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The History of the Island of Rhodes

by

"Laudabunt alii claram Rhodon."
[The Sketch sketches are the
unaided work of the essayist]
The island of Rhodes lies between the 36th and 37th parallels of north latitude, and between the 27th and 29th of east longitude. Its greatest length, from Sandu Point to Cape Sounion, is 49 miles; its greatest breadth, from Lindos to Monolithus, is 22 miles. Its area is nearly equal to that of Euboea; it is to its situation in the South East of the Aegean Sea that Rhodes owes its prominence in history. It formed one corner of the area through which, in the earliest days of Europe, glowed a "white hot centre of glorious life"; and, in later ages, it stood on the border line of two continents, at a time when the paths of their civilizations converged. Thus Rhodes played a part in the history of the world, out of all proportion to its size; for it would be difficult to point to any other region so confined, and at the same time possessed of traditions so varied, so fascinating, and embracing so great a space of time, as this obscure and forgotten little island.

The history of the island falls naturally into several distinct periods. The most prominent
landmarks by far, are the two great periods of prosperity, the earlier from 350 B.C. to 150 B.C., the later from 1300 A.D. to 1522 A.D., both rendered doubly memorable by "wars and rumours of wars." The period of preparation prior to 350 B.C. provides a fertile field for archaeologist and historian; and Rhodes is by no means lost sight of yet in the interval between the first and second eras of prosperity. But after 1522, the island sinks into an obscurity from which it is relieved only once or twice in the course of nearly 400 years.

Long before history begins, mythology is busy with the island of Rhodes, weaving a confused network of legend which combines itself now with the Greek cycle, and now with the romances of the mainland of Greece. Most familiar perhaps, are those which are enshrined in Homer and Virgil, from whom we learn of one, Heliodorus, king of ethrys, who slew his uncle Licymnus, and sought refuge, by divine command, in Rhodes, whether he was accompanied by a large company of followers. The emigrants founded the three cities, Ialysus...
"Πλησόλεμος δ' Ἦρακλείδης ἦν ς τε μέγας τε ἢκ Ῥόδου εὖνέα νήσας ὅτιν "Ῥόδιων ἄχερῶχων."
Lindus and Camirus, and rapidly attained a remarkable degree of prosperity.

"κίνοις ὁ μὲν ἄγαλμα ἀγάλμαν νεφέλαιν
πολὺν ὅσιν χρυσόν..." The legends tell us, also of an early race, the Telchines, supposed to have come originally from Crete, and famed for their skill in magic and the black art. When the Telchines perished in some unrecorded catastrophe, the Heliadæ were created to take their place. There are also indications that the island was visited by Egyptians under Danaus, and by Phoenicians under Cadmus. In the Trojan cycle, the Rhodian contingent of nine ships appears on the side of the ethebæans; and when the war was over, Aristomenes led a band of colonists to Lindus.

The legendary history of the island, of which the bare outlines are given above, must be accepted with great reservations. Recent investigation, however, has all gone to confirm the opinion that myths almost invariably grow up around a core of truth; and in the case of Rhodes, as we shall see, this core is not difficult to bring to light. In short, the whole
cycle of folk lore is founded on fact. In this case, as in so many others, the light of truth has been shed on the legend by archaeology, the discoveries being made in and around Ialysus.

The efforts of the archaeologist have so far failed to disclose any direct and unmistakable evidence of intercourse between Rhodes and Crete of the Minoan dynasty. This is not what we would have expected, in view of the trend of the legendary evidence, and the comparative proximity of the two islands. It is also worthy of remark, that if the ocean bed were raised 800 feet, Rhodes would be united to Crete, but not to the mainland, from which it is separated by a fissure of great depth. Having regard to these facts and to the maritime character of the Minoan empire, we are bound to conclude that an intimate connection existed between Rhodes and Crete, though no settlement of a permanent character may have been made in the smaller island.

The earliest date to which the archaeological evidence points is 1400 B.C., when a Cretan community must have been established in Ialysus.
There are no indications of progressive development, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that settlers had brought the civilisation with them, shortly before this time. One of the difficulties of Early Greek History was to explain why the Aegean culture never crossed the few miles to Caria and Lycia; it was met by the hypothesis — now all but an ascertained fact — of the great empire of the Hittites, dominating the interior of Asia Minor. And it may well have been that the influence of this oriental power extended to Rhodes — and prevented its participation in the Aegean culture until a fairly late date.

Two other influences have been traced in the remains — those of Phoenicia and Egypt. The former has long gone past when the best features of Ionian civilisation were attributed to the mercantile empire of Tyre and Sidon, and when the motto of the investigator into Reis Frascan was "Ex oriente lux." But there can be no question that the Phoenician traders exploited the Aegean area from Cyprus, Rhodes and Crete as trading centres. The legends remind us
that it was the Phoenicians who reduced the Heliadeae; and even in historical times, the Rhodians claimed to have Phoenician blood in their veins. But in the Dalysus graves, the earliest evidence bears witness not to Phoenician but to Egyptian influence. The connection with the Nile was probably direct, and not through the medium of Phoenicia: it is proved not only by the images and scarabs at Dyles, but also by ritualistic survivals. The extended voyaging of these early explorers, was inspired in most cases by trading considerations. The Phoenicians were the carriers, about 1000 B.C., and the commerce of the steleau was entirely passive; but it was not long before the Greeks vindicated the right of exploiting their own home waters, and laid the foundation of their valuable and far reaching mercantile undertakings.

Such is the outline—archaeology has drawn of the pre-historic period in Rhodes. It has taught us to think of the island as an important centre of trade, in touch with Crete, Phoenicia and Egypt, but dating the commencement of settled life in
its three cities from an unusually late date.

