

ЭДВАРД БУЛЬВЕР-ЛИТТОН

**PAUSANIAS, THE
SPARTAN; THE
HAUNTED AND THE
HAUNTERS**

Эдвард Бульвер-Литтон

**Pausanias, the Spartan; The
Haunted and the Haunters**

«Public Domain»

Бульвер-Литтон Э. Д.

Pausanias, the Spartan; The Haunted and the Haunters /

Э. Д. Бульвер-Литтон — «Public Domain»,

© Бульвер-Литтон Э. Д.

© Public Domain

Содержание

PAUSANIAS, THE SPARTAN	5
BOOK I	12
CHAPTER I	12
CHAPTER II	21
CHAPTER III	26
CHAPTER IV	28
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	35

Edward Bulwer-Lytton
Pausanias, the Spartan; The Haunted and the
Haunters / An Unfinished Historical Romance

PAUSANIAS, THE SPARTAN

THE HAUNTED AND THE HAUNTERS

An Unfinished Historical Romance

BY

THE LATE LORD LYTTON

EDITED BY HIS SON

Dedication

TO

THE REV. BENJAMIN HALL KENNEDY, D.D

CANON OF ELY,

AND REGIUS PROFESSOR OF GREEK
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

*** * * * ***

MY DEAR DR. KENNEDY,

Revised by your helpful hand, and corrected by your accurate scholarship, to whom may these pages be so fitly inscribed as to that one of their author's earliest and most honoured friends,¹ whose generous assistance has enabled me to place them before the public in their present form?

It is fully fifteen, if not twenty, years since my father commenced the composition of an historical romance on the subject of Pausanias, the Spartan Regent. Circumstances, which need not here be recorded, compelled him to lay aside the work thus begun. But the subject continued to haunt his imagination and occupy his thoughts. He detected in it singular opportunities for effective exercise of the gifts most peculiar to his genius; and repeatedly, in the intervals of other literary labour, he returned to the task which, though again and again interrupted, was never abandoned. To that rare combination of the imaginative and practical faculties which characterized my father's intellect, and received from his life such varied illustration, the story of Pausanias, indeed, briefly as it is told by Thucydides and Plutarch, addressed itself with singular force. The vast conspiracy of the Spartan Regent, had it been successful, would have changed the whole course of Grecian history. To any student of political phenomena, but more especially to one who, during the greater part of his life, had been personally engaged in active politics, the story of such a conspiracy could not fail to be attractive. To the student of human nature the character of Pausanias himself offers sources of the deepest interest; and, in the strange career and tragic fate of the great conspirator, an imagination fascinated by the supernatural must have recognized remarkable elements of awe and terror. A few months previous to his death, I asked my father whether he had abandoned all intention of finishing his romance of "Pausanias." He replied, "On the contrary, I am finishing it now," and entered, with great animation, into a discussion of the subject and its capabilities. This reply to my inquiry surprised and impressed me: for, as you are aware, my father was then engaged in the simultaneous composition of two other and very different works, "Kenelm Chillingly" and the "Parisians." It was the last time he ever spoke to me about Pausanias; but from what he then said of it I derived an impression that the book was all but completed, and needing only a few finishing touches to be ready for publication at no distant date.

This impression was confirmed, subsequent to my father's death, by a letter of instructions about his posthumous papers which accompanied his will. In that letter, dated 1856, special allusion is made to Pausanias as a work already far advanced towards its conclusion.

You, to whom, in your kind and careful revision of it, this unfinished work has suggested many questions which, alas, I cannot answer, as to the probable conduct and fate of its fictitious characters, will readily understand my reluctance to surrender an impression seemingly so well justified. I did not indeed cease to cherish it, until reiterated and exhaustive search had failed to recover from the "wallet" wherein Time "puts alms for oblivion," more than those few imperfect fragments which, by your valued help, are here arranged in such order as to carry on the narrative of Pausanias, with no solution of continuity, to the middle of the second volume.

There the manuscript breaks off. Was it ever continued further? I know not. Many circumstances induce me to believe that the conception had long been carefully completed in the mind of its author; but he has left behind him only a very meagre and imperfect indication of the course which, beyond the point where it is broken, his narrative was intended to follow. In presence of this fact I have had to choose between the total suppression of the fragment, and the publication of it in its present form. My choice has not been made without hesitation; but I trust that, from many points of view, the following pages will be found to justify it.

Judiciously (as I cannot but think) for the purposes of his fiction, my father has taken up the story of Pausanias at a period subsequent to the battle of Plataea; when the Spartan Regent, as Admiral of the United Greek Fleet in the waters of Byzantium, was at the summit of his power and

¹ The late Lord Lytton, in his unpublished autobiographical memoirs, describing his contemporaries at Cambridge, speaks of Dr. Kennedy as "a young giant of learning."—L.

reputation. Mr. Grote, in his great work, expresses the opinion (which certainly cannot be disputed by unbiassed readers of Thucydides) that the victory of Plataea was not attributable to any remarkable abilities on the part of Pausanias. But Mr. Grote fairly recognizes as quite exceptional the fame and authority accorded to Pausanias, after the battle, by all the Hellenic States; the influence which his name commanded, and the awe which his character inspired. Not to the mere fact of his birth as an Heracleid, not to the lucky accident (if such it were) of his success at Plataea, and certainly not to his undisputed (but surely by no means uncommon) physical courage, is it possible to attribute the peculiar position which this remarkable man so long occupied in the estimation of his contemporaries. For the little that we know about Pausanias we are mainly dependent upon Athenian writers, who must have been strongly prejudiced against him. Mr. Grote, adopting (as any modern historian needs must do) the narrative so handed down to him, never once pauses to question its estimate of the character of a man who was at one time the glory, and at another the terror, of all Greece. Yet in comparing the summary proceedings taken against Leotychides with the extreme, and seemingly pusillanimous, deference paid to Pausanias by the Ephors long after they possessed the most alarming proofs of his treason, Mr. Grote observes, without attempting to account for the fact, that Pausanias, though only Regent, was far more powerful than any Spartan King. Why so powerful? Obviously, because he possessed uncommon force of character; a force of character strikingly attested by every known incident of his career; and which, when concentrated upon the conception and execution of vast designs, (even if those designs be criminal), must be recognized as the special attribute of genius. Thucydides, Plutarch, Diodorus, Grote, all these writers ascribe solely to the administrative incapacity of Pausanias that offensive arrogance which characterized his command at Byzantium, and apparently cost Sparta the loss of her maritime hegemony. But here is precisely one of those problems in public policy and personal conduct which the historian bequeathes to the imaginative writer, and which needs, for its solution, a profound knowledge rather of human nature than of books. For dealing with such a problem, my father, in addition to the intuitive penetration of character and motive which is common to every great romance writer, certainly possessed two qualifications special to himself: the habit of dealing *practically* with political questions, and experience in the active management of men. His explanation of the policy of Pausanias at Byzantium, if it be not (as I think it is) the right one, is at least the only one yet offered. I venture to think that, historically, it merits attention; as, from the imaginative point of view, it is undoubtedly felicitous. By elevating our estimate of Pausanias as a statesman, it increases our interest in him as a man.

The Author of "Pausanias" does not merely tell us that his hero, when in conference with the Spartan commissioners, displayed "great natural powers which, rightly trained, might have made him not less renowned in council than in war;" but he gives us, though briefly, the arguments used by Pausanias. He presents to us the image, always interesting, of a man who grasps firmly the clear conception of a definite but difficult policy, for success in which he is dependent on the conscious or involuntary cooperation of men impenetrable to that conception, and possessed of a collective authority even greater than his own. To retain Sparta temporarily at the head of Greece was an ambition quite consistent with the more criminal designs of Pausanias; and his whole conduct at Byzantium is rendered more intelligible than it appears in history, when he points out that "for Sparta to maintain her ascendancy two things are needful: first, to continue the war by land, secondly, to disgust the Ionians with their sojourn at Byzantium, to send them with their ships back to their own havens, and so leave Hellas under the sole guardianship of the Spartans and their Peloponnesian allies." And who has not learned, in a later school, the wisdom of the Spartan commissioners? Do not their utterances sound familiar to us? "Increase of dominion is waste of life and treasure. Sparta is content to hold her own. What care we, who leads the Greeks into blows? The fewer blows the better. Brave men fight if they must: wise men never fight if they can help it." Of this scene and some others in the first volume of the present fragment (notably the scene in which the Regent confronts the allied chiefs, and defends himself against the charge of connivance at the escape of the Persian

prisoners), I should have been tempted to say that they could not have been written without personal experience of political life; if the interview between Wallenstein and the Swedish ambassadors in Schiller's great trilogy did not recur to my recollection as I write. The language of the ambassadors in that interview is a perfect manual of practical diplomacy; and yet in practical diplomacy Schiller had no personal experience. There are, indeed, no limits to the creative power of genius. But it is perhaps the practical politician who will be most interested by the chapters in which Pausanias explains his policy, or defends his position.

In publishing a romance which its author has left unfinished, I may perhaps be allowed to indicate briefly what I believe to have been the general scope of its design, and the probable progress of its narrative.

The "domestic interest" of that narrative is supplied by the story of Cleonice: a story which, briefly told by Plutarch, suggests one of the most tragic situations it is possible to conceive. The pathos and terror of this dark weird episode in a life which history herself invests with all the character of romance, long haunted the imagination of Byron; and elicited from Goethe one of the most whimsical illustrations of the astonishing absurdity into which criticism sometimes tumbles, when it "o'erleaps itself and falls o' the other—."

Writing of Manfred and its author, he says, "There are, properly speaking, two females whose phantoms for ever haunt him; and which, in this piece also, perform principal parts. One under the name of Astarte, the other without form or actual presence, and merely a voice. Of the horrid occurrence which took place with the former, the following is related:—When a bold and enterprising young man, he won the affections of a Florentine lady. Her husband discovered the amour, and murdered his wife. But the murderer was the same night found dead in the street, and there was no one to whom any suspicion could be attached. Lord Byron removed from Florence, and *these spirits haunted him all his life after*. This romantic incident is rendered highly probable by innumerable allusions to it in his poems. As, for instance, when turning his sad contemplations inwards, he applies to himself the fatal history of the King of Sparta. It is as follows: Pausanias, a Lacedaemonian General, acquires glory by the important victory at Plataea; but afterwards forfeits the confidence of his countrymen by his arrogance, obstinacy, and secret intrigues with the common enemy. This man draws upon himself the heavy guilt of innocent blood, which attends him to his end. For, while commanding the fleet of the allied Greeks in the Black Sea, he is inflamed with a violent passion for a Byzantine maiden. After long resistance, he at length obtains her from her parents; and she is to be delivered up to him at night. She modestly desires the servant to put out the lamp, and, while groping her way in the dark, she overturns it. Pausanias is awakened from his sleep; apprehensive of an attack from murderers he seizes his sword, and destroys his mistress. The horrid sight never leaves him. Her shade pursues him unceasingly; and in vain he implores aid of the gods and the exorcising priests. That poet must have a lacerated heart who selects such a scene from antiquity, appropriates it to himself, and burdens his tragic image with it."²

It is extremely characteristic of Byron, that, instead of resenting this charge of murder, he was so pleased by the criticism in which it occurs that he afterwards dedicated "The Deformed Transformed" to Goethe. Mr. Grote repeats the story above alluded to, with all the sanction of his grave authority, and even mentions the name of the young lady; apparently for the sake of adding a few black strokes to the character of Pausanias. But the supernatural part of the legend was, of course, beneath the notice of a nineteenth-century critic; and he passes it by. This part of the story is, however, essential to the psychological interest of it. For whether it be that Pausanias supposed himself, or that contemporary gossips supposed him, to be haunted by the phantom of the woman he had loved and slain, the fact, in either case, affords a lurid glimpse into the inner life of the man;—just as, although Goethe's murder-story about Byron is ludicrously untrue, yet the fact that such a story was circulated, and

