ALEXANDER THE GREAT

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BY

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with ENGRAVINGS

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PREFACE

THE history of the life of every individual who has, for any reason, attracted extensively the attention of mankind, has been written in a great variety of ways by a multitude of authors, and persons sometimes wonder why we should have so many different accounts of the same thing. The reason is, that each one of these accounts is intended for a different set of readers, who read with ideas and purposes widely dissimilar from each other. Among the twenty millions of people in the United States, there are perhaps two millions, between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five, who wish to become acquainted, in general, with the leading events in the history of the Old World, and of ancient times, but who, coming upon the stage in this land and at this period, have ideas and conceptions so widely different from those of other nations and of other times, that a mere republication of existing accounts is not what they require. The story must be told expressly for them. The things that are to be explained, the points that are to be brought out, the comparative degree of prominence to be given to the various particulars, will all be different, on account of the difference in the situation, the ideas,

and the objects of these new readers, compared with those of the various other classes of readers which former authors have had in view. It is for this reason, and with this view, that the present series of historical narratives is presented to the public. The author, having had some opportunity to become acquainted with the position, the ideas, and the intellectual wants of those whom he addresses, presents the result of his labors to them, with the hope that it may be found successful in accomplishing its design.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

ALEXANDER'S CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

ALEXANDER THE GREAT died when he was quite young. He was but thirty-two years of age when he ended his career, and as he was about twenty when he commenced it, it was only for a period of twelve years that he was actually engaged in performing the work of his life. Napoleon was nearly three times as long on the great field of human action.

Notwithstanding the briefness of Alexander's career, he ran through, during that short period, a very brilliant series of exploits, which were so bold, so romantic, and which led him into such adventures in scenes of the greatest magnificence and splendor, that all the world looked on with astonishment then, and mankind have continued to read the story since, from age to age, with the greatest interest and attention.

The secret of Alexander's success was his character. He possessed a certain combination of mental and personal attractions, which in every age gives to those who exhibit it a mysterious and almost unbounded ascendency over all within their influence. Alexander

was characterized by these qualities in a very remarkable degree. He was finely formed in person, and very prepossessing in his manners. He was active, athletic, and full of ardor and enthusiasm in all that he did. At the same time, he was calm, collected, and considerate in emergencies requiring caution, and thoughtful and far-seeing in respect to the bearings and consequences of his acts. He formed strong attachments, was grateful for kindnesses shown to him, considerate in respect to the feelings of all who were connected with him in any way, faithful to his friends, and generous toward his foes. In a word, he had a noble character, though he devoted its energies unfortunately to conquest and war. He lived, in fact, in an age when great personal and mental powers had scarcely any other field for their exercise than this. He entered upon his career with great ardor, and the position in which he was placed gave him the opportunity to act in it with prodigious effect.

There were several circumstances combined, in the situation in which Alexander was placed, to afford him a great opportunity for the exercise of his vast powers. His native country was on the confines of Europe and Asia. Now Europe and Asia were, in those days, as now, marked and distinguished by two vast masses of social and civilized life, widely dissimilar from each other. The Asiatic side was occupied by the Persians, the Medes, and the Assyrians. The European side by the Greeks and Romans. They were separated from each other by the waters of the Hellespont, the Ægean Sea, and the Mediterranean, as will be seen by the map. These waters constituted a sort of natural barrier, which kept

the two races apart. The races formed, accordingly, two vast organizations, distinct and widely different from each other, and of course rivals and enemies.

It is hard to say whether the Asiatic or European civilization was the highest. The two were so different that it is difficult to compare them. On the Asiatic side there was wealth, luxury, and splendor; on the European, energy, genius, and force. On the one hand were vast cities, splendid palaces, and gardens which were the wonder of the world; on the other, strong citadels, military roads and bridges, and compact and well-defended towns. The Persians had enormous armies, perfectly provided for, with beautiful tents, horses elegantly caparisoned, arms and munitions of war of the finest workmanship, and officers magnificently dressed, and accustomed to a life of luxury and splendor. The Greeks and Romans, on the other hand, prided themselves on their compact bodies of troops, inured to hardship and thoroughly disciplined. Their officers gloried not in luxury and parade, but in the courage, the steadiness, and implicit obedience of their troops, and in their own science, skill, and powers of military calculation. Thus there was a great difference in the whole system of social and military organization in these two quarters of the globe.

Now Alexander was born the heir to the throne of one of the Grecian kingdoms. He possessed, in a very remarkable degree, the energy, and enterprise, and military skill so characteristic of the Greeks and Romans. He organized armies, crossed the boundary between Europe and Asia, and spent the twelve years of

his career in a most triumphant military incursion into the very center of the seat of Asiatic power, destroying the Asiatic armies, conquering the most splendid cities, defeating or taking captive the kings, and princes, and generals that opposed his progress. The whole world looked on with wonder to see such a course of conquest, pursued so successfully by so young a man, and with so small an army, gaining continual victories, as it did, over such vast numbers of foes, and making conquests of such accumulated treasures of wealth and splendor.