The life story of the Hellenes may be said to begin with the great movements of population known as the 'expansions', of which the last and greatest was that of the Dorians. Following shortly after, and directly resulting from the influx into the mainland of Greece, there took place a movement eastward to the coasts of Asia Minor and the Southern Archipelago. In these districts the Dorians met the original population of Carians and Lycians, and also the immigrant Thracians, with both of whom a gradual amalgamation began, resulting in the foundation of such cities as Myndus and Halicarnassus, and the occupation of such islands as Cos, Cyprus, and Rhodes. The influx never ceased until the resources of these districts were taxed to the utmost to meet the requirements of an enterprising population; with the inevitable result that before many years had passed, colonies were required to diminish the number of the inhabitants. Rhodes, however, did not require to take an active part in this movement, her only off-shoots of importance being Selinus and Kaselia, the eastern outpost of Hellenic
civiliisation. Meanwhile, community of race and religion, had drawn togethet the Dorian communities in the SE league, and induced them to form a league, as was not unusual in the early Greek world. The Doric league comprised, Ialysus, Lindus, Camirus, Cos, Enides and Halicarnassus, but the last named city was excluded from the confederation by way of punishment for the impiety of its citizen ephesaeus. The ostensible object of the league was the worship of Apollo on the Ialysian promontory, but there can be no question that this, like the other religious anthistionies, had its political significance.

One other significant event belonging to this period, was the arrival of the Ionia epic, which inscriptional epigraphy has enabled us to date at the middle of the 7th century B.C. Henceforward Rhodes was bound to Greece by what was perhaps the strongest of all bonds of unity in the era of colonisation and dispersion.

Situated on the main route to the Levant, Rhodes must have derived no little benefit from the eastern trade of Lycia and Samos. But the dispersal of the population through the island, and the absence of a suitable harbour may account (i.e. at Ialysus, Lindus or Camirus).
in some measure for the continued obscurity of the
island and its failure to take full advantage of the
opportunities offered to it. For, throughout some 200
years, we have nothing but a few casual references
to guide us. That the foundations of commerce had
been laid in an active coasting trade, is amply
attested by the silver coinage which Caius and
Ludus struck in the 6th century. The coins were of the
Phoenician standard, and bear witness to intercourse
with Crete, Lycia, and Cyprus, and even with
island Cyprus.

Here is no evidence to show what part Rhodes
played in the Ionian revolt. We know that the
island submitted to the Persians, and it is most
probable that the inhabitants avoided the hostility
altogether, convinced that their aid would be
useless against the forces of Persia. The subjection
only lasted for twenty years, for the island was
liberated by Themistocles not long after the
victory of 480. Ten or twelve years later, Rhodes
figures among the allies of Athens in the famous
Delian confederacy, along with most of the
Aeolian coast cities and islands. Up to this point
at least, it would be idle to attempt to find any
settled policy in the actions of the Rhodians. They were moving with the tide.

But in 412 they were dragged all unwillingly into the protracted and sanguinary conflict in which Athens and Sparta had already been engaged for nearly 20 years. Upon the invitation of several powerful inhabitants, the Peloponnesian fleet of 90 triremes suddenly appeared in Rhodian waters and persuaded the three cities to transfer their allegiance. fortified and defended as these cities were, it cannot have required any great display of eloquence to compass this end. For some considerable time, Rhodes remained the Spartan naval base while its inhabitants groaned under the contribution of 32 talents which was levied from them by the Spartans.

The lesson was not lost. The Rhodians said that if their independent existence was to be maintained in such troublesome times as these, active measures would have at once to be taken. The result was the euvoikios of 408 when the dispersed population of the island concentrated upon the splendid site in the extreme north of the island, where the city of Rhodes was built. With a capacity
which would have done credit to more advanced civilizations, it was decided to take full advantage of the lateness of the city's foundation. The services of the first living architect were secured, - Hippodamus of Milesiae, to whose places the towns of Ialceus and Thurae had already been constructed, - and the city soon rose, like an amphitheatre, on the sloping hillside which enclosed the splendid natural harbours. In a very true sense, the history of the island of Rhodes begins in 408.

The first decisive act of the new state was to break with Sparta after Cimon's decisive victory at Oineus. If wealth and power were to be built up on the basis of commerce, Rhodes had certainly nothing to gain by remaining in alliance with an inland state, and at enmity with all the trading centres of the Aegean. The change of attitude is indicated by the minting in Rhodes and throughout the islands, of Argentinia coins, all bearing the figure of Heraclès struggling with the snakes. Thus a kind of league seems to have been formed to resist the ambition of Sparta on the one side, and Persia on the other.

In commerce, Rhodes' success was assured from
the first. A beginning was made with the trade of the East and South, in which Rhodes soon had the field to herself. Her unrivalled situation enabled her to act as entrepôt for the whole Aegean area, exchanging the products of Greece and Asia Minor for the merchandise of Egypt and the East, and it was not long before Athens began to suffer through the success of the new rival. In fact, so wide were the mercantile relations into which Rhodes entered during the first half of the 4th century B.C., that a new coinage was minted after the 'Rhodian' standard, including pieces of so great value as Didrachms and Tetradrachms. At first these coins were rough and unfinished; but, by the end of the 4th century, the coins of Rhodes were in circulation throughout Greater Hellas, and were second to none in beauty and technique.

In 378, anxious to forward her commercial interests, Rhodes accepted Athens' invitation to join the anti-Spartan confederacy, in which she remained for twenty years. But before the close of that period the Rhodians were beginning to chafe under the numerous ill-concealed attempts which Athens was making to recover her lost empire. But the
The ultimate revolt was due not so much to well-considered policy as to the wire-pulling of party politics. For Rhodes had to pass through the stage of internal revolutions: and many opportunities were lost in the 4th century through the strife of aristocrats and democrats. In this case, the final impulse towards defection was given by Ebausotes through the medium of the Rhodian aristocrats. The Social War was brought to an unsatisfactory conclusion in 354, when Ecbatna was compelled to recognize the independence of Rhodes and several other islands. But the humiliation of Ecbatna meant the triumph of Ebausotes, who established an oligarchy supported by Italian garrisons, and the nett result of the aristocratic scheming was loss of independence. When Ebausotes died, the democrats made a vigorous attempt to throw off the yoke, and appealed to the Ecbatnians from whom they had revolted some 40 years before. The discussion of this question in the assembly gave occasion for an early speech of Demosthenes, in which is exhibited to advantage the capacity and broadmindedness of the orator. His eloquence, however, was unsuccessful, and the appeal
was dismissed while Rhodes' position remained unchanged. For the following seventy years, the island was in virtual subjection. When the new power of Macedon arose in its strength, Rhodes placed herself upon the side of Persia, and contributed materially to the resources of that nation by her fleets, and still more by her admirals, ephor, and ephor. Realising in time, that her weight had been thrown into the wrong balance, Rhodes submitted to Alexander, and the ships, which so lately had swelled the power of the Orient, appeared at the siege of Tyre.

