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LEFT THE FIELD IN HASTE

TWO CONQUERORS ALEXANDER AND CÆSAR

BY

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INTRODUCTION

THE two sketches in this little book are not intended for biographies: still less are they meant for histories of the times of which they treat. To deal fully with the life and times of either of our "Conquerors" would require far more space than is at our disposal: and to attempt it would have been to give a string of dry historical facts without any interesting detail. I have, therefore, selected incidents, or parts of the lives of the heroes, which serve to illustrate their characters; and have described them more or less at length, passing lightly over other events of equal, or perhaps greater, importance. In the case of Alexander, I have dwelt upon his youth, trying to show how the child was father of the man. Unfortunately it was impossible to do this for Cæsar, as nothing is known of his boyhood.

My purpose is to compare two men, born in distant ages and in very different states of society, but alike in the fact that they were world-famed conquerors. They were conquerors, partly because they had certain necessary characteristics:—power of organising, ambition, courage, knowledge of human nature, ability to win the love and devotion of their men. These would have made them great in any case: but that they were conquerors was largely due to the political conditions of the world into which they were born.

Both flourished in times of change. Greece looked on Macedonia as a barbarous state. Alexander's father,

Philip, by force or fraud, made her ruler of the destinies of Greece and began a career of conquest. Alexander, building on these foundations, destroyed what was left of Greek liberty, and extended his father's conquests far and wide. Cæsar was born when the class wars in the Roman Republic had brought about a condition of lawlessness which threatened the state with destruction. He not only established a settled government, but greatly extended his country's empire.

In disposition and motives the two men differed widely. But Alexander's fiery energy, ambition, and craving for adventure, and Cæsar's calm determination, patriotism, and love of law and order led them along similar paths, though to very different ends:—the first to an early death when at the height of his success: the second to martyrdom at the hand of jealous assassins when his task was near its end.

H. M.

ALEXANDER OF MACEDON

CHAPTER I.

ALEXANDER'S BOYHOOD

B. C. 356—340.

IF you look at the map of Turkey you will find that just north of the Grecian peninsula there is a District called Macedonia. It now stretches some way to the east along the north shore of the Ægean Sea. But twenty-three centuries ago the little kingdom of Mecedon was a good deal smaller, its greatest breadth from north to south being about one hundred miles, and its greatest length not more than a hundred and fifty. Its only seacoast was a part of the shore of what we now call the Gulf of Salonika. Its people were related to the Greeks, but were much less civilised than they. They spoke a language similar to Greek, but do not seem to have written it. They were however, a hardy race, and very good soldiers: and when King Philip came to the throne in the year 359 B. C., and taught them the art of war which he had studied during a stay in Greece in his youth, he made their army the finest fighting machine of those days. He was not only a soldier, but a wise statesman, and, partly by fighting, partly by cunning, he spread his kingdom to the north, south, and east, and made it far more powerful than any of the Grecian states. For through the mainland of Greece is

not quite so large as the island of Ceylon, it was, from the earliest times, split up into many states. Its people were all of the same race, spoke dialects of the same language, and believed in the same Gods, yet they never united or wished to unite themselves into a single nation. Each city loved to stand alone, to keep its own liberty and make its own laws, and each thought that by union with another this liberty would be lost. Greece is divided up by mountain ranges and arms of the sea: and this, together with the want of roads, helped to keep the people of one little state separate from those of another. Philip determined to take advantage of this division and to win for Macedon a leading place among the Greeks. His agents were everywhere, and as the townspeople governed themselves without any king or parliament, it was not hard to persuade some of them that Philip was their best friend; so that in each important town there were two parties, one in favour of, and one against Macedon. Philip knew what he wanted: the Greek citizens were dragged now one way and now another by their orators: so it is not strange that he got his own way. Twice he was invited to Greece to help in wars between certain states: and so his power grew. Philip had been on the throne three years, when, in 356 B.C., news was brought to him of the birth of a son. He had just captured the city of Potidæa (on the Gulf of Salonika) when three messengers came to him. The first told him that one of his generals, Parmenio, had conquered the Illyrians, barbarians who lived to the west of his dominions: the second that his race-horse had won a victory at the Olympian games: and the third that his wife Olympias had given birth to a son. He was delighted at getting so much good news in one day, and thought his own victory and

those of his general and his horse were excellent omens of great good fortune in store for his son.

Alexander, for so the boy was named, was born at Pella, the capital of Macedon, a town about 20 miles north-east of the head of the Gulf: and here he spent his childhood. Philip was not a good man in his private life. He was far too fond of drinking, as were many of his countrymen, and in other ways set a very bad example to his son. But he did not wish Alexander to follow this example, and did his best for his education. He provided him with many teachers, and chose them well. For some time the chief of these was Leonidas, a relative of Olympias. This man was rather harsh and ill-tempered, but seems to have been on the whole a wise tutor. He noticed that his pupil was extravagant, and probably often reproved him for this: but if he did so, his advice on this subject had very little effect. Alexander always loved to give presents and was often foolish in his generosity. There is a good story of how he reminded Leonidas in after years of this old difference between them.

Master and pupil were once present at a sacrifice, when Alexander, filling both his hands with incense, threw it on the fire. "Some time," said Leonidas, "if you become master of the land of spices, you may throw incense in the flames like this: but at present you must be economical." A good many years later Alexander had taken a town and won much booty. He was sending home presents to his mother and to his friends; and to Leonidas he sent more than a ton of incense and myrrh with a message that in future he need not be economical in his offerings to the gods.

Philip saw that his son had a somewhat obstinate temper, and that he would resist any attempt to force him to do a

thing, but would readily listen to argument. Hence he always reasoned with him instead of commanding him. When the boy was thirteen years old, finding that Leonidas was too strict with him, he invited the great philosopher Aristotle to undertake his education. Aristotle opened a school in a town some distance from Pella, and Alexander attended it for three or four years, and continued through his youth to receive advice and instruction from the great master. From him he learned that it is a man's duty to overcome his passions and desires, and that no one can be a great conqueror until he has conquered himself. Hence in his youth and early manhood we find that Alexander was very temperate. Leonidas too had taught him this lesson, for we are told that when he was passing through Caria (in Asia Minor) the queen used to send him dainties every day: but when she offered to send him some cooks he replied that he had no need of them, for Leonidas had supplied him with excellent cooks. For his breakfast-cook he had one named "All Night-March," and for dinner-cook "Light-breakfast." He added, "Why, that man (Leonidas) would unlock my boxes and look in them to see that my mother had not given me more blankets or clothes than I needed, or anything to make me luxurious!" Well would it have been for him had he persevered in obeying his good masters.

Aristotle would sharpen his pupils' wits by asking them hard questions and comparing their answers. On one occasion he asked several princes who attended his school what they would do for him when they came to their thrones. One said that Aristotle should dine at his table and be treated with the highest respect: another that he should be his minister and adviser. But when it came to Alexander's turn he answered, "What right have you to ask

me such questions about that which the future has yet to bring? I know nothing about what will happen to-morrow, and will only answer you when the time comes." "Well said!" cried Aristotle, "you will be the greatest king of them all." It was the prudence and thoughtfulness of this answer which pleased the master. The other boys thought it their duty to give some sort of direct answer to the question, but Alexander saw that they had been set an impossible problem, and said so.

From Aristotle Alexander learned a love of literature, and especially of the great poet Homer. The Iliad (story of the siege of Troy) was, he thought, the text-book for a soldier, and he is said always to have kept a copy of it under his pillow. When he found a splendid jewel-case amongst the spoils taken after the battle of Issus, he said he would keep his Homer in it, that being his most valuable possession. He only learnt enough about painting and sculpture to say what was good and what bad. Aristotle was a great lover of natural history; and his pupil took an interest in this subject, which he probably learnt from his master. He was also taught something of medicine, and was ready to advise his friends when they were ill. Aristotle taught him logic, and the art of speaking,—not how to use fine words or high sounding phrases, but how to express himself clearly and to reason well.

In after years the prince continued to hold his master in great respect and love: indeed, he said that he owed more to him than to his father, for Philip had given him life, but Aristotle had taught him how to live well. For some time after they were separated they wrote to each other; and two little books written by Aristotle when Alexander was fighting in Asia were intended as advice to

him. Alexander sent him large sums of money—as much as two thousand pounds of English money, it is said—to purchase books with, and to use in the studies necessary for his great work on natural history. He also gave Aristotle the services of a thousand men in different parts of Asia and Greece to observe for him the ways of birds, beasts and insects.