The name of Alexander's father was Philip. The kingdom over which he reigned was called Macedon. Macedon was in the northern part of Greece. It was a kingdom about twice as large as the State of Massachusetts, and one third as large as the State of New York. The name of Alexander's mother was Olympias. She was the daughter of the King of Epirus, which was a kingdom somewhat smaller than Macedon, and lying westward of it. Both Macedon and Epirus will be found upon the map in Chapter II. Olympias was a woman of very strong and determined character. Alexander seemed to inherit her energy, though in his case it was combined with other qualities of a more attractive character, which his mother did not possess.

He was, of course, as the young prince, a very important personage in his father's court. Every one knew that at his father's death he would become King of Macedon, and he was consequently the object of a great deal of care and attention. As he gradually advanced in the years of his boyhood, it was observed by all who knew him that he was endued with extraordinary qualities

of mind and of character, which seemed to indicate, at a very early age, his future greatness.

Although he was a prince, he was not brought up in habits of luxury and effeminacy. This would have been contrary to all the ideas which were entertained by the Greeks in those days. They had then no fire-arms, so that in battle the combatants could not stand quietly, as they can now, at a distance from the enemy, coolly discharging musketry or cannon. In ancient battles the soldiers rushed toward each other, and fought hand to hand, in close combat, with swords, or spears, or other weapons requiring great personal strength, so that headlong bravery and muscular force were the qualities which generally carried the day.

The duties of officers, too, on the field of battle, were very different then from what they are now. An officer *now* must be calm, collected, and quiet. His business is to plan, to calculate, to direct, and arrange. He has to do this sometimes, it is true, in circumstances of the most imminent danger, so that he must be a man of great self-possession and of undaunted courage. But there is very little occasion for him to exert any great physical force.

In ancient times, however, the great business of the officers, certainly in all the subordinate grades, was to lead on the men, and set them an example by performing themselves deeds in which their own great personal prowess was displayed. Of course it was considered extremely important that the child destined to be a general should become robust and powerful in

constitution from his earliest years, and that he should be inured to hardship and fatigue. In the early part of Alexander's life this was the main object of attention.

The name of the nurse who had charge of our hero in his infancy was Lannice. She did all in her power to give strength and hardihood to his constitution, while, at the same time, she treated him with kindness and gentleness. Alexander acquired a strong affection for her, and he treated her with great consideration as long as he lived. He had a governor, also, in his early years, named Leonnatus, who had the general charge of his education. As soon as he was old enough to learn, they appointed him a preceptor also, to teach him such branches as were generally taught to young princes in those days. The name of this preceptor was Lysimachus.

They had then no printed books, but there were a few writings on parchment rolls which young scholars were taught to read. Some of these writings were treatises on philosophy, others were romantic histories, narrating the exploits of the heroes of those days—of course, with much exaggeration and embellishment. There were also some poems, still more romantic than the histories, though generally on the same themes. The greatest productions of this kind were the writings of Homer, an ancient poet who lived and wrote four or five hundred years before Alexander's day. The young Alexander was greatly delighted with Homer's tales. These tales are narrations of the exploits and adventures of certain great warriors at the siege of Troy—a siege which lasted ten years—and they are written with so much beauty and force, they contain such admirable

delineations of character, and such graphic and vivid descriptions of romantic adventures, and picturesque and striking scenes, that they have been admired in every age by all who have learned to understand the language in which they are written.

Alexander could understand them very easily, as they were written in his mother tongue. He was greatly excited by the narrations themselves, and pleased with the flowing smoothness of the verse in which the tales were told. In the latter part of his course of education he was placed under the charge of Aristotle, who was one of the most eminent philosophers of ancient times. Aristotle had a beautiful copy of Homer's poems prepared expressly for Alexander, taking great pains to have it transcribed with perfect correctness, and in the most elegant manner. Alexander carried this copy with him in all his campaigns. Some years afterward, when he was obtaining conquests over the Persians, he took, among the spoils of one of his victories, a very beautiful and costly casket, which King Darius had used for his jewelry or for some other rich treasures. Alexander determined to make use of this box as a depository for his beautiful copy of Homer, and he always carried it with him, thus protected, in all his subsequent campaigns.

Alexander was full of energy and spirit, but he was, at the same time, like all who ever become truly great, of a reflective and considerate turn of mind. He was very fond of the studies which Aristotle led him to pursue, although they were of a very abstruse and difficult character. He made great progress in metaphysical

philosophy and mathematics, by which means his powers of calculation and his judgment were greatly improved.

He early evinced a great degree of ambition. His father Philip was a powerful warrior, and made many conquests in various parts of Greece, though he did not cross into Asia. When news of Philip's victories came into Macedon, all the rest of the court would be filled with rejoicing and delight; but Alexander, on such occasions, looked thoughtful and disappointed, and complained that his father would conquer every country, and leave him nothing to do.

