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LECTURE.

Friday, March 13, 1874.

GENERAL J. R. CRAUFURD in the Chair.

THE RETREAT OF THE TEN THOUSAND; A MILITARY STUDY FOR ALL TIME.

By Major-General J. L. VAUGHAN, C.B.

It has often occurred to me, that in our admiration for the wonderful achievements of war which we have witnessed within the last few years, we are apt to undervalue the exploits of earlier ages, and to forget how much the modern art of war owes to its earlier professors. I would put it to our military professors and students to say if they still give that attention to the campaigns of Alexander, of Hannibal, and of Cæsar, which Napoleon declared them to deserve; and if the modern idea is not that for instruction in the art of war, it is useless to go farther back than the present, or at least than the last century. Yet bold as the assertion may seem, I believe that there are some branches of the art of war which have almost stood still for the last 2,000 years. For instance, does modern history, I would ask, record any military retreat conducted with more ability or more success, through every variety of country and climate, than that famous one of 400 years B.C., which is the subject of my lecture this afternoon? Or, again, in what campaign of modern times have the difficulties incidental to military operations in mountainous countries been more skilfully and successfully surmounted, than I hope to show you they were by Xenophon and his famous Ten Thousand Greeks, when they fought their way, for eight successive days, through the rugged mountains of Kurdistan? It is to the interesting narrative of Xenophon, as bearing chiefly upon these two branches of war, that I now invite your attention.

What this famous body of Greeks, known familiarly as the "Ten Thousand," achieved, may be briefly summarised thus:—

After a march of 1,600 miles from the western coast of Asia Minor to the Plains of Babylon, they defeated the portion of the Persian Army opposed to them in the battle of Cunaxa. The unfortunate death of Cyrus in that battle, and the consequent defeat of the Asiatic portion of the Army, having brought the expedition to an untimely close, they then fought their way homewards, for 1,800 miles, opposed first by hordes of Asiatic cavalry and light troops, and afterwards by a suc-

cession of warlike tribes, who were aided in parts by a most difficult and mountainous country, and by a climate of unusual severity. Nevertheless this body of Greeks eventually reached the shores of the Black Sea, with diminished numbers, it is true, but in unbroken order, and with their discipline and military efficiency unimpaired.

Let me in a few words first recall to your remembrance the circumstances out of which this famous retreat arose, with such further notice of the composition of the Ten Thousand, and of their numbers, drill, and discipline, as may serve to elucidate Xenophon's narrative, and clothe the subject with greater reality, and therefore interest for modern students.

In the year 401 B.C., Cyrus, commonly known as The Younger, being then 24 years old, and the Viceroy over a large portion of Asia Minor for his brother Artaxerxes, King of Persia, formed the design of dethroning his brother, and seizing the Persian crown for himself. During his tenure of the Viceroyalty, he had been brought much into connection with Greeks, and had become deeply impressed with their superior military and political ability, as compared with the native Asiatics. He was therefore naturally led to desire the services of a body of Greek auxiliaries in such an enterprise as he meditated. The times were favourable. The long war, known as the Peloponnesian war, after lasting 27 years, had lately ended. Many Greek citizens, who had served in the war, and become accustomed to a military life, were out of employ. Political causes had sent others into exile. Thus there was no want of eligible recruits, ready enough to enrol themselves under the banner of a young, popular, and openhanded Prince, whose service promised good pay, adventure, and distinction. Indeed, so attractive were the offers of Cyrus, that many young Greeks of good family are said to have run away from their homes to enlist; and sober citizens, hoping to return, after a brief service, with fame and wealth, readily embarked their money in the purchase of arms and outfit, and even advanced funds for the same purpose to their less opulent friends. The inclination to enlist was sharpened by the belief, promoted by Cyrus, that only a short expedition against one of the neighbouring independent provinces was in contemplation.

It is interesting to notice the material of which the Greek force under Cyrus thus came to be composed, because it probably had an important bearing upon its subsequent history. Just as the superiority of modern German Armies is generally attributed to the superior social position of the men whom war places in the ranks, so I think it a fair supposition, that the superior class of men, of whom the ranks of the Ten Thousand were at least partly composed, was a main cause of the success with which they extricated themselves from a situation of unparalleled trial and difficulty.

