

THE SECOND OLYNTHIAC

ARGUMENT

THE Athenians had voted an alliance with the Olynthians, and resolved to send succours. But the sending of them was delayed, partly by the contrivance of the opposite faction, partly from the reluctance of the people themselves to engage in a war with Philip. Demosthenes stimulates them to exertion, and encourages them, by showing that Philip's power is not so great as it appears.

ON many occasions, men of Athens, one may see the kindness of the gods to this country manifested, but most signally, I think, on the present. That here are men prepared for a war with Philip, possessed of a neighbouring territory and some power, and (what is most important) so fixed in their hostility as to regard any accommodation with him as insecure, and even ruinous to their country; this really appears like an extraordinary act of divine beneficence. It must then be our care, Athenians, that we are not more unkind to ourselves than circumstances have been; as it would be a foul, a most foul reproach, to have abandoned not only cities and places that once belonged to us, but also the allies and advantages provided by fortune.

To dilate, Athenians, on Philip's power, and by such discourse to incite you to your duty, I think improper: and why? Because all that may be said on that score involves matter of glory for him, and misconduct on our part. The more he has transcended his repute, the more is he universally admired; you, as you have used your advantages unworthily, have incurred the greater disgrace. This topic, then, I shall pass over. Indeed, Athenians, a correct observer will find the source of his greatness here,¹ and not in himself. But

¹ In this assembly, by the contrivance of venal orators, or through the supineness of the people. In the first Philippic there is a more pointed allusion to the practices of Philip's adherents, who are charged with sending him secret intelligence of what passed at home. Such men as Aristodemus, Neoptolemus, perhaps Demades and others are referred to. Æschines had not yet begun to be a friend of Philip.

of measures, for which Philip's partisans deserve his gratitude and your vengeance, I see no occasion to speak now. Other things are open to me, which it concerns you all to know, and which must, on a due examination, Athenians, reflect great disgrace on Philip. To these will I address myself.

To call him perjured and treacherous, without showing what he has done, might justly be termed idle abuse. But to go through all his actions and convict him in detail, will take, as it happens, but a short time, and is expedient, I think, for two reasons: first, that his baseness may appear in its true light; secondly, that they, whose terror imagines Philip to be invincible, may see he has run through all the artifices by which he rose to greatness, and his career is just come to an end. I myself, men of Athens, should most assuredly have regarded Philip as an object of fear and admiration, had I seen him exalted by honourable conduct; but, observing and considering, I find that in the beginning, when certain persons drove away the Olynthians who desired a conference with us, he gained over our simplicity by engaging to surrender Amphipolis and to execute the secret article¹ once so famous; afterwards he got the friendship of the Olynthians by taking Potidæa from you, wronging you, his former allies, and delivering it to them; and lastly now the Thessalians, by promising to surrender Magnesia, and undertake the Phocian war on their behalf. In short, none who have dealt with him has he not deceived. He has risen by conciliating and cajoling the weakness of every people in turn who knew him not. As, therefore, by such means he rose, when every people imagined he would advance their interest, so ought he by the same means to be pulled down again, when the selfish aim of his whole policy is exposed. To this crisis, O Athenians, are Philip's affairs come; or let

¹ A secret intrigue was carried on between Philip and the Athenians, by which he engaged to put Amphipolis in their hands, but on the understanding that they would deliver up Pydna to him. Demosthenes only mentions the former part of the arrangement, the latter not being honourable to his countrymen.

any man stand forward and prove to me, or rather to you, that my assertions are false, or that men whom Philip has once overreached will trust him hereafter, or that the Thes-salians who have been degraded into servitude would not gladly become free.

