

Pisistratus finally returned, and became the undisputed master of Athens, B. C. 542, having defeated his opponents on the road from Athens to Marathon.

Pisistratus maintained his position without any further interruption till his death, B. C. 527. He was succeeded by his son, Hippias, Hipparchus and Thessalus. A young Athenian, Harmodius, having been insulted by Hipparchus, the latter was killed during the procession of the festival of the Panathenaea, B. C. 514, the former being instigated in his revenge by his friend, Aristogeiton. Harmodius also fell in the fray, and Aristogeiton was arrested and put to death. Hippias now reigned by terror until the Athenians, applying to the Spartans for assistance, succeeded in restoring the exiles Alcmeonids, B. C. 510. The tyrant was deposed, and a sentence of perpetual banishment pronounced against the Pisistratids, and Harmodius and Aristogeiton received heroic honors. Hippias fled to Persia, to the Court of Darius, and subsequently assisted the Persians in the wars against the Greeks.

(Q.) 85. Give the dates of the first, second and third Messenian wars, and state their several results.

(A.) The first lasted from B. C. 743 to B. C. 724, when Ithome was taken and razed to the ground by the Spartans, and the inhabitants were reduced to the condition of serfs.

The second from B. C. 685 to B. C. 668; terminated with the fall of Iru or Eira, and all the Messenians who remained in the country were added to the Helots.

The third from B. C. 464 to B. C. 455, when Ithome was surrendered to the Spartans on condition of the Messenians leaving the Peloponnesus for ever. They settled at Maupactus, kindly given to them by the Athenians.

(Q.) 86. Name the last King of Babylon, and give the particulars relative to the overthrow of the Empire, and state what people were liberated thereby?

(A.) Nabonedus or Labynetus (the Belshazzar of Scripture), being defeated by Cyrus, fled to his capital, to which Cyrus immediately laid siege. After two years he succeeded in taking it, by turning the course of the Euphrates and entering the city by the bed of the river on a night devoted by the Babylonians to feasting and drinking. Belshazzar was slain, and, as had been predicted by the hand-writing on the wall, translated by Daniel the Prophet, "his kingdom was divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

The Jews were liberated after being in captivity fifty years.

(Q.) 87. What kingdoms were conquered by Cyrus the Great, how far did his dominions extend, and what was the end of his career?

(A.) Asia Minor and Babylon. His dominions extended from the Indus to the Aegean Sea, and from the Caspian and Euxine Seas to the Sea of Arabia.

According to Herodotus, he lost his life in a battle against the Massagetae, whereas Ctesias makes him return victorious. It is certain, however, that he died B. C. 530, and was buried at Persepolis.

(Q.) 88. Name the successor of Cyrus, and sketch the events of his reign?

(A.) Cambyses; he conquered Egypt, and formed the project of subduing Carthage, subjugating Ethiopia, and seizing upon the Temple of Jupiter Ammon; but his expeditions were unfortunate, and his armies perished in the sand of the deserts.

He killed with his own hand the bull Apis, inflicted a blow upon his sister, who was also his wife, which proved fatal, and caused his brother Smerdis to be assassinated, whereupon a pseudo Smerdis arose, who was recognised by the people, and Cambyses in setting out against the usurper, accidentally lost his life.

(Q.) 89. Sketch the events that occurred during the reign of Darius Hystaspes.

(A.) Darius Hystaspes was one of the seven Persian nobles that conspired against the imposter Smerdis, who was one of the Magi. These nobles having dethroned and slain the usurping Magian, agreed that he of the seven whose horse should first neigh after the rising of the sun should be chosen king. The lot fell on Darius, who married the daughter of Cyrus, and affected to reign as his successor. He organised his vast empire by dividing it into twenty satrapies, and imposing regular taxation. The great centres of the kingdom were Susa, the spring residence of the King, Ecbatana, his summer abode, and Babylon, the winter quarters. The latter, which had revolted, was recovered after a long siege, by the devotion of Zopyrus. Darius broke up the Ionian confederacy, and subdued Thrace, Macedonia, and Western India, but was defeated in his Scythian invasion, B. C. 513, as well as afterwards in his wars against the Greeks. During this reign the Persians forsook their normal life, and continued the building of the Persepolitan palace, which was begun by Cyrus and completed by Xerxes.

(Q.) 90. Give particulars relative to the origin of the war between the Persians and the Greeks.

(A.) The aristocratic party of the island of Naxos, being driven into exile by the democrats, solicited the aid of Aristagoras, tyrant of Miletus, who applied for assistance to Artaphernes, the Persian Satrap, to convey to a Ionian army to Naxos, promising to defray all the expenses. A fleet of 200 ships was placed at his disposal, commanded by a Persian admiral, and the Ionian army taken on board, but Aristagoras and the admiral having quarrelled, the latter, in revenge, thwarted the design of the Greek tyrant by warning the Naxians of their danger, and thus rendered the enterprise abortive. Being unable to perform his promise to the Persian Satrap, he was ruined, and saw no hope for himself except in revolution. In connection with Histaeus, he induced the Ionian colonies to revolt against Persia, and supported by the Athenians with a squadron of 20 vessels, B. C. 499, they landed at Ephesus, and marched against Sardes, and plundered and burned the lower city. Darius could never forget this insult on the part of Athens, and having subdued the rebellious colonists, he declared war against Greece.

(Q.) 91. What celebrated battle marked the close of the reign of Darius Hystaspes? Give date and particulars.

(A.) The battle of Marathon, B. C. 490. There, between the mountains and the sea, one of the greatest conflicts recorded in history took place. The Athenians had no aid except 600 men from Plataea, making in all 10,000 men, who were commanded by Miltiades. Permitting the Asiatics to pierce his centre, this skilful general ordered his wings upon them, and inflicted a decisive retreat, utterly routing the Persian host of 600,000 men.

*The above interesting paper on History was commenced in the last number of the "Ontario Teacher," and will be completed in our future issues. We bespeak for it a careful perusal by our readers.—Eds.*