² Moore's "Life and Letters of Lord Byron," p. 723.

could be seriously repeated by such a man as Goethe without being resented by Byron himself, offers significant illustration both of what Byron was, and of what he appeared to his contemporaries. Grote also assigns the death of Cleonice to that period in the life of Pausanias when he was in the command of the allies at Byzantium; and refers to it as one of the numerous outrages whereby Pausanias abused and disgraced the authority confided to him. Plutarch, however, who tells the story in greater detail, distinctly fixes the date of its catastrophe subsequent to the return of the Regent to Byzantium, as a solitary volunteer, in the trireme of Hermione. The following is his account of the affair:

"It is related that Pausanias, when at Byzantium, sought, with criminal purpose, the love of a young lady of good family, named Cleonice. The parents yielding to fear, or necessity, suffered him to carry away their daughter. Before entering his chamber, she requested that the light might be extinguished; and in darkness and silence she approached the couch of Pausanias, who was already asleep. In so doing she accidentally upset the lamp. Pausanias, suddenly aroused from slumber, and supposing that some enemy was about to assassinate him, seized his sword, which lay by his bedside, and with it struck the maiden to the ground. She died of her wound; and from that moment repose was banished from the life of Pausanias. A spectre appeared to him every night in his sleep; and repeated to him in reproachful tones this hexameter verse, *Whither I wait thee march, and receive the doom thou deservest. Sooner or later, but ever, to man crime bringeth disaster.*'

The allies, scandalized by this misdeed, concerted with Cimon, and besieged Pausanias in Byzantium. But he succeeded in escaping, Continually troubled by the phantom, he took refuge, it is said, at Heraclea, in that temple where the souls of the dead are evoked. He appealed to Cleonice and conjured her to mitigate his torment. She appeared to him, and told him that on his return to Sparta he would attain the end of his sufferings; indicating, as it would seem, by these enigmatic words, the death which there awaited him. "This" (adds Plutarch) "is a story told by most of the historians."³

I feel no doubt that this version of the story, or at least the general outline of it, would have been followed by the romance had my father lived to complete it. Some modification of its details would doubtless have been necessary for the purposes of fiction. But that the Cleonice of the novel is destined to die by the hand of her lover, is clearly indicated. To me it seems that considerable skill and judgment are shown in the pains taken, at the very opening of the book, to prepare the mind of the reader for an incident which would have been intolerably painful, and must have prematurely ended the whole narrative interest, had the character of Cleonice been drawn otherwise than as we find it in this first portion of the book. From the outset she appears before us under the shadow of a tragic fatality. Of that fatality she is herself intuitively conscious: and with it her whole being is in harmony. No sooner do we recognise her real character than we perceive that, for such a character, there can be no fit or satisfactory issue from the difficulties of her position, in any conceivable combination of earthly circumstances. But she is not of the earth earthly. Her thoughts already habitually hover on the dim frontier of some vague spiritual region in which her love seeks refuge from the hopeless realities of her life; and, recognising this betimes, we are prepared to see above the hand of her ill-fated lover, when it strikes her down in the dark, the merciful and releasing hand of her natural destiny.

But, assuming the author to have adopted Plutarch's chronology, and deferred the death of Cleonice till the return of Pausanias to Byzantium (the latest date to which he could possibly have deferred it), this catastrophe must still have occurred somewhere in the course, or at the close, of his second volume. There would, in that case, have still remained about nine years (and those the most eventful) of his hero's career to be narrated. The premature removal of the heroine from the narrative, so early in the course of it, would therefore, at first sight, appear to be a serious defect in the conception of this romance. Here it is, however, that the credulous gossip of the old biographer comes to the rescue of the modern artist. I apprehend that the Cleonice of the novel would, after her death, have been still sensibly present to the reader's imagination throughout the rest of the romance. She

³ Plutarch, "Life of Cimon."

would then have moved through it like a fate, reappearing in the most solemn moments of the story, and at all times apparent, even when unseen, in her visible influence upon the fierce and passionate character, the sombre and turbulent career, of her guilty lover. In short, we may fairly suppose that, in all the closing scenes of the tragedy, Cleonice would have still figured and acted as one of those supernatural agencies which my father, following the example of his great predecessor, Scott, did not scruple to introduce into the composition of historical romance.⁴

Without the explanation here suggested, those metaphysical conversations between Cleonice, Alcman, and Pausanias, which occupy the opening chapters of Book II., might be deemed superfluous. But, in fact, they are essential to the preparation of the catastrophe; and that catastrophe, if reached, would undoubtedly have revealed to any reflective reader their important connection with the narrative which they now appear to retard somewhat unduly.

Quite apart from the unfinished manuscript of this story of Pausanias, and in another portion of my father's papers which have no reference to this story, I have discovered the following, undated, memorandum of the destined contents of the second and third volumes of the work.

PAUSANIAS

VOL. II

Lysander—Sparta—Ephors—Decision to recall Pausanias.

Pausanias with Pharnabazes—On the point of success—Xerxes' daughter—Interview with Cleonice—Recalled.

Sparta—Alcman with his family.

Cleonice—Antagoras—Yields to suit of marriage.

Pausanias suddenly reappears, as a volunteer—Scenes.

VOL. III

Pausanias removes Cleonice, &c.—Conspiracy against him—Up to Cleonice's death.

His expulsion from Byzantium—His despair—His journey into Thrace—Scythians, &c. Heraclea—Ghost.

His return—to Colonae.

Antagoras resolved on revenge—Communicates with Sparta.

The * * *—Conference with Alcman—Pausanias depends on Helots, and money.

His return—to death.

This is the only indication I can find of the intended conclusion of the story. Meagre though it be, however, it sufficiently suggests the manner in which the author of the romance intended to deal with the circumstances of Cleonice's death as related by Plutarch. With her forcible removal by Pausanias, or her willing flight with him from the house of her father, it would probably have been difficult to reconcile the general sentiment of the romance, in connection with any circumstances less conceivable than those which are indicated in the memorandum. But in such circumstances the step taken by Pausanias might have had no worse motive than the rescue of the woman who loved him from forced union with another; and Cleonice's assent to that step might have been quite compatible with the purity and heroism of her character. In this manner, moreover, a strong motive is prepared

⁴ "Harold."

for that sentiment of revenge on the part of Antagoras whereby the dramatic interest of the story might be greatly heightened in the subsequent chapters. The intended introduction of the supernatural element is also clearly indicated. But apart from this, fine opportunities for psychological analysis would doubtless have occurred in tracing the gradual deterioration of such a character as that of Pausanias when, deprived of the guardian influence of a hope passionate but not impure, its craving for fierce excitement must have been stimulated by remorseful memories and impotent despairs. Indeed, the imperfect manuscript now printed, contains only the exposition of a tragedy. All the most striking effects, all the strongest dramatic situations, have been reserved for the pages of the manuscript which, alas, are either lost or unwritten.

Who can doubt, for instance, how effectually in the closing scenes of this tragedy the grim image of Alitheia might have assumed the place assigned to it by history? All that we now see is the preparation made for its effective presentation in the foreground of such later scenes, by the chapter in the second volume describing the meeting between Lysander and the stern mother of his Spartan chief. In Lysander himself, moreover, we have the germ of a singularly dramatic situation. How would Lysander act in the final struggle which his character and fate are already preparing for him, between patriotism and friendship, his fidelity to Pausanias, and his devotion to Sparta? Is Lysander's father intended for that Ephor, who, in the last moment, made the sign that warned Pausanias to take refuge in the temple which became his living tomb? Probably. Would Themistocles, who was so seriously compromised in the conspiracy of Pausanias, have appeared and played a part in those scenes on which the curtain must remain unlifted? Possibly. Is Alcman the helot who revealed, to the Ephors, the gigantic plots of his master just when those plots were on the eve of execution? There is much in the relations between Pausanias and the Mothon, as they are described in the opening chapters of the romance, which favours, and indeed renders almost irresistible, such a supposition. But then, on the other hand, what genius on the part of the author could reconcile us to the perpetration by his hero of a crime so mean, so cowardly, as that personal perfidy to which history ascribes the revelation of the Regent's far more excusable treasons, and their terrible punishment?

These questions must remain unanswered. The magician can wave his wand no more. The circle is broken, the spells are scattered, the secret lost. The images which he evoked, and which he alone could animate, remain before us incomplete, semi-articulate, unable to satisfy the curiosity they inspire. A group of fragments, in many places broken, you have helped me to restore. With what reverent and kindly care, with what disciplined judgment and felicitous suggestion, you have accomplished the difficult task so generously undertaken, let me here most gratefully attest. Beneath the sculptor's name, allow me to inscribe upon the pedestal your own; and accept this sincere assurance of the inherited esteem and personal regard with which I am,

My dear Dr. Kennedy,
Your obliged and faithful

LYTTON.

GINTRA, 5 July, 1875.

BOOK I

CHAPTER I

On one of the quays which bordered the unrivalled harbour of Byzantium, more than twenty-three centuries before the date at which this narrative is begun, stood two Athenians. In the waters of the haven rode the vessels of the Grecian Fleet. So deep was the basin, in which the tides are scarcely felt,⁵ that the prows of some of the ships touched the quays, and the setting sun glittered upon the smooth and waxen surfaces of the prows rich with diversified colours and wrought gilding. To the extreme right of the fleet, and nearly opposite the place upon which the Athenians stood, was a vessel still more profusely ornamented than the rest. On the prow were elaborately carved the heads of the twin deities of the Laconian mariner, Castor and Pollux; in the centre of the deck was a wooden edifice or pavilion having a gilded roof and shaded by purple awnings, an imitation of the luxurious galleys of the Barbarian; while the parasemon, or flag, as it idly waved in the faint breeze of the gentle evening, exhibited the terrible serpent, which, if it was the fabulous type of demigods and heroes, might also be regarded as an emblem of the wily but stern policy of the Spartan State. Such was the galley of the commander of the armament, which (after the reduction of Cyprus) had but lately wrested from the yoke of Persia that link between her European and Asiatic domains, that key of the Bosphorus—"the Golden Horn" of Byzantium.⁶

High above all other Greeks (Themistocles alone excepted) soared the fame of that renowned chief, Pausanias, Regent of Sparta and General of the allied troops at the victorious battle-field of Plataea. The spot on which the Athenians stood was lonely and now unoccupied, save by themselves and the sentries stationed at some distance on either hand. The larger proportion of the crews in the various vessels were on shore; but on the decks idly reclined small groups of sailors, and the murmur of their voices stole, indistinguishably blended, upon the translucent air. Behind rose, one above the other, the Seven Hills, on which long afterwards the Emperor Constantine built a second Rome; and over these heights, even then, buildings were scattered of various forms and dates, here the pillared temples of the Greek colonists, to whom Byzantium owed its origin, there the light roofs and painted domes which the Eastern conquerors had introduced.

One of the Athenians was a man in the meridian of manhood, of a calm, sedate, but somewhat haughty aspect; the other was in the full bloom of youth, of lofty stature, and with a certain majesty of bearing; down his shoulders flowed a profusion of long curled hair, divided in the centre of the forehead, and connected with golden clasps, in which was wrought the emblem of the Athenian nobles—the Grasshopper—a fashion not yet obsolete, as it had become in the days of Thucydides. Still, to an observer, there was something heavy in the ordinary expression of the handsome countenance. His dress differed from the earlier fashion of the Ionians;⁷ it dispensed with those loose linen garments which had something of effeminacy in their folds, and was confined to the simple and statue-like grace that characterised the Dorian garb. Yet the clasp that fastened the chlamys upon the right shoulder, leaving the arm free, was of pure gold and exquisite workmanship, and the materials of the simple vesture were of a quality that betokened wealth and rank in the wearer.

