

**Source: The Histories of Polybius V2 by Polybius □
(translated by Evelyn S. Shuckburgh 1889)**

BOOK XVIII¹

THE WAR WITH PHILIP

1. WHEN the time appointed arrived, Philip put to sea from Demetrias and came into the Melian Gulf, with five galleys and one beaked war-ship (pristis), on the latter of which he himself was sailing. There met him the Macedonian secretaries Apollodorus and Demosthenes, Brachylles from Boeotia, and the Achaean Cycliadas, who had been driven from the Peloponnese for the reasons I have already described. With Flamininus came king Amyndras, and Dionsodorus, legate of king Attalus. The commissioners from cities and nations were Aristaenus and Xenophon from the Achaeans; Acesimbrotus the navarch from the Rhodians; Phaeneas their Strategus from the Aetolians, and several others of their statesmen with him. Approaching the sea near Nicaea, Flamininus and those with him took their stand upon the very edge of the beach, while Philip, bringing his ship close to shore, remained afloat. Upon Flamininus bidding him disembark, he stood up on board and refused to leave his ship. Flamininus again asked him what he feared, he said that he feared no one but the gods, but he distrusted most of those who were there, especially the Aetolians. Upon the Roman expressing his surprise, and remarking that the danger was the same to all and the risk common, Philip retorted that "He was mistaken in saying that :

Congress at Nicaea in Locris, winter of B.C. 198-197. Coss. Titus Quinctius Flamininus, Sext. Aelius Paetus Catus.

Cycliadas expelled for favouring Philip. See Livy, 32, 19.

¹ According to Hultsch no fragments or extracts of book 17 are preserved. In it would have been contained the campaign of B.C. 199, in the war between Rome and Philip, for which see Livy, 31, 34-43. And the operations of Flamininus in the season of B.C. 198, Livy, 32, 9-18. The first seventeen chapters of this book are generally classed in book 17.

for that, if anything happened to Phaeneas, there were many who would act as Strategi for the Aetolians; but if Philip were to perish at the present juncture, there was no one to be king of the Macedonians." Though all thought this an unconciliatory way of opening the discussion, Flaminius nevertheless bade him speak on the matters he had come to consider. Philip however said that "The word was not with himself but with

The Roman
demand.

Flaminius; and therefore begged that he would state clearly what he was to do in order to have peace." The Roman consul replied that "What he had to say was simple and obvious: it was to bid him evacuate Greece entirely; restore the prisoners and deserters in his hands to their several states; hand over to the Romans those parts of Illyricum of which he had become possessed since

Peace of Epirus,

B.C. 205.

See *supra* II, 5-7.

the peace of Epirus; and, similarly, to restore to Ptolemy all the cities which he had taken from him since the death of Ptolemy Philopator.

2. Having said this Flaminius refrained from any further speech of his own; but turning to the others he bade them deliver what they had been severally charged to say by those who sent them. And first Dionysodorus, the envoy of

Demands of
Attalus,

Attalus, took up the discourse by declaring that "Philip ought to restore the king's ships which had been captured in the battle at Chios and their crews with them; and to restore also the temple of Aphrodite to its original state, as well as the Nicephorium, both of which he had

of the Rhodians,

destroyed." He was followed by the Rhodian navarch Acesimbrotus, who demanded "That Philip should evacuate Peraea, which he had taken from them; withdraw his garrisons from Iasus, Bargylia, and Euromus; restore the Perinthians to their political union with Byzantium; and evacuate Sestos, Abydos, and all commercial ports and harbours in Asia."

of the Achaeans.

Achaeans demanded "The restoration of Corinth and Argos uninjured." Then came the Aetolians, who first demanded, like the Romans, that "Philip should

and of the
Aetolians.

entirely evacuate Greece; and, secondly, that he should restore to them uninjured all cities formerly members of the Aetolian league."