At one time some embassadors from the Persian court arrived in Macedon when Philip was away. These embassadors saw Alexander, of course, and had opportunities to converse with him. They expected that he would be interested in hearing about the splendors, and pomp, and parade of the Persian monarchy. They had stories to tell him about the famous hanging gardens, which were artificially constructed in the most magnificent manner, on arches raised high in the air; and about a vine made of gold, with all sorts of precious stones upon it instead of fruit, which was wrought as an ornament over the throne on which the King of Persia often gave audience; of the splendid palaces and vast cities of the Persians; and the banquets, and fêtes, and magnificent entertainments and celebrations which they used to have there. They found, however, to their surprise, that Alexander was not interested in hearing about any of these things. He would always turn the conversation from them to inquire about

the geographical position of the different Persian countries, the various routes leading into the interior, the organization of the Asiatic armies, their system of military tactics, and, especially, the character and habits of Artaxerxes, the Persian king.

The embassadors were very much surprised at such evidences of maturity of mind, and of far-seeing and reflective powers on the part of the young prince. They could not help comparing him with Artaxerxes. "Alexander," said they, "is *great*, while our king is only *rich*." The truth of the judgment which these embassadors thus formed in respect to the qualities of the young Macedonian, compared with those held in highest estimation on the Asiatic side, was fully confirmed in the subsequent stages of Alexander's career.

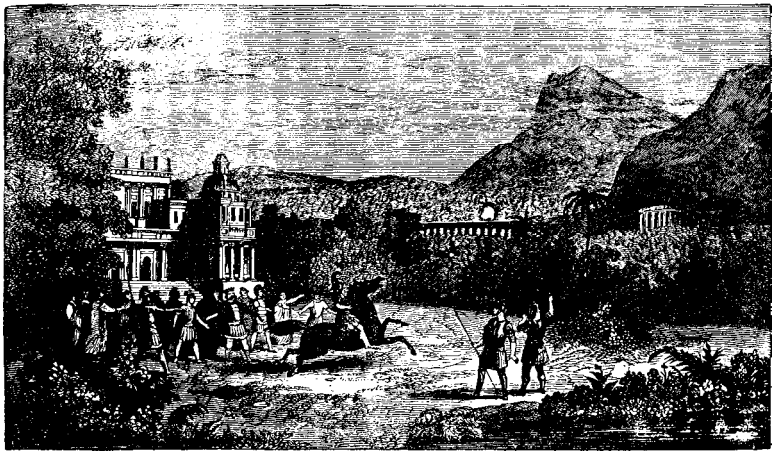
In fact, this combination of a calm and calculating thoughtfulness, with the ardor and energy which formed the basis of his character, was one great secret of Alexander's success. The story of Bucephalus, his famous horse, illustrates this in a very striking manner. This animal was a war-horse of very spirited character, which had been sent as a present to Philip while Alexander was young. They took the horse out into one of the parks connected with the palace, and the king, together with many of his courtiers, went out to view him. The horse pranced about in a very furious manner, and seemed entirely unmanageable. No one dared to mount him. Philip, instead of being gratified at the present, was rather disposed to be displeased that they had sent him an animal of so fiery and apparently

vicious a nature that nobody dared to attempt to subdue him.

In the mean time, while all the other by-standers were joining in the general condemnation of the horse, Alexander stood quietly by, watching his motions, and attentively studying his character. He perceived that a part of the difficulty was caused by the agitations which the horse experienced in so strange and new a scene, and that he appeared, also, to be somewhat frightened by his own shadow, which happened at that time to be thrown very strongly and distinctly upon the ground. He saw other indications, also, that the high excitement which the horse felt was not viciousness, but the excess of noble and generous impulses. It was courage, ardor, and the consciousness of great nervous and muscular power.

Philip had decided that the horse was useless, and had given orders to have him sent back to Thessaly, whence he came. Alexander was very much concerned at the prospect of losing so fine an animal. He begged his father to allow him to make the experiment of mounting him. Philip at first refused, thinking it very presumptuous for such a youth to attempt to subdue an animal so vicious that all his experienced horsemen and grooms condemned him; however, he at length consented. Alexander went up to the horse and took hold of his bridle. He patted him upon the neck, and soothed him with his voice, showing, at the same time, by his easy and unconcerned manner, that he was not in the least afraid of him. A spirited horse knows immediately when any one approaches him in a timid

or cautious manner. He appears to look with contempt on such a master, and to determine not to submit to him. On the contrary, horses seem to love to yield obedience to man, when the individual who exacts the obedience possesses those qualities of coolness and courage which their instincts enable them to appreciate.



ALEXANDER AND BUCEPHALUS

At any rate, Bucephalus was calmed and subdued by the presence of Alexander. He allowed himself to be caressed. Alexander turned his head in such a direction as to prevent his seeing his shadow. He quietly and gently laid off a sort of cloak which he wore, and sprang upon the horse's back. Then, instead of attempting to restrain him, and worrying and checking him by useless efforts to hold him in, he gave him the rein freely, and animated and encouraged him with his voice, so that the horse flew across the plains at the top of his speed, the king and the courtiers looking on, at first with fear and trembling, but soon afterward with feelings of the

greatest admiration and pleasure. After the horse had satisfied himself with his run it was easy to rein him in, and Alexander returned with him in safety to the king. The courtiers overwhelmed him with their praises and congratulations. Philip commended him very highly: he told him that he deserved a larger kingdom than Macedon to govern.

