the poet Melanthius: “Wrought by his hand the deeds of heroes grace At his own charge our temples and our place.” - Some affirm that Elpinice lived with her brother, not secretly, but as his married wife, her poverty excluding her from any suitable match. But afterwards, when Callias, one of the richest men of Athens, fell in love with her, and proffered to pay the fine the father was condemned in, if he could obtain the daughter in marriage, with Elpinice’s own consent, Cimon betrothed her to Callias. There is no doubt but that Cimon was, in general, of an amorous temper. For Melanthius, in his elegies, rallies him on his attachment for Asteria of Salamis, and again for a certain Mnestra. And there can be no doubt of his unusually passionate affection for his lawful wife Isodice, the daughter of Euryptolemus, the son of Megacles; nor of his regret, even to impatience, at her death, if any conclusion may be drawn from those elegies of condolence, addressed to him upon his loss of her. The philosopher Panaetius is of opinion that Archelaus, the writer on physics, was the author of them, and indeed the time seems to favour that conjecture. All the other points of Cimon’s character were noble and good. He was as daring as Miltiades, and not inferior to Themistocles in judgment, and was incomparably more just and honest than either of them.

Fully their equal in all military virtues, in the ordinary duties of a citizen at home he was immeasurably their superior. And this, too,

when he was very young, his years not yet strengthened by any experience. For when Themistocles, upon the Median invasion, advised the Athenians to forsake their city and their country, and to carry all their arms on shipboard and fight the enemy by sea, in the straits of Salamis; when all the people stood amazed at the confidence and rashness of this advice, Cimon was seen, the first of all men, passing with a cheerful countenance through the Ceramicus, on his way with his companions to the citadel, carrying a bridle in his hand to offer to the goddess, intimating that there was no more need of horsemen now, but of mariners. There, after he had paid his devotions to the goddess, and offered up the bridle, he took down one of the bucklers that hung upon the walls of the temple, and went down to the port; by this example giving confidence to many of the citizens. He was also of a fairly handsome person, according to the poet Ion, tall and large, and let his thick and curly hair grow long. After he had acquitted himself gallantly in this battle of Salamis, he obtained great repute among the Athenians, and was regarded with affection, as well as admiration. He had many who followed after him, and bade him aspire to actions not less famous than his father's battle of Marathon. And when he came forward in political life, the people welcomed him gladly, being now weary of Themistocles; in opposition to whom, and because of the frankness and easiness of his temper, which was agreeable to every one, they advanced Cimon to the highest employments in the government. The man that contributed most to his promotion was Aristides, who early discerned in his character his natural capacity, and purposely raised him, that he might be a counterpoise to the craft and boldness of Themistocles.

After the Medes had been driven out of Greece, Cimon was sent out as an admiral, when the Athenians had not yet attained their dominion by sea, but still followed Pausanias and the Lacedaemonians; and his fellow-citizens under his command were highly distinguished, both for the excellence of their discipline, and for their extraordinary zeal and readiness. And further, perceiving that Pausanias was carrying on secret communications with the barbarians, and writing letters to the King of Persia to betray Greece, and puffed up with authority and success, was treating the allies haughtily, and committing many wanton injustices, Cimon, taking this advantage, by acts of kindness to those who were suffering wrong, and by his general humane bearing, robbed him of the command of the Greeks, before he was aware, not by arms, but by his mere language and character. The greatest part of the