The Greeks were devoted to games. Their great athletic sports at Olympia, held every fourth year, and open only to Greek citizens, were crowded with men from all the states of Greece: and it was thought to be the greatest honour to win a race or a boxing match there. The winner received a crown of leaves as prize: and not only he, but the city to which he belonged, was thought most fortunate. Poets sang of the winners, and their fellow citizens erected statues of them. We have seen already how pleased Philip was when he heard that his horse had won a victory at the games. Indeed, any sort of honour was pleasing to Philip. But it was very different with Alexander. He was a good athlete, and ran very well: but when his friends asked him if he would not compete at Olympia he said, “Yes, if I can compete with kings.” This does not seem to have shown mere pride. He wished to do things of some importance, and being a prince, he wanted to do what only princes could do, and not to contend in sports which were open to all men. His ambition was to make war and enlarge the Macedonian Empire. In after years the people of Miletus, a Greek city in Asia Minor, showed him the statues of their Olympian victors. “Well,” said he, “what did all these fine strong fellows do for you when the barbarians attacked your town?” It was Aristotle’s teaching that the body should be strengthened so as to be a good servant of the . .

soul, but not more. So though Alexander took plenty of exercise, and would practise jumping in and out of his chariot when it was going at full speed, and hunted or shot if his army came to a halt at any time, he cared nothing for athletics for their own sake.

When the prince was about twelve years old a neighbouring king sent Philip a beautiful horse, which he offered to sell for a very large sum of money. Philip, Alexander, and others went down to a level piece of land to try the animal, but he proved very restive. One groom after another tried to mount him, but in vain. At last Philip got angry, and ordered the ill-tempered beast to be taken away. "That is too good a horse," said Alexander, "for these men to spoil in this fashion. They don't know how to manage him." Philip paid no heed to him at first, but he kept on talking in the same way till his father said, "What do you mean by finding fault with your elders? Do you know more about horses than they do?" "Well," said he, "I could manage this one better than they if I were given a chance." "What penalty will you pay if you fail?" laughed his father. "Why, the price of the horse," said he. After a good deal of laughter and jesting it was agreed that he should try what he could do.

Now he had noticed that the horse kept looking at its own shadow and starting back from it, so he turned it with its face to the sun. He patted and coaxed it and led it to and fro till its fright was over. Then he leapt on its back, and, after walking it about for a little time, urged it into a gallop. It was a beautiful beast, and carried him splendidly. His father was at first frightened, but seeing that Alexander had complete control over the horse he was much pleased: and when he rode back amidst the cheers of all, his father

shed tears of joy at having so skilful a son. He bought the horse, which they named Bucephalus, and gave it to his son, who rode it until the day of its death, regarding it as one of his most precious treasures.

Alexander early showed that he was different from other boys. Philip was away from Pella when some ambassadors came from Persia; and he, boy though he was, received them. They thought he would ask them about trifles, and perhaps be interested in their dresses and the presents which they had brought the king. But he asked the many questions about the length of roads, and how people travelled in Persia: about their king, and whether he was a good general: whether they had a good army, and how their empire came to be so strong: and so on and so on, until they began to think that, clever though Philip was said to be, his son was cleverer.

He had probably heard his father and others talk about a Greek invasion of Persia. The Persians had twice invaded Greece; and though it was nearly a century and a half since the last invasion, Philip wished to avenge it. He did not live to carry out his plan, but Alexander did: and no doubt thoughts of such an invasion made him ask all these questions. He certainly hoped to out-do his father as a soldier, for when news was brought that Philip had won some victory he never seemed pleased, but would say to his companions, "Father will get everything in advance, boys. He won't leave any great task for me to share with you!"

These stories tell us something of what Alexander was as a boy:—ambitious, clever, and not too humble: generous, and ready to respond to kindness: easy to lead, but hard to drive: active and energetic: always anxious to be doing

something and to control something, whether it were a horse or his own passions: yet not caring for any victory in matters which seemed to him of little importance. He had a loving disposition and was always good to his mother, Olympias, and to his old nurse. How the boy was the father of the man: how this strong character made him one of the greatest conquerors the world has ever seen, and how it was spoiled by his wonderful success, we shall see in the following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

ALEXANDER IN EUROPE

B. C. 340—334.

ALEXANDER was only in his nineteenth year when his father set out to attack Byzantium, which is now called Constantinople. Such was Philip's trust in him that he appointed the boy regent in his absence: and Alexander, not content with remaining at Pella led an army against a rebellious mountain tribe, drove them from their chief town, put loyal Macedonians in their place, and renamed the town after himself. Philip was less successful. Athens helped Byzantium, and it was not taken. In fact, a number of Greek states aided by Persian money, formed a league against Philip, and he was away from Macedon for nearly two years, so that people began to say Alexander was the king and Philip the General.

We have said before that Philip was twice invited into Greece. The first time he was summoned to help Thebes punish Phokis for impiety, and the walls and forts of all

the Phokian towns were destroyed. The second time he was asked by a council of the Greek States to punish the town of Amphissa for sacrilege. He gladly accepted the invitation and marched into Phokis, taking Alexander with him. But when he began to fortify a town there, Athens was alarmed, thinking that her old enemy would not be behaving thus if he only meant to attack Amphissa: so she made friends with her former foes the Thebans, and their allied armies waited at Chæronea for Philip's attack. Now Philip had spent three years in Thebes as a young man, and had watched how her greatest general trained his troops. He had gone back to Macedon and trained his men to fight in the same way, but with certain improvements of his own. The Thebans arranged their foot-soldiers in a solid mass called the "phalanx". In Philip's phalanx men stood sixteen deep, and each carried a spear 21 feet long. If the ranks were close together some four rows of spear points besides their own would stand out in front of the first rank. This arrangement proved to be the best yet discovered in Greece, and the Thebans were now to suffer for the lesson they had taught Philip. Alexander, aided by more experienced generals, commanded the wing of the army which met the Thebans. The phalanx of the latter charged, but in vain. The skill of Alexander and the many long spears of the Macedonians were too much for the Greeks. The best troops of the Theban army called "The Sacred Band" were unable to force their way through; and, being too proud to retreat, fell in their ranks. Their phalanx was broken and pushed back. On the other wing the Athenians drove back a part of Philip's men, and there was a cry of "Let us chase them to Macedonia!" But though they came on boldly, they were not experienced soldiers like the Macedonians,

and could not keep up the struggle. Philip seeing Alexander's success, and determined not to be outdone by his son, pushed his men forward, and presently the whole Grecian army was in flight. A thousand Athenians fell, and two thousand were taken prisoners. The Thebans lost even more.

Alas for Thebes! Philip had expected help from his old allies, and they had turned against him. He sold those whom he had captured into slavery: he put to death some of their leading citizens and banished others: he appointed a council of his own friends to rule the state, and placed a Macedonian garrison in their citadel. The greatness of Thebes was at an end.

Meantime the Athenians were making great efforts to protect their city: but this was unnecessary. Philip wished for their friendship, and would not attack them. He made peace with them and returned their 2000 prisoners without ransom, in return for which Athens was to give up her claim to leadership in Greece, and to do all she could to give that leadership to Philip. He now marched all through Greece, destroying all who opposed him, and at last called a congress of the Greek States and told them that he had resolved to attack Persia. They agreed to provide men for this enterprise and accepted him as leader. Only the Spartans (whose chief town he had never captured) did not attend the congress.

Up to the battle of Chæronea Philip and Alexander were on good terms: but soon after it a quarrel arose between them. Philip was not content with one wife, but had already married several besides Olympias. Now he was about to marry another, a Macedonian woman named Kleopatra. At the wedding her uncle Attalos hinted that

as Olympias was a foreign woman, Kleopatra's son, should she have one, would be heir to the throne. Alexander answered angrily. Philip rose from the coach on which he was lying and walked towards Alexander to strike him, but being drunk he fell down. Then Alexander cried, "The man who wants to cross from Europe to Asia cannot cross from one couch to another." This was more than Philip could bear, and Olympias and Alexander were banished. The latter was recalled after a time, and presently Philip thought that he had better make friends with the relatives of Olympias also, so he offered his daughter as a wife to her brother. Great were the festivities. Greeks were invited from every state, and the grandest entertainments were given: but as Philip was about to enter the theatre, a man named Pausanias rushed forward and stabbed him to death. The murderer was slain on the spot, and his motive was never known for certain. Attalos had done him a great wrong, and Philip had refused him justice, so he may have been moved only by private spite: but it was thought that he had been set on by Olympias and others. Many men suspected of having been in the plot were put to death by Alexander, and it is not unlikely that a good many innocent persons suffered.

There were other claimants to the throne besides Alexander: but partly by violence, partly by making friends with the generals and the army, he secured his position at home: and within two months of his father's death he was marching through Greece at the head of an army as strong as that which had won the battle of Chæronea. He called a new Congress at Corinth, and it renewed the agreement which had been made with Philip.

He now went home. He was determined to carry out his father's plan of invading Asia, but first he must secure

Macedon against invasion. He led his army eastward into Thrace, and then turned northward to cross the Balkans into what is now called Bulgaria. Here he met a body of Thracians who were determined to turn him back. They posted themselves at the top of the pass through which he must go, and placed a number of waggons in front of them. Then as the Macedonians came toiling up the steep hill, they pushed the waggons forward and let them go rushing down the slope, hoping to crush the enemy to death. This rather frightened the Macedonians at first, but Alexander ordered them to open their ranks where the road was wide enough for them to do so, and where it was not, to stoop down in groups and hold their shields in front of them with one edge on the ground and the other over their bodies. When a waggon came to one of these groups it was thrown into the air by the shields, and jumped over the men, so that few were hurt and none killed. Then, pleased with having got over the danger so simply, the Macedonians charged the enemy and put them to flight, slaying some and taking many prisoners whom they sold as slaves.

