eastward to the vicinity of the Thracian Chersonese, though often used with more special reference to the Chalcidic penin­sula. His colleague in the command was Eucles. About the end of November 424 Eucles was in Amphipolis, the stronghold •of Athenian power in the north-west. To guard it with all possible vigilance was a matter of peculiar urgency at that moment. The ablest of Spartan leaders, Brasidas (*q.v.),* was in the Chalddic peninsula, where he had already gained rapid success; and part of the population between that peninsula and Amphipolis was known to be disaffected to Athens. Under such circumstances we might have expected that Thucydides, who had seven ships of war with him, would have been ready to co-operate with Eucles. It appears, however, that, with his ships, he was at the island of Thasos when Brasidas suddenly appeared before Amphipolis. Eudes sent in all haste for Thucy­dides, who arrived with his ships from Thasos just in time to beat off the enemy from Eion at the mouth of the Strymon, but not in time to save Amphipolis. The profound vexation and dismay felt at Athens found expression in the punishment of Thucydides, who was exiled. Cleon is said to have been the prime mover in his condemnation; and this is likely enough.

From 423 to 404 Thucydides lived on his property in Thrace, but much of his time appears to have been spent in travel. He visited the countries of the Peloponnesian allies—recom­mended to them by his quality as an exile from Athens; and he thus enjoyed the rare advantage of contemplating the war from various points of view. He speaks of the increased leisure which his banishment secured to his study of events. He refers partly, doubtless, to detachment from Athenian politics, partly also, we may suppose, to the opportunity of visiting places signalized by recent events and of examining their topography. The local knowledge which is often apparent in his Sicilian books may have been acquired at this period. The mind of Thucy­dides was naturally judicial, and his impartiality—which seems almost superhuman by contrast with Xenophon’s *Hellenica—* was in some degree a result of temperament. But it cannot be doubted that the evenness with which he holds the scales was greatly assisted by his experience during these years of exile.

His own words make it clear that he returned to Athens, at least for a time, in 404, though the precise date is uncertain. The older view (cf. Classen) was that he returned some six months after Athens surrendered to Lysander. More probably he was recalled by the special resolution carried by Oenobius prior to the acceptance of Lysander’s terms (Busolt, ibid., p. 628). He remained at Athens only a short time, and retired to his property in Thrace, where he lived till his death, working at his *History.* The preponderance of testimony certainly goes to show that he died in Thrace, and by violence. It would seem that, when he wrote chapter 116 of his third book, he was ignorant of an eruption of Etna which took place in 396. There is, indeed, strong reason for thinking that he did not live later than 399. His remains were brought to Athens and laid in the vault of Cimon’s family, where Plutarch *(Cimon,* 4) saw their resting-place. The abruptness with which the *History* breaks off agrees with the story of a sudden death. The historian’s daughter is said to have saved the unfinished work and to have placed it in the hands of an editor. This editor, according to one account, was Xenophon, to whom Diogenes Laertius (ii. 6, 13) assigns the credit of having “ brought the work into reputa­tion, when he might have suppressed it.” The tradition is, how­ever, very doubtful; it may have been suggested by a feeling that no one then living could more appropriately have discharged the office of literary executor than the writer who, in his *Hellenica,* continued the narrative.

*The History.*—At the outset of the *History* Thucydides indicates his general conception of his work, and states the principles which governed its composition. His purpose had been formed at the very beginning of the war, in the conviction that it would prove more important than any event of which Greeks had record. The leading belligerents, Athens and Sparta, were both in the highest condition of effective equipment. The whole Hellenic world— including Greek settlements outside of Greece proper—was divided into two parties, either actively helping one of the two combatants or meditating such action. Nor was the movement confined within even the widest limits of Hellas; the “ barbarian ” world also was affected by it—the non-Hellenic populations of Thrace, Macedonia, Epirus, Sicily and, finally, the Persian kingdom itself. The aim of Thucydides was to preserve an accurate record of this war, not only in view of the intrinsic interest and importance of the facts, but also in order that these facts might be permanent sources of political teaching to posterity. His hope was, as he says, that his *History* would be found profitable by "those who desire an exact knowledge of the past as *a* key to the future, which in all proba­bility will repeat or resemble the past. The work is meant to be a possession for ever, not the rhetorical triumph of an hour.” As this context shows, the oft-quoted phrase, “ a possession for ever,” had, in its author’s meaning, a more definite import than any mere anticipation of abiding fame for his *History.* It referred to the permanent value of the lessons which his *History* contained.

