

to force a way through, since the pass was narrow and the walls extended to the sea and above them were sheer cliffs. There were gates set in each of the fortifications. It was in order to turn this position that Cyrus had sent for his fleet, the plan being to land hoplites on each side of the gates and to force a way through the enemy if they were manning the Syrian gates, which was what he expected that Abrocomas would do, as he had a considerable force with him. However, Abrocomas did not do so, but, as soon as he heard that Cyrus was in Cilicia, he abandoned Phoenicia and marched to join the King with an army which was reported to consist of three hundred thousand.

From here a day's march through Syria of fifteen miles took Cyrus to Myriandrus, a city on the sea, inhabited by Phoenicians. This place was a centre for trade and there were many merchant ships at anchor there. He stayed here for seven days, during which Xenias the Arcadian and Pasion the Megarian got on board a ship, stowed away their most valuable property and sailed off. Most people thought that they did this out of jealousy because Cyrus had allowed Clearchus to keep under his command the soldiers of theirs who had gone over to him when they had the idea of returning to Greece and not marching against the King. After their disappearance the rumour went round that Cyrus was pursuing them with triremes; and some, calling them cowards, hoped that they would be caught, while others felt sorry for them if they were. Cyrus, however, called together the generals and said: 'Xenias and Pasion have left us, but they can be sure enough that they have not got away out of reach. I know the way they have gone and they have not escaped me, since I have triremes which could overtake their ships. But, by Heaven, I am certainly not going to pursue them. No one shall say that I make use of a man while he is in my service, and then, when he wants to leave, that I arrest him and ill-treat him and take

Chapter 4

THROUGH THE SYRIAN GATES AND ACROSS THE EUPHRATES

FROM here a two days' march of thirty miles took him to the river Psarus, which was three hundred feet in breadth. From here one day's march of fifteen miles took him to the river Pyramus, which was six hundred feet in breadth. From here a two days' march of forty-five miles took him to the large and prosperous inhabited city of Issus. It is the last city in Cilicia and is on the sea.

Cyrus stayed three days here and was joined by the ships from the Peloponnese, thirty-five of them with their admiral Pythagoras, a Spartan. They had been conducted from Ephesus by Tamos the Egyptian, who was in command of twenty-five more of Cyrus's ships, with which he had been blockading Miletus when it was friendly to Tissaphernes. Also on board the ships was the Spartan Chirisophus. He had been sent for by Cyrus and came with seven hundred hoplites which he commanded himself within Cyrus's army. The ships lay at anchor opposite Cyrus's tent. Here too the Greek mercenaries employed by Abrocomas, four hundred hoplites, revolted and came over to Cyrus and joined him in the march against the King.

From here a day's march of fifteen miles took him to the Gates of Cilicia and Syria. There were two fortresses; the inner one, covering Cilicia, was held by Syennesis and a garrison of Cilicians, and the outer one, covering Syria, was said to be held by a garrison of the King's soldiers. A river called the Carus, a hundred feet in breadth, runs between the two fortresses. The whole space between the fortifications was six hundred yards, and it was out of the question

away his property. No, let them go, with the knowledge that they have behaved worse to us than we have to them. It is true that I hold their children and women under guard at Tralles, but they will not even lose them. No, they will get them back again in return for the good service they did me in the past.

This was what he said. As for the Greeks, even those who were not very enthusiastic about the journey into the interior, when they heard how well Cyrus had behaved, they were all the more happy and keen to march with him.

After this a four days' march of sixty miles took him to the river Chalus, which was a hundred feet in breadth and full of large tame fish which the Syrians regarded as gods and would not allow anyone to harm them. (They think in the same way about pigeons.) The villages where they pitched their tents were the property of Parysatis, and had been given to her for pin-money.

From here a five days' march of ninety miles took him to the source of the river Dardes, which is a hundred feet in breadth. Here was the palace of Belesys, a previous Governor of Syria, and a very large and beautiful park which had in it all the plants that can possibly be grown. But Cyrus ravaged the ground and burned the palace.

From here a three days' march of forty-five miles took him to the river Euphrates, which was eight hundred yards across. On its banks was a great and prosperous city called Thapsacus,⁹ where he stayed for five days.

At this point Cyrus sent for the Greek generals and told them that he was going to march against the Great King in the direction of Babylon. He asked them to inform the soldiers of this and to persuade them to go with him. The generals convened an assembly and gave Cyrus's message.