Marching on towards the north they reached the Danube after some fighting. Some of the Thracians had fled to an island in the river, and Alexander determined to attack them. But the steep banks, the swift stream and the resistance of the enemy, prevented him from landing. To make up for this disappointment he resolved to cross the river and attack the tribesmen on its northern bank. These were chiefly horsemen armed with bows, and four thousand of them were ready to resist him if he tried to cross. Now Alexander had sent some corn ships round by the Sea of Marmora and the Black Sea, and so up the Danube to meet him: he seized such fisherman's boats as he could find: he took the

skin tents of the army and stuffed them with hay, and made rafts by fixing planks to these skins: and with this strange collection of ships and boats he crossed the river one night, and hid his army among the tall corn. Next morning when the barbarians saw the dreaded Macedonian troops coming from the fields, they scarcely waited for the cavalry to charge, but fled to their town, picked up as many of their women and children as they could, and rode away. Alexander did not follow them. He had shown what he could do. He had been where no Greek force had ever gone; and had crossed the greatest of European rivers without a bridge, and in face of an enemy. Now he offered sacrifices to the gods, and recrossed the stream: but he was not to go home yet, for it was reported to him that a rebellion had broken out in Epirus. Hastening westward he soon subdued the rebels, and might have gone back to Pella but for news which was brought from Greece.

Alexander's agents had been breaking the agreements made at Corinth, and there was talk in Athens of making war on him. Darius, king of Persia, thought it would be well to get the Greeks to fight against Macedon instead of against himself, so he sent money to help any state or statesman who would work against Alexander. Then came the news that Alexander was dead. He had been so long away from Macedon that this seemed quite likely, and the false report was believed in Athens. The news was carried to Thebes. The Thebans at once put down the council which Philip had established, and besieged the Macedonian garrison in their fortress. They thought that they were on the eve of regaining their liberty, when suddenly they heard that Alexander and his army were not many miles away. Macedonian troops could march fast and far. Each man

carried his food in a basket on his back so that they did not have to wait for carts carrying provisions. They could if necessary march 30 to 35 miles a day: and, though there were no roads between Pelion and Thessaly, they forced their way across the mountains in seven days, and in six more were in the neighbourhood of Thebes. The Thebans could hardly believe the news. They thought that it must refer to another man named Alexander and not to the king, whose bones, they hoped, were bleaching by the waters of the Danube. But it was too true. Had he come less suddenly, they might have sought help from other states, but now that was impossible.

Alexander waited two days. He asked them to give up two of their leaders. They would not consent to this. They had offended him too much to hope for mercy, so they only answered his demand with insult, and Alexander ordered the town to be stormed, after a sharp fight the Macedonians forced their way through the gates. Fighting went on from street to street, and very few Theban soldiers escaped, for they fought bravely to the last. It is said that five hundred Macedonians and six thousand Thebans perished, and that thirty thousand of the latter were made prisoners.

Alexander called upon the towns around Thebes, who had once been her subjects and had been oppressed by her, to judge what should be her punishment. They decided that the city should be destroyed: that all the prisoners should be sold as slaves: and that the territories of Thebes should be divided amongst themselves. All this was confirmed by Alexander, who only added that the house of the great Theban poet Pindar should be spared.

It is pleasant to hear, amidst all this severity, of one kindly act of Alexander. A certain lady had been ill-treated

by some Thracian soldiers, and their leader asked her where her money was concealed. She led him to a well, and told him that she had thrown it in there. He leaned over to see if he could see anything, and she pushed him into the well, threw stones on him, and killed him. His followers took her to Alexander, who asked her who she was. She proudly told him that she was the sister of a soldier who had fought bravely for his country and fallen at Chæronea. So pleased was Alexander with her courage that he set her and her children at liberty.

News of the fate of Thebes filled Athens with alarm, and she once more prepared to fight. Alexander demanded that ten of her leading men should be handed over to him. She refused, so he was satisfied by the Athenians banishing two of their generals, Ephialtes and Charidemos. These men at once crossed to Asia where, as we shall see, they did good service to Darius.

One thing more Alexander did before he left Greece. He went to Delphi where the priestess of Apollo delivered oracles, supposed to be inspired by the god. He reached the shrine at a time when it was unlawful for the priestess to be consulted. When she told him this, he took her by the arm to drag her to the tripod on which she stood to deliver oracles, and she said, "My son, you are irresistible". "That is all I required to know," said he, and, regarding these words as a sufficiently good omen, he returned to Pella to prepare for his expedition to Asia.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST YEAR IN ASIA

B. C. 334—333.

IN the spring of 334 B. C. Alexander was not 22 years old and had been on the throne less than eighteen months. He had established his power at home and put down all enemies abroad: and he was now making ready to attack Darius. The Persian king then ruled a vast empire. It included Baluchistan, Afghanistan and Turkestan on the east, and Asia Minor and Egypt on the west. It measured 3000 miles from end to end, stretching over more than 50° longitude, or one-seventh of the way round the earth. The land-tax which was paid as tribute to the king amounted to about two and a quarter million pounds, and this was only a small part of his wealth. There were fine roads for military and other purposes; one of these, starting from Susa, near the Persian Gulf, ran 1500 miles, first north-westward through Mesopotamia and Armenia, and then westward to Sardis near the Ægean Sea. Ordinary travellers took three months or so to make the journey, but as there were men and horses posted at rest-houses every fifteen miles, the king's messages could be carried from Susa to Sardis in a week. Vast armies could be raised and sent quickly to any part of the empire, and the king's wealth enabled him in times of need to hire Greek soldiers who were much better than his own. It was this great empire that Alexander was about to attack.

It was rather like the old stories of Jack the Giant-Killer. Jack was only a boy, and the giants could have crushed him

between their fingers; but he had his magic sword and other aids which made their strength useless. Philip had provided Alexander with such a sword in his wonderful army. Not only were the men brave fighters, but they were the best armed and best disciplined force in the world. Mere numbers, and even courage, are of little help against discipline; and when its army had such a general as Alexander, it is not strange that little Macedon should have beaten the giant Persia.

Philip had spent so much on his army that he left behind him but a debt of five talents or £120,000—a vast sum in those days. Alexander, in preparing for his expedition, increased this debt to nearly £320,000. He provided all his friends with means to make ready for the campaign, until at last one of them named Perdikkas asked him, “My King, what have you kept for yourself?” “My hopes,” said Alexander. “Then,” said Perdikkas, “are we who are to go with you not to share them?” and he refused the help offered to him. Alexander left half his army at home under a general named Antipater, who was to rule the country during his absence, and set out for Asia with some thirty thousand infantry (of whom six thousand were Greek) and five thousand cavalry, 1500 of whom came from Thessaly, the most northerly state of Greece. The other troops were mostly Macedonians, but some came from Thrace and other barbarous states. A force which Philip had sent to Asia under Attalos and Parmenio had not met with much success; but they had kept a garrison at Abydos, a town on the Asiatic side of the Dardenelles (or Bosphorus). Opposite to this was Sestos, to which Alexander marched his troops. Leaving them there he went down the straits that he might land near Troy. He loved the tales of Troy.

He claimed to be descended from Achilles, a great Grecian warrior, who had fought and died there, and his son Neoptolomos who slew Priam, the Trojan king; and perhaps he thought it would be a good omen to land where they had fought. First he visited the shrine of Protesilaos. This hero had been the first Greek to land at Troy and the first to fall. Alexander prayed that his might be a better fate. He saw the tomb of Priam and made offerings there, for he feared that the spirit of the dead king might still be angry, with the descendant of the man who had slain him so many centuries before. Then, after offering sacrifices to the chief gods of the Greeks, he joined his army, which had now crossed to Abydos.

There was a Persian army not far away. It was very strong in cavalry, and had a number of Greek infantry under an able general named Memnon. But though it may have been as large as or larger than that of the invaders, Memnon knew very well that the latter were far the stronger. He therefore advised that the Persian army should retire, laying waste the country, so that the Macedonians would not be able to advance for want of supplies. The Persians would not listen to this advice. They were jealous of Memnon; they thought that to retire would be a disgrace; and one of them, Arsites, who was Governor of that part of Asia, declared that not a house should be burned in his province. So they advanced to the little river Granikos, which flows into the sea of Marmora, and waited for Alexander on its eastern bank. They drew up their cavalry in front, to receive the first attack of the enemy, and posted Memnon and his infantry behind them where they could be of little use.

Alexander came to the river, saw how they had arranged their troops, and decided to attack at once. He knew that

they had made a mistake in putting cavalry to defend the river. The momentum of the horses makes them useful if they charge: but to receive a charge, infantry are far better. Parmenio, seeing how steep the east bank of the river was, wished to wait, as perhaps the enemy would retire, and they might find a better chance to attack them later on. "Why," said Alexander, "the Bosphorus would blush with shame if after we had crossed it we feared to cross the Granikos." They told him that Macedonian kings never made war in the month "Daisios." "Well," he replied, "we can get over that difficulty:" and he gave orders that henceforth the month should be given another name.