Recruits being thus plentiful, Cyrus was enabled to commence his expedition with a body of Greeks, amounting to not less than 14,000 of all ranks; but by the time that the real object of the expedition was fully developed, and the combined Greek and Asiatic forces came to be actually arrayed against the Army of Artaxerxes, in the plains of Babylon, the Greek contingent had fallen to 12,800 men. Of this number,

10,400 were of the class called *Hoplites*, or heavy-armed, and 2,400 of the class called *Peltasts*, or light-armed, the latter number including 200 Cretan archers. Of Greek cavalry there were only about 40, and all of these deserted after the battle of Cunaxa. The *Hoplites* of that period wore, as defensive armour, cuirasses and greaves, carried large shields, and were armed with long spears and swords. The *Peltasts* wore defensive armour of a lighter material than the bronze or iron, of which the armour of the *Hoplites* was made. Their shields were small and round, instead of oblong, and their spears were short and handy. They were a description of troops of very recent creation at the time of Cyrus's expedition; but their value, as we shall see, was fully proved in the course of the retreat. All the Greek troops alike were provided with brazen helmets, and their tunics were scarlet or purple.

This large body of Greeks seem to have owned no generalissimo, except Cyrus himself. Each Greek general commanded the men he had himself enlisted as a separate division. Of these generals, Xenophon mentions the names of eight, the most prominent of whom were, in the first instance, Clearchus, Proxenus, and Menon. The characters of all three are drawn by Xenophon with great distinctness, and I shall quote at length his character of Clearchus, because it gives us a curious insight into the state of discipline in the Greek Armies of the period.

"Clearchus," says Xenophon, "liked perilous adventure, was ready to march day and night against the enemy, and was possessed of great presence of mind in circumstances of difficulty, as those who were with him on all such occasions were universally ready to acknowledge. For commanding troops he was qualified in as great a degree as was consistent with his temper, for he was excelled by no one in ability to contrive how an Army might have provisions, and to procure them; and he was equally fitted to impress on all around him the necessity of obeying Clearchus! This he effected by severity, for he was of a stern countenance and harsh voice; and he always punished violently, and sometimes in anger, so that he occasionally repented of what he had done. He punished, too, on principle, for he thought that there could be no efficiency in an Army undisciplined by chastisement. He was accustomed to say that a soldier ought to fear his commander more than the enemy, if he would either keep guard well, or abstain from doing injury to friends, or march without hesitation against foes. In circumstances of danger accordingly the soldiers were willing to obey him implicitly, and wished for no other leader, for they said that the sternness of his countenance then assumed an appearance of cheerfulness, and that what was severe in it seemed undauntedness against the enemy; so that it appeared indicative of safety and not of austerity. But when they were out of danger, and at liberty to betake themselves to other chiefs, they deserted him in great numbers, for he had nothing attractive in him, but was always forbidding and repulsive, so that the soldiers felt to him as boys towards their master. Hence it was that he never had anyone who followed him out of friendship and attachment to his person; though such as followed him, from being appointed to the

"service by their country, or from being compelled by want or other necessity, he found extremely submissive to him. And when they began under his command to gain victories over the enemy, many circumstances concurred to render his troops excellent soldiers, for their perfect confidence against the enemy had its effect, and their dread of punishment from him rendered them strictly observant of discipline. Such was his character as a commander, but he was said to have been by no means willing to be commanded by others."

From this description of Clearchus's treatment of his soldiers, and the habitual severity imputed to him, we may see at once that Greek Armies were at least not what Sir Charles Napier called "Debating Societies," and that the soldiers on the contrary, were subjected to what even we, with our modern ideas, should consider very harsh discipline. This view is further confirmed by several circumstances in the history of the Ten Thousand which Xenophon incidentally relates. Thus, on one occasion we read of Clearchus inflicting a flogging upon a soldier of Menon's division, whom he judged to be in the wrong in a dispute with one of his own men; and though this nearly led to a very serious affray between the two divisions, yet the grievance was, not the nature of the punishment, but that it had been inflicted on a soldier not under the authority of Clearchus. On another occasion, when a road was being made for the passage of the Army, we find this same Clearchus, whose authority as Commander-in-Chief of the Greek Auxiliaries seems in the progress of the campaign to have become tacitly acknowledged, superintending the labour of the soldiers with his spear in his left hand, and a stick in his right, and freely belabouring those who did not work to his satisfaction. Even Xenophon, who ordinarily trusted almost entirely to his power of oratorical persuasion, did not hesitate, when he rose to command, to strike with his fist, soldiers whom he could not otherwise compel to the requisite exertion, and we know that the Army generally fully justified him for doing so.

And now one word as to the drill and tactical instruction of the Greek troops.

The drill of Cyrus's Greek Auxiliaries appears to have been of a very elastic kind, and to have admitted of a variety of formations according to the circumstances of the moment. For instance, when it was desired to make an imposing display of the troops, as on the occasion of a review before the Cilician Queen, described by Xenophon, the Greeks were drawn up in a four-deep line. At the battle of Cunaxa a similar, or certainly not more solid, formation was adopted; the Greek Commanders having doubtless accurately gauged the character of the troops opposed to them. Later on, when the attacks of a numerous cavalry and light troops in an open country had to be provided against, a hollow square, with advance and rear guard, was the formation adopted; and this again was quickly modified as soon as its inconvenience was experienced. When the progress of the retreat took the Ten Thousand into a mountainous country, they seem chiefly to have fought in small independent parties or companies; and in the last serious engagement before they reached the sea, they adopted with

Map
 REPRESENTING THE ENTIRE UPWARD MARCH,
 and
 RETREAT OF THE TEN THOUSAND GREEKS.
 The line of march is shown thus -----

great success what was clearly a line of company columns, as I shall have occasion to notice in greater detail further on.