allies, no longer able to endure the harshness and pride of Pausanias, revolted from him to Cimon and Aristides, who accepted the duty, and wrote to the Ephors of Sparta, desiring them to recall a man who was causing dishonour to Sparta and trouble to Greece. They tell of Pausanias, that when he was in Byzantium, he solicited a young lady of a noble family in the city, whose name was Cleonice, to debauch her. Her parents, dreading his cruelty, were forced to consent, and so abandoned their daughter to his wishes. The daughter asked the servants outside the chamber to put out all the lights; so that approaching silently and in the dark towards his bed, she stumbled upon the lamp, which she overturned. Pausanias, who was fallen asleep, awakened and, startled with the noise, thought an assassin had taken that dead time of night to murder him, so that hastily snatching up his poniard that lay by him, he struck the girl, who fell with the blow, and died. After this, he never had rest, but was continually haunted by her, and saw an apparition visiting him in his sleep, and addressing him with these angry words:- - “Go on thy way, unto the evil end, That doth on lust and violence attend.” - This was one of the chief occasions of indignation against him among the confederates, who now, joining their resentments and forces with Cimon’s, besieged him in Byzantium. He escaped out of their hands, and, continuing, as it is said, to be disturbed by the apparition, fled to the oracle of the dead at Heraclea, raised the ghost of Cleonice, and entreated her to be reconciled. Accordingly she appeared to him, and answered that, as soon as he came to Sparta, he should speedily be freed from all evils; obscurely foretelling, it would seem, his imminent death. This story is related by many authors.

Cimon, strengthened with the accession of the allies, went as general into Thrace. For he was told that some great men among the Persians, of the king’s kindred, being in possession of Eion, a city situated upon the river Strymon, infested the neighbouring Greeks. First he defeated these Persians in battle, and shut them up within the walls of their town. Then he fell upon the Thracians of the country beyond the Strymon, because they supplied Eion with victuals, and driving them entirely out of the country, took possession of it as conqueror, by which means he reduced the besieged to such straits, that Butes, who commanded there for the king, in desperation set fire to the town, and burned himself, his goods, and all his relations, in one common flame. By this means, Cimon got the town, but no great booty; as the barbarians had not only consumed themselves in the fire, but the richest of their

effects. However, he put the country about into the hands of the Athenians, a most advantageous and desirable situation for a settlement. For this action, the people permitted him to erect the stone Mercuries, upon the first of which was this inscription: “Of bold and patient spirit, too, were those, Who, where the Strymon under Eion flows, With famine and the sword, to utmost need, Reduced at last the children of the Mede.”

Upon the second stood this: “The Athenians to their leaders this reward For great and useful service did accord; Others hereafter shall, from their applause, Learn to be valiant in their country’s cause.”

And upon the third the following: “With Atreus’ sons, this city sent of yore Divine Menestheus to the Trojan shore; Of all the Greeks, so Homer’s verses say, The ablest man an army to array: So old the title of her sons the name Of chiefs and champions in the field to claim.”

Though the name of Cimon is not mentioned in these inscriptions, yet his contemporaries considered them to be the very highest honours to him; as neither Miltiades nor Themistocles ever received the like. When Miltiades claimed a garland, Sochares of Decelea stood up in the midst of the assembly and opposed it, using words which, though ungracious, were received with applause by the people: “When you have gained a victory by yourself, Miltiades, then you may ask to triumph so too.” What then induced them so particularly to honour Cimon? Was it that under other commanders they stood upon the defensive? but by his conduct, they not only attacked their enemies, but invaded them in their own country, and acquired new territory, becoming masters of Eion and Amphipolis, where they planted colonies, as also they did in the isle of Scyros, which Cimon had taken on the following occasion. The Dolopians were the inhabitants of this isle, a people who neglected all husbandry, and had, for many generations, been devoted to piracy; this they practised to that degree, that at last they began to plunder foreigners that brought merchandise into their ports. Some merchants of Thessaly, who had come to shore near to Ctesium, were not only spoiled of their goods, but themselves put into confinement. These men afterwards escaping from their prison, went and obtained sentence against the Scyrians in a court of Amphictyons, and when the Scyrian people declined to make public restitution, and called upon the individuals who had got the plunder to give it up, these persons, in alarm, wrote to Cimon to succour them, with his fleet, and declared themselves ready to deliver the town into his hands.

Cimon, by these means, got the town, expelled the Dolopian pirates, and so opened the traffic of the Aegean sea. And, understanding that the ancient Theseus, the son of Aegeus, when he fled from Athens and took refuge in this isle, was here treacherously slain by King Lycomedes, who feared him, Cimon endeavoured to find out where he was buried.