It is convenient at this stage to pause and examine the internal structure of the state whose advance to the front rank in Greek politics we have just described. In the absence of contemporary evidence, we are obliged to rely upon conjectures and casual notices. The Doric element was by far the largest in the Rhodian population, and the Doric character predominated. Rhodes was in Asia, but not of it; and her inhabitants presented a happy combination of the level sobriety and steadiness of the Spartans with the enterprise and enthusiasm of a nation of mariners. In early times
doubtless, aristocratic institutions of the characteristic Dorian type prevailed in the three cities. But, with the rise of commerce, and the consequent social and economic revolutions, a vigorous democracy arose to combat the representatives of exclusiveness and pride of birth. The struggle raged with varying fortunes, for the greater part of a century, its bitterness fomented by the introduction of many side issues by external powers, who desired to make capital out of the division in the camp. The Democrats, as was inevitable, eventually triumphed: but the final settlement was of the nature of a compromise: for the Rhodians wisely avoided the extremes to which popular government may be carried. The exact details of the scheme are not well-ascertained; but the sovereign power seems to have lain with the Assembly, qualified however, by an efficient council endowed with wide probouleutic functions. The executive consisted of two Archons, holding office for a year, and of anuncertain number of eunupxoi, or Admirals, whose powers were much wider than those usually entrusted to naval capta...
In the hands of this modified democracy, the policy of Rhodes was guided with a broad-mindedness and moderation which never failed to elicit the admiration and goodwill of the adjoining states; and throughout the whole of the Hellenistic period, the Rhodian government consistently maintained its reputation for honourable and sagacious dealing. The records of their work exhibit, as we shall have abundant opportunity to observe, an unusual singleness of purpose and constancy of aim. It has been well said that, in 408, Rhodes put into operation, under far more favourable circumstances, the plans which Scipio had but recently designed for the conduct of the Peloponnesian War.

Rhodes was, further, a strikingly religious island. The patron deity of the island was Helios, who seems to have been regarded as quite distinct from Apollo. Here can be little question that the cult was eastern in its origin, and closely related to the ephthaireion of Besia, which proved so formidable a rival to Christianity in the later days of the Western Roman Empire. An annual festival - the Helia - was held in summer in his
honour, the most notable feature being the sacrifice of a team of horses. It was to Helios, too, that the Colossus was later erected.

More local in character were the cults of Athena at Lindus, and of Poseidon at Dulynus, and of Asclepius at his healing shrine: but fanned throughout the whole of Greece was the shrine of Zeus, the sky God, or Ζεὺς θάλαμος, whose lofty summit was fittingly consecrated to the service of the god of the sky. Here they celebrated his birth, his death and disappearance from earth, in accordance with the common belief that the death of Nature each winter implied the death of their god. The piety of the Rhodians, as indicated by these facts, is all the more remarkable, all the more incredible, in the light of the history of the following 120 years, during which one would be justified in regarding self-interest as the sole spring of action, and Mammon as the only god.

To rescue the history of the island, where the youthful emperor died in 323, Rhodes refused to submit to the Diadochi, and declared her independence, eleven years before had her position been so secure.
of wealth, and in her seamen, a truly
formidable weapon of offence or defence. Rhodes had
taken action at a time when all her rivals were
levelled by the common subjection to Macedon;
and the advantage then secured was retained by the
skill and moderation of her statesmen for 150 years.
The basis of her power was wealth; and wealth
could only be secured safely by means of trade.
Therefore the Rhodian counsellors shaped their
plans to protect and foster their overseas commerce,
and made every other end subservient to this.
Guided, doubtless, by the lesson of Tyre and Sidon,
they grasped the fundamental idea that an empire
cannot be securely built upon the foundation
of commerce alone; and thus no efforts and no
expenditures were spared to maintain the navy in
full equipment and perfect efficiency.

No department of Rhodian trade was at once
more valuable and fraught with richer possibilities
than that with Egypt, with whose new ruler, the
Athenian, Rhodes entered into a close friendship.
The position became increasingly delicate when
hostilities broke out between Egypt and the
ambitious ruler of Asia, Ebion, - Eutropius.
By means of diplomacy, a bold but unsuccessful attempt was made to ward off the evil day, and the issue became sharply defined when, in 305, Antigonus demanded the alliance of Rhodes against Egypt. Things looked black indeed for the young republic, never as yet having made trial of her strength: and there was no alternative but conceding to the demand for alliance. But Demetrius Poliorcetes, son of Antigonus, who was in command of the operations, had his suspicions as to the genuineness of the Rhodian professions, demanded in addition 100 leading citizens as hostages, and access to the harbour. This was to add insult to injury, and the Rhodians cut short negotiations, and prepared for war. They now began one of the famous sieges of antiquity. Demetrius with his armada, manned by 40,000 marines, attacked the city, which was defended by only 6000 fully armed citizens. The account of the fighting, and of the dramatic bravery of the beleaguered city, has often been told. The attack laymen resulted in the capture of the outer harbour which was held for a short time; operations were then conducted by land, and
without success. Demetrius' failure was due to his inability completely to invest the city both by land and sea, while the cities of the East met with each other in offering assistance. Too often they stopped short at offering; and even when they, on whose account the hostilities had commenced, did not declare war on each other. However, food supplies and even mercenaries were sent from Egypt, and by potentialities such as Tyre, Baalbek, and others. One factor in the problem had been entirely omitted from consideration. Rhodes had already made herself the centre of the trade of the Eastern Mediterranean; and the effect of her prolonged cessation from commerce was felt keenly by every trading centre in the East. Embassies poured in on every side, and pressure was brought to bear upon the combatants to secure the abandonment of the siege. Tyre, too, who was by no means best bet to arrive to see the triumph of one of his rivals over the other, as soon as he felt confident that success was in sight, urged upon Rhodes the desirability of a compromise. A settlement was reached shortly after, Rhodes agreeing with her to ally herself against Eutychenus except against...
And it was to the Rhodian places of business that young men resorted in order to gain complex practical insight into the mechanism of international trade.
stolery, and granting hostages in support of her possessions. The result was thus peace with honour, for the chief point in dispute, viz. the relations with Egypt, had not been conceded. In the fullness of their hearts, and their eagerness to recover their commercial power, the Rhodians were betrayed into much fulsome adulation of the Egyptian monarch, whose cult was established as a "Protezione," and to whom, according to the general report, was granted the epithet of Europa.