The expeditionary force of which the Greek contingent thus formed so important a part, commenced its march from the neighbourhood of the well-known town of Sardis in Asia Minor, in the month of March, 401 B.C. Including the native Asiatic troops, the Army consisted of not less than 110,000 men. From Sardis to the plains of Babylon, no enemy was encountered; but the incidents of this prolonged march, though not coming within the scope of this paper, were of the most interesting character. At length, six months after leaving Sardis, the crisis of the expedition arrived. The Army of the Persian King was discovered on the plain of Cunaxa, 36 miles from Babylon, advancing in battle array. The troops of Cyrus were immediately disposed in an order of battle previously determined on. The Greek Auxiliaries took the right of the line, resting on the River Euphrates, the Asiatic troops forming the centre and left. Cyrus's orders to Clearchus the senior Greek Officer, were to direct his attack against the Persian centre, where he perceived that the King had posted himself; justly concluding, that if the centre were once broken, the day would be won. Clearchus, however, fearing that his flank would be turned if he abandoned the support of the Euphrates, disobeyed these instructions, and led his Greeks straightforward against the Persian left wing. The formidable appearance of the Greeks, and their steady advance in line, chanting the accustomed pæan or war song, was quite sufficient to daunt the Persian troops opposed to them, and cause them to take to flight; but while Clearchus continued his victorious advance, matters fared very differently with the centre and left of the allied line. In the centre Cyrus was at first successful in a charge he made, with 600 chosen followers, upon the far more numerous body of horse, which guarded the person of the Persian King. But this success, by causing his followers to disperse in pursuit, was fatal to the life of Cyrus. Though he found himself almost unattended, he could not restrain himself from making a vehement attack upon his brother, whose person he recognised. In this ill-judged attack he was slain; upon which the whole of the native troops on the left were seized with a panic, and fled from the field in irretrievable disorder. When Clearchus, at the head of his victorious Greeks, at last became aware that he was unsupported, he countermarched the Greek line, and led it back towards the field of battle. He was met by Artaxerxes returning from the plunder of the Allied camp, and dispositions were immediately made on both sides for a renewal of the battle. The Greeks manœuvred so as to get the river in their rear, and then advancing with the same intrepidity which had served them so well before, dispersed the enemy without difficulty, and remained masters of the field of battle.

The night which followed, was passed in much discomfort and perplexity by the Greeks, who were still ignorant of the fate of Cyrus. When apprised next morning of his death, an event so disastrous to their future prospects, it may well be imagined how quickly their feelings of triumph at their own victory, were exchanged for dismay and apprehension. Bitterly, but unavailingly, must they then have

regretted the venture into which they had been seduced by Cyrus. And indeed, when we contemplate the forlorn condition of this Greek division, thus left to their own resources in the neighbourhood of Babylon, we need not be surprised that both Commanders and soldiers were well nigh overwhelmed with despair. The Army had come 93 days' march, exclusive of halts, from the western coast of Asia Minor. This long line of march had been planned with the greatest forethought by Cyrus, but even under such advantages, the Army had all but experienced, on more than one occasion, an utter failure of supplies. Now, the only course that seemed open, to the Greek division at least, was to retrace their steps. But in so doing they would have to shift for themselves, and to march probably without map, certainly without guides, without knowledge of roads or distances, without any one to indicate or furnish supplies, and with the whole force of the Persian Empire arrayed against them. The single consolatory circumstance was the reflection of the ease with which in actual fight they had defeated the enemy. This reflection probably saved them from utter despair, and induced them, in the tedious negotiations which followed, to adopt a tone of confidence and superiority, which in reality they were far from feeling. Time forbids me to enter into any detailed account of the anxious events of the next six weeks. It must suffice to say that under a convention with the Persian King, the Greeks eventually agreed to place themselves under the guidance of the Satrap Tissaphernes, who solemnly engaged to lead them back to the Greek colonies on the west coast of Asia Minor. In pursuance of this arrangement, and amidst constantly increasing suspicions of treachery, which, as the event showed, were only too well founded, the Greeks, 46 days after the battle of Cunaxa, arrived at the River Zabatus, an eastern affluent of the Tigris. Here Tissaphernes consummated his treachery by the seizure and murder, at a conference to which he had invited them, of five of the leading Greek Generals, and about 20 inferior Officers. This event, which deprived them of their leaders, seemed to annihilate the last chance which remained to the Greek troops of a safe return to their country.