For an oracle had commanded the Athenians to bring home his ashes, and pay him all due honours as a hero; but hitherto they had not been able to learn where he was interred, as the people of Scyros dissembled the knowledge of it, and were not willing to allow a search. But now, great inquiry being made, with some difficulty he found out the tomb and carried the relics into his own galley, and with great pomp and show brought them to Athens, four hundred years, or thereabouts, after his expulsion. This act got Cimon great favour with the people, one mark of which was the judgment, afterwards so famous, upon the tragic poets. Sophocles, still a young man, had just brought forward his first plays; opinions were much divided, and the spectators had taken sides with some heat. So, to determine the case, Apsephion, who was at that time archon, would not cast lots who should be judges; but when Cimon and his brother commanders with him came into the theatre, after they had performed the usual rites to the god of the festival, he would not allow them to retire, but came forward and made them swear (being ten in all, one from each tribe) the usual oath; and so being sworn judges, he made them sit down to give sentence. The eagerness for victory grew all the warmer from the ambition to get the suffrages of such honourable judges. And the victory was at last adjudged to Sophocles, which Aeschylus is said to have taken so ill, that he left Athens shortly after, and went in anger to Sicily, where he died, and was buried near the city of Gela.

Ion relates that when he was a young man, and recently come from Chios to Athens, he chanced to sup with Cimon at Laomedon’s house. After supper, when they had, according to custom, poured out wine to the honour of the gods, Cimon was desired by the company to give them a song, which he did with sufficient success, and received the commendations of the company, who remarked on his superiority to Themistocles, who, on a like occasion, had declared he had never learnt to sing, nor to play, and only knew how to make a city rich and powerful. After talking of things incident to such entertainments, they entered upon the particulars of the several actions for which Cimon had been famous. And when they were mentioning the most signal, he told them they had

omitted one, upon which he valued himself most for address and good contrivance. He gave this account of it.

When the allies had taken a great number of the barbarians prisoners in Sestos and Byzantium, they gave him the preference to divide the booty; he accordingly put the prisoners in one lot, and the spoils of their rich attire and jewels in the other. This the allies complained of as an unequal division; but he gave them their choice to take which lot they would, for that the Athenians should be content with that which they refused. Herophytus of Samos advised them to take the ornaments for their share, and leave the slaves to the Athenians; and Cimon went away, and was much laughed at for his ridiculous division. For the allies carried away the golden bracelets, and armlets, and collars, and purple robes, and the Athenians had only the naked bodies of the captives, which they could make no advantage of, being unused to labour. But a little while after, the friends and kinsmen of the prisoners coming from Lydia and Phrygia, redeemed everyone his relations at a high ransom; so that by this means Cimon got so much treasure that he maintained his whole fleet of galleys with the money for four months; and yet there was some left to lay up in the treasury at Athens.

Cimon now grew rich, and what he gained from the barbarians with honour, he spent yet more honourably upon the citizens. For he pulled down all the enclosures of his gardens and grounds, that strangers, and the needy of his fellow-citizens, might gather of his fruits freely. At home he kept a table, plain, but sufficient for a considerable number; to which any poor townsman had free access, and so might support himself without labour, with his whole time left free for public duties. Aristotle states, however, that this reception did not extend to all the Athenians, but only to his own fellow-townsmen, the Laciadae. Besides this, he always went attended by two or three young companions, very well clad; and if he met with an elderly citizen in a poor habit, one of these would change clothes with the decayed citizen, which was looked upon as very nobly done. He enjoined them, likewise, to carry a considerable quantity of coin about them, which they were to convey silently into the hands of the better class of poor men, as they stood by them in the market-place. This, Cratinus the poet speaks of in one of his comedies, the Archilochi “For I, Metrobius too, the scrivener poor, Of ease and comfort in my age secure By Greece’s noblest son in life’s decline,

Cimon, the generous-hearted, the divine, Well-fed and feasted hoped till death to be, Death which, alas! has taken him ere me.”

Gorgias the Leontine gives him this character, that he got riches that he might use them, and used them that he might get honour by them. And Critias, one of the thirty tyrants, makes it, in his elegies, his wish to have “The Scopads’ wealth, and Cimon’s nobleness, And King Agesilaus’s success.”