Rhodes rapidly recovered from the injuries inflicted by the siege. Her only home product was a particularly fine earthenware, but it was from the through traffic that Rhodes derived her wealth. Her market places, with their great Arizma or Exchange, became the business centres of the East; large numbers of bankers or usurers found occupation as money changers, and still more as money lenders; and although credit, as an institution, was never in great favour in the ancient world, it became increasingly common for business to be transacted by means of banker's drafts, and promissory notes. In short, there was not nearly enough
money in circulation to cope with the demand of the mercantile classes; and the practice had come into vogue of effecting transfers of money by means of simple book keeping operations, — the origin of the later Roman Lettered Contract. Thus Rhodes possessed a source of great influence over her neighbours in her control of the financial world. Further, there had devolved upon Rhodes the important duty of policing the seas, and restraining the hordes of pirates for which the Eastern Mediterranean had at all times enjoyed an enviable notoriety. Thus, when occasion called for it, the Rhodians were not above levying a kind of political blackmail by means of their power over the dangerous freebooters.

It is interesting to watch how Rhodes dealt with the problems which arose during the following century. Slavery later was engaged, in Egypt, in carrying into operation plans very similar to those which exercised the Rhodian Statesmen. He had thought, at first, to divide with the Ethiopian mercantile seaport, and had coined in the Ethiopian standard. Soon, however, he altered his mind. The Rhodian standard: but his
enthusiasm cooled, and a third change was made, this time to the Phenician standard. Whether, because of this or some more overt act (call it in the cutting of defence, Rhodes took umbrage, and without hesitation, appealed to force. A slight success satisfied her honour, and secured the substantial advantage of the Rhodian héraclae. We thus see that the Egyptian alliance was inspired solely by self-interest, a motive which operated again in 220, when Rhodes, as the leader of Mediterranean commerce, took up arms against Byzantium in defence of her trade through the straits to the Black Sea. With commendable promptness, Rhodes brought her fleet and forces to bear upon the city on the Dardanelles, and secured her purpose without difficulty, and strange to say, so soon as her purpose was achieved, the hostilities were stopped, since the Rhodesians were actuated by no motives of hate or revenge but simply by their desire to defend their interests.

But before the armed intervention at Byzantium an incident had occurred which illustrated with great distinctness the importance of the
The prosperity and supremacy of Rhodes permitted
of the realisation of the two conditions most essential
to extended commercial activity, viz. reasonable
security, and uniformity of mercantile usage.
position held by Rhodes in the Mediterranean. In 227 B.C., Rhodes was devastated by one of those earthquakes to which the island has so frequently been subjected, lying as it does on the edge of the great lateral depression caused by the Mediterranean sea. The whole of the Greek-speaking world was moved by the calamity which had ruined the great commercial city; and in a short time, subscriptions came pouring in to reestablish the town in its old position. It is said to have been that unless Rhodes received money to meet her obligations, the whole financial system of the East would have collapsed. For we can well believe that Rhodes was the keystone of the laboriously constructed and of Hellenistic trade, and that the failure of the Rhodian enterprise meant something like a stoppage of payment by the Bank of England, an interesting parallel to the earthquake incident is afforded by the Hamburg fire of 1842.

We must remember, however, that there was a certain element of philanthropy in the gift which were showered upon Rhodes in 226. Under similar circumstances, one can hardly believe that Athens would have received them; Athens schemed for
wealth and empire, Rhodes was satisfied with wealth alone, and was happy. The policy which she had adopted, viz. neutrality except in pursuance of trade interests, has become characteristic of the age. Its influence, too, was not confined to Rhodes alone. As Mahaffy has pointed out, in all the struggles of the Diadochi the command of the sea was lost and won, again and again, in a single engagement, simply because Rhodes and the other commercial states at once threw their weight with the stronger party, and forced the weaker to submit. The one thing above all others to be avoided was war.

The name of Rhodes is associated in history not only with the peace policy and neutrality of commercial states, but also with a remarkably complete system of eleemosynary law. The Sea Law of Rhodes, as we know it, is a very miscellaneous compendium of trading rules and shipping regulations, written in Greek, and dating from 700 B.C. But this work only contains an ill arranged outline of the law eleemosynary which usage and long experience in commercial
Dealing had enabled the Rhodians to create, and to perfect. And it is possible, on many points, to discover a direct connection between this early code and the modern law of Maritime Contract, Bottomry and General Average.

Further, Rhodes is remarkable for her early experiments in international arbitration, her actions in this connection, being prompted, of course, more by self interest than by any puritanic hatred of war for its own sake. In any event, her intervention was successful in securing peaceful settlement of disputes between Potamia Philopator and Heracles III, and later between Samos and Crete.

At this point in the narrative the student of ancient history cannot but be conscious of a subtle change of atmosphere. We have been watching the course of events from the point of view of Greece Hellenic and the Orient; but after 200 B.C., we change to the West, and pursue the struggles in the East from the point of view from the new power which has arisen, whose shadow is destined to fall across the page of history for many centuries to come.
Tradition dates Rhodes'friendliness with Rome from 306 B.C.; but it was not till a century later, that the ambitious scheming of Philip and Cleobulus brought Rhodes into close contact with the vigorous empire of the West. 

