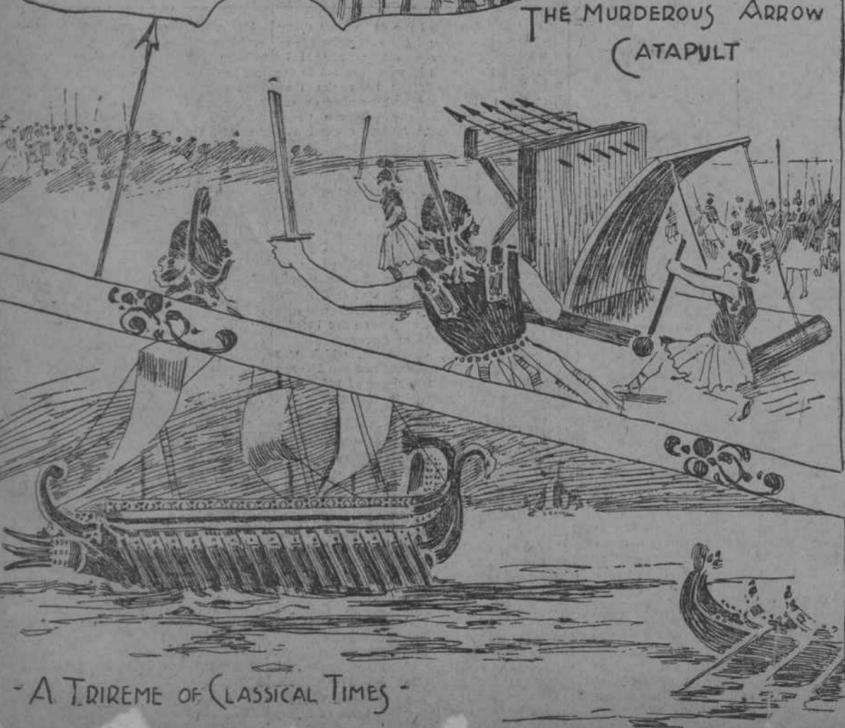
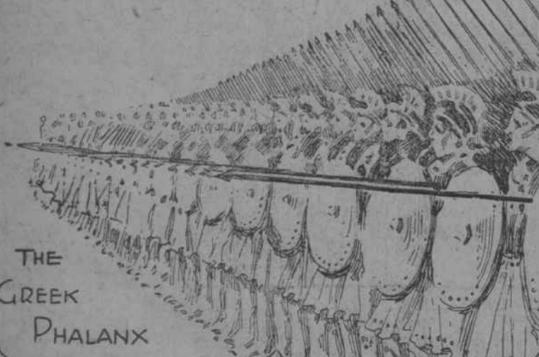


HOW THEY USED TO MAKE WAR IN GREECE

How the Greeks Fought the Barbarian Hordes in the Days of Leonidas, Miltiades and Alexander.

And the Way They Do It To-day.

How the Greeks Fought the Turks According to the Up-to-Date Science of Land and Naval Warfare.



TO-DAY the Greeks are fighting a gallant but a losing fight for the land which they love as well as their ancestors who died at Thermopylae. Their foes are the Turkish barbarians, who hate Christianity and civilization as much as they hate the Greeks.

The battles of the present war have taken place on ground that is more historical than any in the world. Here more than twenty centuries ago the ancient Greeks developed the art of war to such a pitch that even modern soldiers must study their methods. They also set examples of personal bravery that men will never forget.

To know something of ancient Greek warfare is thoroughly worth while, and the present moment is a peculiarly appropriate one for the study. That excellent military writer, Colonel Theodore A. Dodge, of the United States Army, says that the science of war is not more perfect to-day, according to our resources in the arts and mechanics, than it was in the days of Alexander.

Napoleon said that one could only become a successful general by studying the great captains, beginning with Alexander. Frederick the Great's victory at Leuthen was due to his knowledge of the tactics of Epaminondas at Leuctra. The passage of the Hydarnes by Alexander has been the model for the crossing of rivers ever since.

As a campaigner, the old Greek soldier has never been surpassed. The marches of Alexander in Asia were stupendous. In one important respect the modern soldiers can claim superiority over the ancient. They have sustained heavier losses in battle.

At Marathon is found one of the first and most marked illustrations of what is known in military science as grand tactics.