Alexander's judgment of the true character of the horse proved to be correct. He became very tractable and docile, yielding a ready submission to his master in every thing. He would kneel upon his fore legs at Alexander's command, in order that he might mount more easily. Alexander retained him for a long time, and made him his favorite war horse. A great many stories are related by the historians of those days of his sagacity and his feats of war. Whenever he was equipped for the field with his military trappings, he seemed to be highly elated with pride and pleasure, and at such times he would not allow any one but Alexander to mount him.

What became of him at last is not certainly known. There are two accounts of his end. One is, that on a certain occasion Alexander got carried too far into the midst of his enemies, on a battle field, and that, after fighting desperately for some time, Bucephalus made the most extreme exertions to carry him away. He was severely wounded again and again, and though his strength was nearly gone, he would not stop, but pressed forward till he had carried his master away to a place of safety, and that then he hopped down exhausted, and died. It may be, however, that he did

not actually die at this time, but slowly recovered; for some historians relate that he lived to be thirty years old—which is quite an old age for a horse—and that he then died. Alexander caused him to be buried with great ceremony, and built a small city upon the spot in honor of his memory. The name of this city was Bucephalia.

Alexander's character matured rapidly, and he began very early to act the part of a man. When he was only sixteen years of age, his father, Philip, made him regent of Macedon while he was absent on a great military campaign among the other states of Greece. Without doubt Alexander had, in this regency, the counsel and aid of high officers of state of great experience and ability. He acted, however, himself, in this high position, with great energy and with complete success; and, at the same time, with all that modesty of deportment, and that delicate consideration for the officers under him—who, though inferior in rank, were yet his superiors in age and experience—which his position rendered proper, but which few persons so young as he would have manifested in circumstances so well calculated to awaken the feelings of vanity and elation.

Afterward, when Alexander was about eighteen years old, his father took him with him on a campaign toward the south, during which Philip fought one of his great battles at Chæronea, in Bœotia. In the arrangements for this battle, Philip gave the command of one of the wings of the army to Alexander, while he reserved the other for himself. He felt some solicitude in giving his young son so important a charge, but he endeavored

to guard against the danger of an unfortunate result by putting the ablest generals on Alexander's side, while he reserved those on whom he could place less reliance for his own. Thus organized, the army went into battle.

Philip soon ceased to feel any solicitude for Alexander's part of the duty. Boy as he was, the young prince acted with the utmost bravery, coolness, and discretion. The wing which he commanded was victorious, and Philip was obliged to urge himself and the officers with him to greater exertions, to avoid being outdone by his son. In the end Philip was completely victorious, and the result of this great battle was to make his power paramount and supreme over all the states of Greece.

Notwithstanding, however, the extraordinary discretion and wisdom which characterized the mind of Alexander in his early years, he was often haughty and headstrong, and in cases where his pride or his resentment were aroused, he was sometimes found very impetuous and uncontrollable. His mother Olympias was of a haughty and imperious temper, and she quarreled with her husband, King Philip; or, perhaps, it ought rather to be said that *he* quarreled with her. Each is said to have been unfaithful to the other, and, after a bitter contention, Philip repudiated his wife and married another lady. Among the festivities held on the occasion of this marriage, there was a great banquet, at which Alexander was present, and an incident occurred which strikingly illustrates the impetuosity of his character.

One of the guests at this banquet, in saying some-

thing complimentary to the new queen, made use of expressions which Alexander considered as in disparagement of the character of his mother and of his own birth. His anger was immediately aroused. He threw the cup from which he had been drinking at the offender's head. Attalus, for this was his name, threw his cup at Alexander in return; the guests at the table where they were sitting rose, and a scene of uproar and confusion ensued.

Philip, incensed at such an interruption of the order and harmony of the wedding feast, drew his sword and rushed toward Alexander but by some accident he stumbled and fell upon the floor. Alexander looked upon his fallen father with contempt and scorn, and exclaimed, "What a fine hero the states of Greece have to lead their armies—a man that can not get across the floor without tumbling down." He then turned away and left the palace. Immediately afterward he joined his mother Olympias, and went away with her to her native country, Epirus, where the mother and son remained for a time in a state of open quarrel with the husband and father.

In the mean time Philip had been planning a great expedition into Asia. He had arranged the affairs of his own kingdom, and had formed a strong combination among the states of Greece by which powerful armies had been raised, and he had been designated to command them. His mind was very intently engaged in this vast enterprise. He was in the flower of his years, and at the height of his power. His own kingdom was in a very prosperous and thriving condition, and his ascendency

over the other kingdoms and states on the European side had been fully established. He was excited with ambition, and full of hope. He was proud of his son Alexander, and was relying upon his efficient aid in his schemes of conquest and aggrandizement. He had married a youthful and beautiful bride, and was surrounded by scenes of festivity, congratulation, and rejoicing. He was looking forward to a very brilliant career considering all the deeds that he had done and all the glory which he had acquired as only the introduction and prelude to the far more distinguished and conspicuous part which he was intending to perform.

