

athlete, and what occupation can there be for the mind in rowing in a trireme? Why, your eyes see nothing save the back of the slave or labourer in front of you, and your body bends when his does; if it fails to keep time, it will soon feel the lash of the overseer. Are your young man chained to their benches?"

"No, of course they are not."

"Perhaps you wish to imply that, being only a Theban, I cannot be expected to know much about maritime affairs. The shield of Bœotia is certainly better known by land than by sea."

"And not always on the right side, even on land, Pindar—that little affair at Platæa for instance."

"Medized, you would say, medized. Go on, say it; heap reproaches on an old man who has sung the glories of Hellas for a life-time. I never encouraged the Mede. Bah, you have been reading Herodotus or that fellow Simonides."

"But, my dear sir, you misunderstand me."

"I at least never wrote an epinikian to mules,—mules indeed!—or to Sparta either! My young friend, I thank the gods that I never had any sympathy with the jingoistic ebullitions of a spurious patriotism. Let us be calm."

"Sir, I never meant to offend you."

"Quite so, quite so. We Thebans are rather touchy on some points. Besides, as you probably know, I was not born in Thebes but at Cynoscephalæ, which is at least nine miles distant from the city. I have often spoken in favour of Athens in my poems and complimented that city; certainly I am not a 'little Bœotian'. Besides, perhaps I spoke in ignorance of your sea contests. I can quite imagine that, as there is nothing to exercise a man's mind in rowing, he may well be able to use his eyes the while in studying the scene around him."

"Oh, but, sir, on the contrary, he must perforce keep his eyes in the boat, otherwise he is almost certain to earn the marked disapprobation of his trainer."