It is at this point of the history that Xenophon, who was to play so important a part in the subsequent retreat, first appears upon the scene. He was an Athenian citizen, who had so far accompanied the Army in a private capacity only, that is to say, as a guest of one of the murdered Generals, Proxenus. His connection with the Army had therefore up to this time been of a no more official character than that of the "special correspondent" of our own day, of which enterprising class Xenophon may fairly be considered the prototype. On the mournful night which followed the seizure and murder of the Generals, Xenophon, like the rest of the Greeks, lay down to rest wakeful and dispirited. He tells us, that falling as he did into a brief sleep, he dreamt that he heard thunder, and saw a burning thunder-bolt fall on his paternal house, which was forthwith encircled with fire. The dream seemed to his excited imagination to be divinely sent in order to rouse him to exertion, and to stimulate him to break through the stupor which was fatally affecting all ranks.

His first step was to call together some of the Captains who belonged to the division to which he had more immediately attached himself, and to urge upon them the necessity of immediate action. These Officers at once came into Xenophon's views, and encouraged him to address himself to the surviving Officers of the other divisions. These also assenting, the assembled Officers proceeded at once to elect new Generals and Officers in the place of those murdered, and to convene the Army in general assembly, in order to submit and obtain confirmation of the new appointments, as well as to decide on further measures. Xenophon, in this general assembly, was again the principal spokesman; and on his recommendation, the most vigorous resolutions were passed. It was determined that there should be no surrender; that all wheeled carriages and superfluous baggage should be at once destroyed; that the Army thus lightened should then march to the nearest villages where provisions were obtainable; that the march should be in hollow square, with baggage and followers in the centre; that Cheirisophus, one of the surviving Generals, should, in virtue of his being a Lacedæmonian (Sparta was then supreme in Greece), lead the van of the Army; that certain other of the Generals should command on the flanks; and that Xenophon and Timasion, the two Generals youngest in age, should command in rear. This, I may remark, was Xenophon's post throughout this retreat; and we may judge, by the invariable steadiness and enterprise displayed by the rear guard, how soon both Officers and men felt the influence of his resolution and spirit.

We may now therefore consider this famous retreat fairly commenced. The soldiers, after destroying all superfluous baggage, took such refreshment as was procurable, and the line of march was formed. Cheirisophus led the advanced guard, which was composed of 300 picked *Hoplites* or heavy infantry, and a due proportion of *Peltasts*, or light infantry. Then followed the main body in hollow square; and Xenophon brought up the rear, with a rear guard, also composed of *Hoplites* and *Peltasts*, and a detachment of Cretan archers and javelin-men. The rear guard was harassed during the whole of this march by a body of Persian cavalry and light troops. The Greek light troops, overpowered by numbers, were driven in; and this obliged Xenophon to employ his heavy infantry to repel and pursue the enemy, a service for which they were ill adapted, and which they performed with indifferent success. Impressed with the serious danger which thus threatened the Army from the inferiority of their light troops, and entire want of cavalry, the Greek Commanders devoted the night which followed to organising a small body of 50 cavalry, to replace the horsemen who had deserted after the battle, mounting them upon the spare horses belonging to the murdered Generals and other Officers. They also induced some 200 Rhodians, noted as adepts in the use of the sling, to form themselves into a body of volunteer slingers. The rear guard having been thus reinforced, it fared better the next day. As soon as the Persian cavalry and light troops approached to attack, the trumpet sounded, and the Greek cavalry and the slingers issued forth, being duly supported by the infantry of both classes. The charge was so boldly pushed by the

Greek horsemen, that several of the enemy were overtaken and killed, and 18 of their cavalry made prisoners. This bold reprisal deterred the enemy from attempting any annoyance during the two next days' march. But on the third day a much more serious attack was made by the traitor Tissaphernes in person, at the head of largely increased numbers. The Rhodian slingers, however, used their slings, and the Cretan archers their bows, with such good effect, that the Persians were soon driven to a respectful distance, and contented themselves for the rest of the day with following and observing the line of march. It was at this period of the retreat that the Greek Commanders saw the necessity of modifying the hollow square in which the main body had hitherto marched. To correct the liability of such an unwieldy formation becoming disordered, when passing obstacles on the line of march, they caused a number of detached companies to move upon the flanks, so as to be ready at once to fill up gaps and to rectify any disorder; another instance, you will observe, of Greek fertility of resource, and of the adaptability of their tactical formations to all circumstances.