Alexander commanded the right of his army, Parmenio the left. Each had command of half the phalanx which was in the centre. Cavalry and light-armed infantry were on each wing. The Macedonian cavalry charged, singing a hymn to Ares, the god of war. Arrows and the javelins or darts with which the Persian cavalry were armed were showered upon them. As they reached the farther bank of the stream their horses slipped about in the mud, and the Persian horse rode down to resist them, so that they were checked for a while. But the javelins were no match for the long spears of the Macedonians, who soon made their way up the banks. The light infantry were mixed with the cavalry and did good service. Alexander's lance was broken, but presently he got another. Now he saw a son-in-law of Darius advancing at the head of a body of cavalry. He aimed a lance at his head, and struck him to the ground. A javelin pierced his own armour, but did him no harm. Two Persian generals attacked him at once. He avoided the charge of one of them, Spithridates, broke his spear on the breast-plate of the



THE MACEDONIANS SOON MADE THEIR WAY UP THE BANKS

other, Rhœsakes, and then drew his sword to fight the latter. Spithridates now rode up again, and struck a blow with his battle-axe which cut open Alexander's helmet: but before he could strike a second time he was run through with a lance by Kleitos, the brother of Alexander's nurse and one of his best friends. Alexander himself slew Rhœsakes. The Persian cavalry began to give way, and presently fled in disorder. Alexander did not follow them far, for Memnon and his infantry had not been engaged as yet. The phalanx now advanced and attacked them in front, the cavalry and light-armed infantry on the flanks and rear. They resisted fiercely, but their case was hopeless. It is said they were almost all killed or taken prisoners, and that about a thousand of the cavalry were left dead, while the Macedonian losses were very small; but most likely this is an exaggeration. It is certain however that the army of Memnon and Arsites was scattered. The victory was complete. The north-west corner of Asia Minor belonged to Alexander, not to Darius.

Alexander condemned the captured Greeks to slavery. He said that he represented Greece: that he had been elected by the Greek states in the congress at Corinth to lead them against Persia: and that therefore Greeks, who fought against him were rebels and deserved no mercy. He ordered statues to be made of the twenty-five horsemen who were killed in the first charge, and freed their relatives from taxation. He visited the wounded, and listened to the tales of what they had done, and made himself more popular with his men than ever. Then he appointed a new governor of the province, arranged that its tributes should be unchanged, but should be paid to him instead of to Darius, and so marched south to Sardis. This was a very strong

city; but such was the fear of its people when they heard of the battle of the Granikos, that they surrendered without a blow. At Ephesus he met with no resistance. His fleet met him here, and after sending troops to take possession of some towns which had offered to surrender, he went south to Miletus, his fleet also sailing for that port.

The governor of Miletus had at first been as frightened as the people of Sardis, and had sent an offer of surrender. But he had afterwards plucked up his courage and resolved to resist. The Persian fleet was expected, and this encouraged him. Memnon too came to Miletus, and doubtless he urged its people to fight. The fleet however came too late. The Macedonian ships were in the harbour, and the Persians had to stay outside and look on. Parmenio wanted to fight them, and there was a curious discussion between him and Alexander. The latter wisely said that the Phœnicians, who manned the Persian fleet, were both more numerous and more skilful than his own sailors. Parmenio replied that he had seen an eagle, and that that was an omen of victory. "Yes," said Alexander, "but the eagle was on land, and so it was an omen of a land victory, not of a naval one." Whether this answer was really serious or not, Alexander had made up his mind what ought to be done, and was determined to do it. The outer part of the town was undefended, and he brought up battering-rams and other engines, and soon knocked holes in the walls. The Milesians and their hired Greeks fought bravely, but when the Macedonians rushed in through the breaches resistance was vain. Some tried to escape by sea in little boats or by swimming, but the Macedonians in the ships killed many of these poor creatures. Three hundred Greeks landed on an island, and Alexander prepared to attack them, taking long ladders to

help his men to land. But when he found that the three hundred would fight hard for their lives, he accepted their surrender, and enlisted them in his own army. The Persian fleet sailed southward to Halicarnassus, and Alexander dismissed most of his own, thinking that he could not fight at sea, but that by taking all the coast-line he would make the enemy's fleet useless.

At the most south-westerly point of Asia Minor stood the town of Halicarnassus. It had two or three strong forts and was surrounded on three sides by a ditch 45 feet wide and 22 feet deep. On the fourth side was the sea. There was a strong garrison in the town including a large number of Greeks commanded by the Athenian Ephialtes. Alexander brought up machines to attack the place. The walls could only be beaten down with battering-rams, huge beams of wood with iron heads which were hung from a framework close to the wall, drawn back, and then allowed to rush forward by their own weight. Such machines would not cross the moat, and the first thing to be done was to fill it up. To do this Alexander used "Tortoises", movable sheds which covered his men while they worked. He had also great wooden towers which could be wheeled near the walls of a town, and from these his men could fire their arrows, or throw darts at the defenders. After some useless fighting Alexander settled down to filling up the ditch and battering the wall. Presently two towers were destroyed, and the wall between them. Alexander would not attack till he had beaten down another tower, and while he was doing this the defenders were building a semi-circular wall to fill up the breach, and making a wooden tower 150 feet high from which to shoot at the besiegers. At last a third tower fell: but the semi-

circular wall was now ready, and Alexander had to take his engines forward to break it down. They were thus exposed to fire on three sides, and the enemy made a sally at night and burned some of their machines. The garrison now saw however that their case was hopeless, and Ephialtes asked leave of Memnon (who was now in command of all the Persian troops in the west) to make a sally, for he was resolved not to be taken alive. He took 2000 men, half of them provided with torches to burn the engines. For a time he had the best of the fight. The Macedonians were driven back, and some of the engines set on fire. But now Alexander came up leading some old soldiers who had been encamped in the rear. These men, accusing their comrades of cowardice, formed themselves into a phalanx, and drove back the Greeks, Ephialtes fighting till he fell. Memnon saw that the town must be taken, so, after burning his own engines which were too heavy to be removed, the garrison retired to the citadels. The Macedonians entered the town and put out the flames: but they did not spare the city. Alexander would not stay to take the citadels. He left an army to surround them and starve them into submission. He levelled the city to the ground, and gave it and the whole province of Karia over to Ada, who had formerly been its queen, but had been deposed by her brother. She had shown friendship to Alexander, and it was she whom we mentioned in the first chapter as having offered to provide him with cooks.

All the west of Asia Minor was now Alexander's. Winter was coming on, and he sent home many of his troops on furlough, bidding Parmenio collect fresh men and meet him in the following spring. With the rest of his army he turned eastward, and passed along the south

coast as far as the Gulf of Adalia. Then going north he made his way after some fighting to Gordium on the great Susa-Sardis road, where he found Parmenio waiting for him with 3600 men. At Gordium, it is said, there was a waggon, on the yoke of which was a cord tied in a knot that no one could untie. There was a prophecy that anyone who could succeed in untying it would conquer all Asia Minor. Alexander tried, but tried in vain, for he could find no end to the cord. At last, determined that no one else should succeed where he had failed, he cut through the knot with his sword. He and his companions seemed to think that he had fulfilled the oracle. There are many stories which show that Alexander believed in omens, as did all men of his time: but it seems clear that he was not a slave to such beliefs. If the omens were bad he would not let his own judgment be interfered with by them, but would make better ones for himself. We have seen other instances of this in his visit to the Delphic oracle, in his re-naming the month Daisios, and in his discussion with Parmenio about the eagle at Miletus.

CHAPTER IV.

ISSUS AND TYRE

B. C. 333—332.

MEMNON was the ablest of all the generals of Darius. He advised his master not to fight, but to guard the mountain passes so that Alexander might not march to the east, while Memnon with the fleet under his command cut him off from Greece and Macedon. He had already retaken some

islands off the coast when, unfortunately for Darius, he died. When news of this was brought to Alexander he thought that he need fear no more trouble in the west. He left Gordium and marched eastward along the great road to a point where it forked, one branch going north-east to Armenia, and the other south-east to Cilicia. Here he halted to learn what Darius would do. Now when Darius heard of the death of his best general he thought that he would raise an army and go himself to meet Alexander. So he sent messages to all parts of his kingdom and got together a host of half a million men. His heart and those of his nobles were full of pride when they saw this huge army, and they thought that the Macedonians would not have a chance of success. Darius asked the opinion of the old general Charidemus, whom the Athenians had banished in obedience to Alexander. He replied that the army, large though it was, was quite unfit to meet the disciplined Macedonians. He begged Darius to use his wealth to hire Greeks, and not to trust untrained Asiatics. The Persians were very angry. They were jealous of Charidemus, and thought that he gave this advice in order to get the command for himself. They accused him of insolence, and he accused them of cowardice, which so enraged Darius that he ordered him to be slain. He was led away to execution, exclaiming, "You will discover too late the truth of what I have said. My avenger will soon be upon you."