Darius, the great King of Persia, invaded Greece and was met by the Athenians and Plataeans at Marathon. Miltiades, who commanded the Greeks, had but 11,000 men; the Persians had ten times as many. The latter lay on the seashore in front of their fleet. To reach and lean his flanks on two brooks running to the sea, Miltiades made his centre thin, his wings strong, and advanced sharply on the enemy.

With his wings he scattered the Persian array, but the deep Persian line broke through his weak centre. Miltiades had either anticipated and prepared his army for this, or else seized the occasion by a stroke of genius. The Persian troops followed hard after the broken centre. Miltiades caused each wing to wheel inward, and fell upon both flanks of the Persian advance, absolutely overwhelming it and throwing it back upon the main line in such confusion as to lead to complete victory.

This was one of the earliest occasions on which the Greeks departed from their plan of fighting on parallel order to their adversaries. Marathon is about eighteen miles north east of Athens, and its site is well marked to-day.

Leonidas is represented now by the Crown Prince Constantine, if by any one. The latter is a brave soldier, and unfortunate like his immortal predecessor. A curious fact that there is some reason to believe that a considerable number of Teutonic people found their way into classical Greece, thereby providing the fair-haired Greeks so much admired by Homer and other writers. If that is true, Constantine, a Dane born in Greece, may not be so far removed in blood from Leonidas as one would at first suppose.

The Persian invaders of ancient Greece may be compared to the Turks of to-day. Like the latter, they were personally brave, but they were also less barbarous. Thermopylae typifies all that is noble in Greek military history. It was the scene of the fight of Leonidas and 300 Spartans against the uncounted hordes of Xerxes, the Persian. It failed, but has left an undying fame. Its memory inspires the Greeks of to-day, and if, like Leonidas and his Spartans, they are falling, they are yet

striving nobly to follow the example of their glorious ancestors.

Perhaps in a few days the Turks will swarm over what was once the pass of Thermopylae. It led from Thessaly, where the two armies are now fighting, into Locris. It lay between Mount Oeta and an inaccessible morass forming the edge of the Malis Gulf. At one end of the pass the mountain approached so close to the morass as to leave room for only a single carriage to pass.

In the year 480 B. C. Xerxes, King of Persia, then ruling the most extended empire in the world, gathered a great army for the conquest of Greece. It has been estimated at 1,000,000 men, but certainly it was a vast horde. Xerxes marched through Thrace and Macedonia and met with no resistance until he reached Thermopylae.

This the Spartan King, Leonidas, had occupied with 7,000 men. For two days they beat back the huge masses of Persians who assailed the pass, but whose overwhelming numbers proved an impediment to their success. Even the so-called Immortals of the Persian army were routed, and Xerxes, who was watching the battle, leaped thence from his throne in his rage.

At last by the treachery of a Mallian named Ephialtes, a body of Persian troops was led by a secret path over the mountains to the rear of the Greeks. Thus they were threatened by overwhelming numbers before and behind. Leonidas dismissed all his army except his bodyguard of 300 Spartans and a body of Thespians. With these he advanced into the plain, and after killing unnumbered Persians the little band was completely destroyed. To-day the pass of Thermopylae has become a broad plain through the deposit of alluvial matter, and is no longer a natural site for defence.

Xerxes occupied Athens and pillaged the Acropolis, as the Turks were destined to do many centuries later, but he suffered a great naval defeat at Salamis, where 200 of his ships were sunk.

This victory was due to the shrewdness of Themistocles. He was Archon Eponymus, or Chief Ruler, of Athens, and when in office induced the Athenians to spend the product of the silver mines of Laurium in building ships, instead of distributing it among the citizens. His object was to draw the Athenians to the sea, as he felt convinced that it was only by their fleet that they could repel the Persians and obtain supremacy in Greece. It is here worth while to remember that a large fleet and a daring naval commander would probably change the result in the present unequal struggle between Greece and Turkey.

Upon the invasion by Xerxes, Themistocles was appointed to the command of the Athenian fleet. When the Persians were drawing near the Athenians, by the advice of Themistocles, deserted the city, and removed their women and children and their persons to Salamis, Aegina and Troezen. But as soon as the Persians took possession of Athens the Peloponnesians were anxious to retire to the Isthmus of Corinth. Themistocles bought them to stay and fight the Persians at Salamis, and induced the Spartan commander, Eurybiades, to do so.

When the fleet of Xerxes appeared the Peloponnesians were again anxious to sail away. Themistocles saw that he could only hold them by stratagem. He therefore sent a faithful slave to the Persian commanders, informing them that the Greeks intended to make their escape, and that the Persians had now an opportunity of covering themselves with glory if they would only cut off the retreat of the Greeks.