⁵ Gibbon, ch. 17.

⁶ "The harbour of Constantinople, which may be considered as an arm of the Bosphorus, obtained in a very remote period the denomination of the Golden Horn. The curve which it describes might be compared to the horn of a stag, or, as it should seem, with more propriety to that of an ox."—Gib. c. 17; Strab. 1. x.

⁷ Ion *apud* Plut.

"Yes, Cimon," said the elder of the Athenians, "yonder galley itself affords sufficient testimony of the change that has come over the haughty Spartan. It is difficult, indeed, to recognize in this luxurious satrap, who affects the dress, the manners, the very insolence of the Barbarian, that Pausanias who, after the glorious day of Plataea, ordered the slaves to prepare in the tent of Mardonius such a banquet as would have been served to the Persian, while his own Spartan broth and bread were set beside it, in order that he might utter to the chiefs of Greece that noble pleasantry, 'Behold the folly of the Persians, who forsook such splendour to plunder such poverty.'"⁸

"Shame upon his degeneracy, and thrice shame!" said the young Cimon, sternly. "I love the Spartans so well, that I blush for whatever degrades them. And all Sparta is dwarfed by the effeminacy of her chief."

"Softly, Cimon," said Aristides, with a sober smile. "Whatever surprise we may feel at the corruption of Pausanias, he is not one who will allow us to feel contempt. Through all the voluptuous softness acquired by intercourse with these Barbarians, the strong nature of the descendant of the demigod still breaks forth. Even at the distaff I recognize Alcides, whether for evil or for good. Pausanias is one on whom our most anxious gaze must be duly bent. But in this change of his I rejoice; the gods are at work for Athens. See you not that, day after day, while Pausanias disgusts the allies with the Spartans themselves, he throws them more and more into the arms of Athens? Let his madness go on, and ere long the violet-crowned city will become the queen of the seas."

"Such was my own hope," said Cimon, his face assuming a new expression, brightened with all the intelligence of ambition and pride; "but I did not dare own it to myself till you spoke. Several officers of Ionia and the Isles have already openly and loudly proclaimed to me their wish to exchange the Spartan ascendancy for the Athenian."

"And with all your love for Sparta," said Aristides, looking steadfastly and searchingly at his comrade, "you would not then hesitate to rob her of a glory which you might bestow on your own Athens?"

"Ah, am I not Athenian?" answered Cimon, with a deep passion in his voice. "Though my great father perished a victim to the injustice of a faction—though he who had saved Athens from the Mede died in the Athenian dungeon—still, fatherless, I see in Athens but a mother, and if her voice sounded harshly in my boyish years, in manhood I have feasted on her smiles. Yes, I honour Sparta, but I love Athens. You have my answer."

"You speak well," said Aristides, with warmth; "you are worthy of the destinies for which I foresee that the son of Miltiades is reserved. Be wary, be cautious; above all, be smooth, and blend with men of every state and grade. I would wish that the allies themselves should draw the contrast between the insolence of the Spartan chief and the courtesy of the Athenians. What said you to the Ionian officers?"

"I said that Athens held there was no difference between to command and to obey, except so far as was best for the interests of Greece; that—as on the field of Plataea, when the Tegeans asserted precedence over the Athenians, we, the Athenian army, at once exclaimed, through your voice, Aristides, 'We come here to fight the Barbarian, not to dispute amongst ourselves; place us where you will'⁹:—even so now, while the allies give the command to Sparta, Sparta we will obey. But if we were thought by the Grecian States the fittest leaders, our answer would be the same that we gave at Plataea, 'Not we, but Greece be consulted: place us where you will!'"

"O wise Cimon!" exclaimed Aristides, "I have no caution to bestow on you. You do by intuition that which I attempt by experience. But hark! What music sounds in the distance? the airs that Lydia borrowed from the East?"

"And for which," said Cimon, sarcastically, "Pausanias hath abandoned the Dorian flute."

⁸ Herod. ix. 82.

⁹ Plut. in Vit. Arist.

Soft, airy, and voluptuous were indeed the sounds which now, from the streets leading upwards from the quay, floated along the delicious air. The sailors rose, listening and eager, from the decks; there was once more bustle, life, and animation on board the fleet. From several of the vessels the trumpets woke a sonorous signal-note. In a few minutes the quays, before so deserted, swarmed with the Grecian mariners, who emerged hastily, whether from various houses in the haven, or from the encampment which stretched along it, and hurried to their respective ships. On board the galley of Pausanias there was more especial animation; not only mariners, but slaves, evidently from the Eastern markets, were seen, jostling each other, and heard talking, quick and loud, in foreign tongues. Rich carpets were unfurled and laid across the deck, while trembling and hasty hands smoothed into yet more graceful folds the curtains that shaded the gay pavilion in the centre. The Athenians looked on, the one with thoughtful composure, the other with a bitter smile, while these preparations announced the unexpected, and not undreaded, approach of the great Pausanias.

"Ho, noble Cimon!" cried a young man who, hurrying towards one of the vessels, caught sight of the Athenians and paused. "You are the very person whom I most desired to see. Aristides too! —we are fortunate."

The speaker was a young man of slighter make and lower stature than the Athenians, but well shaped, and with features the partial effeminacy of which was elevated by an expression of great vivacity and intelligence. The steed trained for Elis never bore in its proportions the evidence of blood and rare breeding more visibly than the dark brilliant eye of this young man, his broad low transparent brow, expanded nostril and sensitive lip, revealed the passionate and somewhat arrogant character of the vivacious Greek of the Aegean Isles.

"Antagoras," replied Cimon, laying his hand with frank and somewhat blunt cordiality on the Greek's shoulder, "like the grape of your own Chios, you cannot fail to be welcome at all times. But why would you seek us now?"

"Because I will no longer endure the insolence of this rude Spartan. Will you believe it, Cimon —will you believe it, Aristides? Pausanias has actually dared to sentence to blows, to stripes, one of my own men—a free Chian—nay, a Decadarchus.¹⁰ I have but this instant heard it. And the offence —Gods! the *offence!*—was that he ventured to contest with a Laconian, an underling in the Spartan army, which one of the two had the fair right to a wine cask! Shall this be borne, Cimon?"

"Stripes to a Greek!" said Cimon. and the colour mounted to his brow.

"Thinks Pausanias that the Ionian race are already his Helots?"

"Be calm," said Aristides; "Pausanias approaches. I will accost him."

"But listen still!" exclaimed Antagoras eagerly, plucking the gown of the Athenian as the latter turned away. "When Pausanias heard of the contest between my soldier and his Laconian, what said he, think you? 'Prior claim; learn henceforth that, where the Spartans are to be found, the Spartans in all matters have the prior claim.'"

"We will see to it," returned Aristides, calmly; "but keep by my side."

And now the music sounded loud and near, and suddenly, as the procession approached, the character of that music altered. The Lydian measures ceased, those who had attuned them gave way to musicians of loftier aspect and simpler garb; in whom might be recognized, not indeed the genuine Spartans, but their free, if subordinate, countrymen of Laconia; and a minstrel, who walked beside them, broke out into a song, partially adapted from the bold and lively strain of Alcaeus, the first two lines in each stanza ringing much to that chime, the two latter reduced into briefer compass, as, with allowance for the differing laws of national rhythm, we thus seek to render the verse:

¹⁰ Leader of ten men.

SONG

Multitudes, backward! Way for the Dorian;
Way for the Lord of rocky Laconia;
Heaven to Hercules opened
Way on the earth for his son.

Steel and fate, blunted, break on his fortitude;
Two evils only never endureth he—
Death by a wound in retreating,
Life with a blot on his name.

Rocky his birthplace; rocks are immutable;
So are his laws, and so shall his glory be.
Time is the Victor of Nations,
Sparta the Victor of Time.

Watch o'er him heedful on the wide ocean,
Brothers of Helen, luminous guiding stars;
Dangerous to Truth are the fickle,
Dangerous to Sparta the seas.

Multitudes, backward! Way for the Conqueror;
Way for the footstep half the world fled before;
Nothing that Phoebus can shine on
Needs so much space as Renown.

Behind the musicians came ten Spartans, selected from the celebrated three hundred who claimed the right to be stationed around the king in battle. Tall, stalwart, sheathed in armour, their shields slung at their backs, their crests of plumage or horsehair waving over their strong and stern features, these hardy warriors betrayed to the keen eye of Aristides their sullen discontent at the part assigned to them in the luxurious procession; their brows were knit, their lips contracted, and each of them who caught the glance of the Athenians, turned his eyes, as half in shame, half in anger, to the ground.

Coming now upon the quay, opposite to the galley of Pausanias, from which was suspended a ladder of silken cords, the procession halted, and opening on either side, left space in the midst for the commander.

"He comes," whispered Antagoras to Cimon. "By Hercules! I pray you survey him well. Is it the conqueror of Mardonius, or the ghost of Mardonius himself?"

The question of the Chian seemed not extravagant to the blunt son of Miltiades, as his eyes now rested on Pausanias.

The pure Spartan race boasted, perhaps, the most superb models of masculine beauty which the land blessed by Apollo could afford. The laws that regulate marriage ensured a healthful and vigorous progeny. Gymnastic discipline from early boyhood gave ease to the limbs, iron to the muscle, grace to the whole frame. Every Spartan, being born to command, being noble by his birth, lord of the Laconians, Master of the Helots, superior in the eyes of Greece to all other Greeks, was at once a Republican and an Aristocrat. Schooled in the arts that compose the presence, and give calmness

and majesty to the bearing, he combined with the mere physical advantages of activity and strength a conscious and yet natural dignity of mien. Amidst the Greeks assembled at the Olympian contests, others showed richer garments, more sumptuous chariots, rarer steeds, but no state could vie with Sparta in the thews and sinews, the aspect and the majesty of the men. Nor were the royal race, the descendants of Hercules, in external appearance unworthy of their countrymen and of their fabled origin.

Sculptor and painter would have vainly tasked their imaginative minds to invent a nobler ideal for the effigies of a hero, than that which the Victor of Plataea offered to their inspiration. As he now paused amidst the group, he towered high above them all, even above Cimon himself. But in his stature there was nothing of the cumbrous bulk and stolid heaviness, which often destroy the beauty of vast strength. Severe and early training, long habits of rigid abstemiousness, the toils of war, and, more than all, perhaps, the constant play of a restless, anxious, aspiring temper, had left, undisfigured by superfluous flesh, the grand proportions of a frame, the very spareness of which had at once the strength and the beauty of one of those hardy victors in the wrestling or boxing match, whose agility and force are modelled by discipline to the purest forms of grace. Without that exact and chiselled harmony of countenance which characterised perhaps the Ionic rather than the Doric race, the features of the royal Spartan were noble and commanding. His complexion was sunburnt, almost to oriental swarthiness, and the raven's plume had no darker gloss than that of his long hair, which (contrary to the Spartan custom), flowing on either side, mingled with the closer curls of the beard. To a scrutinizing gaze, the more dignified and prepossessing effect of this exterior would perhaps have been counterbalanced by an eye, bright indeed and penetrating, but restless and suspicious, by a certain ineffable mixture of arrogant pride and profound melancholy in the general expression of the countenance, ill according with that frank and serene aspect which best becomes the face of one who would lead mankind. About him altogether—the countenance, the form, the bearing—there was that which woke a vague, profound, and singular interest, an interest somewhat mingled with awe, but not altogether uncalculated to produce that affection which belongs to admiration, save when the sudden frown or disdainful lip repelled the gentler impulse and tended rather to excite fear, or to irritate pride, or to wound self-love.