For the next four days the retreat was continued without material incident; but on the fifth day the character of the country changed. The road now lay through a succession of low hills, above which, on the right flank of the Army, rose a lofty mountain. The order of march which had hitherto served the Greeks so well, now became unsuitable; and as the exigency had not been foreseen, no provision had been made for it, and some disorder ensued. Taking advantage of the ground, and of the close formation of the Greeks, the Persians pressed the few Greek light troops who were available to oppose them so hardly, that they drove them, in great discouragement, within the square. This obliged the heavy infantry to take up the fighting; but though their spirit was excellent, they were necessarily at great disadvantage in following the enemy over such ragged ground. This was the first experience of hill warfare which the Greek commanders had had; but they seem to have grasped the correct principles of such warfare at once. A strong body of *Peltasts*, a description of troops which, as I have already endeavoured to explain, combined some portion of the steadiness and solidity of the *Hoplites*, or heavy infantry, with the agility of light troops, was at once called out from the right flank of the column, and directed to scale the mountain, and establish themselves on the summit, and thereby gain the command of the enemy. As soon as this was accomplished, the enemy gave way, and no longer attempted to oppose the march of the main body. The detachment of *Peltasts* was then ordered to continue its march along the summit of the mountain, abreast of the column; and presently the main body reached some well-stored villages, where the whole force reposed for three days, to make arrangements for the wounded, who were numerous, and to reorganise for future efforts. "Here," says Xenophon, "it was found necessary to appoint eight surgeons for the Army."

Not discouraged by their failure on the last occasion to stop the march of the Greeks, the enemy, a few days later, availed themselves of a similar advantage of ground to repeat the attempt. But the

Greek Generals were this time fully prepared. A strong body of the *Peltasts*, or light infantry, who had done such good service on the previous occasion, was quickly formed; and, having been strengthened by the addition of the 300 picked *Hoplites* of the advanced guard, was instructed to obtain possession of a lofty mountain summit which commanded the enemy's position. Xenophon himself took the command. As soon as the Persians perceived the design of the Greeks, they also sent off a party to get possession of the summit. Then ensued a scene, the like of which has often been seen in the rough mountain warfare of our Indian north-west frontier. Loud cheers rose from the main body of the Greeks, as they watched the efforts of their comrades to gain the summit of the mountain, and were answered by corresponding shouts of encouragement from the main body of the, Persians. Xenophon relates that whilst he was urging on his men, a heavy-armed soldier taunted him with being on horseback, whilst he was sweating under his shield on foot! Xenophon replied to the taunt by jumping from his horse, pushing the soldier from the ranks, seizing his shield, and making his way up the rugged mountain on foot as fast as he was able. But this so displeased the other soldiers, that they beat and pelted the man, and obliged him to resume his shield. Xenophon thereupon remounted, and led his men as before, until the difficulty of the ground obliged him again to dismount, and abandon his horse. The race, however, was eventually won by the Greeks, and as soon as the Persian main body found themselves under command from the mountain, they took to flight.

The progress of the retreat now led the Greeks into the difficult and mountainous country inhabited by the Carduchi, the progenitors, I believe, of the modern *Kurds*. Anyone who may have served on the north-west frontier of India—at Peshawur, for instance—will be able to form a good idea from his own experience of what the Carduchi and their country were like. The Carduchi were clearly the prototype of the modern Afreedee, just as their country in its rugged features appears to have afforded a striking resemblance to the mountainous tract which lies between Peshawur and Jelalabad. Just as at this day, too, legends are current on the frontier, of invading armies annihilated in those formidable mountains, so in Xenophon's time was there a legend of an Army of 120,000 Persians having been destroyed to a man, in the Carduchian hills, whilst endeavouring to levy tribute. To this day it is, I am told, the common boast of the modern Kurds, that they have never yet paid tribute to King or Kaiser. That a body of 10,000 Greeks should have been able to force a passage through such a country, was surely an achievement, the merit of which may fairly compare with that of the forcing of the Khyber Pass, in the second Afghan war;—a feat of arms which brought just fame to a distinguished Vice-Patron of this Institution, whom death has lately taken from amongst us.*

I must not pause to relate the admirable arrangements by which the Greek Commanders effected a first entrance into the Carduchian moun-

* Field-Marshal Sir George Pollock, Bart., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., &c.