3. When Phaeneas the Aetolian strategus had delivered this demand, a man called Alexander Isius, who had the reputation of being an able politician and good speaker, said that "Philip was neither sincere at the present moment in proposing terms, nor bold in his manner of making war, when he had to do that. In conferences and colloquies he was always setting ambushes and lying in wait, and using all the practices of war, but in actual war itself took up a position at once unjust and ignoble: for he avoided meeting his enemies face to face, and, as he fled before them, employed himself in burning and plundering the cities; and by this policy, though himself beaten, he spoilt the value of the victor's reward. Yet former kings of Macedonia had not adopted this plan, but one exactly the reverse: for they were continually fighting with each other in the open field, but rarely destroyed and ruined cities. This was shown clearly by Alexander's war in Asia against king Darius; and again in the contentions between his successors, when they combined to fight Antigonus for the possession of Asia. So too had the successors of these kings followed the same policy down to the time of Pyrrhus: they had been prompt to war against each other in the open field, and to do everything they could to conquer each other in arms, but had spared the cities, that they might rule them if they conquered, and be honoured by their subjects. But that a man should abandon war, and yet destroy that for which the war was undertaken, seemed an act of madness, and madness of a very violent sort. And this was just what Philip was doing at that moment; for he had destroyed more cities in Thessaly, on his rapid march from the pass of Epirus, though he was a friend and ally of that country, than any one who had ever been at war with the Thessalians."

After a good deal more to the same effect he ended by asking Philip, "On what grounds he was holding the town of Lysimacheia with a garrison, having expelled the strategus sent by the Aetolian league, of which it was a member? Also on what grounds he had enslaved the Ciani who were also in alliance with the Aetolians? Lastly, on what plea he was in actual occupation of Echinus, Phthiotid Thebes, Pharsalus, and Larisa?"

Speech of
Alexander Isius.

4. When Alexander had concluded his speech, Philip came somewhat nearer to the shore than he was before, and, rising on board his ship, said that "Alexander had composed and delivered a speech in the true Aetolian and theatrical style. For every one knew quite well that nobody willingly destroys his own allies, but that, at times of special danger, military commanders are compelled to do many things contrary to their natural feelings." While the king was still speaking, Phaeneas, who was very short-sighted, interrupted him by saying, "You are trifling with us ; you must either fight and conquer, or obey the commands of the stronger." Philip, in spite of the unfortunate position of his affairs, could not refrain from his habitual humour : turning towards Phaeneas he said, "Even a blind man could see that." Such a knack had he of cutting repartee. Then he turned to Alexander again and said, "You ask me, Alexander, why I took possession of Lysimacheia. I reply, in order that it might not by your neglect be devastated by Thracians, as it has now actually been ; because I was compelled by this war to remove my soldiers, who indeed were no hostile garrison, as you say, but were there for its protection. As for the Ciani, I did not go to war with them, but only assisted Prusias to take them who was at war with them. And of this you yourselves were the cause. For though I sent envoy after envoy to you desiring that you would repeal the law which allows you the privilege of taking 'spoil from spoil,' you replied that rather than abolish this law you would remove Aetolia from Aetolia."

5. When Flaminius expressed some wonder at what he meant by this, the king tried to explain it to him by saying that "The Aetolian custom was this. They not only plundered those with whom they were at war, and harried their country ; but, if certain other nations were at war with each other, even though both were friends and allies of the Aetolians, none the less the Aetolians might, without a formal decree of the people, take part with both combatants and plunder the territory of both. The result was that in the eyes of the Aetolians there were no defined limits of friendship or enmity, but they were ready to be the enemies and assailers of all who had a dispute on any-

thing. "How then," he added, "have they any right to blame me if, while on terms of friendship with the Aetolians, I did anything against the Ciani in support of my own allies? But the most outrageous part of their conduct is that they try to rival Rome, and bid me entirely evacuate Greece! The demand in itself is sufficiently haughty and dictatorial: still, in the mouths of Romans, it is tolerable, but in that of Aetolians quite intolerable. What is this Greece, pray, from which ye bid me depart? How do you define it? Why, most of the Aetolians themselves are not Greeks; for neither the Agrai, nor the Apodoti, nor the Amphiloichi are counted as Greek. Do you then give up those tribes to me?"