Lichas, we know, became famous in Greece, only because on the days of the sports, when the young boys run naked, he used to entertain the strangers that came to see these diversions. But Cimon’s generosity outdid all the old Athenian hospitality and good-nature. For though it is the city’s just boast that their forefathers taught the rest of Greece to sow corn, and how to use springs of water, and to kindle fire, yet Cimon, by keeping open house for his fellow-citizens, and giving travellers liberty to eat the fruits which the several seasons produced in his land, seemed to restore to the world that community of goods, which mythology says existed in the reign of Saturn. Those who object to him, that he did this to be popular and gain the applause of the vulgar, are confuted by the constant tenor of the rest of his actions, which all tended to uphold the interests of the nobility and the Spartan policy, of which he gave instances, when together with Aristides he opposed Themistocles, who was advancing the authority of the people beyond its just limits, and resisted Ephialtes, who, to please the multitude, was for abolishing the jurisdiction of the court of Areopagus. And when all of this time, except Aristides and Ephialtes, enriched themselves out of the public money, he still kept his hands clean and untainted, and to his last day never acted or spoke for his own private gain or emolument. They tell us that Rhoesaces, a Persian, who had traitorously revolted from the king his master, fled to Athens, and there, being harassed by sycophants, who were still accusing him to the people, he applied himself to Cimon for redress, and, to gain his favour, laid down in his doorway two cups, the one full of gold and the other of silver Darics. Cimon smiled and asked him whether he wished to have Cimon’s hired service or his friendship. He replied, his friendship. “If so,” said he, “take away these pieces, for, being your friend, when I shall have occasion for them, I will send and ask for them.” The allies of the Athenians began now to be weary of war and military service, willing to have repose, and to look after their husbandry and traffic. For they saw their enemies driven out of the country, and did not fear any new vexations from them. They still paid the tax they were assessed at, but did not send men and galleys, as they had done before. This the other Athenian generals wished to constrain them to, and by judicial proceedings against

defaulters, and penalties which they inflicted on them, made the government uneasy, and even odious. But Cimon practised a contrary method; he forced no man to go that was not willing, but of those that desired to be excused from service he took money and vessels unmanned, and let them yield to the temptation of staying at home, to attend to their private business. Thus they lost their military habits and luxury, and their own folly quickly changed them into unwarlike husbandmen and traders; while Cimon, continually embarking large numbers of Athenians on board his galleys, thoroughly disciplined them in his expeditions, and ere long made them the lords of their own paymasters. The allies, whose indolence maintained them, while they thus went sailing about everywhere, and incessantly bearing arms and acquiring skill, began to fear and flatter them, and found themselves after a while allies no longer, but unwittingly become tributaries and slaves.

Nor did any man ever do more than Cimon did to humble the pride of the Persian king. He was not content with getting rid of him out of Greece; but following close at his heels, before the barbarians could take breath and recover themselves, he was already at work, and what with his devastations, and his forcible reduction of some places, and the revolts and voluntary accession of others, in the end, from Ionia to Pamphylia, all Asia was clear of Persian soldiers. Word being brought him that the royal commanders were lying in wait upon the coast of Pamphylia with a numerous land army and a large fleet, he determined to make the whole sea on his side the Chelidonian islands so formidable to them that they should never dare to show themselves in it; and setting off from Cnidos and the Triopian headland with two hundred galleys, which had been originally built with particular care by Themistocles, for speed and rapid evolutions, and to which he now gave greater width and roomier decks along the sides to move to and fro upon, so as to allow a great number of full-armed soldiers to take part in the engagements and fight from them, he shaped his course first of all against the town of Phaselis, which though inhabited by Greeks, yet would not quit the interests of Persia, but denied his galleys entrance into their port. Upon this he wasted the country, and drew up his army to their very walls; but the soldiers of Chios, who were then serving under him, being ancient friends to the Phaselites, endeavouring to propitiate the general in their behalf, at the same time shot arrows into the town, to which were fastened letters conveying intelligence. At length he concluded peace with them, upon the conditions that they should