But if the form and features of Pausanias were eminently those of the purest race of Greece, the dress which he assumed was no less characteristic of the Barbarian. He wore, not the garb of the noble Persian race, which, close and simple, was but a little less manly than that of the Greeks, but the flowing and gorgeous garments of the Mede. His long gown, which swept the earth, was covered with flowers wrought in golden tissue. Instead of the Spartan hat, the high Median cap or tiara crowned his perfumed and lustrous hair, while (what of all was most hateful to Grecian eyes) he wore, though otherwise unarmed, the curved scimitar and short dirk that were the national weapons of the Barbarian. And as it was not customary, nor indeed legitimate, for the Greeks to wear weapons on peaceful occasions and with their ordinary costume, so this departure from the common practice had not only in itself something offensive to the jealous eyes of his comrades, but was rendered yet more obnoxious by the adoption of the very arms of the East.

By the side of Pausanias was a man whose dark beard was already sown with grey. This man, named Gongylus, though a Greek—a native of Eretria, in Euboea—was in high command under the great Persian king. At the time of the barbarian invasion under Datis and Artaphernes, he had deserted the cause of Greece and had been rewarded with the lordship of four towns in Aeolis. Few among the apostate Greeks were more deeply instructed in the language and manners of the Persians; and the intimate and sudden friendship that had grown up between him and the Spartan was regarded by the Greeks with the most bitter and angry suspicion. As if to show his contempt for the natural jealousy of his countrymen, Pausanias, however, had just given to the Eretrian the government of Byzantium itself, and with the command of the citadel had entrusted to him the custody of the Persian prisoners captured in that port. Among these were men of the highest rank and influence at the court

of Xerxes; and it was more than rumoured that of late Pausanias had visited and conferred with them, through the interpretation of Gongylus, far more frequently than became the General of the Greeks. Gongylus had one of those countenances which are observed when many of more striking semblance are overlooked. But the features were sharp and the visage lean, the eyes vivid and sparkling as those of the lynx, and the dark pupil seemed yet more dark from the extreme whiteness of the ball, from which it lessened or dilated with the impulse of the spirit which gave it fire. There was in that eye all the subtle craft, the plotting and restless malignity which usually characterised those Greek renegades who prostituted their native energies to the rich service of the Barbarian; and the lips, narrow and thin, wore that everlasting smile which to the credulous disguises wile, and to the experienced betrays it. Small, spare, and prematurely bent, the Eretrian supported himself by a staff, upon which now leaning, he glanced, quickly and pryingly, around, till his eyes rested upon the Athenians, with the young Chian standing in their rear.

"The Athenian Captains are here to do you homage, Pausanias," said he in a whisper, as he touched with his small lean fingers the arm of the Spartan.

Pausanias turned and muttered to himself, and at that instant Aristides approached.

"If it please you, Pausanias, Cimon and myself, the leaders of the Athenians, would crave a hearing upon certain matters."

"Son of Lysimachus, say on."

"Your pardon, Pausanias," returned the Athenian, lowering his voice, and with a smile—"This is too crowded a council-hall; may we attend you on board your galley?"

"Not so," answered the Spartan haughtily; "the morning to affairs, the evening to recreation. We shall sail in the bay to see the moon rise, and if we indulge in consultations, it will be over our winecups. It is a good custom."

"It is a Persian one," said Cimon bluntly.

"It is permitted to us," returned the Spartan coldly, "to borrow from those we conquer. But enough of this. I have no secrets with the Athenians. No matter if the whole city hear what you would address to Pausanias."

"It is to complain," said Aristides with calm emphasis, but still in an undertone.

"Ay, I doubt it not: the Athenians are eloquent in grumbling."

"It was not found so at Plataea," returned Cimon.

"Son of Miltiades," said Pausanias loftily, "your wit outruns your experience. But my time is short. To the matter!"

"If you will have it so, I will speak," said Aristides, raising his voice. "Before your own Spartans, our comrades in arms, I proclaim our causes of complaint. Firstly, then, I demand release and compensation to seven Athenians, free-born and citizens, whom your orders have condemned to the unworthy punishment of standing all day in the open sun with the weight of iron anchors on their shoulders."

"The mutinous knaves!" exclaimed the Spartan. "They introduced into the camp the insolence of their own agora, and were publicly heard in the streets inveighing against myself as a favourer of the Persians."

"It was easy to confute the charge; it was tyrannical to punish words in men whose deeds had raised you to the command of Greece."

"*Their* deeds! Ye Gods, give me patience! By the help of Juno the protectress it was this brain and this arm that—But I will not justify myself by imitating the Athenian fashion of wordy boasting. Pass on to your next complaint."

"You have placed slaves—yes, Helots—around the springs, to drive away with scourges the soldiers that come for water."

"Not so, but merely to prevent others from filling their vases until the Spartans are supplied."

"And by what right—?" began Cimon, but Aristides checked him with a gesture, and proceeded.

"That precedence is not warranted by custom, nor by the terms of our alliance; and the springs, O Pausanias, are bounteous enough to provide for all. I proceed. You have formally sentenced citizens and soldiers to the scourge. Nay, this very day you have extended the sentence to one in actual command amongst the Chians. Is it not so, Antagoras?"

"It is," said the young Chian, coming forward boldly; "and in the name of my countrymen I demand justice."

"And I also, Uliades of Samos," said a thickset and burly Greek who had joined the group unobserved, "I demand justice. What, by the Gods! Are we to be all equals in the day of battle? 'My good sir, march here;' and, 'My dear sir, just run into that breach;' and yet when we have won the victory and should share the glory, is one state, nay, one man to seize the whole, and deal out iron anchors and tough cowhides to his companions? No, Spartans, this is not your view of the case; you suffer in the eyes of Greece by this misconduct. To Sparta itself I appeal."

"And what, most patient sir," said Pausanias, with calm sarcasm, though his eye shot fire, and the upper lip, on which no Spartan suffered the beard to grow, slightly quivered—"what is your contribution to the catalogue of complaints?"

"Jest not, Pausanias; you will find me in earnest," answered Uliades, doggedly, and encouraged by the evident effect that his eloquence had produced upon the Spartans themselves. "I have met with a grievous wrong, and all Greece shall hear of it, if it be not redressed. My own brother, who at Mycale slew four Persians with his own hand, headed a detachment for forage. He and his men were met by a company of mixed Laconians and Helots, their forage taken from them, they themselves assaulted, and my brother, a man who has monies and maintains forty slaves of his own, struck thrice across the face by a rascally Helot. Now, Pausanias, your answer!"

"You have prepared a notable scene for the commander of your forces, son of Lysimachus," said the Spartan, addressing himself to Aristides. "Far be it from me to affect the Agamemnon, but your friends are less modest in imitating the venerable model of Thersites. Enough" (and changing the tone of his voice, the chief stamped his foot vehemently to the ground): "we owe no account to our inferiors; we render no explanation save to Sparta and her Ephors."

"So be it, then," said Aristides, gravely; "we have our answer, and you will hear of our appeal."

Pausanias changed colour. "How?" said he, with a slight hesitation in his tone. "Mean you to threaten me—Me—with carrying the busy tales of your disaffection to the Spartan government?"

"Time will show. Farewell, Pausanias. We will detain you no longer from your pastime."

"But," began Uliades.

"Hush," said the Athenian, laying his hand on the Samian's shoulder. "We will confer anon."

Pausanias paused a moment, irresolute and in thought. His eyes glanced towards his own countrymen, who, true to their rigid discipline, neither spake nor moved, but whose countenances were sullen and overcast, and at that moment his pride was shaken, and his heart misgave him. Gongylus watched his countenance, and once more laying his hand on his arm, said in a whisper—

"He who seeks to rule never goes back."

"Tush, you know not the Spartans."

"But I know Human Nature; it is the same everywhere. You cannot yield to this insolence; to-morrow, of your own accord, send for these men separately and pacify them."

"You are right. Now to the vessel!"

With this, leaning on the shoulder of the Persian, and with a slight wave of his hand towards the Athenians—he did not deign even that gesture to the island officers—Pausanias advanced to the vessel, and slowly ascending, disappeared within his pavilion. The Spartans and the musicians followed; then, spare and swarthy, some half score of Egyptian sailors; last came a small party of Laconians and Helots, who, standing at some distance behind Pausanias, had not hitherto been

observed. The former were but slightly armed; the latter had forsaken their customary rude and savage garb, and wore long gowns and gay tunics, somewhat in the fashion of the Lydians. With these last there was one of a mien and aspect that strongly differed from the lowering and ferocious cast of countenance common to the Helot race. He was of the ordinary stature, and his frame was not characterised by any appearance of unusual strength; but he trod the earth, with a firm step and an erect crest, as if the curse of the slave had not yet destroyed the inborn dignity of the human being. There was a certain delicacy and refinement, rather of thought than beauty, in his clear, sharp, and singularly intelligent features. In contradistinction from the free-born Spartans, his hair was short, and curled close above a broad and manly forehead; and his large eyes of dark blue looked full and bold upon the Athenians with something, if not of defiance, at least of pride in their gaze, as he stalked by them to the vessel.

"A sturdy fellow for a Helot," muttered Cimon.

"And merits well his freedom," said the son of Lysimachus. "I remember him well. He is Alcman, the foster-brother of Pausanias, whom he attended at Plataea. Not a Spartan that day bore himself more bravely."

"No doubt they will put him to death when he goes back to Sparta," said Antagoras. "When a Helot is brave, the Ephors clap the black mark against his name, and at the next crypteia he suddenly disappears."

"Pausanias may share the same fate as his Helot, for all I care," quoth Uliades. "Well, Athenians, what say you to the answer we have received?"

"That Sparta shall hear of it," answered Aristides.

"Ah, but is that all? Recollect the Ionians have the majority in the fleet; let us not wait for the slow Ephors. Let us at once throw off this insufferable yoke, and proclaim Athens the Mistress of the Seas. What say you, Cimon?"

"Let Aristides answer."

"Yonder lie the Athenian vessels," said Aristides. "Those who put themselves voluntarily under our protection we will not reject. But remember we assert no claim; we yield but to the general wish."

"Enough; I understand you," said Antagoras.

"Not quite," returned the Athenian with a smile. "The breach between you and Pausanias is begun, but it is not yet wide enough. You yourselves must do that which will annul all power in the Spartan, and then if ye come to Athens ye will find her as bold against the Doric despot as against the Barbarian foe."

"But speak more plainly. What would you have us do?" asked Uliades, rubbing his chin in great perplexity.

"Nay, nay, I have already said enough. Fare ye well, fellow-countrymen," and leaning lightly on the shoulder of Cimon, the Athenian passed on.

Meanwhile, the splendid galley of Pausanias slowly put forth into the farther waters of the bay. The oars of the rowers broke the surface into countless phosphoric sparkles, and the sound they made, as they dashed amidst the gentle waters, seemed to keep time with the song and the instruments on the deck. The Ionians gazed in silence as the stately vessel, now shooting far ahead of the rest, swept into the centre of the bay. And the moon, just rising, shone full upon the glittering prow, and streaked the rippling billows over which it had bounded, with a light, as it were, of glory.

Antagoras sighed. "What think you of?" asked the rough Samian.

"Peace," replied Antagoras. "In this hour, when the fair face of Artemis recalls the old legends of Endymion, is it not permitted to man to remember that before the iron age came the golden, before war reigned love?"