Alexander, in the mean time, ardent and impetuous, and eager for glory as he was, looked upon the position and prospects of his father with some envy and jealousy. He was impatient to be monarch himself. His taking sides so promptly with his mother in the domestic quarrel was partly owing to the feeling that his father was a hindrance and an obstacle in the way of his own greatness and fame. He felt within himself powers and capacities qualifying him to take his father's place, and reap for himself the harvest of glory and power which seemed to await the Grecian armies in the coming campaign. While his father lived, however, he could be only a prince; influential, accomplished, and popular, it is true, but still without any substantial and independent power. He was restless and uneasy at the thought that, as his father was in the prime and vigor of manhood, many long years must elapse before he could emerge from this confined and subordinate condition. His restlessness and uneasiness were, however, suddenly

ended by a very extraordinary occurrence, which called him, with scarcely an hour's notice, to take his father's place upon the throne.

CHAPTER II

BEGINNING OF HIS REIGN

ALEXANDER was suddenly called upon to succeed his father on the Macedonian throne, in the most unexpected manner, and in the midst of scenes of the greatest excitement and agitation. The circumstances were these:

Philip had felt very desirous, before setting out upon his great expedition into Asia, to become reconciled to Alexander and Olympias. He wished for Alexander's co-operation in his plans; and then, besides, it would be dangerous to go away from his own dominions with such a son left behind, in a state of resentment and hostility.

So Philip sent kind and conciliatory messages to Olympias and Alexander, who had gone, it will be recollected, to Epirus, where *her* friends resided. The brother of Olympias was King of Epirus. He had been at first incensed at the indignity which had been put upon his sister by Philip's treatment of her; but Philip now tried to appease his anger, also, by friendly negotiations and messages. At last he arranged a marriage between this King of Epirus and one of his own daughters,

and this completed the reconciliation. Olympias and Alexander returned to Macedon, and great preparations were made for a very splendid wedding.

Philip wished to make this wedding not merely the means of confirming his reconciliation with his former wife and son, and establishing friendly relations with the King of Epirus: he also prized it as an occasion for paying marked and honorable attention to the princes and great generals of the other states of Greece. He consequently made his preparations on a very extended and sumptuous scale, and sent invitations to the influential and prominent men far and near.

These great men, on the other hand, and all the other public authorities in the various Grecian states, sent compliments, congratulations, and presents to Philip, each seeming ambitious to contribute his share to the splendor of the celebration. They were not wholly disinterested in this, it is true. As Philip had been made commander-in-chief of the Grecian armies which were about to undertake the conquest of Asia, and as, of course, his influence and power in all that related to that vast enterprise would be paramount and supreme; and as all were ambitious to have a large share in the glory of that expedition, and to participate, as much as possible, in the power and in the renown which seemed to be at Philip's disposal, all were, of course, very anxious to secure his favor. A short time before, they were contending against him; but now, since he had established his ascendency, they all eagerly joined in the work of magnifying it and making it illustrious.

Nor could Philip justly complain of the hollowness and falseness of these professions of friendship. The compliments and favors which he offered to them were equally hollow and heartless. He wished to secure *their* favor as a means of aiding him up the steep path to fame and power which he was attempting to climb. They wished for his, in order that he might, as he ascended himself, help them up with him. There was, however, the greatest appearance of cordial and devoted friendship. Some cities sent him presents of golden crowns, beautifully wrought, and of high cost. Others dispatched embassies, expressing their good wishes for him, and their confidence in the success of his plans. Athens, the city which was the great seat of literature and science in Greece sent a *poem*, in which the history of the expedition into Persia was given by anticipation. In this poem Philip was, of course, triumphantly successful in his enterprise. He conducted his armies in safety through the most dangerous passes and defiles; he fought glorious battles, gained magnificent victories, and possessed himself of all the treasures of Asiatic wealth and power. It ought to be stated, however, in justice to the poet, that, in narrating these imaginary exploits, he had sufficient delicacy to represent Philip and the Persian monarch by fictitious names.

The wedding was at length celebrated, in one of the cities of Macedon, with great pomp and splendor. There were games, and shows, and military and civic spectacles of all kinds to amuse the thousands of spectators that assembled to witness them. In one of these spectacles they had a procession of statues of the gods. There

were twelve of these statues, sculptured with great art, and they were borne along on elevated pedestals, with censers, and incense, and various ceremonies of homage, while vast multitudes of spectators lined the way. There was a thirteenth statue, more magnificent than the other twelve, which represented Philip himself in the character of a god.

This was not, however, so impious as it would at first view seem, for the gods whom the ancients worshiped were, in fact, only deifications of old heroes and kings who had lived in early times, and had acquired a reputation for supernatural powers by the fame of their exploits, exaggerated in descending by tradition in superstitious times. The ignorant multitude accordingly, in those days, looked up to a living king with almost the same reverence and homage which they felt for their deified heroes; and these deified heroes furnished them with all the ideas they had of God. Making a monarch a god, therefore, was no very extravagant flattery.

After the procession of the statues passed along, there came bodies of troops, with trumpets sounding and banners flying. The officers rode on horses elegantly caparisoned, and prancing proudly. These troops escorted princes, ambassadors, generals, and great officers of state, all gorgeously decked in their robes, and wearing their badges and insignia.

At length King Philip himself appeared in the procession. He had arranged to have a large space left, in the middle of which he was to walk. This was done in order to make his position the more conspicuous, and

to mark more strongly his own high distinction above all the other potentates present on the occasion. Guards preceded and followed him, though at considerable distance, as has been already said. He was himself clothed with white robes, and his head was adorned with a splendid crown.