pay down ten talents, and follow him against the barbarians. Ephorus says the admiral of the Persian fleet was Tithraustes, and the general of the land army Pherendates; but Callisthenes is positive that Ariomandes, the son of Gobryas, had the supreme command of all the forces. He lay waiting with the whole fleet at the mouth of the river Eurymedon, with no design to fight, but expecting a reinforcement of eighty Phoenician ships on their way from Cyprus. Cimon, aware of this, put out to sea, resolved, if they would not fight a battle willingly, to force them to it. The barbarians, seeing this, retired within the mouth of the river to avoid being attacked; but when they saw the Athenians come upon them, notwithstanding their retreat, they met them with six hundred ships, as Phanodemus relates, but, according to Ephorus, only with three hundred and fifty. However, they did nothing worthy such mighty forces, but immediately turned the prows of their galleys toward the shore, where those that came first threw themselves upon the land, and fled to their army drawn up thereabout, while the rest perished with their vessel or were taken. By this, one may guess at their number, for though a great many escaped out of the fight, and a great many others were sunk, yet two hundred galleys were taken by the Athenians.

When their land army drew toward the seaside, Cimon was in suspense whether he should venture to try and force his way on shore; as he should thus expose his Greeks, wearied with slaughter in the first engagement, to the swords of the barbarians, who were all fresh men, and many times their number. But seeing his men resolute, and flushed with victory, he bade them land, though they were not yet cool from their first battle. As soon as they touched ground, they set up a shout and ran upon the enemy, who stood firm and sustained the first shock with great courage, so that the fight was a hard one, and some principal men of the Athenians in rank and courage were slain. At length, though with much ado, they routed the barbarians, and killing some, took others prisoners, and plundered all their tents and pavilions, which were full of rich spoil. Cimon, like a skilled athlete at the games, having in one day carried off two victories wherein he surpassed that of Salamis by sea and that of Plataea by land, was encouraged to try for yet another success. News being brought that the Phoenician succours, in number eighty sail, had come in sight at Hydrum, he set off with all speed to find them, while they as yet had not received any certain account of the larger fleet, and were in doubt what to think; so that, thus surprised, they lost all their vessels and most of their men with them. This success of Cimon so daunted the King of

Persia that he presently made that celebrated peace, by which he engaged that his armies should come no nearer the Grecian sea than the length of a horse's course, and that none of his galleys or vessels of war should appear between the Cyanean and Chelidonian isles. Callisthenes, however, says that he did not agree to any such articles, but that, upon the fear this victory gave him, he did in reality thus act, and kept off so far from Greece, that when Pericles with fifty and Ephialtes with thirty galleys cruised beyond the Chelidonian isles, they did not discover one Persian vessel. But in the collection which Craterus made of the public acts of the people, there is a draft of this treaty given. And it is told, also, that at Athens they erected the altar of Peace upon this occasion, and decreed particular honours to Callias, who was employed as ambassador to procure the treaty.

The people of Athens raised so much money from the spoils of this war, which were publicly sold, that besides other expenses, and raising the south wall of the citadel, they laid the foundation of the long walls, not, indeed, finished till at a later time, which were called the Legs. And the place where they built them being soft and marshy ground, they were forced to sink great weights of stone and rubble to secure the foundation, and did all this out of the money Cimon supplied them with. It was he, likewise, who first embellished the upper city with those fine and ornamental places of exercise and resort, which they afterwards so much frequented and delighted in. He set the market-place with plane-trees; and the Academy, which was before a bare, dry, and dirty spot, he converted into a wellwatered grove, with shady alleys to walk in, and open courses for races.

When the Persians who had made themselves masters of the Chersonese, so far from quitting it, called in the people of the interior of Thrace to help them against Cimon, whom they despised for the smallness of his forces, he set upon them with only four galleys, and took thirteen of theirs; and having driven out the Persians, and subdued the Thracians, he made the whole Chersonese the property of Athens. Next he attacked the people of Thasos, who had revolted from the Athenians; and, having defeated them in a fight at sea, where he took thirty-three of their vessels, he took their town by siege, and acquired for the Athenians all the mines of gold on the opposite coast, and the territory dependent on Thasos.