"Tush," said Uliades. "Time enough to think of love when we have satisfied vengeance. Let us summon our friends, and hold council on the Spartan's insults."

"Whither goes now the Spartan?" murmured Antagoras abstractedly, as he suffered his companion to lead him away. Then halting abruptly, he struck his clenched hand on his breast.

"O Aphrodite!" he cried; "this night—this night I will seek thy temple. Hear my vows—soothe my jealousy!"

"Ah," grunted Uliades, "if, as men say, thou lovest a fair Byzantine, Aphrodite will have sharp work to cure thee of jealousy, unless she first makes thee blind."

Antagoras smiled faintly, and the two Ionians moved on slowly and in silence. In a few minutes more the quays were deserted and nothing but the blended murmur, spreading wide and indistinct throughout the camp, and a noisier but occasional burst of merriment from those resorts of obscener pleasure which were profusely scattered along the haven, mingled with the whispers of "the far resounding sea."

CHAPTER II

On a couch, beneath his voluptuous awning, reclined Pausanias. The curtains, drawn aside, gave to view the moonlit ocean, and the dim shadows of the shore, with the dark woods beyond, relieved by the distant lights of the city. On one side of the Spartan was a small table, that supported goblets and vases of that exquisite wine which Maronea proffered to the thirst of the Byzantine, and those cooling and delicious fruits which the orchards around the city supplied as amply as the fabled gardens of the Hesperides, were heaped on the other side. Towards the foot of the couch, propped upon cushions piled on the floor, sat Gongylus, conversing in a low, earnest voice, and fixing his eyes steadfastly on the Spartan. The habits of the Eretrian's life, which had brought him in constant contact with the Persians, had infected his very language with the luxuriant extravagance of the East. And the thoughts he uttered made his language but too musical to the ears of the listening Spartan.

"And fair as these climes may seem to you, and rich as are the gardens and granaries of Byzantium, yet to me who have stood on the terraces of Babylon and looked upon groves covering with blossom and fruit the very fortresses and walls of that queen of nations,—to me, who have roved amidst the vast delights of Susa, through palaces whose very porticoes might enclose the limits of a Grecian city,—who have stood, awed and dazzled, in the courts of that wonder of the world, that crown of the East, the marble magnificence of Persepolis—to me, Pausanias, who have been thus admitted into the very heart of Persian glories, this city of Byzantium appears but a village of artisans and fishermen. The very foliage of its forests, pale and sickly, the very moonlight upon these waters, cold and smileless, ah, if thou couldst but see! But pardon me, I weary thee?"

"Not so," said the Spartan, who, raised upon his elbow, listened to the words of Gongylus with deep attention. "Proceed." "Ah, if thou couldst but see the fair regions which the great king has apportioned to thy countryman Demaratus. And if a domain, that would satiate the ambition of the most craving of your earlier tyrants, fall to Demaratus, what would be the splendid satrapy in which the conqueror of Plataea might plant his throne?"

"In truth, my renown and my power are greater than those ever possessed by Demaratus," said the Spartan musingly.

"Yet," pursued Gongylus, "it is not so much the mere extent of the territories which the grateful Xerxes could proffer to the brave Pausanias—it is not their extent so much that might tempt desire, neither is it their stately forests, nor the fertile meadows, nor the ocean-like rivers, which the gods of the East have given to the race of Cyrus. There, free from the strange constraints which our austere customs and solemn Deities impose upon the Greeks, the beneficent Ormuzd scatters ever-varying delights upon the paths of men. All that art can invent, all that the marts of the universe can afford of the rare and voluptuous, are lavished upon abodes the splendour of which even our idle dreams of Olympus never shadowed forth. There, instead of the harsh and imperious helpmate to whom the joyless Spartan confines his reluctant love, all the beauties of every clime contend for the smile of their lord. And wherever are turned the change-loving eyes of Passion, the Aphrodite of our poets, such as the Cytherean and the Cyprian fable her, seems to recline on the lotus leaf or to rise from the unruffled ocean of delight. Instead of the gloomy brows and the harsh tones of rivals envious of your fame, hosts of friends aspiring only to be followers will catch gladness from your smile or sorrow from your frown. There, no jarring contests with little men, who deem themselves the equals of the great, no jealous Ephor is found, to load the commonest acts of life with fetters of iron custom. Talk of liberty! Liberty in Sparta is but one eternal servitude; you cannot move, or eat, or sleep, save as the law directs. Your very children are wrested from you just in the age when their voices sound most sweet. Ye are not men; ye are machines. Call you this liberty, Pausanias? I, a Greek, have known both Grecian liberty and Persian royalty Better be chieftain to a king than servant to a mob! But in Eretria, at least, pleasure was not denied. In Sparta the very Graces preside over discipline and war only."

"Your fire falls upon flax," said Pausanias, rising, and with passionate emotion. "And if you, the Greek of a happier state, you who know but by report the unnatural bondage to which the Spartans are subjected, can weary of the very name of Greek, what must be the feelings of one who from the cradle upward has been starved out of the genial desires of life? Even in earliest youth, while yet all other lands and customs were unknown, when it was duly poured into my ears that to be born a Spartan constituted the glory and the bliss of earth, my soul sickened at the lesson, and my reason revolted against the lie. Often when my whole body was lacerated with stripes, disdaining to groan, I yet yearned to strike, and I cursed my savage tutors who denied pleasure even to childhood with all the madness of impotent revenge. My mother herself (sweet name elsewhere) had no kindness in her face. She was the pride of the matronage of Sparta, because of all our women Alithea was the most unsexed. When I went forth to my first crypteia, to watch, amidst the wintry dreariness of the mountains, upon the movements of the wretched Helots, to spy upon their sufferings, to take account of their groans, and if one more manly than the rest dared to mingle curses with his groans, to mark *him* for slaughter, as a wolf that threatened danger to the fold; to lurk, an assassin, about his home, to dog his walks, to fall on him unawares, to strike him from behind, to filch away his life, to bury him in the ravines, so that murder might leave no trace; when upon this initiating campaign, the virgin trials of our youth, I first set forth, my mother drew near, and girding me herself with my grandsire's sword, 'Go forth,' she said, 'as the young hound to the chase, to wind, to double, to leap on the prey, and to taste of blood. See, the sword is bright; show me the stains at thy return,'"

"Is it then true, as the Greeks generally declare," interrupted Gongylus, "that in these campaigns, or crypteias, the sole aim and object is the massacre of Helots?"

"Not so," replied Pausanias; "savage though the custom, it smells not so foully of the shambles. The avowed object is to harden the nerves of our youth. Barefooted, unattended, through cold and storm, performing ourselves the most menial offices necessary to life, we wander for a certain season daily and nightly through the rugged territories of Laconia.¹¹ We go as boys—we come back as men.¹² The avowed object, I say, is increment to hardship, but with this is connected the secret end of keeping watch on these half-tamed and bull-like herds of men whom we call the Helots. If any be dangerous, we mark him for the knife. One of them had thrice been a ringleader in revolt. He was wary as well as fierce. He had escaped in three succeeding crypteias. To me, as one of the Heraclidae, was assigned the honour of tracking and destroying him. For three days and three nights I dogged his footsteps, (for he had caught the scent of the pursuers and fled,) through forest and defile, through valley and crag, stealthily and relentlessly. I followed him close. At last, one evening, having lost sight of all my comrades, I came suddenly upon him as I emerged from a wood. It was a broad patch of waste land, through which rushed a stream swollen by the rains, and plunging with a sullen roar down a deep and gloomy precipice, that to the right and left bounded the waste, the stream in front, the wood in the rear. He was reclining by the stream, at which, with the hollow of his hand, he quenched his thirst. I paused to gaze upon him, and as I did so he turned and saw me. He rose, and fixed his eyes on mine, and we examined each other in silence. The Helots are rarely of tall stature, but this was a giant. His dress, that of his tribe, of rude sheep-skins, and his cap made from the hide of a dog increased the savage rudeness of his appearance. I rejoiced that he saw me, and that, as we were alone, I might fight him fairly. It would have been terrible to slay the wretch if I had caught him in his sleep."

"Proceed," said Gongylus, with interest, for so little was known of Sparta by the rest of the Greeks, especially outside the Peloponnesus, that these details gratified his natural spirit of gossiping inquisitiveness.

"Stand!" said I, and he moved not. I approached him slowly. 'Thou art a Spartan,' said he, in a deep and harsh voice, 'and thou comest for my blood. Go, boy, go, thou art not mellowed to thy

¹¹ Plat. Leg. i. p. 633. See also Müller's Dorians, vol. ii. p. 41.

¹² Pueros puberos—neque prius in urbem redire quam viri facti essent.—Justin, iii. 3.

prime, and thy comrades are far away. The shears of the Fatal deities hover over the thread not of my life but of thine.' I was struck, Gongylus, by this address, for it was neither desperate nor dastardly, as I had anticipated; nevertheless, it beseemed not a Spartan to fly from a Helot, and I drew the sword which my mother had girded on. The Helot watched my movements, and seized a rude and knotted club that lay on the ground beside him.

"'Wretch,' said I, 'darest thou attack face to face a descendant of the Heraclidae? In me behold Pausanias, the son of Cleombrotus.'

"'Be it so; in the city one is the god-born, the other the man-enslaved. On the mountains we are equals.'

"'Knowest thou not,' said I, 'that if the Gods condemned me to die by thy hand, not only thou, but thy whole house, thy wife and thy children, would be sacrificed to my ghost?'"

"'The earth can hide the Spartan's bones as secretly as the Helot's,' answered my strange foe. 'Begone, young and unfleshed in slaughter as you are; why make war upon me? My death can give you neither gold nor glory. I have never harmed thee or thine. How much of the air and sun does this form take from the descendant of the Heraclidae?'"

"'Thrice hast thou raised revolt among the Helots, thrice at thy voice have they risen in bloody, though fruitless, strife against their masters.'

"'Not at my voice, but at that of the two deities who are the war-gods of slaves—Persecution and Despair.'¹³ 'Impatient of this parley, I tarried no longer. I sprang upon the Helot. He evaded my sword, and I soon found that all my agility and skill were requisite to save me from the massive weapon, one blow of which would have sufficed to crush me. But the Helot seemed to stand on the defensive, and continued to back towards the wood from which I had emerged. Fearful lest he would escape me, I pressed hard on his footsteps. My blood grew warm; my fury got the better of my prudence. My foot stumbled; I recovered in an instant, and, looking up, beheld the terrible club suspended over my head; it might have fallen, but the stroke of death was withheld. I misinterpreted the merciful delay; the lifted arm left the body of my enemy exposed. I struck him on the side; the thick hide blunted the stroke, but it drew blood. Afraid to draw back within the reach of his weapon, I threw myself on him, and grappled to his throat. We rolled on the earth together; it was but a moment's struggle. Strong as I was even in boyhood, the Helot would have been a match for Alcides. A shade passed over my eyes; my breath heaved short. The slave was kneeling on my breast, and, dropping the club, he drew a short knife from his girdle. I gazed upon him grim and mute. I was conquered, and I cared not for the rest.

"'The blood from his side, as he bent over me, trickled down upon my face. "'And this blood,' said the Helot, 'you shed in the very moment when I spared your life; such is the honour of a Spartan. Do you not deserve to die?'"

"'Yes, for I am subdued, and by a slave. Strike!'"

"'There,' said the Helot in a melancholy and altered tone, 'there speaks the soul of the Dorian, the fatal spirit to which the Gods have rendered up our wretched race. We are doomed—doomed—and one victim will not expiate our curse. Rise, return to Sparta, and forget that thou art innocent of murder.'

"He lifted his knee from my breast, and I rose, ashamed and humbled.