tains; but I will take the narrative of two subsequent days' march to illustrate my assertion that there are some branches of the art of war—notably that of mountain warfare—which seem to have been as well understood 2,000 years ago as they are at present. On the third day's march through this difficult country of the Carduchians, Xenophon, as usual in command of the rear guard, had been severely pressed by the enemy throughout the march. His repeated messages to the advanced guard to halt, had received no attention. When at last the encamping ground was reached, Xenophon reproached Cheirisophus for this neglect; but that general excused himself by pointing to a crowd of the enemy occupying the crest of a pass a little further on, over which the road lay. It happened by good fortune that the rear-guard had that day made two prisoners, by means of a judicious ambushade. Questioned if there was no other road than that thus pre-occupied by the enemy, one of these prisoners refused all information. The stern measure was immediately adopted of putting him to death, in presence of his comrade. His fellow-prisoner then admitted that he knew of another road, so easy as to be passable even for the baggage animals, but that it was commanded at one point by a hill, which it would be indispensable to secure. Thereupon the Greek Commanders demanded to know what Officers would volunteer for this service; upon which four Captains stepped forward, Aristonymus, Agasias, Callimachus, and Aristas, all four being Officers whose names recur again and again in the narrative as distinguishing themselves in similar emergencies. The Generals then proceeded to allot 2,000 soldiers to serve under the above captains, and I may remark that these 2,000 men do not appear to have been, like the Officers, *volunteers*, but to have been told off by ordinary roster for the duty:—a circumstance which cannot fail to give us a favourable impression of the discipline and good spirit which prevailed in the force, and of the ready obedience yielded by the men to their Officers, even when the service for which they were required was one of peculiar hardship and danger. The “Ten Thousand” seem to have had a provident habit of always taking a meal before setting out upon an enterprise, and the rule was not neglected on this occasion. Xenophon relates that the party, *having dined*, set off by a circuitous route, whilst he himself led out the rear guard to the front of camp, for the purpose of distracting the enemy's attention by a feigned attack. The employment of the *rear guard* on this duty is worthy of note, because it indicates the good spirit of the men composing it, and their attachment to Xenophon, that they should have been ready to follow him on a service from which, as the rear guard of the Army, they might easily have claimed exemption. Their good spirit is still further shown by the fact, which Xenophon is careful to record, namely, that when he led them back to camp at nightfall, the men had not yet broken their fast during the whole day.

In the darkness of the night the party, under the volunteer Officers, missed seizing the height which the guide had indicated, but they surprised a picquet of the enemy, whose watchfires the Greeks found very acceptable during the night, and took up a position, from which they were able the next morning effectually to surprise and rout the Car-

duchian Army, which occupied the pass. A bugle signal immediately informed the main body of the Greeks that the road was free, and they marched up the pass unopposed, though much delayed by the extremely difficult nature of the ground. Xenophon, as previously arranged, conducted the rear guard and baggage by the route taken by the detachment the evening before; and his record of this day's work reads like a page from the despatches of some of our Indian frontier campaigns. He divided his men into two parties, with the baggage between them. The Carduchians, as soon as they saw these dispositions, took post upon three heights in succession, each of which commanded the road. The first height was immediately stormed, with great resolution, by the Greeks, and a party left to hold it, until the baggage and rear guard should have passed. The second height was carried in the same determined way; and the enemy then abandoned the third without resistance. But observing the weakness of the Greek detachment left to occupy the first height, the Carduchians returned, and attacked it with such vigour, that they quickly retook it, killing all the Greeks, who did not save themselves by hurriedly leaping down the rocks. After this success, the Carduchians immediately occupied a height contiguous to the third hill, which Xenophon in person was holding with only a few men, having sent forward the bulk of his party with orders to halt, and pile arms upon a level plateau a little further on. When the time came for Xenophon to withdraw his men from the height, in order to join his advanced party, he experienced exactly the difficulty which to this day constantly occurs in hill warfare under similar circumstances. Emboldened by seeing the Greeks begin to retire, the mountaineers pressed forward, and commenced rolling down big stones upon them from the hill top. So bold did they become, that Xenophon himself, being deserted by his shield bearer, was for a time in great danger, and was only saved by the devotion of one of his men. However, this hard day's work at last came to an end, and we learn with satisfaction that when, as night fell, the rear guard rejoined the main body, they found it established in a comfortable village, and in the midst of abundance of provisions.

The rest of the march through this difficult country was attended with similar incidents, and Xenophon sums up his narrative of it thus:—

“Whenever the enemy impeded the front, Xenophon, ascending the hills from the rear, endeavoured to get above and dislodge them; and when they attacked the rear, Cheirisophus, from the front, did the same. Thus the front and rear of the Army mutually relieved and supported each other. Sometimes, too, when the Greeks had ascended a hill, the Carduchians gave them great annoyance when the time came to retire from it; and as they were extremely active, and encumbered with no other weapons than bows and slings, they could always escape, even though they had but a short start. As archers they were most expert; their arrows penetrated through shields and corslets, and were of such a length, that our soldiers would pick them up, and use them as javelins.” “Our own Cretan

"bowmen," concludes Xenophon, "rendered great service in this warfare, under their commander, Stratocles."

Enough has been said, I think, to prove that the Ten Thousand had fully mastered the tactical principles of mountain warfare, and that they proceeded exactly as modern troops would do under the same circumstances. I will now pass to a different operation of war, and relate by what able manœuvres the Ten Thousand on one occasion passed a rapid river, in the face of an enemy, threatening them both in front and rear.