This opened him a fair passage into Macedon, so that he might, it was thought, have acquired a good portion of that country; and because he neglected the opportunity, he was suspected of

corruption, and of having been bribed off by King Alexander. So, by the combination of his adversaries, he was accused of being false to his country. In his defence he told the judges that he had always shown himself in his public life the friend, not, like other men, of rich Ionians and Thessalians, to be courted, and to receive presents, but of the Lacedaemonians; for as he admired, so he wished to imitate, the plainness of their habits, their temperance, and simplicity of living, which he preferred to any sort of riches: but that he always had been, and still was, proud to enrich his country with the spoils of her enemies. Stesimbrotus, making mention of this trial, states that Elpinice, in behalf of her brother, addressed herself to Pericles, the most vehement of his accusers, to whom Pericles answered, with a smile, “You are old, Elpinice, to meddle with affairs of this nature.” However, he proved the mildest of his prosecutors, and rose up but once all the while, almost as a matter of form, to plead against him. Cimon was acquitted.

In his public life after this he continued, whilst at home, to control and restrain the common people, who would have trampled upon the nobility. and drawn all the power and sovereignty to themselves. But when he afterwards was sent out to war, the multitude broke loose, as it were, and overthrew all the ancient laws and customs they had hitherto observed, and, chiefly at the instigation of Ephialtes, withdrew the cognisance of almost all causes from the Areopagus; so that all jurisdiction now being transferred to them, the government was reduced to a perfect democracy, and this by the help of Pericles, who was already powerful, and had pronounced in favour of the common people. Cimon, when he returned, seeing the authority of this great council so upset, was exceedingly troubled, and endeavoured to remedy these disorders by bringing the courts of law to their former state, and restoring the old aristocracy of the time of Clisthenes. This the others declaimed against with all the vehemence possible, and began to revive those stories concerning him and his sister, and cried out against him as the partisan of the Lacedaemonians. To these calumnies the famous verses of Eupolis the poet upon Cimon refer: “He was as good as others that one sees, But he was fond of drinking and of ease; And would at nights to Sparta often roam, Leaving his sister desolate at home.”

But if, though slothful and a drunkard, he could capture so many towns and gain so many victories, certainly if he had been sober and minded his business, there had been no Grecian commander,

either before or after him, that could have surpassed him for exploits of war.

He was, indeed, a favourer of the Lacedaemonians, even from his youth, and he gave the names of Lacedaemonius and Eleus to two sons, twins, whom he had, as Stesimbrotus says, by a woman of Clitorium, whence Pericles often upbraided them with their mother's blood. But Diodorus the geographer asserts that both these, and another son of Cimon's, whose name was Thessalus, were born of Isodice, the daughter of Euryptolemus, the son of Megacles.

However, this is certain, that Cimon was countenanced by the Lacedaemonians in opposition to Themistocles, whom they disliked; and while he was yet very young, they endeavoured to raise and increase his credit in Athens. This the Athenians perceived at first with pleasure, and the favour the Lacedaemonians showed him was in various ways advantageous to them and their affairs; as at that time they were just rising to power, and were occupied in winning the allies to their side. So they seemed not at all offended with the honour and kindness shown to Cimon, who then had the chief management of all the affairs of Greece, and was acceptable to the Lacedaemonians, and courteous to the allies. But afterwards the Athenians, grown more powerful, when they saw Cimon so entirely devoted to the Lacedaemonians, began to be angry, for he would always in his speeches prefer them to the Athenians, and upon every occasion, when he would reprimand them for a fault, or incite them to emulation, he would exclaim, "The Lacedaemonians would not do thus." This raised the discontent, and got him in some degree the hatred of the citizens; but that which ministered chiefly to the accusation against him fell out upon the following occasion.