6. Upon Flaminius laughing at these words, Philip proceeded: "Well, enough said to the Aetolians! Philip's answer But to the Rhodians and Attalus I have to say to the Rhodians that, in the eyes of a fair judge, it would be held and Attalus. more just that they should restore to me the ships captured, than I to them. For I did not begin the attack upon Attalus and the Rhodians, but they upon me, as everybody acknowledges. However, at your instance, Titus, I restore Peræa to the Rhodians, and to Attalus his ships and as many of the men as are still alive. As for the destruction of the Nicephorium and the grove of Aphrodite, I am not able to do anything else towards their restoration, but I will send plants and gardeners to attend to the place and the growth of the trees that have been cut down." Flaminius once more laughing at the king's sarcastic tone, Philip and the Achæans. turned to the Achæans, and first went through the list of benefactions received by them from Antigonus and himself; then quoted the extraordinary honours Antigonus and he had received from them; and concluded by reading their decree for abandoning him and joining Rome. Taking this for his text, he expatiated at great length on the fickleness and ingratitude of the Achæans. Still he said he would restore Argos to them, and as to Corinth would consult with Flaminius.

7. Having thus concluded his conversation with the other envoys, he asked Flaminius, observing that the discussion was really confined to himself A retort of Flaminius. and the Romans, "Whether he considered that

he was bound to evacuate only those places in Greece which he had himself acquired, or those also which he had inherited from his ancestors?" On Flaminius making no answer, Aristaenus for the Achaeans, and Phaeneas for the Aetolians, were on the point of replying. But as the day was closing in, time prevented them from doing so; and Philip demanded that they should all hand into him a written statement of the terms on which peace was to be granted: for being there alone he had no one with whom to consult; and therefore wished to turn their demands over in his own mind. Now Flaminius was much amused at Philip's sarcastic banter; but not wishing the others to think so, he retaliated on him by a sarcasm also, saying: "Of course you are alone, Philip: for you have killed all the friends likely to give you the best advice!" The king smiled sardonically, but said nothing. And for the present, all having handed in the written statements of their demands as aforesaid, the conference broke up, after appointing to meet again next day at Nicaea. But next morning, though Flaminius came to the appointed place and found the others there, Philip did not arrive.

8. When the day, however, had nearly come to an end, and Titus and the others had almost given him up, Philip appeared accompanied as before, and excused himself by saying that he had spent the whole day in perplexity and doubt, caused by the severity of the demands made upon him. But every one else thought that he had acted thus from a wish to prevent, by the lateness of the hour, the delivery of invectives by the Achaeans and Aetolians: for he saw, as he was going away on the previous evening, that both were ready to attack him and state grievances. Therefore, as soon as he approached the meeting this time, he demanded that "The Roman Consul should discuss the matter with him in private; that they might not have a mere war of words on both sides, but that a definite settlement should be come to on the points in dispute." On his several times repeating this request and pressing it strongly, Flaminius asked those present what he ought to do. On their bidding him meet the king and hear what he had to say, he took with him Appius Claudius, at that time a military Tribune,

and telling the others to retire a short way from the sea and remain there, he himself bade Philip disembark. Accordingly the king, attended by Apollodorus and Demosthenes, left his ship, and, joining Flamininus, conversed with him for a considerable time. What was said by the one and the other on that occasion it is not easy to state. However, when Philip and he had parted, Flamininus, Philip's final offers. in explaining the king's views to the others, said that he consented to restore Pharsalus and Larisa to the Aetolians, but not Thebes: and that to the Rhodians he surrendered Peræa, but not Iasus and Bargylia: to the Achæans he gave up Corinth and Argos: to the Romans he promised that he would surrender Illyricum and all prisoners: and to Attalus the ships, and as many of the men captured in the sea-fights as survived.

9. All present expressed their dissatisfaction at these terms, and alleged that it was necessary before all that he should perform the general injunction, that, Dissatisfaction of the Congress. namely, of evacuating all Greece: otherwise these particular concessions were vain and useless. Observing that there was an animated discussion going on among them, and fearing at the same time that they would indulge in accusations against himself, Philip requested Flamininus to adjourn the conference till next day, as the evening was closing in; and promised that he would then either persuade them to accept his terms or submit to theirs. Flamininus consenting, they separated, after appointing to meet next day on the beach near Thronium.

Next day all came to the appointed place in good time. Philip in a short speech called on all, and Third day's conference. A reference to the Senate agreed on. especially on Flamininus, "Not to break off the negotiation for peace now that by far the greater number were inclined to come to some arrangement; but, if possible, to come to an understanding by themselves on the points in dispute; or, if that could not be, to send envoys to the Senate, and either convince it as to this controversy, or submit to whatever it enjoined."

On this proposition of the king, all the others declared that they preferred war to such a demand. But the Roman Consul

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