

## THE OVERTHROW OF THE DEMOCRACY.

HAVING remained in Athens during the rule of the Thirty Tyrants, when most of the democrats had left it, the speaker was accused of having favored "the overthrow of democracy." The following is his reply to the charge:

1. After listening to such speeches, O Judges, and remembering, as you do, all the events that have lately occurred, it is not at all surprising that you regard with equal anger all of us that have remained in the city. But at my accusers I must say I am surprised. Intently watching the business of others, they seem to have neglected their own. Well knowing which of us were innocent during the stay and which of us were guilty of many crimes, instead of making their charges accordingly, they have lumped the innocent with the guilty, apparently expecting to increase their profit by inducing you to look on all of us in the same light.

2. In attacking me, why attack the Thirty? Simply to involve me in the common odium. But in both points they fail. In their attacks on the Thirty they show their incompetency as orators, for they have brought to your notice only a small part of their misdeeds. In their attempt to connect me with the crimes of the Thirty they commit even a greater blunder, for I shall have no difficulty in showing them to be liars in every particular. During the whole of my stay I shall prove myself to have been as good a citizen as the most respectable Piræan would be if he had remained in the city.

3. I need hardly ask you, O Judges, to entertain an opinion on these matters quite different from that of the informers. It is their game to drag the innocent into court—off such they make the most money—but it is your exalted privilege, O Judges, to secure for every innocent man the full measure of his rights as a citizen. Only thus, as you know, you secure the greatest number of supporters for your government.

4. Therefore, O Judges, if I show myself to have done no wrong to anyone, and, on the contrary, to have performed, by arm as well as by means, many valuable services towards the State, I think I am entitled to such treatment on your part as—I will not say a benefactor—but as every citizen that is not a malefactor has an undoubted right to expect.

5. In the first place, I can point to one signal proof that my accusers have no case against me. If they were able to bring any specific charge against myself would they have accused me of the crimes of the Thirty? Why blame one for misdeeds committed by another? Why not invoke justice on the perpetrator himself? The answer is obvious. They have no crime to lay to my charge. But they have persuaded themselves that the public indignation cherished against the infamous Thirty is overwhelming enough to involve even the innocent in one common destruction.

6. But in this they are mistaken. When a man has performed distinguished services towards the State we all know how unjust it would be if others obtained the rewards and the favors that are rightly his due. And we also know that, when a man has committed many evil acts, how equally unjust it would be to make the innocent suffer the censures and the punishments that should be inflicted on the guilty alone. These points we should particularly remember just now when the enemies of the State are numerous enough and un-

scrupulous enough to consider as fair game every one that they can, under any pretence, unjustly accuse.

7. But I must leave nothing to conjecture, O Judges. I shall therefore endeavor to show you what kind of citizens prefer an oligarchy and what kind take to a democratic form of government. By this a double object will be secured. You will better understand the various sides of the case, and I, while explaining it, shall be defending myself, for I mean to show that neither in democracy nor in oligarchy have I committed an act that could show me to be prejudiced against your government.

8. First of all, then, it is necessary to bear in mind two great truths: one, that no man is naturally a democrat or naturally an oligarch; and (two) that as soon as he finds that a particular form of government does not suit him he will do his best to upset it. Wherefore, it is not the least of your duties, O Judges, to secure the greatest number possible of adherents to the present form of your government.

9. Such to be really the case, you know; and why it is so it is not difficult to understand from recent events. Remember how often the leaders of each party changed their minds. Did not Phrynichus, Pisander and their aids in government, after various acts of injustice towards you, dread your vengeance so much that they changed the former oligarchy? Did not many of the Four Hundred unite with the Piræans? Did not some of those that were instrumental in expelling a number of the Thirty after a while become members of that body themselves? And did not some of the "Enrolled of Eleusis," though they left the city in your company, actually blockade those that had already retired there?

10. Therefore, O Judges, it is not difficult to see that disputes between men seldom turn so much on the particular

nature of the government as they do on the particular nature of the advantages that it holds out for each individual. If this be so, we have at once a principle whereby to test a citizen's real character. Simply examine how he has conducted himself in a democracy, investigating particularly at the same time the nature of the profits that would accrue to him from a change of government. Do this, and you can form the best possible judgment of his merits as a citizen.

11. For I think it to be self-evident that those who, under a democracy, for good and sufficient reasons, have been dishonored, or deprived of their goods, or subjected to any similar loss, naturally long for another form of government, expecting the change to prove a source of profit to themselves. *These, therefore, are oligarchs.* And I also think it self-evident that those who have performed many distinguished services towards the State, or even services of modest merit, just as naturally expect thanks from you for their deeds rather than punishment in spite of them. And I further think that accusations against such men it is unfair to listen to, and that no one ought to do so even if every member of the government proclaimed himself to be an oligarch.