Darius now moved towards Cilicia. As soon as Alexander heard of this, he set out in the same direction. He might easily have been stopped in the mountains through which he had to go, particularly in one pass where only four men could walk abreast; but he marched through unopposed. At Tarsus Alexander was delayed. He fell ill,

so ill that the doctors were afraid to treat him; for each thought that if he gave Alexander medicine and he died, he would be accused of killing him. However, a man named Philip, well-known to Alexander, seeing how serious things were, said that he knew of a medicine which would cure the patient. Parmenio wrote to Alexander saying that Philip had been bribed by Darius to poison him. Alexander put the letter under his pillow and said nothing about it. Presently Philip brought the draught, and Alexander handing him the letter, drank off the medicine, watching Philip's face to see if there was any sign of guilt in it. He saw none. Philip declared that he was ready to take the consequence of his deed. The effect of the medicine was so violent that Alexander was insensible for a time, and they thought he would die. But a little later he was declared to be out of danger, and he soon recovered.

Now before we can understand what follows, we must know a little of the nature of the country of Cilicia. At the south-east corner of Asia Minor a bay runs up into the land, and it is called the Gulf of Scanderun, or Alexander's Gulf, to this day. A chain of mountains (Mount Amanus) runs along its south-east coast not far from the shore. Another branch of the same range runs parallel to the north-west coast, the two forming a V. Between the mountains and the sea is a narrow plain, and at one point on the first mentioned range, the hills come close down to the sea, leaving only a narrow way called the gates of Cilicia and Syria. To enter Syria it was usual to go through these "Gates" and then cross Mount Amanus by a pass. There was however another pass, which we may call the pass of Darius, further to the north. Not far from this, and at the head of the gulf was the town of Issus.

Now when Alexander got well he celebrated his recovery with games and races. Then, sending Parmenio on to seize the gates of Cilicia, lest the Persians should try to stop him there, he turned west to subdue two coast towns. Presently he turned east again and went through the "Gates" to a town beyond. Thus he had spent some time in Cilicia; and Darius, who was encamped on the Syrian or eastern side of Mount Amanus, began to think he was afraid of him. A Macedonian in the Persian camp told him, "Do not fear. He will come to you." But Darius thought he knew best, and, crossing the mountains by the pass of Darius, marched down to Issus, thus getting behind Alexander. When he heard of this, Alexander called his troops together and addressed them in some such words as these: —

"Soldiers! our enemy has been foolish enough to cross the mountains. In the wide plains he might have surrounded us. Here he is shut in between the mountain and the sea, and cannot find room to use a quarter of his men. You have met the Persians and defeated them before. You are strong, and used to toil and danger: they are made weak by ease and luxury. You are free: they are slaves. They will dash in vain against your phalanx. They are coming on led by their king. Defeat him, and all his wealth will be ours. You have fought bravely in the past. Fight now as becomes such soldiers. I have led you on to victory, won some fame, and suffered some wounds: and I will not fail you now. Remember how Xenophon led his ten thousand Greeks into Persia, and, without horsemen or slingers or archers, defeated the Persians close to Babylon itself. What they did you can do. Leave to your descendants an example as glorious as that which your ancestors have left to you."

His men crowded round him and begged him to lead them on. He bade them take their evening meal, and sent a few men on to occupy the gate of Cilicia: then, when night came he took the army back through the pass to the narrow plain of Issus and camped there till morning. Darius had marched southward after Alexander. He had better have stayed at Issus, for as he advanced the plain grew narrower and narrower. When he came to the little river Pinarus where he camped for the night, it was only a mile and a half wide. Next day, learning that Alexander was coming to meet him, he made ready his array. In the centre he placed 30,000 heavy armed Greek troops, many of whom he had recalled from Memnon's fleet. On each side of these was a body of Asiatics armed like the Greeks. There were some fine cavalry on his right wing near the sea, and about 20,000 men on the hills on his left. These made up one-fourth or one-fifth of his men: for the rest he could find no place, so they were drawn up in the rear and could take no part in the battle. Alexander, as usual, put his phalanx in the middle with cavalry and light armed infantry on each wing. He commanded the right and Parmenio the left. His troops which had been forced to march in column through the Gates had opened out so as to cover the whole width of the plain, and marched on to the field almost in the order in which they were to fight.

The first thing to be done was to get rid of the 20,000 Persians in the hills who threatened his right flank. Alexander sent some men against them, and these had little trouble in driving off the foe. He left a body of 300 cavalry far on his right lest they should return, but they do not seem to have found anything to do. Now Alexander addressed

his men once more, reminding each regiment, Greek or Macedonian, of the deeds of their ancestors, till they shouted to be led on to the fight. The word was given, and the advance began, slowly and steadily at first, but with a fierce rush as soon as the enemy's darts and arrows fell among them. Alexander was at the head of the Macedonian cavalry, and met with little resistance from the Asiatics whom he attacked. This force being broken up he turned to the left, attacking the left flank of the Greek troops, behind whom stood Darius in his chariot. It is said that Alexander himself sought to attack Darius, that a fight took place near where the latter was standing, and that his horses being frightened the king was afraid his chariot might be overturned: that he therefore left it, mounted a horse which had been kept ready for him, and left the field in haste. Certain it is that he turned and fled, and never stopped, except to change horses, till he had crossed the hills and reached the place from which he had marched out with such high hopes four days before.

No one was left in command of the army, but it fought on for a time. The Greeks in the centre were attacked by the phalanx. The river protected their front, and the Macedonians had to fight their way up the steep bank and lost rather heavily: but when Alexander's cavalry attacked their left the Greeks gave way. Down by the sea the Persian cavalry boldly crossed the stream and charged the Thessalians, inflicting heavy losses on them; but when they heard that Darius had fled, they followed their master's example. There was no more fighting. The great host of Darius had but one desire to escape from the terrible foe in their rear. All that day the Macedonians chased them, and it is said that 100,000 of them perished. Those who



“LEFT THE FIELD IN HASTE”

escaped from the plain of Issus scattered in all directions. Some climbed the mountains and got back to Syria. Some went westward into Cilicia and were killed by savage tribes of mountaineers. Many must have died of starvation: and of the vast army only 4000 rejoined their king.

Darius and his nobles had been so sure of success that they had brought their wives and families with them. Before crossing the mountains they had sent some of their women, many slaves, and much treasure to Damascus (in Syria), but much still remained as spoil for the conquerors. Among the captives were the mother, wife, daughters, and son of Darius. We are glad to read that Alexander treated them with the greatest respect. The tent of Darius with all its costly furniture filled the Macedonians with surprise. They took Alexander to see it, and he said, "Let me wash off the sweat of battle in the bath of Darius." "No," said one of his friends, "in that of Alexander. It is yours now." When he saw all the vessels of oil and scents and the boxes of ointment which filled the tent, and then went on to another where a rich banquet was prepared, he exclaimed, "This then it is to be a king!"

Alexander kept to his plan of winning the coast-line before marching to the heart of the empire. There was a stretch of coast between the Gulfs of Adalia and Skanderun which he had not yet touched, so he went westward, sending on Parmenio to Damascus to seize the treasures there. The latter found vast spoils, and reported that there were among the prisoners 329 of the king's female flute-players, 227 cooks, 40 makers of perfumes, and many other slaves. He was amazed that anyone should go to war with such a retinue.

Having secured the whole coast of Asia Minor, Alexander

marched southward as far as Sidon (in Phœnicia) meeting with little or no resistance. Sidon yielded to him at once, but not so the neighbouring city of Tyre. Her people boasted that no foreign army had ever entered their town. They would accept Alexander as their king, just as they had accepted the kings of Persia. But they would not receive him or any of his troops within their gates. Alexander said that he must worship in their temple, since their God was the same as the Greek hero Herakles, who was an ancestor of his own. His request for admission was refused, and he began a siege which lasted seven months.

Tyre was built on an island, half a mile from the shore, and was surrounded by strong walls at the very water's edge. There was a harbour on the north and another on the south side of the island, and the Tyrian fleet was the finest in the world. Thus Alexander's task was no easy one.

The first thing he did was to drive stakes into the muddy bottom of the sea and fill up the space between them with earth and stones, thus making a wide way by which he hoped to take his engines to the walls. This "mole" is there to-day. At first the work went on fast, but when they came to the deep water near the island the workmen were attacked by archers and slingers on the walls and on the Tyrian ships. They put up shelters to protect themselves, covering them with hides to prevent their being burnt; but a great ship filled with wood and pitch and sulphur was brought up, and soon these shelters were in a blaze, and many weeks' work was destroyed. Now Alexander prepared to make his mole wider, so that even if fireships came they would not touch what was in the middle of it; and while this was being done he hurried off to Sidon to get a fleet. In this he was very successful.

Deserters from the Persians came to him, and no less than 120 ships from Cyprus, whose people, after hearing of the battle of Issus, thought it would be wise to help the stronger side. Altogether he collected 256 ships, far more than the Tyrians owned, and with these he sailed for Tyre. The Tyrians opposed him, but after sinking three of their vessels, he anchored half his fleet on each side of the mole. Presently there was only a small gap between this mole and the city walls: but the walls were built of stone and cement, and were one hundred and fifty feet high. Battering rams were set to work at the end of the mole and on board great rafts, but the Tyrians threw boulders into the water to block the way of the rafts. The Macedonians tried to remove the boulders with cranes. Then Tyrian ships, covered with skins, came and cut the ropes by which the rafts were moored, and Alexander had to use chains instead of ropes. And so the struggle went on for months.

