

APPENDIX VII

A MEMORIAL TO SOLDIERS WHO FELL AT THE DARDANELLES IN 440 B.C.

After the war of 1914-18 there came to the notice of some Australians the existence in the National Museum at Athens of a memorial to members of an earlier force which had served its country at the Dardanelles. On a marble monument are the names of twenty-eight Athenians, grouped under the names of their "tribes" (that is, of their electoral divisions), as well as of others who fell at Byzantium (which 750 years later became Constantinople) and elsewhere. In the *Manual of Greek Historical Inscriptions* (Hicks and Hill, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1901) the editors conjecture that the fighting at the Dardanelles (or Hellespont) took place in 440 B.C., when the people—or aristocracy—of Samos revolted against the Athenian democracy, and the Greek colony of Byzantium also took the opportunity to revolt. In a sea and land war, in which Pericles and the poet Sophocles both served as leaders, the Athenians won.

On a slab of Pentelic marble across both columns of the monument is the following inscription:

οἶδε παρ' Ἑλλήσποντον ἀπώλεσαν ἀγλαὸν ἦβην
βαρνάμενοι, σφετέραν δ' εὐκλείσαν πατρίδα,
ὥστ' ἐχθροὺς στενάχειν πολέμου θέρος ἐκκομίσαντας
Αὐτοῖς δ' ἀθάνατον μνήμ' ἀρετῆς ἔθεσαν.

This has been translated, I believe by the late Christopher Brennan, as follows:

These by the Dardanelles laid down their shining youth
In battle and won fair renown for their native land,

So that their enemy groaned carrying war's harvest from the field—
But for themselves they founded a deathless monument
of valour.

Another Australian suggested a shortened version to commemorate others who fell on the same shores 2355 years later:

They gave their shining youth, and raised thereby
Valour's own monument which cannot die