The procession was moving toward a great theater, where certain games and spectacles were to be exhibited. The statues of the gods were to be taken into the theater, and placed in conspicuous positions there, in the view of the assembly, and then the procession itself was to follow. All the statues had entered except that of Philip, which was just at the door, and Philip himself was advancing in the midst of the space left for him, up the avenue by which the theater was approached, when an occurrence took place by which the whole character of the scene, the destiny of Alexander, and the fate of fifty nations, was suddenly and totally changed. It was this. An officer of the guards, who had his position in the procession near the king, was seen advancing impetuously toward him, through the space which separated him from the rest, and, before the spectators had time even to wonder what he was going to do, he stabbed him to the heart. Philip fell down in the street and died.

A scene of indescribable tumult and confusion ensued. The murderer was immediately cut to pieces by the other guards. They found, however, before he was dead, that it was Pausanias, a man of high standing and influence, a general officer of the guards. He had had horses provided, and other assistance ready, to enable

him to make his escape, but he was cut down by the guards before he could avail himself of them.

An officer of state immediately hastened to Alexander, and announced to him his father's death and his own accession to the throne. An assembly of the leading counselors and statesmen was called, in a hasty and tumultuous manner, and Alexander was proclaimed king with prolonged and general acclamations. Alexander made a speech in reply. The great assembly looked upon his youthful form and face as he arose, and listened with intense interest to hear what he had to say. He was between nineteen and twenty years of age; but, though thus really a boy, he spoke with all the decision and confidence of an energetic man. He said that he should at once assume his father's position, and carry forward his plans. He hoped to do this so efficiently that every thing would go directly onward, just as if his father had continued to live, and that the nation would find that the only change which had taken place was in the *name* of the king.

The motive which induced Pausanias to murder Philip in this manner was never fully ascertained. There were various opinions about it. One was, that it was an act of private revenge, occasioned by some neglect or injury which Pausanias had received from Philip. Others thought that the murder was instigated by a party in the states of Greece, who were hostile to Philip, and unwilling that he should command the allied armies that were about to penetrate into Asia. Demosthenes, the celebrated orator, was Philip's great enemy among the Greeks. Many of his most powerful orations were

made for the purpose of arousing his countrymen to resist his ambitious plans and to curtail his power. These orations were called his Philippics, and from this origin has arisen the practice, which has prevailed ever since that day, of applying the term philippics to denote, in general, any strongly denunciatory harangues.

Now Demosthenes, it is said, who was at this time in Athens, announced the death of Philip in an Athenian assembly before it was possible that the news could have been conveyed there. He accounted for his early possession of the intelligence by saying it was communicated to him by some of the gods. Many persons have accordingly supposed that the plan of assassinating Philip was devised in Greece; that Demosthenes was a party to it; that Pausanias was the agent for carrying it into execution; and that Demosthenes was so confident of the success of the plot, and exulted so much in this certainty, that he could not resist the temptation of thus anticipating its announcement.

There were other persons who thought that the *Persians* had plotted and accomplished this murder, having induced Pausanias to execute the deed by the promise of great rewards. As Pausanias himself, however, had been instantly killed, there was no opportunity of gaining any information from him on the motives of his conduct, even if he would have been disposed to impart any.

At all events, Alexander found himself suddenly elevated to one of the most conspicuous positions in the whole political world. It was not simply that he

succeeded to the throne of Macedon; even this would have been a lofty position for so young a man; but Macedon was a very small part of the realm over which Philip had extended his power. The ascendency which he had acquired over the whole Grecian empire, and the vast arrangements he had made for an incursion into Asia, made Alexander the object of universal interest and attention. The question was, whether Alexander should attempt to take his father's place in respect to all this general power, and undertake to sustain and carry on his vast projects, or whether he should content himself with ruling, in quiet, over his native country of Macedon.

Most prudent persons would have advised a young prince, under such circumstances, to have decided upon the latter course. But Alexander had no idea of bounding his ambition by any such limits. He resolved to spring at once completely into his father's seat, and not only to possess himself of the whole of the power which his father had acquired, but to commence, immediately, the most energetic and vigorous efforts for a great extension of it.

His first plan was to punish his father's murderers. He caused the circumstances of the case to be investigated, and the persons suspected of having been connected with Pausanias in the plot to be tried. Although the designs and motives of the murderers could never be fully ascertained, still several persons were found guilty of participating in it, and were condemned to death and publicly executed.