Once there was a great sea-fight, but the Tyrians lost so heavily in it that they did not attempt another.

The end came at last. The wall by the mole could not be beaten down, but a breach was made near the southern harbour mouth. A first attack here failed; but a second, led by Alexander, was successful. There was a hard fight in the streets. Darts and arrows drove the defenders from the walls. Barriers erected in the streets were forced, and little mercy was shown except to those who took refuge in the great temple. Many prisoners were taken, of whom 2000 were hanged, while the women and children were sold as slaves. The glory of Tyre was no more. Alexander could now pay his devotions to Herakles as he had wished.

About this time Darius wrote offering to give a sum of £240,000, all his territories west of the Euphrates, and the

hand of his daughter in marriage, on condition that Alexander would give up his wife and mother. "If I were Alexander," said Parmenio, "I would accept this offer." "So would I," said Alexander, "were I Parmenio." To Darius he sent a haughty refusal, and bade him come in person if he wished to make terms.

A southward march along the coast of Palestine brought the invaders to the strong town of Gaza. It was nearly three months before it was captured, and Alexander put its commander to death with horrid tortures, in imitation of his supposed ancestor Achilles, who had similarly ill-treated his conquered foe Hector.

CHAPTER V.

EGYPT AND ARBELA

B. C. 332—331.

ALEXANDER'S plan was to cut off Persia from the sea before he marched inland, so that his communications with Greece might not be disturbed. He was now master of the coast from the Hellespont (or Bosphorus) to Palestine, but Egypt was untouched. From Gaza, therefore, he turned his steps towards the west, and marched across a hideous desert to the eastern mouth of the Nile. Then, turning inland, he followed the course of the river to the Egyptian capital, Memphis, situated a little above the modern city of Cairo. The Egyptians did not love the Persians. They had been ruled by them for about two centuries, and were quite ready for a change of masters, so they yielded without fighting. Alexander, always ready to respect the religion

of other countries, did honour to the sacred bull Apis, the earthly dwelling of the great god "Ptah". This was a very popular action, for sacred bulls had twice been slain by Persian invaders. He now went down the western branch of the Nile to its mouth: and finding what seemed a good site for a town, decreed that one should be built there and named Alexandria. The site was well chosen, and the city became one of the wealthiest towns of the Mediterranean basin.

Now there is in the desert, nearly 300 miles from Alexandria, an oasis or fertile spot, where stood formerly the famous temple of Ammon, whom the Greeks called Zeus, the king of the gods. Here, as at Delphi, oracles were given: and though a long and difficult journey had to be made to reach it, Alexander determined to consult the oracle. He probably went along the coast for a while, but even so his desert journey was long. Fables are told of how he and his army were guided by serpents and birds, and how plentiful showers saved them from thirst. He was so successful in his undertakings that it is not strange that he was thought to be the special favourite of the gods, and that such stories came to be told of him. What he asked the priest when he reached the temple and what he was told, are doubtful, for he entered the shrine alone: but it is said that he began by enquiring, "Have I punished all the murderers of my father?" "My son," said the priest, "You must not ask such a question. Your father is more than man." "Have I punished all the murderers of Philip?" was his next question. "You have," said the priest. Then he went on to ask whether he should conquer all mankind, and was given an answer which satisfied him. Another story is that the priest tried to answer him in Greek which

he could not speak well: and that meaning to say "My son," he said "Son of Zeus". Whatever the truth may be, we know that from this time Alexander claimed that he was the son of Zeus, and not of Philip. Perhaps he half believed it. Some writers say that his mother thought the story true: others that she mocked at it. But certain it is that the Macedonians were vexed at what they thought an insult to Philip, and that it was chiefly to Asiatics that Alexander made his boast.

But if he meant to win the Persian Empire it was now time for him to get to work again. All the coast was his, but Darius was raising another great army in the interior. Alexander sent some troops on to make bridges over the Euphrates. Some Persians who hindered their work fled on Alexander's approach, and a bridge was soon completed. The army might now have marched down the left bank of the stream to Babylon: but the country was a desert, so they went northward for eighty or ninety miles, and then turned to the east till they came to a place where they could ford the Tigris. The river was wide, the current strong, the bottom slippery. Had the Persians been on the other bank the crossing would have been impossible. But they were not. If Darius could make a mistake he made it, so though he had an army which is said to have consisted of a million men, he sent none of them. He had chosen the plain of Gaugamela some distance to the south as the scene of the battle, and would not try to hinder Alexander from getting there.

There was an eclipse of the moon soon after the army crossed the river. The troops were terrified till it was pointed out to them that the evil omen was for the Persians, not for themselves. Then they marched south to meet Darius, who was waiting at Arbela, a town which has given

its name to the great battle which followed. Hearing that they were coming he led his army to Gaugamela. Here was no narrow plain between mountains and sea as at Issus, but a vast space, big enough for him to draw up his whole force. He had made the surface level so that his chariots might be driven over it, and had strewn spikes where he thought the enemy's cavalry would charge: and here he arranged his long line and awaited the attack. Alexander advanced by night, and in the early morning, coming to the top of a hill, saw the Persian host. He called a council of war. Parmenio advised that they should attack on the morrow, as the men were tired and the ground needed to be surveyed. For these reasons Alexander agreed to wait. At night it was suggested that he should make an attack. "No," said he, "I will not steal a victory." So he gave his men a good night's rest to prepare them for the next day's fight. So soundly did he sleep himself that they had difficulty in waking him next morning. Parmenio asked him how he could sleep the sleep of a victor before the mightiest battle that had ever been fought. He laughed and said, "What! don't you think we are already conquerors now that we have no longer to hunt for Darius?"

In front of the Persian army were drawn up 200 chariots. These had spikes on their poles, and scythe-blades sticking out from the yokes and axles, and it was thought that no troops could resist a charge of them. But they proved of little use. Darts and arrows pierced many a horse and driver, the Macedonians beat their shields with their spears and frightened the horses: and so the dreadful charge melted away. Some chariots did indeed reach the phalanx, but the men opened their ranks and let them pass through, and very little harm was done. And now followed a scene

very like the battle of Issus. Alexander led his army towards the right, perhaps to avoid the spike-strewn ground, of which a Persian deserter had told him. The Persians followed his example, till Darius, thinking to stop this crab-like movement, sent a body of Bactrian cavalry to attack the Macedonian right. Alexander detached some men to meet them, while he himself at the head of the cavalry charged through the gap left in the Persian line by the Bactrian advance, and, followed by a part of the phalanx, made for the chariot of Darius. Again Darius was seized with terror. Again he turned and fled. He was surrounded by the best of his cavalry and perhaps they might have beaten the Macedonians back by their very numbers—at all events they would have tried—but seeing Darius retreat, they lost heart and followed his example.

On the other flank Parmenio was hard pressed. Some Persian and Indian cavalry, taking advantage of the fact that Alexander's advance had separated his army into two parts, passed between them and attacked Parmenio's right. He was already attacked on his front and left, and was now all but surrounded. However his reserves met this new attack, and he despatched a message asking for Alexander's help. The latter was thus compelled to turn from the pursuit of Darius and to go to the help of his general. He need not have gone, for before he arrived the reserve had beaten off the attack on the right, the Thessalian cavalry that on the left, and Parmenio was no longer in danger. As Alexander at the head of his cavalry was charging across the field from right to left, he met the Persians and Indians coming back. They fought bravely, but though they slew 60 of the Macedonians, few managed to cut their way through and follow Darius in his flight.

The delay caused by his return to help Parmenio made it impossible for Alexander to overtake Darius. So dense were the clouds of dust caused by the hosts of fugitives that it was impossible to say which way he had gone. The pursuit continued and numbers of the wretched Persians were cut down. The rest did their best to return to their homes, and the mighty army of Darius was an army no more. Alexander pressed on to Arbela, fifty-five miles away, and heard that Darius was far ahead of him, so he gave up the useless chase and turned southward towards Babylon and Susa.