"At that instant I heard the crashing of the leaves in the wood, for the air was exceedingly still. I knew that my companions were at hand. 'Fly,' I cried; 'fly. If they come I cannot save thee, royal though I be. Fly.'

"'And *wouldest* thou save me!' said the Helot in surprise.

¹³ When Themistocles sought to extort tribute from the Andrians, he said, "I bring with me two powerful gods—Persuasion and Force." "And on our side," was the answer, "are two deities not less powerful—Poverty and Despair!"

"Ay, with my own life. Canst thou doubt it? Lose not a moment. Fly. Yet stay;' and I tore off a part of the woollen vest that I wore. 'Place this at thy side; staunch the blood, that it may not track thee. Now begone!'

"The Helot looked hard at me, and I thought there were tears in his rude eyes; then catching up the club with as much ease as I this staff, he sped with inconceivable rapidity, despite his wound, towards the precipice on the right, and disappeared amidst the thick brambles that clothed the gorge. In a few moments three of my companions approached. They found me exhausted, and panting rather with excitement than fatigue. Their quick eyes detected the blood upon the ground. I gave them no time to pause and examine. 'He has escaped me—he has fled,' I cried; 'follow,' and I led them to the opposite part of the precipice from that which the Helot had taken. Heading the search, I pretended to catch a glimpse of the goatskin ever and anon through the trees, and I stayed not the pursuit till night grew dark, and I judged the victim was far away."

"And he escaped?"

"He did. The crypteia ended. Three other Helots were slain, but not by me. We returned to Sparta, and my mother was comforted for my misfortune in not having slain my foe by seeing the stains on my grandsire's sword, I will tell thee a secret, Gongylus"—(and here Pausanias lowered his voice, and looked anxiously toward him)—"since that day I have not hated the Helot race. Nay, it may be that I have loved them better than the Dorian."

"I do not wonder at it; but has not your wounded giant yet met with his death?"

"No, I never related what had passed between us to any one save my father. He was gentle for a Spartan, and he rested not till Gylippus—so was the Helot named—obtained exemption from the black list. He dared not, however, attribute his intercession to the true cause. It happened, fortunately, that Gylippus was related to my own foster-brother, Alcman, brother to my nurse; and Alcman is celebrated in Sparta, not only for courage in war, but for arts in peace. He is a poet, and his strains please the Dorian ear, for they are stern and simple, and they breathe of war. Alcman's merits won forgiveness for the offences of Gylippus. May the Gods be kind to his race!"

"Your Alcman seems one of no common intelligence, and your gentleness to him does not astonish me, though it seems often to raise a frown on the brows of your Spartans."

"We have lain on the same bosom," said Pausanias touchingly, "and his mother was kinder to me than my own. You must know that to those Helots who have been our foster-brothers, and whom we distinguish by the name of Mothons, our stern law relaxes. They have no rights of citizenship, it is true, but they cease to be slaves;¹⁴ nay, sometimes they attain not only to entire emancipation, but to distinction. Alcman has bound his fate to mine. But to return, Gongylus. I tell thee that it is not thy descriptions of pomp and dominion that allure me, though I am not above the love of power, neither is it thy glowing promises, though blood too wild for a Dorian runs riot in my veins; but it is my deep loathing, my inexpressible disgust for Sparta and her laws, my horror at the thought of wearing away life in those sullen customs, amid that joyless round of tyrannic duties, in my rapture at the hope of escape, of life in a land which the eye of the Ephor never pierces; this it is, and this alone, O Persian, that makes me (the words must out) a traitor to my country, one who dreams of becoming a dependent on her foe."

"Nay," said Gongylus eagerly; for here Pausanias moved uneasily, and the colour mounted to his brow. "Nay, speak not of dependence. Consider the proposals that you can alone condescend to offer to the great king. Can the conqueror of Plataea, with millions for his subjects, hold himself dependent, even on the sovereign of the East? How, hereafter, will the memories of our sterile Greece and your rocky Sparta fade from your mind: or be remembered only as a state of thralldom and bondage, which your riper manhood has outgrown!"

¹⁴ The appellation of Mothons was not confined to the Helots who claimed the connection of foster-brothers, but was given also to household slaves.

"I will try to think so, at least," said Pausanias gloomily. "And, come what may, I am not one to recede. I have thrown my shield into a fearful peril; but I will win it back or perish. Enough of this, Gongylus. Night advances. I will attend the appointment you have made. Take the boat, and within an hour I will meet you with the prisoners at the spot agreed on, near the Temple of Aphrodite. All things are prepared?"

"All," said Gongylus, rising, with a gleam of malignant joy on his dark face. "I leave thee, kingly slave of the rocky Sparta, to prepare the way for thee, as Satrap of half the East."

So saying he quitted the awning, and motioned three Egyptian sailors who lay on the deck without. A boat was lowered, and the sound of its oars woke Pausanias from the reverie into which the parting words of the Eretrian had plunged his mind.

CHAPTER III

With a slow and thoughtful step, Pausanias passed on to the outer deck. The moon was up, and the vessel scarcely seemed to stir, so gently did it glide along the sparkling waters. They were still within the bay, and the shores rose, white and distinct, to his view. A group of Spartans, reclining by the side of the ship, were gazing listlessly on the waters. The Regent paused beside them.

"Ye weary of the ocean, methinks," said he. "We Dorians have not the merchant tastes of the Ionians."¹⁵

"Son of Cleombrotus," said one of the group, a Spartan whose rank and services entitled him to more than ordinary familiarity with the chief, "it is not the ocean itself that we should dread, it is the contagion of those who, living on the element, seem to share in its ebb and flow. The Ionians are never three hours in the same mind."

"For that reason," said Pausanias, fixing his eyes steadfastly on the Spartan, "for that reason I have judged it advisable to adopt a rough manner with these innovators, to draw with a broad chalk the line between them and the Spartans, and to teach those who never knew discipline the stern duties of obedience. Think you I have done wisely?"

The Spartan, who had risen when Pausanias addressed him, drew his chief a little aside from the rest.

"Pausanias," said he, "the hard Naxian stone best tames and tempers the fine steel;¹⁶ but the steel may break if the workman be not skilful. These Athenians are grown insolent since Marathon, and their soft kindred of Asia have relighted the fires they took of old from the Cecropian Prytaneum. Their sail is more numerous than ours; on the sea they find the courage they lose on land. Better be gentle with those wayward allies, for the Spartan greyhound shows not his teeth but to bite."

"Perhaps you are right. I will consider these things, and appease the mutineers. But it goes hard with my pride, Thrasyllus, to make equals of this soft-tongued race. Why, these Ionians, do they not enjoy themselves in perpetual holidays?—spend days at the banquet?—ransack earth and sea for dainties and for perfumes?—and shall they be the equals of us men, who, from the age of seven to that of sixty, are wisely taught to make life so barren and toilsome, that we may well have no fear of death? I hate these sleek and merry feast-givers; they are a perpetual insult to our solemn existence."

There was a strange mixture of irony and passion in the Spartan's voice as he thus spoke, and Thrasyllus looked at him in grave surprise.

"There is nothing to envy in the woman-like debaucheries of the Ionian," said he, after a pause.

"Envy! no; we only hate them, Thrasyllus Yon Eretrian tells me rare things of the East. Time may come when we shall sup on the black broth in Susa."

"The Gods forbid! Sparta never invades. Life with us is too precious, for we are few. Pausanias, I would we were well quit of Byzantium. I do not suspect you, not I; but there are those who look with vexed eyes on those garments, and I, who love you, fear the sharp jealousies of the Ephors, to whose ears the birds carry all tidings."

"My poor Thrasyllus," said Pausanias, laughing scornfully, "think you that I wear these robes, or mimic the Median manners, for love of the Mede? No, no! But there are arts which save countries as well as those of war. This Gongylus is in the confidence of Xerxes. I desire to establish a peace for Greece upon everlasting foundations. Reflect; Persia hath millions yet left. Another invasion may find a different fortune; and even at the best, Sparta gains nothing by these wars. Athens triumphs, not Lacedaemon. I would, I say, establish a peace with Persia. I would that Sparta, not Athens, should have that honour. Hence these flatteries to the Persian—trivial to us who render them, sweet and powerful

¹⁵ No Spartan served as a sailor, or indeed condescended to any trade or calling, but that of war.

¹⁶ Pind. Isth. v. (vi.) 73.

to those who receive. Remember these words hereafter, if the Ephors make question of my discretion. And now, Thrasyllus, return to our friends, and satisfy them as to the conduct of Pausanias." Quitting Thrasyllus, the Regent now joined a young Spartan who stood alone by the prow in a musing attitude.

"Lysander, my friend, my only friend, my best-loved Lysander," said Pausanias, placing his hand on the Spartan's shoulder. "And why so sad?"

"How many leagues are we from Sparta?" answered Lysander mournfully.

"And canst thou sigh for the black broth, my friend? Come, how often hast thou said, 'Where Pausanias is, *there* is Sparta!'"

"Forgive me, I am ungrateful," said Lysander with warmth. "My benefactor, my guardian, my hero, forgive me if I have added to your own countless causes of anxiety. Wherever you are there is life, and there glory. When I was just born, sickly and feeble, I was exposed on Taygetus. You, then a boy, heard my faint cry, and took on me that compassion which my parents had forsworn. You bore me to your father's roof, you interceded for my life. You prevailed even on your stern mother. I was saved; and the Gods smiled upon the infant whom the son of the humane Hercules protected. I grew up strong and hardy, and belied the signs of my birth. My parents then owned me; but still you were my fosterer, my saviour, my more than father. As I grew up, placed under your care, I imbibed my first lessons of war. By your side I fought, and from your example I won glory. Yes, Pausanias, even here, amidst luxuries which revolt me more than the Parthian bow and the Persian sword, even amidst the faces of the stranger, I still feel thy presence my home, thyself my Sparta."

The proud Pausanias was touched, and his voice trembled as he replied, "Brother in arms and in love, whatever service fate may have allowed me to render unto thee, thy high nature and thy cheering affection have more than paid me back. Often in our lonely rambles amidst the dark oaks of the sacred Scotitas,¹⁷ or by the wayward waters of Tiasa,¹⁸ when I have poured into thy faithful breast my impatient loathing, my ineffable distaste for the iron life, the countless and wearisome tyrannies of custom which surround the Spartans, often have I found a consoling refuge in thy divine contentment, thy cheerful wisdom. Thou lovest Sparta; why is she not worthier of thy love? Allowed only to be half men, in war we are demigods, in peace, slaves. Thou wouldst interrupt me. Be silent. I am in a wilful mood; thou canst not comprehend me, and I often marvel at thee. Still we are friends, such friends as the Dorian discipline, which makes friendship necessary in order to endure life, alone can form. Come, take up thy staff and mantle. Thou shalt be my companion ashore. I seek one whom alone in the world I love better than thee. To-morrow to stern duties once more. Alcman shall row us across the bay, and as we glide along, if thou wilt praise Sparta, I will listen to thee as the Ionians listen to their tale-tellers. Ho! Alcman, stop the rowers, and lower the boat."

The orders were obeyed, and a second boat soon darted towards the same part of the bay as that to which the one that bore Gongylus had directed its course. Thrasyllus and his companions watched the boat that bore Pausanias and his two comrades, as it bounded, arrow-like, over the glassy sea.

"Whither goes Pausanias?" asked one of the Spartans.

"Back to Byzantium on business," replied Thrasyllus.

"And we?"

"Are to cruise in the bay till his return."

"Pausanias is changed."

"Sparta will restore him to what he was. Nothing thrives out of Sparta. Even man spoils."