In 205 Cleomenes IV had died, leaving as his successor an infant son, in the power of a cabal of unscrupulous courtiers. Philip and Cleobulus, both of whom were bent upon adding to their territories, entered into an infamous contract to divide between them the outlying districts of the Egyptian empire. For at least the second time within a short period, Rhodes intervened to protect the degenerate but wealthy kingdom on the Nile, and carried with her the support of the mercantile cities of the east, and notably of Bergamum, which was already in imminent peril from Philip's advance. After the approved Macedonian fashion, Philip opened the hostilities by having the Rhodian arsenal set on fire, and not long afterward he was actually successful in a naval engagement with the combined fleets of Rhodes and Bergamum, and captured the Serape. Stilpno...
of supplies however was an excuse for rapid withdrawal, and saved Philip from the well-mixed retribution which the commercial cities were prepared to mete out. He abandoned his southern conquest and pursued his career of aggression in the north, until checked by the Romans. The final frustration of the designs of the "royal robber" was due in no small degree to the action of Rhodes in barring the way against eustolichus who might else have joined forces with Philip before cyancephalae.

During the following years, Rhodes and...
kept Rome in possession of full information as to the movements of Artaxerxes, and there is evidence to show that the islanders lost a whole fleet to the Syrian monarch in 192. In the final struggle, too, the Rhodian fleet formed an invaluable addition to the Roman naval forces.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the policy of 'feet and carry' which Rhodes had adopted during the Macedonian War, was inconsistent with her dignity. Even supposing that Rhodes recognised the superior power of the city of the Tiber, no obvious benefit would result from anticipating the day of submission: and the decline of the island after 160 might not have been so rapid, if a less cringing and humble attitude had been adopted from the first.

When the true cause for the dividing of the spoils, both Rhodes and Perinthus were literally rewarded for their services by what appeared to be parcels of territory. The interesting debate took place as to the status of the Greek cities, representatives of both states being heard in the Senate. The envoys of Elis thus were unsuccessful in their tirade against the 'Shibboleth of
"Home Rule for all the Greeks" they had recognised that grants of independence to these cities would simply result in the aggregavement of Rhodes a result which they dreaded more and more every day. By this means, and by giving aid to the isolated post of Tenees in Sicily the Romans with the astuteness and skill which swere characterised their foreign policy, sowed the seeds of disunion between the two powerful trading centres of the Aegean.

Eager to exploit the resources of their new territories, the Rhodians rapidly organised Lycia upon lines which must have compared unfavourably with the lax and shadowy control which had been exercised by Eastern potentates. More than once the smouldering discontent was fanned into a flame and ultimately the Lycians applied direct to Rome for protection against their overlords. This was exactly what Rome wanted, and the message of the Senate was borne to the Rhodians in unmistakable terms, warning them that the Lycians were friends and allies, not subjects of Rhodes. After an undignified and useless expostulation, the islanders were compelled
to pocket their pride. But they cherished their feeling of resentment until an opportunity of averting their wounded pride presented itself.

That opportunity was not long delayed. In 172 the Romans were obliged to take the field against Demetrius of Pharamond, who was bent upon extending his kingdom to its old limits. At first, in spite of the artful envies of Elbaedon, the Rhodians refused to act inconsistently with their long standing friendship with Rome, and placed a fleet of 40 triremes at the disposal of Rome. But as the war wore on, a different complexion was put upon affairs. Rhodian commerce was suffering severely while the Roman army, upon which lay the duty of putting an end to hostilities, had suffered discredit and defeat. Acting on the treacherous advice of the consul Elbarcides, the islanders formed the idea of returning to the highest circles their work of international mediation. Embassies were appointed to warn the Romans that the war must cease. Unfortunately for Rhodes, the reputation of Rome was immediately thereafter re-established by the victory of Sydna, and the Senate was able to consider the conduct of their
sometime allies. It was strange, they thought, that the demand for peace came just when the Romans were beginning to gain the mastery; this fact lent colour to the suspicions which Pergamum had for long been seeking to arouse. The Rhodians also saw how to block their prospects were: throwing dignity to the winds, they strove in panic stricken fashion to appease the wrath they felt they justly had aroused. Papirius, the consul, was induced to disembark at Rhodes and listen to the congratulations of the islanders, and rows of eternal alliance. He took occasion to deliver an insulting address which accentuated the terror of the populace. Grovelling embassies were despatched to the capital, where they were compelled to suffer every indignity, while notice was given of war against Rhodes. But there was no occasion, as the Romans well knew, for this:

and moderation was successfully urged by bato in his famous oration, in which he took a charitable view of the case- "Dieo suadeoque, he concluded, "ut iure nos aliquot dies proferatur, dum ex lauto gaudio in potestate nostro redeamus." Rome's humiliation was
complete. Her commercial downfall was secured by the establishment as a free port of Delos. The first great era of prosperity has drawn to a close. But heavy blows as the loss of mainland possessions and the creation of a commercial rival were, Rhodes did not collapse all at once. Some conception of the affluence in which her inhabitants had been living may be gained from the fact that the opening of Delos meant an annual loss in drachms alone of £35,000! The rapid narrowing of trade enterprise reacted so strongly on the ebony elbarcket that the issue of Tetrodramas was stopped, and their place filled by Hemidrachms. Further, the priests took advantage of the loss of prestige which Rhodes and Bergamum had suffered to redouble their efforts in their nefarious occupation; and 10 years wrought such a change in the island state that her old rival Bergamum could afford to be generous, and win a cheap reputation for love of culture by endowing a teaching institution in Rhodes in 162. The old ideal of commercial supremacy is already giving way before that of culture, philosophy and art.
That Rhodes still enjoyed the privilege of independent action is shown by the war with the Bretons of which we hear in 153. But the ancient prowess of the island had become nothing more than a tradition, which the inhabitants no longer strived to maintain; and Rhodes is not heard of again until 69, when the aggressiveness of Elbidhadias brought the Eastern Question prominently before the Roman Senate. The lesson of the war with Percusus was well learnt by the Rhodians who took good care to avoid compromising their loyalty. They held out against Elbidhadias, though many times out-numbered, and offered refuge to the consul Cassius when no other state in the region dared openly to avow allegiance to Rome. In the naval engagements which followed, success was due in no small measure to the skill which the Rhodian admirals still possessed.