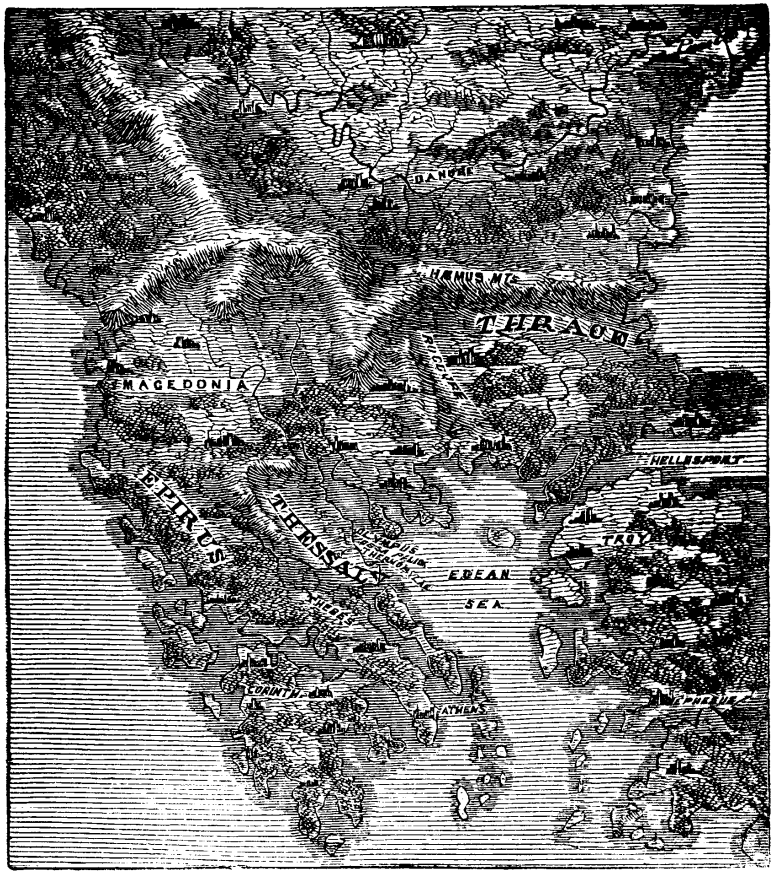
Alexander next decided not to make any change in his father's appointments to the great offices of state, but to let all the departments of public affairs go on in the same hands as before. How sagacious a line of conduct was this! Most ardent and enthusiastic young men, in the circumstances in which he was placed, would have been elated and vain at their elevation, and would have replaced the old and well-tried servants of the father with personal favorites of their own age, inexperienced and incompetent, and as conceited as themselves. Alexander, however, made no such changes. He continued the old officers in command, endeavoring to have every thing go on just as if his father had not died.

There were two officers in particular who were the ministers on whom Philip had mainly relied. Their names were Antipater and Parmenio. Antipater had charge of the civil, and Parmenio of military affairs. Parmenio was a very distinguished general. He was at this time nearly sixty years of age. Alexander had great confidence in his military powers, and felt a strong personal attachment for him. Parmenio entered into the young king's service with great readiness, and accompanied him through almost the whole of his career. It seemed strange to see men of such age, standing, and experience, obeying the orders of such a boy; but there was something in the genius, the power, and the enthusiasm of Alexander's character which inspired ardor in all around him, and made every one eager to join his standard and to aid in the execution of his plans.

Macedon, as will be seen on the following map, was in the northern part of the country occupied by the Greeks, and the most powerful states of the confederacy and all the great and influential cities were south of it. There was Athens, which was magnificently built, its splendid citadel crowning a rocky hill in the center of it. It was the great seat of literature, philosophy, and the arts, and was thus a center of attraction for all the civilized world. There was Corinth, which was distinguished for the gayety and pleasure which reigned there. All possible means of luxury and amusement were concentrated within its walls. The lovers of knowledge and of art, from all parts of the earth, flocked to Athens, while those in pursuit of pleasure, dissipation, and indulgence chose Corinth for their home. Corinth was beautifully situated on the isthmus, with prospects of the sea on either hand. It had been a famous city for a thousand years in Alexander's day.

There was also Thebes. Thebes was farther north than Athens and Corinth. It was situated on an elevated plain, and had, like other ancient cities, a strong citadel, where there was at this time a Macedonian garrison, which Philip had placed there. Thebes was very wealthy and powerful. It had also been celebrated as the birth-place of many poets and philosophers, and other eminent men. Among these was Pindar, a very celebrated poet who had flourished one or two centuries before the time of Alexander. His descendants still lived in Thebes, and Alexander, some time after this, had occasion to confer upon them a very distinguished honor.

There was Sparta also, called sometimes Lacedæmon.



The inhabitants of this city were famed for their courage, hardihood, and physical strength, and for the energy with which they devoted themselves to the work of war. They were nearly all soldiers, and all the arrangements of the state and of society, and all the plans of education, were designed to promote military ambition and pride among the officers and fierce and indomitable courage and endurance in the men.

These cities and many others, with the states which were attached to them, formed a large, and flourishing,

and very powerful community, extending over all that part of Greece which lay south of Macedon. Philip, as has been already said, had established his own ascendency over all this region, though it had cost him many perplexing negotiations and some hard fought battles to do it. Alexander considered it somewhat uncertain whether the people of all these states and cities would be disposed to transfer readily, to so youthful a prince as he, the high commission which his father, a very powerful monarch and soldier, had extorted from them with so much difficulty. What should he do in the case? Should he give up the expectation of it? Should he send embassadors to them, presenting his claims to occupy his father's place? Or should he not act at all, but wait quietly at home in Macedon until they should decide the question?