But if any among you, though agreeing in these state-ments, thinks that Philip will maintain his power by having occupied forts and havens and the like, this is a mistake. True, when a confederacy subsists by good-will, and all parties to the war have a common interest, men are willing to co-operate and bear hardships and persevere. But when one has grown strong, like Philip, by rapacity and artifice, on the first pretext, the slightest reverse, all is overturned and broken up. Impossible is it—impossible, Athenians—to acquire a solid power by injustice and perjury and falsehood. Such things last for once, or for a short period; maybe, they blossom fairly with hope; but in time they are discovered and drop away. As a house, a ship, or the like, ought to have the lower parts firmest, so in human conduct, I ween, the principle and foundation should be just and true. But this is not so in Philip's conduct.

I say, then, we should at once aid the Olynthians (the best and quickest way that can be suggested will please me most) and send an embassy to the Thessalians, to inform some of our measures, and to stir up the rest; for they have now resolved to demand Pagasæ, and remonstrate about Magnesia. But look to this, Athenians, that our envoys shall not only make speeches, but have some real proof that we have gone forth as becomes our country, and are engaged in action. All speech without action appears vain and idle, but especially that of our commonwealth; as the more we are thought to excel therein, the more is our speaking distrusted by all. You must show yourselves greatly reformed, greatly changed, contributing, serving personally, acting promptly, before any one will pay attention to you. And if ye will perform these duties properly and becomingly,

Athenians, not only will it appear that Philip's alliances are weak and precarious, but the poor state of his native empire and power will be revealed.

To speak roundly, the Macedonian power and empire is very well as a help, as it was for you in Timotheus' time against the Olynthians; likewise for them against Potidæa the conjunction was important; and lately it aided the Thessalians in their broils and troubles against the regnant house: and the accession of any power, however small, is undoubtedly useful. But the Macedonian is feeble of itself, and full of defects. The very operations which seem to constitute Philip's greatness, his wars and his expeditions, have made it more insecure than it was originally. Think not, Athenians, that Philip and his subjects have the same likings. He desires glory, makes that his passion, is ready for any consequence of adventure and peril, preferring to a life of safety the honour of achieving what no Macedonian king ever did before. They have no share in the glorious result; ever harassed by these excursions up and down, they suffer and toil incessantly, allowed no leisure for their employments or private concerns, unable even to dispose of their hard earnings, the markets of the country being closed on account of the war. By this then may easily be seen, how the Macedonians in general are disposed to Philip. His mercenaries and guards, indeed, have the reputation of admirable and well-trained soldiers, but, as I heard from one who had been in the country, a man incapable of falsehood, they are no better than others. For if there be any among them experienced in battles and campaigns, Philip is jealous of such men and drives them away, he says, wishing to keep the glory of all actions to himself; his jealousy (among other failings) being excessive. Or if any man be generally good and virtuous, unable to bear Philip's daily intemperances, drunkenness, and indecencies,¹ he is pushed aside and

¹ The original signifies a certain dance, which formed a part of riotous festivities. We gather from history that the orator's description here is not wholly untrue, though exaggerated.

accounted as nobody. The rest about him are brigands and parasites, and men of that character, who will get drunk and perform dances which I scruple to name before you. My information is undoubtedly true; for persons whom all scouted here as worse rascals than mountebanks, Callias the town-slave and the like of him, antic-jesters, and composers of ribald songs to lampoon their companions, such person Philip caresses and keeps about him. Small matters these may be thought, Athenians, but to the wise they are strong indications of his character and wrongheadedness. Success perhaps throws a shade over them now; prosperity is a famous hider of such blemishes; but, on any miscarriage, they will be fully exposed. And this (trust me, Athenians) will appear in no long time, if the gods so will and you determine. For as in the human body, a man in health feels not partial ailments, but, when illness occurs, all are in motion, whether it be a rupture or a sprain or anything else unsound; so with states and monarchs, whilst they wage external war, their weaknesses are undiscerned by most men, but the tug of a frontier war betrays all.