The bewildering years of the Civil Wars seem B.C. to have perplexed the Rhodians not a little. They who had ruled the island sided first with Pompey, but later transferred their support to Caesar, whom they supplied with a valuable addition to his fleet in the Alexandrine War. It was of a Rhodian admiral...
have it so, Euphranor, that the ancient chronicler wrote the brief eulogium - 'animi magnificiudinis ae victute magis cum nostris quam cum Graecis comparandum.' In the troubled times following Caesar's death, too, Rhodes was dragged into the fighting. Her support of Dolabella called down the wrath of Cassius who defeated the Rhodian fleet and plundered the city in 43, striking a coin in memory of his victory. But these and many other lifting incidents were accidental in character, and only seemed to accentuate the commercial depression, which is shown by further reductions in the currency, and by the complete cessation of issue in the reign of Commodus.

Without exaggeration it may be said that Rhodes has no political history during the Western Roman Empire, beyond what is conveyed in Tacitus' pointed statement - 'Reddita Rhodis libertas, adulteria saepe aut promata pro levis enterreis meruereant et domi redituine deliquerant.'

But while the island was briefly a pawn in the politics of the first century A.D., its name was famous throughout the Roman Empire in other
connections, and we must now relax our steps for a little to visit Rhodes, the seat of culture and favourite haunt of art, poetry, and philosophy, rising from the ruins of Rhodes, the city of skillful mariners, the mercantile queen of the East.

Immediately after their city was built, the Rhodians commenced the task of adorning it with statues. Of these, by far the most remarkable was the enormous statue of Helius which adorned the outer harbour. The work of three of Lycidas, this image stood 280 feet high, and was completed in 278. Unfortunately it perished in the great earth-quake fifty years later. There is evidence to show that in all their sculptures the Rhodian School had a partiality for the massive and colossal, and later for the startling and sensational, a refinement which indicates a marked decline from the earlier purity of taste in Greece. Two important pieces must be mentioned as representing the most lasting triumphs of Rhodian art, viz. the Laocoon and the Tarnese Bull. In painting, as well as in sculpture, Rhodes produced several artists of note, the most notable being Harnacius and Protogenes. He isolated situation of Rhodes, its delightful
climate and splendid scenery made the city peculiarly suitable to act as a retreat for those who desired to escape the uncertain turmoil of political career for the secure retirement of the recluse. This reputation was founded before the close of the 4th century B.C., and was due, according to Quintilian, to the visit of the exiled orators who brought with them the learned pursuits of cultured scholars.

The university of Rhodes first came to the front as a school of rhetoric. Its teachers affected the golden mean between the ornate turgidity of the orators, and the austere simplicity and purity of the followers of Lyias; or, as Quintilian's figure neatly expresses it, - 'Neque fontibus penis neque torrentibus turbidis sed lenibus atque sinuibus labentibus.' Insufficiency of data precludes us from forming any reliable opinion as to the justice of these claims. The most celebrated professor of rhetoric were Challonius and Lebro, the latter of whom numbered Cicero among his students. The Latin orator freely acknowledged the debt he owed this study in Rhodes, where his style was purified of its youthful exuberance,
'Quasi defensorat oratio.' Julius Caesar also studied rhetoric at Rhodes, and the victorious
conquest, returning from his triumphs in the East,
broke his journey at Rhodes to hear the polished
declamations of the professional orators.

Nor was philosophy neglected by the Rhodian
scholars. The famous Peripatetic scientist, Euclid,
worked at Rhodes for a time, and there may have
produced his histories of geometry and astronomy.
The university later became a stronghold of
Stoicism, and performed much valuable work
in disseminating, in popularised form, the
doctrines of the school throughout the Roman World.

Panaceus, the earliest philosopher, was hardly
less celebrated than his pupil Caecilius, who
lived on terms of intimacy with many of the
leaders of Roman politics, and was made
proconsul in his own city on the strength of his
reputation for omniscience. His teaching, and
even his published writings are closely followed
by biennies in the Susceaian and the De officiis,
which the orator wrote when captivated by the
noble aspects of the Stoic creed.

The only other literary celebrity is Pom
Rhodes can lay even a remote claim, are Authorean Apollonius Rhodes. He formed a passionate lyric poet who flourished during the Persian Wars, and is remembered chiefly for his quarrel with Themistocles whom he upbraided in the picturesque words: "ὑψίστως, ἀφίκον, ἀρπάζων, ὦς Τιμοκρέοντα ἔχων ἵνα, ἐφαρμοσίς σκυθαλικτοίς πεισθείς οὐ καθέν ὦς Πάτρων Ἰδέων."

Apollonius belongs rather to the Alexandria than to the Rhodian school of poetry. His many excellences of this powerful poet have too long been obscured by the faults which belonged more to the age than to the poet.

At this point the history of ancient Rhodes draws to a close. In reviewing the story of the city during the 800 years of its life, we observe the steady rise to commercial supremacy based upon command of the seas, and due to the whole-hearted devotion of the people to the attainment of this end. When the appearance of Rome altered the political balance in the East, a departure from the successful policy of neutrality was forced upon the Rhodians, who never recovered from the damage inflicted to the city's trade. When the vision failure, the people
perish. The place of the old ideal was taken by that of making Rhodes the Temple of Culture—as it had been the bastion of Trade. But this prospect appealed to too narrow a section of the community to act as an inspiration and an enthusiasm to the whole. The decline and fall of Rhodes was already a matter of time.

Resuming the narrative where we left it, we find Rhodes a Roman province during the reign of Tiberius. The island still enjoyed a certain degree of commercial prosperity, as it acted as an entrepot for the coast cities of Southern Ekleia Minor. But the resources of these regions were not inexhaustible, and Rhodesian trade seems to have languished and all but disappeared before the close of the 2nd century of our era. When the division of the Empire took place in 395, Rhodes became part of the Byzantine Empire, and remained under the control of the Eastern Emperors for over 900 years. Long before that line had elapsed, the term ‘Rhodian’ had ceased to have any definite significance. A peasant population there must have been, of course, tilling the rich plains, and fertile eastern slopes of the Athabegros range, from generation to generation.
But the great bulk of the population must have probably been of cosmopolitan character, consisting of a mixture of those who would make of the island a magnificent base of operations, and of those who valued the impregnable city and the splendid situation, and regarded Rhodes as a prize to be grasped. Thus throughout several centuries the island presented great possibilities; and the course of circumstances tended to increase its importance from age to age. For the history of Europe was about to be materially altered by the introduction of a new factor into the international problem.