Instead of doing either of these things, Alexander decided on the very bold step of setting out himself, at the head of an army, to march into southern Greece, for the purpose of presenting in person, and, if necessary, of enforcing his claim to the same post of honor and power which had been conferred upon his father. Considering all the circumstances of the case, this was perhaps one of the boldest and most decided steps of Alexander's whole career. Many of his Macedonian advisers counseled him not to make such an attempt; but Alexander would not listen to any such cautions. He collected his forces, and set forth at the head of them.

Between Macedon and the southern states of Greece was a range of lofty and almost impassable mountains. These mountains extended through the whole interior

of the country, and the main route leading into southern Greece passed around to the eastward of them, where they terminated in cliffs, leaving a narrow passage between the cliffs and the sea. This pass was called the Pass of Thermopylæ, and it was considered the key to Greece. There was a town named Anthela near the pass, on the outward side.

There was in those days a sort of general congress or assembly of the states of Greece, which was held from time to time, to decide questions and disputes in which the different states were continually getting involved with each other. This assembly was called the Amphictyonic Council, on account, as is said, of its having been established by a certain king named Amphictyon. A meeting of this council was appointed to receive Alexander. It was to be held at Thermopylæ, or, rather, at Anthela, which was just without the pass, and was the usual place at which the council assembled. This was because the pass was in an intermediate position between the northern and southern portions of Greece, and thus equally accessible from either.

In proceeding to the southward, Alexander had first to pass through Thessaly, which was a very powerful state immediately south of Macedon. He met with some show of resistance at first, but not much. The country was impressed with the boldness and decision of character manifested in the taking of such a course by so young a man. Then, too, Alexander, so far as he became personally known, made a very favorable impression upon every one. His manly and athletic form, his frank and open manners, his spirit, his generosity,

and a certain air of confidence, independence, and conscious superiority, which were combined, as they always are in the case of true greatness, with an unaffected and unassuming modesty—these and other traits, which were obvious to all who saw him, in the person and character of Alexander, made every one his friend. Common men take pleasure in yielding to the influence and ascendency of one whose spirit they see and feel stands on a higher eminence and wields higher powers than their own. They like a leader. It is true, they must feel confident of his superiority; but when this superiority stands out so clearly and distinctly marked, combined, too, with all the graces and attractions of youth and manly beauty, as it was in the case of Alexander, the minds of men are brought very easily and rapidly under its sway.

The Thessalians gave Alexander a very favorable reception. They expressed a cordial readiness to instate him in the position which his father had occupied. They joined their forces to his, and proceeded southward toward the Pass of Thermopylæ.

Here the great council was held. Alexander took his place in it as a member. Of course, he must have been an object of universal interest and attention. The impression which he made here seems to have been very favorable. After this assembly separated, Alexander proceeded southward, accompanied by his own forces, and tended by the various princes and potentates of Greece, with their attendants and followers. The feelings of exultation and pleasure with which the young king

defiled through the Pass of Thermopylæ, thus attended, must have been exciting in the extreme.

The Pass of Thermopylæ was a scene strongly associated with ideas of military glory and renown. It was here that, about a hundred and fifty years before, Leonidas, a Spartan general, with only three hundred soldiers, had attempted to withstand the pressure of an immense Persian force which was at that time invading Greece. He was one of the kings of Sparta, and he had the command, not only of his three hundred Spartans, but also of all the allied forces of the Greeks that had been assembled to repel the Persian invasion. With the help of these allies he withstood the Persian forces for some time, and as the pass was so narrow between the cliffs and the sea, he was enabled to resist them successfully. At length, however, a strong detachment from the immense Persian army contrived to find their way over the mountains and around the pass, so as to establish themselves in a position from which they could come down upon the small Greek army in their rear. Leonidas, perceiving this, ordered all his allies from the other states of Greece to withdraw, leaving himself and his three hundred countrymen alone in the defile.

He did not expect to repel his enemies or to defend the pass. He knew that he must die, and all his brave followers with him, and that the torrent of invaders would pour down through the pass over their bodies. But he considered himself stationed there to defend the passage, and he would not desert his post. When the battle came on he was the first to fall. The soldiers

gathered around him and defended his dead body as long as they could. At length, overpowered by the immense numbers of their foes, they were all killed but one man. He made his escape and returned to Sparta. A monument was erected on the spot with this inscription: "Go, traveler, to Sparta, and say that we lie here, on the spot at which we were stationed to defend our country."

Alexander passed through the defile. He advanced to the great cities south of it—to Athens, to Thebes, and to Corinth. Another great assembly of all the monarchs and potentates of Greece was convened in Corinth; and here Alexander attained the object of his ambition, in having the command of the great expedition into Asia conferred upon him. The impression which he made upon those with whom he came into connection by his personal qualities must have been favorable in the extreme. That such a youthful prince should be selected by so powerful a confederation of nations as their leader in such an enterprise as they were about to engage in, indicates a most extraordinary power on his part of acquiring an ascendency over the minds of men, and of impressing all with a sense of his commanding superiority. Alexander returned to Macedon from his expedition to the southward in triumph, and began at once to arrange the affairs of his kingdom, so as to be ready to enter, unembarrassed, upon the great career of conquest which he imagined was before him.