

long way over the plain. When they got nearer, then suddenly there were flashes of bronze, and the spear points and the enemy formations became visible. There were cavalry with white armour on the enemy's left and Tissaphernes was said to be in command of them. Next to them were soldiers with wicker shields, and then came hoplites with wooden shields reaching to the feet. These were said to be Egyptians. Then there were more cavalry and archers. These all marched in tribes, each tribe in a dense oblong formation. In front of them, and at considerable distances apart from each other, were what they called the scythed chariots. These had thin scythes extending at an angle from the axles and also under the driver's seat, turned toward the ground, so as to cut through everything in their way. The idea was to drive them into the Greek ranks and cut through them.

But Cyrus was wrong in what he said at the time when he called together the Greeks and told them to stand their ground against the shouting of the natives. So far from shouting, they came on assilently as they could, calmly, in a slow, steady march.

At this point Cyrus himself with his interpreter Pigres and three or four others rode up and shouted out to Clearchus, telling him to lead his army against the enemy's centre, because that was where the King was. 'And if we win there,' he said, 'the whole thing is over.' Clearchus saw the troops in close order in the enemy's centre and he heard too from Cyrus that the King was beyond the Greek left (so great was the King's superiority in numbers that he, leading the centre of his own army, was still beyond Cyrus's left), but in spite of this he was reluctant, from fear of encirclement, to draw his right wing away from the river. He replied to Cyrus, then, that he would see to it that things went well.

While this was going on the Persian army continued to move steadily forward and the Greeks still remained where

THE BATTLE OF CUNAXA AND DEATH OF CYRUS

Chapter 8

It was already the middle of the morning, and they had nearly reached the place where Cyrus intended to halt, when Pategyas, a Persian and a good friend of Cyrus, came into sight, riding hard, with his horse in a sweat. He immediately began to shout out, in Persian and Greek, to everyone in his way that the King with a great army in order of battle was approaching. There was certainly considerable confusion at this point, for the Greeks and everyone else thought that he would be upon them before they could form up in position. Cyrus leapt down from his chariot, put on his breastplate, mounted his horse and took hold of his javelins. He gave orders for all the rest to arm themselves and to take up their correct positions. This was done readily enough. Clearchus was on the right wing, flanked by the Euphrates, next to him was Proxenus and then the other Greeks, with Menon holding the left wing of the Greek army. As to the native troops, there were about a thousand Paphlagonian cavalry stationed with Clearchus and also the Greek peltasts on the right; Ariaeus, Cyrus's second-in-command, was on the left with the rest of the native army. Cyrus and about six hundred of his personal cavalry in the centre were armed with breast-plates, and armour to cover the thighs. They all wore helmets except for Cyrus, who went into the battle bare-headed. All their horses had armour covering the forehead and breast; and the horsemen also carried Greek sabres.

It was now midday and the enemy had not yet come into sight. But in the early afternoon dust appeared, like a white cloud, and after some time a sort of blackness extending a

they were, and their ranks filled up from those who were continually coming up. Cyrus rode by some way in front of the army and looked along the lines both at the enemy and at his own troops. Xenophon, an Athenian, saw him from his position in the Greek line and, going forward to meet him, asked if he had any orders to give. Cyrus pulled in his horse and said: 'The omens are good and the sacrifices are good.' He told him to tell this to everyone, and while he was speaking he heard a noise going along the ranks and asked what the noise was. Xenophon told him that it was the watchword now being passed along the ranks for the second time. Cyrus wondered who had given the word and asked what it was, and Xenophon told him it was 'Zeus the Deliverer and Victory.' On hearing this Cyrus said: 'Then I accept the word. Let it be so,' and with these words he rode away to his own position in the field.

By now the two armies were not more than between six and eight hundred yards apart, and now the Greeks sang the paean and began to move forward against the enemy. As they advanced, part of the phalanx surged forward in front of the rest and the part that was left behind began to advance at the double. At the same time they all raised a shout like the shout of 'Eleleu' which people make to the War God, and then they were all running forward. Some say that to scare the horses they clashed their shields and spears together. But the Persians, even before they were in range of the arrows, wavered and ran away. Then certainly the Greeks pressed on the pursuit vigorously, but they shouted out to each other not to run, but to follow up the enemy without breaking ranks. The chariots rushed about, some going through the enemy's own ranks, though some, abandoned by their drivers, did go through the Greeks. When they saw them coming the Greeks opened out, though one man stood rooted to the spot, as though he was at a race course, and got run down.