It was a poor showing in comparison with a Maxim gun, which discharges 600 shots a minute and is capable of killing every one it strikes within a range of five miles.

The ballista was the mortar of the ancients. It threw stones of fifty pounds and more for a distance of half a mile. The ballista consisted of a stout beam or arm of wood, whose one end bore a spoon or bowl, in which was held the stone, while the other end was secured in a twisted cord or gut, mounted in a timber frame. Being brought backward against the twist to a nearly horizontal position by a windlass, and the stone or other projectile placed in the spoon or bowl, the arm was suddenly released and flew upward with great power. Its motion was suddenly arrested by an upper transverse beam, or by cords fastened to the frame work. The projectile left the spoon at this point and could be directed with considerable accuracy.

Red hot balls and fire-pots were also hurled by the ballista, and sometimes infected corpses were thrown into a city to spread disease.

The fore part of the vessel was constructed largely with regard to the use of the ram, being very strong. Rams were made of iron, but sometimes of bronze. The principal ram of a trireme weighed some 170 pounds. It usually had three prongs, and often sloped downward. The great object of naval tactics was to ram the enemy. A trireme driven by oars had no difficulty in cutting an enemy in two if it struck amidships. To smash the rudder by ramming was another way of putting an adversary out of the fight.

The back bone of a Greek army was the phalanx, consisting of hoplites or heavy infantry, the substantial citizens in every sense of the state. The phalanx differed considerably in formation in different times.

The most famous phalanx was that of Philip of Macedonia. It was at first eight, afterward twelve to sixteen deep. In the eight rank formation the lances, or sarissae, being eighteen feet long, those of all ranks could be presented to the enemy. They were grasped with the right hand at the butt and with the left four feet from the butt end. Hence the lances of the first rank projected fourteen feet, while the spearheads of the last rank were level with or just in front of the men in the front rank.

In the deeper formation, and after the reduction of the length of the sarissa to fourteen feet, only the first ranks presented their weapons to the front. The rest held them slanting over the heads of their comrades in front.

The importance of this formation lay

in its power of resistance to hostile onset and in the weight with which it fell when impelled against the enemy's lines. Its weaknesses were want of mobility, the impossibility of changing front in face of the enemy, and unsuitability for close hand-to-hand engagement. The Romans, in fighting Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, who used the phalanx, at first suffered badly from it, but soon learned how to avoid it, to attack it when in disorder, and generally to bother it.

In defensive order or to attack intrenchments, a tortoise or synagman was formed. The men stood close together, each occupying but one and a half feet square, the front rank covering their shields, the other ranks using them to form a roof over the heads of all.

This tortoise was so strong that archers and slingers could march over it to shoot their missiles, and wagons rolled over the formation without harm to the soldiers. To repel an attack the hoplites knelt on the right knee and leaned the shield against the left knee, the edge on the ground. This was a device of Chabrias, the Athenian.

The phalangites were taught by Philip and Alexander to form a circle for exactly the same purpose that modern infantry forms a hollow square, four or five ranks deep, with row upon row of bayonets rising one above the other. That purpose is to resist a charge. The ancient formation was no doubt very effective, but the modern soldiers have an advantage in weapons more easily handled than the eighteen-foot sarissae.

The catapult was the heavy siege gun of the ancients. It was a species of huge bow, mounted on a platform, and the propelling force was usually a twisted cord or vat applied to the arms of the bow. Sometimes women's hair was used. The bowstrings was tightened by a windlass and released by a spring.

The catapult shot huge iron-pointed arrows or pikes weighing from ten to three hundred pounds. It was capable of carrying nearly half a mile, and was accurate up to five hundred paces. Some were arranged so as to hurl a flight of leaden bullets.

Another piece of artillery, known as the falxica, discharged a flight of arrows. This may be compared to the Maxim gun. In the falxica the impelling force was a huge plank of very supple wood. The arrows were placed in round holes in a very thick, upright board. The elastic plank was drawn backward to the ground with ropes and pulleys, and suddenly freed, so that it struck the butts of the arrows with its flat surface and discharged them. They were very deadly and widespread in their effects, although they could not be directed with much accuracy.

Ingenious as this machine is, it must be admitted that it makes a poor showing in comparison with a Maxim gun, which discharges 600 shots a minute and is capable of killing every one it strikes within a range of five miles.

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