In the fourth year of the reign of Archidamus, the son of Zeuxidamus, King of Sparta, there happened in the country of Lacedaemon the greatest earthquake that was known in the memory of man; the earth opened into chasms, and the mountain Taygetus was so shaken, that some of the rocky points of it fell down, and except five houses, all the town of Sparta was shattered to pieces. They say that a little before any motion was perceived, as the young men and the boys just grown up were exercising themselves together in the middle of the portico, a hare, of a sudden, started out just by them, which the young men, though all naked and daubed with oil, ran after for sport. No sooner were they gone from the place, than the gymnasium fell down upon the boys who had stayed behind, and killed them all. Their tomb is to

this day called Sismatias. Archidamus, by the present danger made apprehensive of what might follow, and seeing the citizens intent upon removing the most valuable of their goods out of their houses, commanded an alarm to be sounded, as if an enemy were coming upon them, in order that they should collect about him in a body, with arms. It was this alone that saved Sparta at that time, for the Helots were got together from the country about, with design to surprise the Spartans, and overpower those whom the earthquake had spared. But finding them armed and well prepared, they retired into the towns and openly made war with them, gaining over a number of the Laconians of the country districts; while at the same time the Messenians, also, made an attack upon the Spartans, who therefore despatched Periclidas to Athens to solicit succours, of whom Aristophanes says in mockery that he came and “In a red jacket, at the altars seated, With a white face, for men and arms entreated.”

This Ephialtes opposed, protesting that they ought not to raise up or assist a city that was a rival to Athens; but that being down, it were best to keep her so, and let the pride and arrogance of Sparta be trodden under. But Cimon, as Critias says, preferring the safety of Lacedaemon to the aggrandisement of his own country, so persuaded the people, that he soon marched out with a large army to their relief. Ion records, also, the most successful expression which he used to move the Athenians. “They ought not to suffer Greece to be lamed, nor their own city to be deprived of her yoke-fellow.” In his return from aiding the Lacedaemonians, he passed with his army through the territory of Corinth; whereupon Lachartus reproached him for bringing his army into the country without first asking leave of the people. For he that knocks at another man’s door ought not to enter the house till the master gives him leave. “But you Corinthians, O Lachartus,” said Cimon, “did not knock at the gates of the Cleonaeans and Megarians, but broke them down, and entered by force, thinking that all places should be open to the stronger.” And having thus rallied the Corinthian, he passed on with his army. Some time after this, the Lacedaemonians sent a second time to desire succours of the Athenians against the Messenians and Helots, who had seized upon Ithome. But when they came, fearing their boldness and gallantry, of all that came to their assistance, they sent them only back, alleging they were designing innovations. The Athenians returned home, enraged at this usage, and vented their anger upon all those who were favourers of the Lacedaemonians, and seizing some slight occasion, they banished Cimon for ten years, which is

the time prescribed to those that are banished by the ostracism. In the meantime, the Lacedaemonians, on their return after freeing Delphi from the Phocians, encamped their army at Tanagra, whither the Athenians presently marched with design to fight them.

Cimon, also, came thither armed, and ranged himself among those of his own tribe which was the Oeneis, desirous of fighting with the rest against the Spartans; but the council of five hundred being informed of this, and frighted at it, his adversaries crying out he would disorder the army, and bring the Lacedaemonians to Athens, commanded the officers not to receive him. Wherefore Cimon left the army, conjuring Euthippus, the Anaphlystian, and the rest of his companions, who were most suspected as favouring the Lacedaemonians, to behave themselves bravely against their enemies, and by their actions make their innocence evident to their countrymen. These, being in all a hundred, took the arms of Cimon, and followed his advice; and making a body by themselves, fought so desperately with the enemy, that they were all cut off, leaving the Athenians deep regret for the loss of such brave men, and repentance for having so unjustly suspected them. Accordingly, they did not long retain their severity toward Cimon, partly upon remembrance of his former services, and partly, perhaps, induced by the juncture of the times. For being defeated at Tanagra in a great battle, and fearing the Peloponnesians would come upon them at the opening of the spring, they recalled Cimon by a decree, of which Pericles himself was author. So reasonable were men’s resentments in those times, and so moderate their anger, that it always gave way to the public good. Even ambition, the least governable of all human passions, could then yield to the necessities of the state.