However, even he, they said, came to no harm, nor were there any other casualties among the Greeks in this battle, except for one man on the left wing who was said to have been shot with an arrow.

Cyrus was pleased enough when he saw the Greeks winning and driving back the enemy in front of them, and he was already being bowed to as King by those who were with him; but he was not so carried away as to join in the pursuit. He kept the six hundred cavalry of his personal bodyguard in close order, and watched to see what the King would do, as he was sure that his position was in the Persian centre. Indeed, all Persian commanders are in the centre of their own troops when they go into battle, the idea being that in this way they will be in the safest spot, with their forces on each side of them, and that also if they want to issue any orders, their army will receive them in half the time. The King, too, on this occasion was in the centre of his army, but was all the same beyond Cyrus's left wing. Seeing, then, that no frontal attack was being made either on him or on the troops drawn up to screen him, he wheeled right in an outflanking movement.

Then Cyrus, fearing that the King might get behind the Greeks and cut them up, moved directly towards him. With his six hundred he charged into and broke through the screen of troops in front of the King, routed the six thousand, and is said to have killed their commander, Artageres, with his own hand. But while they turned to flight, Cyrus's own six hundred lost their cohesion in their eagerness for the pursuit, and there were only a very few left with him, mostly those who were called his 'table-companions'. When left with these few, he caught sight of the King and the closely formed ranks around him. Without a moment's hesitation he cried out, 'I see the man,' charged down on him, and struck him a blow on the breast which wounded him through the breastplate,

as Ctesias the doctor says, — saying also that he dressed the wound himself. But while he was in the very act of striking the blow, someone hit him hard under the eye with a javelin. In the fighting there between Cyrus and the King and their supporters, Ctesias (who was with the King) tells how many fell on the King's side. But Cyrus was killed himself, and eight of the noblest of his company lay dead upon his body. It is said that when Artapatas, the most trusted servant among his sceptre-bearers, saw Cyrus fall, he leapt from his horse and threw himself down on him. Some say that the King ordered someone to kill him on top of Cyrus, others that he drew his scimitar and killed himself there. He had a golden scimitar, and used to wear a chain and bracelets and the other decorations like the noblest of the Persians; for he had been honoured by Cyrus as a good friend and a faithful servant.

Chapter 9

THE CHARACTER OF CYRUS

THIS, then, was the end of Cyrus. Of all the Persians who lived after Cyrus the Great, he was the most like a king and the most deserving of an empire, as is admitted by everyone who is known to have been personally acquainted with him. In his early life, when he was still a child being brought up with his brother, and the other children, he was regarded as the best of them all in every way. All the children of Persian nobles are brought up at the Court, and there a child can pick up many lessons in good behaviour while having no chance of seeing or hearing anything bad. The boys see and hear some people being honoured by the King and others being dismissed in disgrace, and so from their childhood they learn how to command and how to obey. Here, at the Court, Cyrus was considered, first, to be the best-behaved of his contemporaries and more willing even than his inferiors to listen to those older than himself; and then he was remarkable for his fondness for horses and being able to manage them extremely well. In the soldierly arts also of archery and javelin-throwing they judged him to be most eager to learn and most willing to practise them. When he got to the age for hunting, he was most enthusiastic about it, and only too ready to take risks in his encounters with wild animals. There was one occasion when a she-bear charged at him and he, showing no fear, got to grips with the animal and was pulled off his horse. The scars from the wounds he got then were still visible on his body, but he killed the animal in the end, and as for the first man who came to help him Cyrus made people think him very lucky indeed.

When he was sent down to the coast by his father as satrap

XENOPHON

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EXPEDITION

TRANSLATED BY
REX WARNER

*With an Introduction
and Notes by*

GEORGE CAWKWELL

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