The victorious campaigns of Heraclius were still fresh in men's minds, and the Church was still exulting in the triumphant restoration of the true cross to Jerusalem when there appeared on the Eastern frontiers of the Empire the militant followers of Mohammed, fired by the burning enthusiasm of religious zeal, and confiding in their prowess which had never known a serious reverse. The troops of Heraclius proved totally unable to check the Western advance of the Saracens in the battle of Trench, and thereafter the Emperor
made no decisive attempt to inflict a defeat upon them. Their attack had been singularly ineffectual.

The peace of 628 had marked the limit of endurance both of Heraclius and Chosroes. The Byzantine Empire was exhausted; the treasuries emptied; the people crushed by oppressive taxes and divided by religious dissension. Heraclius is almost to be excused for recognising the hopelessness of the position and bowing to the inevitable. Rhodes fell in 653. But the inhabitants did not tamely submit to the domination of the infidel; and in less than six years the vigorous resistance had been successful in restoring the island to the Byzantine Empire.

This is the first of the four glimpses of Rhodes which we catch during the long period of obscurity lasting from the early Roman Empire to the domination of the Knights. The second is not given us until 1123, and the interval of nearly 500 years we are left to fill up by conjecture. In the East, the Empire, for several hundred years, enjoyed considerable prosperity while the power of the Saracens declined; but the beginning of the 12th century witnessed an unmistakable decadence, concurrent with the appearance of a new and not less formidable foe.
in the Seljuk Turks. In the West, Rome had exchanged political for ecclesiastical supremacy, and the wealth and power of Italy had concentrated in the merchant cities of Genoa and Venice. These two great trading stations rapidly absorbed the Eastern trade of Europe through Alexandria and Beirut; and the above sketch map will illustrate more plainly than words the new importance attaching to a powerful city lying within a few hours' sail of the greatest commercial highways in the world.

There can be no question that Venice was already regarding Rhodes with a jealous eye.
Not the least important aspect of the Crusades is the economic: the transference of enormous masses of population across Europe, and the consequent diffusion of knowledge cannot but have reacted vigorously upon the commerce of the world.
at the beginning of the 12th century, when her eastern advance had made collision with the Byzantine Empire practically inevitable. Indeed, when Comnenus at Constantinople opened the gates by striking a blow at Venetian trade, the Doge Dandolo finally earned his epithet of Terror Gratiaun by capturing Rhodes and devastating the Cyclades and southern Euboea. The city fell in 1123, and remained under the control of Venice, more or less directly, for over a century.

Meanwhile the nations of Europe had passed beneath the fascinating spell of the crusading movement. It was only to be expected that Rhodes, with its splendid harbour and genial climate, and, above all, with its situation on the furthest outposts of Christendom, became a favourite port of call for the pilgrim warriors; and the island enjoyed a great increase in prosperity during the 12th and 13th centuries. This, therefore, by no means surprising to learn that in 1204, an adventurous chieftain thought it worth while to declare the independence of Rhodes, and succeeded in clotting himself in a little brief authority for some considerable time. Whether from lack of inclination,
or of ability, he failed to attract much attention from the neighbouring states, and was allowed to delude himself with the appearance of independent power, until, about 1230, he voluntarily submitted to the Venetian government. In what infamous purposes such opportunities might have been turned, was shown later by the escapades of the notorious Barbarossa and his consorts. On the other hand, it would have been difficult to attain notable success in the earlier half of the 13th century. For these were the great years of the Venetian republic, whose commercial ambitions had led to the employment of the Fourth Crusade in the task of crushing the Eastern Empire, and transferring the power of Constantinople to the hands of the Daces.

But Nemesis was not long delayed. The rival state of Genoa, which had also benefited in great measure from the crusades, fell foul of her neighbour in the Eastern, and in the open hostilities which ensued. Rhodes was captured by the Genoese in 1248. The period of Genoese domination, however, was of comparatively short duration. While the two merchant cities struggled for
in the Seljuk Turks. In the West, Rome had exchanged political for ecclesiastical supremacy, and the wealth and power of Italy soon concentrated
commercial supremacy, the Byzantine Empire regained much of the power it had lost, and was soon successful in recovering the island which it had lost a century previously.

We are now within sight of the second of Rhodes' great era of prosperity, viz., the occupation by the Knights. The Hospitallers began with medical and philanthropic work among the armies of the crusaders: but to their activities in these directions they gave first a religious, and then a military colouring: until, in the middle of the 12th century, the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem formed a numerous and affluent company of soldiers-monks, answering closely to the description with which the reader of Ivanhoe and the Saladin is familiar. After the conquest of Jerusalem by Saladin, the Hospitallers retreated to Cyprus which they held until 1291, when they sought temporary refuge in Cyprus. Here in 1307, the Grand Master, de Villaret, led them to Rhodes which they held successfully for over 200 years.

However pure their motives may have been at first, however nobly they may have adhered to their original purpose of succouring
RHODES

IN THE MIDDLE AGES.
the infidel by a union of religious zeal and military skill, it would be idle to deny that line brought a grievous charge for the worse among the military orders, and that there is much truth in the vague charges which were brought against Templars and Hospitallers alike, and we shall have more than one opportunity of watching the Knights consistently pursuing a line of action diametrically opposed to the principles they professed to maintain.