He met with no opposition. The officials of Babylon received him gladly or pretended to do so. They showed him their great city, ten miles square. They showed him their wonderful walls and gardens and the great temple of their god—things which were counted among the “Seven wonders of the world”. And he treated them with courtesy and won the good opinion of the people as he had that of the Egyptians at Memphis. Next he went east to Susa where he found a vast amount of treasure—£12,000,000 in gold alone, it is said. Here too he was well received, and he presently marched on to Persepolis where an ancestor of Darius had built himself a splendid palace. This was 300 miles farther to the south-east, not far from the modern Shiraz, and in this and a neighbouring town he is said to have found £30,000,000. Here a disgraceful thing happened. Alexander gave a feast in the palace, and it was followed by a drinking bout. An Athenian woman who was present said that all her toils on the march were repaid by feasting in the palace of Xerxes, who had once burned down her native city: but that if she might set his palace on fire it would be a still greater reward. The drunken guests

applauded. The king, not very sober himself, seized a torch and led on the crowd, and they soon set the palace in a blaze. The sight of the mischief he had done seems to have sobered him, for he ordered the flames to be put out before the palace was completely destroyed: but his repentance came too late, on this as well as on other occasions which we shall have to mention in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

ALEXANDER, KING OF PERSIA

B. C. 331—327.

Now Alexander was king of Persia indeed. He was 25 years old, and had been in Asia (and Egypt) three years. Darius had fled and would never lead an army again. There were still tribes in the east to subdue, but Asia Minor, Mesopotamia and Egypt were his own. His plan was to make a terrible example of all who opposed him, but to do all he could to make friends of those who submitted. He confirmed many of the Persian "Satraps" or governors of provinces in their offices, though he often appointed Greeks or Macedonians to assist them: but he was a conqueror rather than a ruler, and seems to have done little to improve upon the Persian methods of government. He wished to make east and west one, and for this purpose he chose a number of Persian youths whom he committed to Macedonian tutors to be brought up with western ideas. He encouraged his followers to marry Persian women. He gradually took to wearing a dress very like that of the Persians, and insisted on Persian forms being observed at

court. All this gave great offence to many of the older Macedonians. They thought that as conquerors they ought to rule the country: they despised the effeminate dress and ways of the Persians: they were jealous of Alexander's Persian favourites: and they felt bitterly insulted when they were called upon to prostrate themselves before the king.

Alexander was not the man he had been. He had never been generous to a fallen foe. He had levelled Thebes to the ground. He had sold his Athenian prisoners at the Granikos as slaves. He had hanged 2000 prisoners at Tyre. These deeds may have been a matter of policy: he may have thought to inspire terror and so put a stop to opposition: but a man cannot do such deeds without hardening his own heart and banishing all kindness from it. Because his ancestor Neoptolomos had taken the wife of the noble Hector as a slave, Alexander made a slave of the wife of his brave foe Memnon. Because Achilles had dragged Hector by his heels behind his chariot, Alexander did the same to the Governor of Gaza. These deeds are blots on his early career: but then he was generous to his friends. We remember how he treated the doctor Philip, and his kind feeling to his old tutors. But we shall now have to relate acts which were quite unworthy of a noble man. He had been taught by Aristotle to practise self-control, and for a while he showed himself an apt pupil. In the early part of his life he did not drink much wine, though he sat long at table because he loved conversation. But we have told already of the drunken orgy at Persepolis, and we shall have to speak of others. Supreme power turned his head. Plots were constantly reported: and he became suspicious, and merciless to those whom he suspected. Still however he loved to give away freely the money which

he had won so easily, and his kindness to his soldiers kept them ever faithful to him.

In the spring following the battle of Arbela Darius was at Ecbatana (the modern Hamadan) with a small force under Bessus, Satrap of Bactria. Hearing that Alexander was marching north, Bessus seized his master's person and fled with him towards Bactria in the far east. Alexander heard this and followed. It was a headlong chase. The infantry were left behind. Man after man, horse after horse, sank exhausted in a desert which they had to cross, but at last the sixty cavalry who remained came upon a long line of carriages. Most of the guards fled. The few who did not were cut down, and the search of the carriages began. Helpless women, gold, silver, and other treasure were there in abundance; and at last, in a carriage near the head of the line, they found Darius, thrust through with a spear. He asked for water: he praised Alexander for his kindness to his wife and mother, but before Alexander could reach him he was dead.

The unhappy man might have made a good enough king in times of peace: but he had none of the skill or courage needed for a general: nor had he the wisdom to use his vast wealth, as he might have done, to save his kingdom. Alexander, who had robbed him of everything,—crown, family, possessions, and life—seemed stricken with grief at his death and gave him magnificent funeral rites: not because he regretted his own ambition which had led to his rival's death: but because he would have preferred to have Darius as a prisoner, and to treat him with the same show of respect as he had given to his mother.

He spent the next three years in subduing what we now call Afghanistan, Balkh, and Bokhara. He met plenty of

good fighters there, and among them Bessus, whom he captured and put to a horrid death, as a punishment for his treachery to his master. He built cities in which he settled some of his men who were tired of fighting. In Bactria (now Balkh) a chief named Oxyartes held a strong castle on a précipitous hill. It seemed impossible to take the fort, but 300 Macedonians climbed the cliff and forced the garrison to surrender. Now Oxyartes had a very beautiful daughter named Roxana, and on seeing her, Alexander, for the first and only time in his life, fell in love. He at once offered to make her his wife, and thus her father became his closest friend, and peace and quiet were brought to that part of the country.

Parmenio had a son named Philotas. He was the commander of the splendid band of Macedonian cavalry, called "The Companions," whom Alexander had led to victory at the Granikos, at Issus, and at Arbela. He was very wealthy and fond of display, and his father had to advise him to be more moderate. He seems to have tried to rival Alexander in generosity: and this may have given rise to the suspicion that he wanted to form a party friendly to himself and hostile to the king. Alexander had him watched, and he was reported to have made foolish and disrespectful speeches over his wine. Alexander waited for something worse. Presently a plot was made against the king, and was reported to Philotas, who said nothing about it. Perhaps he thought it of no importance: perhaps he really wished it to succeed. But when news of the plot was carried to Alexander, and he heard how Philotas had acted, he was very angry. Philotas had plenty of enemies to bear tales against him. He was arrested, and a favourite of Alexander's named Hephaestion was ordered to torture

him. Alexander himself is said to have hidden behind a curtain to hear whether Philotas would confess, and to have rebuked him for cowardice when he begged Hephaestion for mercy. Not content with condemning Philotas to death, he sent messengers to murder Parmenio—Parmenio who had defeated the Illyrians about the time of Alexander's birth, who had commanded the left wing in all his great battles, and had been ever faithful to him: Parmenio who had been fighting for Philip when Alexander was born, and who had grown old in his service and that of Alexander. He was seventy years of age, and there was no evidence of his guilt: but he might have resented the death of his son, so he had to die. The command of the Companions was divided between Hephaestion and Kleitos. Other plots resulted in other executions, but perhaps this specimen is enough.

The event next to be described happened in the year 328, when Alexander was 28 years old. There was at Samarkand a drinking party, and probably not a man present was quite sober. A song was sung in which certain Macedonian generals who had lately been defeated were ridiculed. The elder Macedonians were angry, but Alexander and the younger ones cried out to the singer to go on. Then Kleitos, the brother of Alexander's nurse, said angrily that though the generals had been unfortunate they should not be made fun of in the presence of barbarians. "What!" said Alexander, "do you call cowards unfortunate? I suppose you are thinking of yourself." "My cowardice," cried Kleitos, "saved the life of the son of the gods when he turned his back on Spithridates. Now you have become so proud that you deny your father Philip." Alexander threatened him with punishment: Kleitos declared that

Alexander was unjust to the Macedonians and favoured the Persians, and so the squabble went on till Alexander, after throwing an apple at Kleitos, began to feel for his dagger. Friends now pushed Kleitos from the room; but he made his way round to another entrance, and standing in the doorway recited lines from a play of Euripides, complaining that generals take the glory due to the valour of their troops. The king seized a spear from a guard, hurled it at Kleitos, and pierced him through the body. Then, shocked at what he had done, he hastened to the corpse and drew out the spear. He would have killed himself with it had he not been prevented. He was carried to his room where he wept all night, reproaching himself for ingratitude to his friend and to his nurse. For three days it is said he shut himself up and would neither eat nor drink. At last a man came to him and told him that kings are above law and need care nothing for the opinion of the world: and this miserable flattery consoled him! He never quite forgave himself however. He thought this misfortune was a punishment from the gods for his destruction of Thebes—not because the destruction of a city is wrong in itself, but because by so doing he had wiped out a Greek state. Had he blamed his own drunkenness it would have been more reasonable.

CHAPTER VII.

THE INVASION OF INDIA

B. C. 327—324.

THE summer of the year 327 B. C. found Alexander in Kabul ready to march into India. He had two reasons for

doing this: first, the Panjab had long paid tribute to Persia, and so he regarded it as a part of his empire: secondly the demigod Herakles and the wine god Dionysos had visited India, and he wished to equal their exploits. The Raja of Taxila, a town beyond the Indus, came to meet him, bringing presents, and gladly promising help to fight his old enemy Poros who reigned beyond the Jhelam.

Ninety miles east of Kabul Alexander divided his forces into two. Hephaestion and Perdikkas were to lead one part down the Kabul River to its junction with the Indus. But this was too easy a route for Alexander! He turned north up the Kunar to Chitral, crossed three mountain ranges and the valleys of the Panjkara and the Swat, and so reached the Indus near the hill now named Mahaban, but then called Aornos. This was not done merely from love of adventure. The tribes in those rough mountains were hard fighters then as they are now: and had Alexander passed on leaving them unsubdued, they would have cut him off from Persia. Those who submitted he spared. Those who resisted found little mercy. Alexander was wounded twice, but not very severely. It was November before he reached the Indus, and then he could not march south till he had taken Mahaban.