12. By this test, O Judges, I am now willing to be tried. During the long period of the democracy never, publicly or privately, was there a wrong inflicted on me, on account of which I should become either tired of the present state of things or disposed for any reason to bring about a change. Five times was I captain of a trireme. Four times have I taken active part in a naval battle. Many taxes did I pay during the war; and all the other duties towards the State I discharged in a way that would not be unbecoming in any citizen whatsoever. For (13) all this a greater expenditure was often necessary than that enjoined by the State, but I

met it all cheerfully, so that I might gain your esteem and, in case some misfortune befell me, that I should find you more favorably disposed. But of all such pleasing prospects was I deprived as soon as the oligarchy came into power. For it was not those that had performed the most meritorious actions to your government that they considered worthy of favor. On the contrary, it was those that had wrought you most evils that they lifted to the highest honors, taking such injury as the best test of fealty. Bearing such things in your minds, therefore, O Judges, you see why you must not place confidence in the words of the informers, but in the acts proved to have been committed by each one of the accused.

14. By this test, again, O Judges, I am willing to be tried. I have shown what I was during a democracy. What was I in an oligarchy? I was never one of the Four Hundred. Let any one of the accusers that pleases step forward and prove the contrary. Nor when the Thirty came into power can any one show that I was ever present at their meetings or accepted one of their offices. The latter point especially should claim your attention. I had no office, either because I would not have one or could not get one. If I was unwilling to accept office from your enemies when I had the opportunity, I am certainly entitled to the approbation of my friends just now. But if they were too hostile at that time to give me an office, by what clearer argument can I prove my accusers to be liars?

15. Other actions of mine too, O Judges, may aid you in coming to a correct conclusion. During the whole period of the city's misfortunes I bore myself so that had the others been of my way of thinking, not a single one of you would have suffered an injury. During the whole period of the oligarchy's rule, not a single citizen can be shown to

have been sent by me into prison, not a single one of my enemies injured, not a single one even of my friends favored. Nor need you be surprised that such was my line of conduct. It was in keeping with that of my life in general. The times were bad and I wanted to have nothing to do with them.

16. For in those days to do right was difficult, to do wrong was easy for anybody. Still never shall I be shown up as having placed a single one of the Athenians on the condemned list, of having ever started an accusation, of having ever grown rich by robbing a single one of your people. Remember, however, that if you are justly irritated against the evil doers of those days, it is only just that those who did no evil in those days should rise higher in your estimation.

17. And this certainly, O Judges, is the strongest guarantee that I can give the democracy why it should have confidence in me. For I, who never did any wrong at a time when the utmost license prevailed, should at the present time particularly exert myself to be a useful citizen, well knowing that if I do wrong I shall instantly pay the penalty. In short, this is my rule of life: in an oligarchy I never covet another's property; in a democracy I am always ready to devote my own to the general good.

18. And, Judges, it would seem that some distinction should be made regarding the objects of public displeasure. It is all right, of course, to show your anger against those who have unjustly treated a democracy, but it is hardly just to pursue with your hatred all those that have not been unjustly treated by an oligarchy. Your anger should not prevent you from seeing who are your real enemies. They are not those that have not gone into exile themselves, but those who have driven you into exile. *Not those that sought to retain their own property, but those that took away your*

property. Not those that remained in the city for the sake of their own safety, but those that seized the city's government for the purpose of your destruction. If you do not recognize this distinction you are worse than the Thirty. You will destroy all those that the tyrants spared, so that not a single citizen shall be left alive.

19. Another point should also be taken into consideration, O Judges. You are well aware that in the government preceding the oligarchy, many of the officers pillaged the treasury; that some, when employed on your own especial affairs, accepted bribes; and that others alienated our allies by bringing unjust charges against them. Now if these were the only sufferers from the severities of the Thirty, even you yourselves would have looked on the Thirty as honorable men. But because they thought proper to punish the whole State for the wrongs committed by some of its members, you are naturally indignant, thinking it to be a terrible thing to lay the misdeeds of a few to the common charge of the whole republic. (20.) Therefore it is not right for you to walk in the way, nor to consider that to be unjust when you suffer it yourselves which you consider just when you made others suffer it. On your return to your native city you should retain the same sentiments of right and wrong as you had entertained on your departure. By such fair play you will restore complete harmony, make your State once more extremely powerful, and take the severest measures against your enemies.

21. Other actions of the Thirty it is also necessary to take into consideration, O Judges, so that the mistakes of our enemies may aid you in deliberating prudently regarding your own affairs. I have just spoken of harmony. Complete harmony is indispensable to our well being. When suffering in your exile, as long as you understood that the

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