9. The site of Thapsacus is uncertain, but was probably near modern Meskeneh.

But the soldiers were in an angry mood. They said that the generals had known this all along but had kept it back, and they refused to go further unless they were given extra money, as had been given to those who had gone up before with Cyrus to the Capital to Cyrus's father; and on that occasion there had been no question of a battle, but Cyrus's father had simply called him to the Court.

The generals reported all this back to Cyrus and he promised to give each man five minae¹⁰ of silver on their arrival at Babylon together with full pay until he had brought the Greeks back to Ionia again. Most of the Greek army was won over by these terms; but Menon, before it was certain what the rest of the army was going to do, and whether it would follow Cyrus or not, called together his own troops apart from the rest and made the following speech: 'Soldiers, if you take my advice, you will, entirely without risk or hardship, get more consideration from Cyrus than all the rest. And this is what I recommend: Cyrus, at the moment, is begging the Greeks to follow him against the King. I say that you should cross the Euphrates before it is certain what reply the other Greeks will make to Cyrus. For then, if they vote in favour of following him, you, by being the first to cross the river, will get the credit for the decision; Cyrus will be grateful to you as being the most enthusiastic of his supporters, and he will show his gratitude. Believe me, he knows how to. And if the others vote against it, we shall all go back again, but he will look upon you, the only ones to obey his orders, as the most reliable people for garrison duties and promotion from the ranks, and whatever else you want I am sure you will get through Cyrus's friendship.'

After hearing this they took his advice and crossed the river before the others had sent their reply. Cyrus was delighted

10. A mina equalled one hundred Attic drachmas, i.e. about four months' pay for the mercenaries.

when he found that they had crossed and he sent Glous to Menon's army with the following message: 'Soldiers, I am pleased with you now. But I shall see to it that you too are pleased with me, or my name is not Cyrus.'

The soldiers on their side, with their great expectations, prayed for his success, and he was said to have sent presents on a very handsome scale to Menon. After this he crossed the river and the whole of the rest of the army followed him. In the crossing no one got wet from the river-water above the nipples. The people of Thapsacus said that this river had never except on this occasion been passable on foot, but could only be crossed in boats;¹¹ and on this occasion Abrocomas had gone ahead and burned the boats to prevent Cyrus from crossing. It seemed certainly that there was something supernatural about it, and that the river had undoubtedly made way for Cyrus since he was destined to become King.

From here there was a nine days' march of one hundred and fifty miles through Syria until they arrived at the river Araxes. Here there were many villages well supplied with corn and wine. They stayed three days and provided themselves with food.

11. Or 'by a bridge of boats', as rivers were frequently crossed in the Persian empire (cf. I.2.5, II.4.13 and 24). Alexander the Great in 331 found two bridges at Thapsacus, the description of which (in Arrian, *Anabasis* III.7.1f.) implies pontoon bridging.

Chapter 5

THE ARABIAN DESERT · QUARREL BETWEEN MENON AND CLEARCHUS

FROM here, with the Euphrates on the right, he moved forward through Arabia. It was a five days' march of a hundred and five miles through the desert. In this part of the world the ground was all one level plain, like the sea. Wormwood was plentiful, and all the other shrubs and reeds which grew there smelt as sweetly as perfume. There were no trees, but there was a great variety of animal life. Wild asses were very common and there were many ostriches; also there were bustards and gazelles. The cavalry hunted all these animals on various occasions. In the case of the wild asses, when anyone chased them, they ran ahead and then stopped still; for they ran much faster than the horses. Then again, when the horses got near, they would do the same thing, and it was impossible to catch them except by stationing the horsemen at intervals from each other and hunting in relays. The flesh of those that were caught was very like venison, only more tender. No one succeeded in catching an ostrich. Indeed the horsemen who tried soon gave up the pursuit, as it made them go a very great distance when it ran from them. It used its feet for running and got under way with its wings, just as if it was using a sail. But one can catch bustards if one puts them up quickly, as they only fly a little way, like partridges, and soon get tired. Their flesh was delicious.

Marching through this country, they came to the river Mascas, which is a hundred feet in breadth. Here there was a deserted city of great size called Corsote. The river Mascas curved right round it. They stayed here three days and provided themselves with food. Then came a thirteen days'

XENOPHON

THE PERSIAN
EXPEDITION

TRANSLATED BY
REX WARNER

*With an Introduction
and Notes by*
GEORGE CAWKWELL

1972

PENGUIN BOOKS