When the Ten Thousand, after eight days' continuous fighting, emerged from the Carduchian mountains, they found their further progress barred by the Centrites, a rapid, breast-deep stream, 200 feet broad, and with a bottom of slippery boulders. On the opposite side a body of horse was seen drawn up upon the water's edge, and supported by a force of infantry on the high bank above. What rendered the situation still more embarrassing was, that the Carduchian mountaineers, of whose prowess the Greeks had lately had such ample experience, were collected in great numbers on the slopes of the mountains in rear, prepared to descend and attack as soon as the passage of the river should commence.

After several trials the river was found too deep and too rapid to be forded, and the Greek soldiers halted on the bank, anxious and desponding. Accident, however, revealed an easier ford, about half a mile off, up-stream, which promised the further advantage that the nature of the ground on the opposite bank was unsuitable for the action of the enemy's horse. To this ford the Army was immediately conducted in two divisions, and orders were given that the first division, led by Cheirisophus, should first effect a crossing, the companies marching independently, in file, or, possibly, column of sections. As soon as the first division was well advanced in the stream, Xenophon countermarched the second division, and led it back as if to pass at the point originally attempted. When this movement of Xenophon's was perceived, the enemy's horse, fearing to be intercepted between the two divisions, took to flight, and were promptly pursued by the small band of Greek cavalry, and by the light troops of the first division. Cheirisophus, as soon as he had got his whole division across, marched straight against the enemy's infantry, on the high bank; and Xenophon, observing the successful progress of the first division, abandoned his feint, and marched back to the crossing place. In the meantime the Carduchians descended from their mountains, and Xenophon, to oppose them, had to form a portion of his division into line, whilst the baggage and the remainder of the division crossed the river as fast as possible. To assist Xenophon, Cheirisophus now sent back the light troops which had crossed with the first division, desiring them to advance some way into the stream, as if intending to recross. Xenophon's orders to his men were that, as soon as the Carduchians should arrive within effective slinging and shooting distance, the Greek line should advance at the charging step to meet them, raising the accustomed martial shout. Inadequately armed for close combat on the plain, the Carduchians did not await the Greek onset, and their flight was hastened by the Greek trumpets loudly sounding the signal to charge,

a sound doubtless well known to the mountaineers, from their recent experience. But at this signal the Greeks, previously instructed, instead of continuing, suspended their charge, and turning to the right-about, crossed the river with all speed, under cover of the light troops of the first division, a few of whom, having in their eagerness recrossed too far, were wounded in this duty. By these able manœuvres the Greeks effected the passage of the river with trifling loss, in the face of an enemy both in front and rear.

The last tactical lesson in the art of war which I shall permit myself to draw from Xenophon's narrative of the retreat of the Ten Thousand will be the forcing of the mountain ridge described as forming the boundary of the Colchian country. It gives me particular pleasure to draw your attention to this incident of the retreat, because it appears to me that the tactical formation adopted by the Greek Commanders on this occasion bears considerable affinity to the company-column mode of attack which has been so successfully adopted by the German Armies in recent campaigns. The Colchian mountaineers appear to have occupied in great strength the summit of a lofty mountain ridge, which it was indispensable for the Greeks to cross. It was at first intended that the ascent should be made in line; but Xenophon objected to this formation for the following reasons:—"A line," said he, "will probably fall into speedy disorder, if only from the rugged nature of the ground; and besides this disadvantage, unless the line is formed of considerable depth it will be liable to be broken—perhaps in several places at once—by any resolute onset of the enemy; and if to meet this possibility greater depth be given to the line, our front will be so narrowed that our flanks will be overlapped by the enemy. I therefore propose that we advance in a line of company columns at such distance from each other as to present a front equal to the enemy's. In this formation, each company, whilst preserving the general direction, will be able to choose its own path up the mountain; and if any one company should be hard pressed, it will receive ready support from those on its right and left; and if even a single company is able to reach the top, we may be sure the enemy will no longer be able to hold their ground."

Xenophon's plan was adopted, and the Greek *Hoplites*, or heavy infantry, were accordingly formed for the ascent of the mountain in 80 company columns of about 80 men each. The *Peltasts*, or light infantry, were formed in three separate bodies of about 600 men each, and distributed, one in the centre, and one on each of the flanks of the general line. In this elastic, and yet truly formidable formation, the ascent commenced, the light infantry on each flank, led respectively by Xenophon and Cheirisophus in person, pushing forward somewhat in advance of the main body. The Colchians, to meet the danger which thus threatened their flanks, reinforced them by drawing men from their centre; observing which, the Commander of the centre body of light troops (whose name Xenophon has not omitted to record) with great readiness gave the order to his men to "double," and established himself, with slight resistance, on the summit of the mountain, quickly followed by a support of Hoplite or heavy com-

panies. This success of the centre led, as Xenophon had anticipated, to the speedy flight of the Colchians, and the abandonment of the whole position.