If any of you think Philip a formidable opponent, because they see he is fortunate, such reasoning is prudent, Athenians. Fortune has indeed a great preponderance—nay, is everything, in human affairs. Not but that, if I had the choice, I should prefer our fortune to Philip's, would you but moderately perform your duty. For I see you have many more claims to the divine favour than he has. But we sit doing nothing; and a man idle himself cannot require even his friends to act for him, much less the gods. No wonder then that he, marching and toiling in person, present on all occasions, neglecting no time or season, prevails over us delaying and voting and inquiring. I marvel not at that; the contrary would have been marvellous, if we doing none of the duties of war had beaten one doing all. But this surprises me, that formerly, Athenians, you resisted the Lacedæmonians for the rights of Greece, and rejecting many

opportunities of selfish gain, to secure the rights of others, expended your property in contributions, and bore the brunt of the battle; yet now you are loth to serve, slow to contribute, in defence of your own possessions, and, though you have often saved the other nations of Greece collectively and individually, under your own losses you sit still. This surprises me, and one thing more, Athenians; that not one of you can reckon, how long your war with Philip has lasted, and what you have been doing while the time has passed. You surely know, that while you have been delaying, expecting others to act, accusing, trying one another, expecting again, doing much the same as ye do now, all the time has passed away. Then are ye so senseless, Athenians, as to imagine that the same measures which have brought the country from a prosperous to a poor condition will bring it from a poor to a prosperous? Unreasonable were this and unnatural; for all things are easier kept than gotten. The war now has left us nothing to keep; we have all to get, and the work must be done by ourselves. I say then, you must contribute money, serve in person with alacrity, accuse no one, till you have gained your objects; then, judging from facts, honour the deserving, punish offenders; let there be no pretences or defaults on your own part; for you cannot harshly scrutinise the conduct of others, unless you have done what is right yourselves. Why, think you, do all the generals¹ whom you commission avoid this war, and seek wars of their own? (for of the generals, too, must a little truth be told.) Because here the prizes of the war are yours; for

¹ A system of employing mercenary troops sprang up at the close of the Peloponnesian war, when there were numerous Grecian bands accustomed to warfare and seeking employment. Such troops were eagerly sought for by the Persian satraps and their king, by such men as Jason of Pheræ, Dionysius of Syracuse, or Philomelus of Phocis. Athens, which had partially employed mercenaries before, began to make use of them on a large scale, while her citizens preferred staying at home to attend to commerce, politics, and idle amusements. The ill effects, however, were soon apparent. Athenian generals, ill supplied with money, and having little control over their followers, were tempted or obliged to engage in enterprises unconnected with, and often adverse to, the interests of their country.

example, if Amphipolis be taken, you will immediately recover it; the commanders have all the risk and no reward. But in the other case the risks are less, and the gains belong to the commanders and soldiers; Lampsacus,¹ Sigeum, the vessels which they plunder. So they proceed to secure their several interests: you, when you look at the bad state of your affairs, bring the generals to trial; but when they get a hearing and plead these necessities, you dismiss them. The result is that, while you are quarrelling and divided, some holding one opinion, some another, the commonwealth goes wrong. Formerly, Athenians, you had boards² for taxes; now you have boards for politics. There is an orator presiding on either side, a general under him, and three hundred men to shout; the rest of you are attached to the one party or the other. This you must leave off; be yourselves again; establish a general liberty of speech, deliberation, and action. If some are appointed to command as with royal authority, some to be ship-captains, tax-payers, soldiers by compulsion, others only to vote against them, and help in nothing besides, no duty will be seasonably performed; the aggrieved parties will still fail you, and you will have to punish them instead of your enemies. I say, in short; you must all fairly contribute, according to each man's ability; take your turns of service till you have all been afield; give every speaker a hearing, and adopt the best counsel, not what this or that person advises. If ye act thus, not only will ye praise the speaker at the moment, but yourselves afterwards, when the condition of the country is improved.

¹ Chares, the Athenian general, was said to have received these Asiatic cities from Artabazus, the Persian satrap, in return for the service he had performed. Probably it was some authority or privileges in those cities, not the actual dominion, that was conferred upon him. Sigeum, which is near the mouth of the Hellespont, and was a convenient situation for his adventures, was the ordinary residence of Chares.

² This refers to the institution of the boards for management of the property-tax at Athens.

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