The avowed object of the Knights was, of course, to combat the infidel; and it was to this task that their energies were at first chiefly directed. But subsidiary interests claimed the attention of an increasing number, when they forced themselves into possession of a naval equipment inferior to none in the Mediterranean. The fine forests of bireme and elbiae elminor were ruthlessly plundered, and by the employment of great quantities of slave labour, a powerful fleet was constructed and manned. At the same time attention was given to the defence of the city. An elaborate system of fortifications was arranged so that equal divisions were entrusted to the care of the various companies of the order. France, Germany,
Almeria, Spain, England, Provence, and Italy are all represented as guardians of particular tongues or sections of the wall. With such resources as these at their command, the knights flung principle and discretion to the winds, and embarked upon a career of unscrupulous aggrandisement to which history affords few parallels. Scarcely had the slave trade supplied the money, while the undoubted bravery and indomitable spirit of the knights afforded the power. The result was that the name of Rhodes became the most feared than adored, and that its inhabitants were regarded as the common foe of Venice and the Sultan alike.

But it is in connection with the two sieges by the Turks that the name of Rhodes and of the Knights Hospitallers has gone down to history. The failings and shortcomings of the Order are generally forgotten when placed over against their services to Christianity in 1480 and 1522. Both sieges immortalised the names of the leaders on either side. Pierre D'Elcublusson joined the Knights after he had won renown on many battlefields of Europe; and, as Francis de Staelin, was maturing plans for a combined resistance to the Turkish.
advance. Judging from his dismaying conduct with reference to Prince Fezz, his work in this connection, was actuated more by a soldier's enthusiasm than by a Christian's zeal. But, in any case, his schemes were still incomplete when, in 1480, elbahammed the conqueror invades the fortress with 100,000 Turks. A month of desperate fighting and amazing privations made so little impression upon the gallant Genoese that the besiegers reluctantly withdrew with a loss of one fourth of their numbers.

The Turks never forgave that loss. When in 1521-2 they had humbled both Venice and Genoa, they welcomed the opportunity of wiping out the stain which Rhodes had inflicted on their name. The Grand Master during the second siege was De Lisle Adam, whose traditional bravery acquires him of all blame for the disaster which ensued. Suleiman the Magnificent led a vast host against the city in 1523. The story of the siege, even if we allow for the flamboyance which romance has cast over it, is one of the great things in European history. But the utter hopelessness of the position induced the
knights to accept the honourable terms which, to his credit, the magnificent Stelarca had offered. The knights were allowed 12 days in which to leave the island, while the remaining inhabitants were granted religious freedom, and exemption from tribute for five years.

After the departure of the knights, the decline of Rhodes was rendered more rapid than it otherwise might have been, by the outbreak of a pestilence which wrought havoc among the peasantry and lower classes. The result was emigration which all but decimated the population of the island in a few years. For the attraction of Rhodes lay in its situation; and when, with the discovery of America and of the Cape route to India, the commerce of Venice declined and prosperity the island's chief claims to importance was gone.

From that day in 1522 until a few months ago, the island remained a part of the Turkish Empire. During the 16th and 17th centuries, the population rapidly declined, and Rhodes, in common with the rest of the Near East sank into unrelieved obscurity. Under wise and
lerious rule, a revival took place during the 18th century, but the ground they gained was lost again, in the course of the Greek Revolution, when the island was subjected to harsh and tyrannical government.

Rhodes has, on the whole, been little more than a spectator in the hostilities which constantly agitated the Balkan peninsula throughout the 19th century. But on two occasions—the Cretean rebellions of 1868 and 1895—the islanders were confronted with the stern realities of war. Once, too, was the name of Rhodes brought prominently before the peoples of Europe by reason of the sufferings of its inhabitants. For the four which had destroyed the Colossus revisited the island in 1851, 1855, and 1863, spreading ruin and devastation throughout the whole region of Southern Asia Minor.

The last notable appearance of Rhodes on the political arena took place so recently as last May, when the Italians in pursuance of their policy of self-aggrandisement at the expense of the Sultan, turned their attention to the richer islands of the Aegean, and successfully bombarded the celebrated stronghold. The city had for some time appeared on
the official papers as a first-class fortress: but even splendid natural advantages, and a reputation created four centuries previously, are a poor defence against a modern cannonade. The Turkish troops retreated from the city to the neighbouring fortress at Osithos, where, after a fall and but unavailing resistance, they surrendered on May 20th to General Mangles. Further than this, one cannot go—ever in conjecture. The future of the Ottoman Empire is an insoluble problem which, at the time of writing (Oct. 9th), has just entered an acutest stage.

The population of the islands, which has been decreasing since 1840, is about 30,000, of whom two-thirds are Christians, the rest being Mohammedans and Jews. The cosmopolitan character of the citizens leads to much inconvenience in the capital, where the people are constrained by differences of religious observance and custom, to live in distinct quarters and from exclusive castes. In spite of the fertility of the soil, and the proverbial excellence of the climate, negligence and indolence have combined to allow much of the land to lie waste. The same causes have
produced a like result in the harbours of the city, which have been allowed to silt up until they are impassable for the larger linens of the Messenian and Lycian trade. Connection has therefore often been established by means of small boats, and, in certain states of the weather, becomes difficult or impossible. The trade is inconsistent, the chief items of export being olives and fruit. The peasantry still preserve articles of the ancient Rhodian ware for which they can usually find ready purchasers in the tourists and antiquarians who form the bulk of the visitors to the island.

We have now surveyed Rhodes' story through out well nigh 4000 years; and the thought which first springs to the mind on reflection is that the title of this essay was well chosen. The story has been with the history of the Island of Rhodes that we have mainly been dealing, and not with the history of the Rhodians. Between 400 and 500 B.C., it is true, the inhabitants of the island enjoyed with great success a distinct political existence. But during the greater part of its history, Rhodes was simply the inanimate background against which many striking
scenes were enacted. We are thus very largely precluded from the study of motives and tendencies which form so important an element in modern psychological history; but this loss is more than compensated by the opportunities we were granted. More than once of catching a fleeting glimpse of the great actors in the international dramas (visual characteristics included), where in pursuance of their own several designs, they crossed the Rhodian stage. Athens and Sparta, Persia and Egypt, Rome and Byzantium, the Crescent and the Cross have all passed under our review; and if it were only for the wide and comprehensive view of universal history with which he is presented, the student of the history of the Island of Rhodes would be amply repaid.