This is the last tactical lesson of the retreat to which time permits me to draw your attention. But the real lesson which this famous retreat teaches the soldiers of all time, lies far deeper, I need hardly say, than mere tactics. The real lesson which I conceive we have to learn from it is, that under the most adverse circumstances—and truly I do not think any body of men ever found themselves under *more* adverse circumstances—if soldiers will only be true to themselves, if they will only determine that come what will, there shall be no surrender, they may confidently hope to emerge victorious from any and every trial. More than this, surely the retreat of the Ten Thousand shows how invaluable may be the efforts of a single man in an Army, even though not at first clothed with authority and in possession of high military rank, if he only determinedly sets himself to rouse and stimulate the flagging spirits of those around him, whether Officers or soldiers. And, further, let us recognise and profit by this example of the value of a leader at least of men of education and decent social position in the ranks of an Army. Thus, if there had been no Xenophon to point out to the Greeks after the loss of their principal Commanders, and many of their most influential Officers, that their circumstances, though dismal enough, were yet by no means desperate, and that by a resolute effort they might yet hope to open a road to their own country, the Army would, it can hardly be doubted, have thrown up the game by an ignominious surrender, and the history of the retreat would never have been written. Again, if resolution had not been seconded by that readiness of resource and spirit of intelligent action which belongs to education and superior social position, is it not probable that the Greeks would have succumbed to the numerous adverse circumstances which arose one after another in the course of this prolonged retreat?—a retreat which, lastly, it must not be forgotten, carried the Army through a region, the winter of which was hardly less severe than that which proved so fatal to the veteran soldiers of Napoleon, and in which the sufferings of the Greeks from the cold are described in language which reads like a page from Alison or Thiers.

You will, I think, desire that I should, by way of conclusion, briefly recall to your recollection what befell this famous body of men in the later stages of their history. None of us, I suppose, can have forgotten the memorable and affecting scene when the Army first caught sight of the Euxine, and the enthusiastic shouts of *Thalatta! Thalatta!* the Sea! the Sea! with which the soldiers hailed the emblem of their deliverance. The point at which the Ten Thousand, a few days later, struck the shores of the Black Sea, was the modern Trebizond, then a Greek maritime colony under the name of Trapezus. The inhabitants of Trebizond received their countrymen in the most hospitable manner, and afforded them every assistance in their power; but they were still obliged to trust to their own exertions for supplies of food, which they obtained by frequent expeditions directed against the indigenous tribes of the neighbourhood. From Trebizond, after a month's repose,

such as it was, the Greeks continued their march, along the shores of the Black Sea to Kotyora, also a Greek colony. From the field of battle at Cunaxa, to Kotyora, the distance marched by the Greeks is computed at something over 1,800 miles. The battle was fought in the beginning of September, and the Greeks arrived at Kotyora in the middle of May following;—the retreat having thus lasted over more than eight months.

At Kotyora the Army embarked in transports, which had been collected for the purpose from the various Greek maritime colonies on the coast, and was conveyed as far as Kalpe by sea, landing on the way at Sinope (which bore the same name then as now), and being hospitably entertained by the inhabitants, their countrymen. From Kalpe, after many adventures, the Army forced its way by land through the rude tribes of Thracian Bithynia, and at last reached Chrysopolis, a town which was to the Byzantium of those days what Scutari now is to Constantinople. At Chrysopolis the Greeks halted for a week to dispose of the slaves and plunder which they had acquired on the march through Bithynia. But the presence of so formidable a Greek force at that point was so menacing to the safety of the adjoining Persian province, that the Governor, Pharnabazus, set on foot an intrigue with Anaxibius, the representative of the Lacedæmonian power (then paramount throughout Greece) at Byzantium, with a view to his decoying the Greeks, under a promise of pay and employment, out of Asia into Europe. The army accordingly crossed the Bosphorus to Byzantium. After enduring subsequently the shabbiest and harshest treatment from Anaxibius, the Greeks—now reduced to about 6,000 men, but still commanded by Xenophon—were driven by their necessities to accept the offers of the barbarian King of the adjoining country of Thrace, who, after employing them for two months in a winter campaign, ended by defrauding them of the pay he had promised them. Finally, this gallant and ill-used body of men accepted service under the Lacedæmonian banner in Asia Minor, against their old enemy Tissaphernes; and after campaigns of several years' duration, through most of which they still had the advantage of Xenophon's leadership, they ended their service, as a united body, under the generalship-in-chief of Agesilaus, King of Sparta, at the hard fought battle of Koroneia, *B.C.* 394, in which the Theban troops first showed their ability to hold their own against the veteran soldiers of Sparta.