"True, sleep is the sole constant friend the same in all climates."

¹⁷ Paus. Lac. x.

¹⁸ *Ib.*, c. xviii.

CHAPTER IV

On the shore to the right of the port of Byzantium were at that time thickly scattered the villas or suburban retreats of the wealthier and more luxurious citizens. Byzantium was originally colonized by the Megarians, a Dorian race kindred with that of Sparta; and the old features of the pure and antique Hellas were still preserved in the dialect,¹⁹ as well as in the forms of the descendants of the colonists; in their favourite deities, and rites, and traditions; even in the names of places, transferred from the sterile Megara to that fertile coast; in the rigid and helot-like slavery to which the native Bithynians were subjected, and in the attachment of their masters to the oligarchic principles of government. Nor was it till long after the present date, that democracy in its most corrupt and licentious form was introduced amongst them. But like all the Dorian colonies, when once they departed from the severe and masculine mode of life inherited from their ancestors, the reaction was rapid, the degeneracy complete. Even then the Byzantines, intermingled with the foreign merchants and traders that thronged their haven, and womanized by the soft contagion of the East, were voluptuous, timid, and prone to every excess save that of valour. The higher class were exceedingly wealthy, and gave to their vices or their pleasures a splendour and refinement of which the elder states of Greece were as yet unconscious. At a later period, indeed, we are informed that the Byzantine citizens had their habitual residence in the public hostels, and let their houses—not even taking the trouble to remove their wives—to the strangers who crowded their gay capital. And when their general found it necessary to demand their aid on the ramparts, he could only secure their attendance by ordering the taverns and cookshops to be removed to the place of duty. Not yet so far sunk in sloth and debauch, the Byzantines were nevertheless hosts eminently dangerous to the austerer manners of their Greek visitors. The people, the women, the delicious wine, the balm of the subduing climate served to tempt the senses and relax the mind. Like all the Dorians, when freed from primitive restraint, the higher class, that is, the descendants of the colonists, were in themselves an agreeable, jovial race. They had that strong bias to humour, to jest, to satire, which in their ancestral Megara gave birth to the Grecian comedy, and which lurked even beneath the pithy aphorisms and rude merry-makings of the severe Spartan.

Such were the people with whom of late Pausanias had familiarly mixed, and with whose manners he contrasted, far too favourably for his honour and his peace, the habits of his countrymen.

It was in one of the villas we have described, the favourite abode of the rich Diagoras, and in an apartment connected with those more private recesses of the house appropriated to the females, that two persons were seated by a window which commanded a wide view of the glittering sea below. One of these was an old man in a long robe that reached to his feet, with a bald head and a beard in which some dark hairs yet withstood the encroachments of the grey. In his well-cut features and large eyes were remains of the beauty that characterised his race; but the mouth was full and wide, the forehead low though broad, the cheeks swollen, the chin double, and the whole form corpulent and unwieldy. Still there was a jolly, sleek good humour about the aspect of the man that prepossessed you in his favour. This personage, who was no less than Diagoras himself, was reclining lazily upon a kind of narrow sofa cunningly inlaid with ivory, and studying new combinations in that scientific game which Palamedes is said to have invented at the siege of Troy.

His companion was of a very different appearance. She was a girl who to the eye of a northern stranger might have seemed about eighteen, though she was probably much younger, of a countenance so remarkable for intelligence that it was easy to see that her mind had outgrown her years. Beautiful she certainly was, yet scarcely of that beauty from which the Greek sculptor would have drawn his models. The features were not strictly regular, and yet so harmoniously did each blend with each,

¹⁹ "The Byzantine dialect was in the time of Philip, as we know from the decree in Demosthenes, rich in Dorisms."—Müller on the Doric Dialect.

that to have amended one would have spoiled the whole. There was in the fulness and depth of the large but genial eye, with its sweeping fringe, and straight, slightly chiselled brow, more of Asia than of Greece. The lips, of the freshest red, were somewhat full and pouting, and dimples without number lay scattered round them—lurking places for the loves. Her complexion was clear though dark, and the purest and most virgin bloom mantled, now paler now richer, through the soft surface. At the time we speak of she was leaning against the open door with her arms crossed on her bosom, and her face turned towards the Byzantine. Her robe, of a deep yellow, so trying to the fair women of the North, became well the glowing colours of her beauty—the damask cheek, the purple hair. Like those of the Ionians, the sleeves of the robe, long and loose, descended to her hands, which were marvellously small and delicate. Long earrings, which terminated in a kind of berry, studded with precious stones, then common only with the women of the East; a broad collar, or necklace, of the smaragdus or emerald; and large clasps, medallion-like, where the swan-like throat joined the graceful shoulder, gave to her dress an appearance of opulence and splendour that betokened how much the ladies of Byzantium had borrowed from the fashions of the Oriental world. Nothing could exceed the lightness of her form, rounded, it is true, but slight and girlish, and the high instep, with the slender foot, so well set off by the embroidered sandal, would have suited such dances as those in which the huntress nymphs of Delos moved around Diana. The natural expression of her face, if countenance so mobile and changeful had one expression more predominant than another, appeared to be irresistibly arch and joyous, as of one full of youth and conscious of her beauty; yet, if a cloud came over the face, nothing could equal the thoughtful and deep sadness of the dark abstracted eyes, as if some touch of higher and more animated emotion—such as belongs to pride, or courage, or intellect—vibrated on the heart. The colour rose, the form dilated, the lip quivered, the eye flashed light, and the mirthful expression heightened almost into the sublime. Yet, lovely as Cleonice was deemed at Byzantium, lovelier still as she would have appeared in modern eyes, she failed in what the Greeks generally, but especially the Spartans, deemed an essential of beauty—in height of stature. Accustomed to look upon the virgin but as the future mother of a race of warriors, the Spartans saw beauty only in those proportions which promised a robust and stately progeny, and the reader may remember the well-known story of the opprobrious reproaches, even, it is said, accompanied with stripes, which the Ephors addressed to a Spartan king for presuming to make choice of a wife below the ordinary stature. Cleonice was small and delicate, rather like the Peri of the Persian than the sturdy Grace of the Dorian. But her beauty was her least charm. She had all that feminine fascination of manner, wayward, varying, inexpressible, yet irresistible, which seizes hold of the imagination as well as the senses, and which has so often made willing slaves of the proud rulers of the world. In fact Cleonice, the daughter of Diagoras, had enjoyed those advantages of womanly education wholly unknown at that time to the freeborn ladies of Greece proper, but which gave to the women of some of the isles and Ionian cities their celebrity in ancient story. Her mother was of Miletus, famed for the intellectual cultivation of the sex, no less than for their beauty—of Miletus, the birthplace of Aspasia—of Miletus, from which those remarkable women who, under the name of Hetaerae, exercised afterwards so signal an influence over the mind and manners of Athens, chiefly derived their origin, and who seem to have inspired an affection, which in depth, constancy, and fervour, approached to the more chivalrous passion of the North. Such an education consisted not only in the feminine and household arts honoured universally throughout Greece, but in a kind of spontaneous and luxuriant cultivation of all that captivates the fancy and enlivens the leisure. If there were something pedantic in their affectation of philosophy, it was so graced and vivified by a brilliancy of conversation, a charm of manner carried almost to a science, a womanly facility of softening all that comes within their circle, of suiting yet refining each complexity and discord of character admitted to their intercourse, that it had at least nothing masculine or harsh. Wisdom, taken lightly or easily, seemed but another shape of poetry. The matrons of Athens, who could often neither read nor write—ignorant, vain, tawdry, and not always faithful, if we may trust to such scandal as has reached the modern time—must

have seemed insipid beside these brilliant strangers; and while certainly wanting their power to retain love, must have had but a doubtful superiority in the qualifications that ensure esteem. But we are not to suppose that the Hetaerae (that mysterious and important class peculiar to a certain state of society, and whose appellation we cannot render by any proper word in modern language) monopolized all the graces of their countrywomen. In the same cities were many of unblemished virtue and repute who possessed equal cultivation and attraction, but whom a more decorous life has concealed from the equivocal admiration of posterity; though the numerous female disciples of Pythagoras throw some light on their capacity and intellect. Among such as these had been the mother of Cleonice, not long since dead, and her daughter inherited and equalled her accomplishments, while her virgin youth, her inborn playfulness of manner, her pure guilelessness, which the secluded habits of the unmarried women at Byzantium preserved from all contagion, gave to qualities and gifts so little published abroad, the effect as it were of a happy and wondrous inspiration rather than of elaborate culture.

Such was the fair creature whom Diagoras, looking up from his pastime, thus addressed:—

"And so, perverse one, thou canst not love this great hero, a proper person truly, and a mighty warrior, who will eat you an army of Persians at a meal. These Spartan fighting-cocks want no garlic, I warrant you.²⁰ And yet you can't love him, you little rogue."

"Why, my father," said Cleonice, with an arch smile, and a slight blush, "even if I did look kindly on Pausanias, would it not be to my own sorrow? What Spartan—above all, what royal Spartan—may marry with a foreigner, and a Byzantine?"

"I did not precisely talk of marriage—a very happy state, doubtless, to those who dislike too quiet a life, and a very honourable one, for war is honor itself; but I did not speak of that, Cleonice. I would only say that this man of might loves thee—that he is rich, rich, rich. Pretty pickings at Plataea; and we have known losses, my child, sad losses. And if you do not love him, why, you can but smile and talk as if you did, and when the Spartan goes home, you will lose a tormenter and gain a dowry."

"My father, for shame!"

"Who talks of shame? You women are always so sharp at finding oracles in oak leaves, that one don't wonder Apollo makes choice of your sex for his priests. But listen to me, girl, seriously," and here Diagoras with a great effort raised himself on his elbow, and lowering his voice, spoke with evident earnestness. "Pausanias has life and death, and, what is worse, wealth or poverty in his hands; he can raise or ruin us with a nod of his head, this black-curled Jupiter. They tell me that he is fierce, irascible, haughty; and what slighted lover is not revengeful? For my sake, Cleonice, for your poor father's sake, show no scorn, no repugnance; be gentle, play with him, draw not down the thunderbolt, even if you turn from the golden shower."

While Diagoras spoke, the girl listened with downcast eyes and flushed cheeks, and there was an expression of such shame and sadness on her countenance, that even the Byzantine, pausing and looking up for a reply, was startled by it.

"My child," said he, hesitatingly and absorbed, "do not misconceive me. Cursed be the hour when the Spartan saw thee; but since the Fates have so served us, let us not make bad worse. I love thee, Cleonice, more dearly than the apple of my eye; it is for *thee* I fear, for thee I speak. Alas! it is not dishonour I recommend, it is force I would shun."

"Force!" said the girl, drawing up her form with sudden animation.

"Fear not that. It is not Pausanias I dread, it is—"

"What then?"

"No matter; talk of this no more. Shall I sing to thee?"

"But Pausanias will visit us this very night."

²⁰ Fighting-cocks were fed with garlic, to make them more fierce. The learned reader will remember how Theorus advised Dicaeopolis to keep clear of the Thracians with garlic in their mouths.—See the *Acharnians* of Aristoph.

"I know it. Hark!" and with her finger to her lip, her ear bent downward, her cheek varying from pale to red, from red to pale, the maiden stole beyond the window to a kind of platform or terrace that overhung the sea. There, the faint breeze stirring her long hair, and the moonlight full upon her face, she stood, as stood that immortal priestess who looked along the starry Hellespont for the young Leander; and her ear had not deceived her. The oars were dashing in the wave's below, and dark and rapid the boat bounded on towards the rocky shore. She gazed long and steadfastly on the dim and shadowy forms which that slender raft contained, and her eye detected amongst the three the loftier form of her haughty wooer. Presently the thick foliage that clothed the descent shut the boat, nearing the strand, from her view; but she now heard below, mellowed and softened in the still and fragrant air, the sound of the cithara and the melodious song of the Mothon, thus imperfectly rendered from the language of immortal melody.