Cimon, as soon as he returned, put an end to the war, and reconciled the two cities. Peace thus established, seeing the Athenians impatient of being idle, and eager after the honour and aggrandisement of war, lest they should set upon the Greeks themselves, or with so many ships cruising about the isles and Peloponnesus they should give occasions to intestine wars, or complaining of their allies against them, he equipped two hundred galleys, with design to make an attempt upon Egypt and Cyprus; purposing, by this means, to accustom the Athenians to fight against the barbarians, and enrich themselves honestly by spoiling those who were the natural enemies of Greece. But when all things were prepared, and the army ready to embark, Cimon had this dream. It seemed to him that there was a furious bitch barking at

him, and mixed with the barking a kind of human voice uttered these words: “Come on, for thou shalt shortly be, A pleasure to my whelps and me.” - This dream was hard to interpret, yet Astyphilus of Posidonia, a man skilled in divinations, and intimate with Cimon, told him that his death was presaged by this vision, which he thus explained. A dog is enemy to him he barks at; and one is always most a pleasure to one’s enemies when one is dead; the mixture of human voice with barking signifies the Medes, for the army of the Medes is mixed up of Greeks and barbarians. After this dream, as he was sacrificing to Bacchus, and the priest cutting up the victim, a number of ants, taking up the congealed particles of the blood, laid them about Cimon’s great toe. This was not observed for a good while, but at the very time when Cimon spied it, the priest came and showed him the liver of the sacrifice imperfect, wanting that part of it called the head. But he could not then recede from the enterprise, so he set sail. Sixty of his ships he sent toward Egypt; with the rest he went and fought the King of Persia’s fleet, composed of Phoenician and Cilician galleys, recovered all the cities thereabout, and threatened Egypt; designing no less than the entire ruin of the Persian empire. And the rather, for that he was informed Themistocles was in great repute among the barbarians, having promised the king to lead his army, whenever he should make war upon Greece.

But Themistocles, it is said, abandoning all hopes of compassing his designs, very much out of the despair of overcoming the valour and good fortune of Cimon, died a voluntary death. Cimon, intent on great designs, which he was now to enter upon, keeping his navy about the isle of Cyprus, sent messengers to consult the oracle of Jupiter Ammon upon some secret matter. For it is not known about what they were sent, and the god would give them no answer, but commanded them to return again, for that Cimon was already with him. Hearing this, they returned to sea, and as soon as they came to the Grecian army, which was then about Egypt, they understood that Cimon was dead; and computing the time of the oracle, they found that his death had been signified, he being then already with the gods.

He died, some say, of sickness, while besieging Citium, in Cyprus; according to others, of a wound he received in a skirmish with the barbarians. When he perceived he should die he commanded those under his charge to return, and by no means to let the news of his death be known by the way; this they did with such secrecy that they all came home safe, and neither their enemies nor the allies knew what had happened. Thus, as Phanodemus relates, the

Grecian army was, as it were, conducted by Cimon thirty days after he was dead. But after his death there was not one commander among the Greeks that did anything considerable against the barbarians, and instead of uniting against their common enemies, the popular leaders and partisans of war animated them against one another to that degree, that none could interpose their good offices to reconcile them. And while, by their mutual discord, they ruined the power of Greece, they gave the Persians time to recover breath, and repair all their losses. It is true, indeed, Agesilaus carried the arms of Greece into Asia, but it was a long time after; there were, indeed, some brief appearances of a war against the king's lieutenants in the maritime provinces, but they all quickly vanished; before he could perform anything of moment, he was recalled by fresh civil dissensions and disturbances at home. So that he was forced to leave the Persian king's officers to impose what tribute they pleased on the Greek cities in Asia, the confederates and allies of the Lacedaemonians. Whereas, in the time of Cimon, not so much as a letter-carrier, or a single horseman, was ever seen to come within four hundred furlongs of the sea.

The monuments, called Cimonian to this day, in Athens, show that his remains were conveyed home, yet the inhabitants of the city Citium pay particular honour to a certain tomb which they call the tomb of Cimon, according to Nausicrates the rhetorician, who states that in a time of famine, when the crops of their land all failed, they sent to the oracle, which commanded them not to forget Cimon, but give him the honours of a superior being. Such was the Greek commander.

THE END