Thucydides stands alone among the men of his own days, and has no superior of any age, in the width of mental grasp which could seize the general significance of particular events. The political education of mankind began in Greece, and in the time of Thucy­dides their political life was still young. Thucydides knew only the small city-commonwealth on the one hand, and on the other the vast barbaric kingdom; and yet, as has been well said of him, “ there is hardly a problem in the science of government which the statesman will not find, if not solved, at any rate handled, in the pages of this universal master.”@@1

Such being the spirit in which he approached his task, it is interesting to inquire what were the points which he himself con­sidered to be distinctive in his method of executing it. His Greek predecessors in the recording of events had been, he conceived, of two classes. First, there were the epic poets, with Homer at their head, whose characteristic tendency, in the eyes of Thucydides, is to exaggerate the greatness or splendour of things past. Secondly, there were the Ionian prose writers whom he calls “ chroniclers ” (see Logographi), whose general object was to diffuse a knowledge of legends preserved by oral tradition and of written documents—usually lists of officials or genealogies—preserved in public archives; and they published their materials as they found them, without criticism. Thucydides describes their work by the word *ζυντιθϵναι,* but his own by ε*vγγράϕϵιν*—the difference between the terms answering to that between compilation of a somewhat mechanical kind and historical composition in a higher sense. The vice of the “ chroniclers,” in his view, is that they cared only for popularity, and took no pains to make their narratives trustworthy. Herodotus was presumably regarded by him as in the same general category.

In contrast with these predecessors Thucydides has subjected his materials to the most searching scrutiny. The ruling principle of his work has been strict adherence to carefully verified facts. “ As to the deeds done in the war, I have not thought myself at liberty to record them on hearsay from the first informant or on arbitrary con­jecture. My account rests either on personal knowledge or on the closest possible scrutiny of each statement made by others. The process of research was laborious, because conflicting accounts were given by those who had witnessed the several events, as partiality swayed or memory served them.”

It might .be supposed that the speeches which Thucydides has introduced into his *History* conflict with this standard of scientific accuracy; it is, therefore, well to consider their nature and purpose rather closely. The speeches constitute between a fourth and a fifth part of the *History.* If they were eliminated, an admirable narrative would indeed remain, with a few comments, usually brief, on the more striking characters and events. But we should lose all the most vivid light on the inner workings of the Greek political mind, on the motives of the actors and the arguments which they used—in a word, on the whole play of contemporary feeling and opinion. To the speeches is due in no small measure the imperishable intellectual interest of the *History,* since it is chiefly by the speeches that the facts of the Peloponnesian War are so lit up with keen thought as to become illustrations of genera! laws, and to acquire a permanent suggestive­ness for the student of politics. When Herodotus made his persons hold conversations or deliver speeches, he was following the pre­cedent of epic poetry; his tone is usually colloquial rather than rhetorical; he is merely making thought and motive vivid in the way natural to a simple age. Thucydides is the real founder of the tradition by which historians were so long held to be warranted in introducing set speeches of their own composition. His own account of his practice is given in the following words: “As to the speeches made on the eve of the war, or in its course, I have found it difficult to retain a memory of the precise words which I had heard spoken ; and so it was with those who brought me reports

@@@1 Freeman, *Historical Essays,* 2nd series, vol. iii.; on the general questions of the structure of the work and the view of the war which it represents see Peloponnesian War; and Greece: *Ancient History,* § Authorities.