SONG

Carry a sword in the myrtle bough,
Ye who would honour the tyrant-slayer;
I, in the leaves of the myrtle bough,
Carry a tyrant to slay myself.

I pluck'd the branch with a hasty hand,
But Love was lurking amidst the leaves;
His bow is bent and his shaft is poised,
And I must perish or pass the bough.

Maiden, I come with a gift to thee,
Maiden, I come with a myrtle wreath;
Over thy forehead, or round thy breast
Bind, I implore thee, my myrtle wreath.²¹

From hand to hand by the banquet lights
On with the myrtle bough passes song:
From hand to hand by the silent stars
What with the myrtle wreath passes? Love.

I bear the god in a myrtle wreath,
Under the stars let him pass to thee;
Empty his quiver and bind his wings,
Then pass the myrtle wreath back to me.

Cleonice listened breathlessly to the words, and sighed heavily as they ceased. Then, as the foliage rustled below, she turned quickly into the chamber and seated herself at a little distance from Diagoras; to all appearance calm, indifferent and composed. Was it nature, or the arts of Miletus, that taught the young beauty the hereditary artifices of the sex?

²¹ Garlands were twined round the neck, or placed upon the bosom (Greek: upothumiades). See the quotations from Alcaeus, Sappho, and Anacreon in Athenaeus, book xiii. c. 17.

"So it is he, then?" said Diagoras, with a fidgety and nervous trepidation. "Well, he chooses strange hours to visit us. But he is right; his visits cannot be too private. Cleonice, you look provokingly at your ease."

Cleonice made no reply, but shifted her position so that the light from the lamp did not fall upon her face, while her father, hurrying to the threshold of his hall to receive his illustrious visitor, soon re-appeared with the Spartan Regent, talking as he entered with the volubility of one of the parasites of Alciphron and Athenaeus.

"This is most kind, most affable. Cleonice said you would come, Pausanias, though I began to distrust you. The hours seem long to those who expect pleasure."

"And, Cleonice, *you* knew that I should come," said Pausanias, approaching the fair Byzantine; but his step was timid, and there was no pride now in his anxious eye and bended brow.

"You said you would come to-night," said Cleonice, calmly, "and Spartans, according to proverbs, speak the truth."

"When it is to their advantage, yes,"²² said but with respect to others, they consider honourable whatever pleases them, and just whatever is to their advantage."

Pausanias, with a slight curl of his lips; and, as if the girl's compliment to his countrymen had roused his spleen and changed his thoughts, he seated himself moodily by Cleonice, and remained silent.

The Byzantine stole an arch glance at the Spartan, as he thus sat, from the corner of her eyes, and said, after a pause—

"You Spartans ought to speak the truth more than other people, for you say much less. We too have our proverb at Byzantium, and one which implies that it requires some wit to tell fibs."

"Child, child!" exclaimed Diagoras, holding up his hand reprovingly, and directing a terrified look at the Spartan. To his great relief, Pausanias smiled, and replied—

"Fair maiden, we Dorians are said to have a wit peculiar to ourselves, but I confess that it is of a nature that is but little attractive to your sex. The Athenians are blander wooers."

"Do you ever attempt to woo in Lacedaemon, then? Ah, but the maidens there, perhaps, are not difficult to please."

"The girl puts me in a cold sweat!" muttered Diagoras, wiping his brow. And this time Pausanias did not smile; he coloured, and answered gravely—

"And is it, then, a vain hope for a Spartan to please a Byzantine?"

"You puzzle me. That is an enigma; put it to the oracle."

The Spartan raised his eyes towards Cleonice, and, as she saw the inquiring, perplexed look that his features assumed, the ruby lips broke into so wicked a smile, and the eyes that met his had so much laughter in them, that Pausanias was fairly bewitched out of his own displeasure.

"Ah, cruel one!" said he, lowering his voice, "I am not so proud of being Spartan that the thought should console me for thy mockery."

"Not proud of being Spartan! say not so," exclaimed Cleonice. "Who ever speaks of Greece and places not Sparta at her head? Who ever speaks of freedom and forgets Thermopylae? Who ever burns for glory, and sighs not for the fame of Pausanias and Plataea? Ah, yes, even in jest say not that you are not proud to be a Spartan!"

"The little fool!" cried Diagoras, chuckling, and mightily delighted; "she is quite mad about Sparta—no wonder!"

Pausanias, surprised and moved by the burst of the fair Byzantine, gazed at her admiringly, and thought within himself how harshly the same sentiment would have sounded on the lips of a tall Spartan virgin; but when Cleonice heard the approving interlocution of Diagoras, her enthusiasm

²² So said Thucydides of the Spartans, many years afterwards. "They give evidence of honour among themselves, but with respect to others, they consider honourable whatever pleases them, and just whatever is to their advantage."—See Thucyd. lib. v.

vanished from her face, and putting out her lips poutingly, she said, "Nay, father, I repeat only what others say of the Spartans. They are admirable heroes; but from the little I have seen, they are—"

"What?" said Pausanias eagerly, and leaning nearer to Cleonice.

"Proud, dictatorial, and stern as companions."

Pausanias once more drew back.

"There it is again!" groaned Diagoras. "I feel exactly as if I were playing at odd and even with a lion; she does it to vex me. I shall retaliate and creep away."

"Cleonice," said Pausanias, with suppressed emotion, "you trifle with me, and I bear it."

"You are condescending. How would you avenge yourself?"

"How!"

"You would not beat me; you would not make me bear an anchor on the shoulders, as they say you do your soldiers. Shame on you! *you* bear with me! true, what help for you?"

"Maiden," said the Spartan, rising in great anger, "for him who loves and is slighted there is a revenge you have not mentioned."

"For him who *loves!* No, Spartan; for him who shuns disgrace and courts the fame dear to gods and men, there is no revenge upon women. Blush for your threat."

"You madden, but subdue me," said the Spartan as he turned away. He then first perceived that Diagoras had gone—that they were alone. His contempt for the father awoke suspicion of the daughter. Again he approached and said, "Cleonice, I know but little of the fables of poets, yet is it an old maxim often sung and ever belied, that love scorned becomes hate. There are moments when I think I hate thee."

"And yet thou hast never loved me," said Cleonice; and there was something soft and tender in the tone of her voice, and the rough Spartan was again subdued.

"I never loved thee! What, then, is love? Is not thine image always before me?—amidst schemes, amidst perils of which thy very dreams have never presented equal perplexity or phantoms so uncertain, I am occupied but with thee. Surely, as upon the hyacinth is written the exclamation of woe, so on this heart is graven thy name. Cleonice, you who know not what it is to love, you affect to deny or to question mine."

"And what," said Cleonice, blushing deeply, and with tears in her eyes, "what result can come from such a love? You may not wed with the stranger. And yet, Pausanias, yet you know that all other love dishonours the virgin even of Byzantium. You are silent; you turn away. Ah, do not let them wrong you. My father fears your power. If you love me you are powerless; your power has passed to me. Is it not so? I, a weak girl, can rule, command, irritate, mock you, if I will. You may fly me, but not control."

"Do not tempt me too far, Cleonice," said the Spartan, with a faint smile.

"Nay, I will be merciful henceforth, and you, Pausanias, come here no more. Awake to the true sense of what is due to your divine ancestry—your great name. Is it not told of you that, after the fall of Mardonius, you nobly dismissed to her country, unscathed and honoured, the captive Coan lady?²³ Will you reverse at Byzantium the fame acquired at Plataea? Pausanias, spare us; appeal not to my father's fear, still less to his love of gold."

"I cannot, I cannot fly thee," said the Spartan, with great emotion. "You know not how stormy, how inexorable are the passions which burst forth after a whole youth of restraint. When nature breaks the barriers, she rushes headlong on her course. I am no gentle wooer; where in Sparta should I learn the art? But, if I love thee not as these mincing Ionians, who come with offerings of flowers and song, I do love thee with all that fervour of which the old Dorian legends tell. I could brave, like the Thracian, the dark gates of Hades, were thy embrace my reward. Command me as thou wilt—make me thy slave in all things, even as Hercules was to Omphale; but tell me only that I may win thy love

²³ Herod, ix.

at last. Fear not. Why fear me? in my wildest moments a look from thee can control me. I ask but love for love. Without thy love thy beauty were valueless. Bid me not despair."

Cleonice turned pale, and the large tears that had gathered in her eyes fell slowly down her cheeks; but she did not withdraw her hand from his clasp, or avert her countenance from his eyes.

"I do not fear thee," said she, in a very low voice. "I told my father so; but—but—" (and here she drew back her hand and averted her face), "I fear myself."

"Ah, no, no," cried the delighted Spartan, detaining her, "do not fear to trust to thine own heart. Talk not of dishonour. There are" (and here the Spartan drew himself up, and his voice took a deeper swell)—"there are those on earth who hold themselves above the miserable judgments of the vulgar herd—who can emancipate themselves from those galling chains of custom and of country which helotize affection, genius, nature herself. What is dishonour here may be glory elsewhere; and this hand, outstretched towards a mightier sceptre than Greek ever wielded yet, may dispense, not shame and sorrow, but glory and golden affluence to those I love."

"You amaze me, Pausanias. *Now* I fear you. What mean these mysterious boasts? Have you the dark ambition to restore in your own person that race of tyrants whom your country hath helped to sweep away? Can you hope to change the laws of Sparta, and reign there, your will the state?"

"Cleonice, we touch upon matters that should not disturb the ears of women. Forgive me if I have been roused from myself."

"At Miletus—so have I heard my mother say—there were women worthy to be the confidants of men."

"But they were women who loved. Cleonice, I should rejoice in an hour when I might pour every thought into thy bosom."

At this moment there was heard on the strand below a single note from the Mophon's instrument, low, but prolonged; it ceased, and was again renewed. The royal conspirator started and breathed hard.

"It is the signal," he muttered; "they wait me. Cleonice," he said aloud, and with much earnestness in his voice, "I had hoped, ere we parted, to have drawn from your lips those assurances which would give me energy for the present and hope in the future. Ah, turn not from me because my speech is plain and my manner rugged. What, Cleonice, what if I could defy the laws of Sparta; what if, instead of that gloomy soil, I could bear thee to lands where heaven and man alike smile benignant on love? Might I not hope then?"

"Do nothing to sully your fame."

"Is it, then, dear to thee?"

"It is a part of thee," said Cleonice falteringly; and as if she had said too much, she covered her face with her hands.

Emboldened by this emotion, the Spartan gave way to his passion and his joy. He clasped her in his arms—his first embrace—and kissed, with wild fervour, the crimsoned forehead, the veiling hands. Then, as he tore himself away, he cast his right arm aloft.

"O Hercules!" he cried, in solemn and kindling adjuration, "my ancestor and my divine guardian, it was not by confining thy labours to one spot of earth, that thou wert borne from thy throne of fire to the seats of the Gods. Like thee I will spread the influence of my arms to nations whose glory shall be my name; and as thy sons, my fathers, expelled from Sparta, returned thither with sword and spear to defeat usurpers and to found the long dynasty of the Heracleids, even so may it be mine to visit that dread abode of torturers and spies, and to build up in the halls of the Atridae a power worthier of the lineage of the demigod. Again the signal! Fear not, Cleonice, I will not tarnish my fame, but I will exchange the envy of abhorring rivals for the obedience of a world. One kiss more! Farewell!"

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.