This hill rose four or five thousand feet above the rivers. There was only one path to the top, where on a steep peak, stood a strong fort. Such a position could not be left in his rear, so Alexander prepared for a siege. When all was ready he sent his general Ptolemy with some picked men to climb the hill at night. Before daybreak they had made themselves a strong camp some hundreds of yards from the fort. The hill-men spent the next day in a vain attempt to take this camp, but retired at night; and on the day after

they found that Alexander was climbing the hill to join Ptolemy. They opposed him bravely, hurling stones and darts down on the climbers: but Ptolemy came out and attacked them in the rear, and before night the two Macedonian parties were united. The fort was yet untaken. It was high above them, and there were marshes and ravines to be crossed. The Macedonians began to cut down trees and fill these up: and when, four days later, they gained a hill-top as high as the fort, the mountaineers offered to surrender. Alexander drew back his forces, and the hill-men tried to escape unnoticed. Then the invaders advanced, scaled the undefended walls, and chased the fugitives, slaying them or driving them over precipices in their headlong flight.

Alexander now joined Hephæstion and crossed the Indus. Ambhi, the Rajah of Taxila, received them gladly, and helped them on their way to the Jhelam. It was probably near the present town of Jhelam that they reached the river. But from this time onward we know very little of the course they took. The rivers of the Panjab have changed their courses, and the Indian races cannot always be recognised by the Greek names which old historians give them. Old towns have vanished and new ones sprung up, and the whole geography of the district has changed.

The army of Poros, 35,000 strong, was drawn up on the eastern bank of the Jhelam (or Hydaspes). The river was deep and wide, and it seemed impossible to cross it. Alexander waited some time, and gave the Indians so many false alarms that they became careless. Then he took advantage of a stormy night to march with a part of his force to a point some miles up stream. He left Krateros to watch Poros, who had no idea that any troops had left the

camp: so that when Alexander crossed, first to a woody island, and then to the opposite bank, he found no one there: the few guards who had been posted at that part of the bank had fled. They carried the news to Poros, who sent a few cavalry and chariots to find out if it was really Alexander who was approaching, or a Rajah from Kashmir who had promised him help. The broken fragments of this little force carried back the news that it was indeed Alexander, and Poros swung his army round to meet him.

He placed his infantry in the centre of the line, and amongst them he stationed 200 elephants. Alexander's horses would not face these great beasts, so he determined to attack the cavalry on the river bank. Flights of arrows were fired at the Indian horsemen till they got impatient and, turning a little from the river, rode towards Alexander. He charged them at the head of the Companion Cavalry, and while he did so he sent Koinos round to get between the enemy and the river and attack them on the flank. The Indian cavalry were thus driven back on the infantry and elephants, who were now advancing towards their own left to attack the Companions, thus leaving an opening in the middle of the line. The phalanx had been thrown into some confusion by an attack of the elephants: but they soon found that with their long spears they could wound the beasts and make them unmanageable, or disable the mahouts. They now advanced into the gap in the Indian line. The Indian cavalry rallied and charged again. But presently the Companions on their left and the phalanx on their front, drove them back, and so crowded the troops together that the elephants, mad with fear and wounds, began to tread down the men. It was two o'clock when Krateros made

his way across the river, and now all hope of victory for the Indians was over. Poros was wounded four times, made a prisoner, and taken to Alexander, who wondered at his mighty stature—he is said to have been $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet high—and at his bold bearing. “How shall I deal with you?” he asked. “Like a king”, said Poros. This reply so pleased Alexander that he confirmed Poros as Rajah, and promised to add to his kingdom. To celebrate his victory he built a city on the site of the battle, and called it Nikaia—the city of Victory. On the other bank he built Boukephala, in memory of his favourite horse Boukephalos which died on the day of the battle.

And now, after a rest, the army marched eastward again, crossed the Chenab and the Ravi, and reached the Bias, a tributary of the Sutlej, after a good deal of fighting and much hard work. Here some rumours came to the king's ears of the fertile Ganges Valley, to reach which he must cross a wide desert. He wished to go on, but his men did not. They had won much treasure. When should they enjoy it? They had gone much farther than Herakles or Dionysos. Why should they seek destruction in the desert? Alexander could not persuade them. He waited two days. Then he offered sacrifices as he had done before crossing the other rivers: but the priests told him the omens were bad, and unwillingly he turned back. Perhaps the priests, like the soldiers, thought they had gone far enough. Perhaps they knew Alexander wanted an excuse for yielding to his troops. But whatever the reason may have been the eastward journey ended, and they only crossed the river to build twelve great stone altars seventy-five feet high to the Greek gods. Then Alexander sadly gave the word to return to the Jhelam.

Here he found a fleet which had been built in his absence, for he had resolved that he would sail south till he reached the Ocean, more than 700 miles away. Nearchos commanded the fleet. Part of the army went on board, and part marched on either bank. It would take too long to tell of all their adventures: how ships were wrecked in rapids and Alexander had a narrow escape from drowning: how they saw alligators and thought that they must be in the upper part of the Nile: how puzzled and frightened they were when they saw the ocean tides — for there are no tides in the Mediterranean: how they fought and besieged cities: how Alexander built towns, placed garrisons here and there, appointed governors, and began to make a vast dock at the head of the Indus delta. But one story we must tell to show that however much Alexander had been spoiled by success he was not only the same skilful general as he had been, but as full of courage and the love of fighting as ever.

Near Multan dwelt the Malloi, who offered a very strong resistance to the invaders. Their chief town had been taken, and the defenders had retired to the citadel. Alexander, impatient of some delay in bringing up ladders, ordered two that were there to be put against the walls. He climbed one, and followed only by three men he reached the top of the wall. Then the weight of men climbing after them broke the ladders and left the four alone. Alexander, finding arrows flying about him, instead of trying to take shelter, jumped down into the citadel and stood with his back against a tree. The three followed him, and one of them was soon struck down by a stone. Presently an arrow pierced Alexander's breastplate, and he fell forward on his shield. Other men who had by this time managed to scale the walls, came to his help. The citadel was taken,



HE REACHED THE TOP OF THE WALL.

and Alexander was carried to his tent. The shaft of the arrow had to be sawn off before they could remove the breastplate. They tried to pull out the barbed head, and he himself did his best to get it out, but it would not come, and Perdikkas had to cut it out with his sword. His life was despaired of for a time, but his strong constitution saved him, to the delight of his soldiers who thought that none but he could ever lead them safely home.

On reaching the river mouth Alexander resolved to march along the coast, while Nearchos sailed back to the Tigris. He little knew the hideous desert he must cross. In one part of it the few inhabitants lived only on fish, and even used the bones of whales as posts for their rude huts. The water was brackish and scarce. It took two months to reach the fertile land of Carmania, and at the end of that time half of his men were dead. Luckily he had sent one-third of his army back by the Bolan Pass, or the loss might have been even more dreadful.

And now to make up for all this misery he ordered a drunken procession to march through Carmania, in imitation of the procession of Dionysos (the god of wine), through India. Alexander and his officers sat at tables in waggon^s shaded with green boughs. The men followed in disorderly crowds. Instead of weapons they had drinking cups, which they continually filled from great barrels of wine which were carried along with them: and with songs and music and drunken feasting they marched for seven days. Near the mouth of the Persian gulf they waited for the fleet, which had been delayed by adverse winds. Then, assured of its safety, they marched on, and the three divisions of the expedition met again at Susa, from which Alexander had been absent six years.

The Punjab, had he lived, would have remained a part of his empire. He had now three means of communication with it—the Khyber and Bolan Passes, and the sea. But there was no one to carry out his plans: and within three years of his departure his governors had been deposed and his garrisons destroyed. Tales of him are still told in the north: but his passage through India left little more mark than does a bird's flight through the air.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE END

B. C. 324—323.

TURNING his thoughts from conquests for a time, Alexander busied himself once more with plans for uniting east and west. He determined to marry Statira the daughter of Darius, and Parysatis the daughter of the preceding king of Persia. Not contented with this he induced eighty or ninety of his friends and officers to marry Persian ladies of high rank, to whom he gave handsome dowries. There were great festivities at these weddings, and to satisfy those who did not like the marriages of Greeks with "barbarians" he offered to pay the debts of all his soldiers. Any man might, without giving his name, state the amount he owed, and it would be paid to him. No wonder this cost much money! It is said that £4,500,000 was thus spent.

When his army refused to cross the Bias, Alexander had resolved that he would not leave it in the power of his Macedonians to thwart him so again: so he sent messengers to Persia, bidding his governors raise 30,000

troops and train them in the use of Macedonian arms. These men now arrived at Susa and gave much satisfaction to Alexander, but caused jealousy and discontent among the Macedonians; and this grew greater when he told the latter that he should send home such as were unfit for further service, giving them enough to support them for the rest of their lives. A mutiny followed, the whole of the Macedonian troops demanding to be dismissed, and calling upon Alexander to depend on his father Ammon in future. He went among the mutineers, took 13 ringleaders by the arm, and ordered them to be executed. Then, after a speech in which he told them of the great things Philip and he had done for them, he bade them begone, turned his back on them, and shut himself up in his palace. Two days passed. Then, hearing that new Persian officers were being appointed and thinking that the king meant to do without his own countrymen, the mutineers came and implored pardon. He granted it, and there was a feast of reconciliation, after which he selected 10,000 men to be taken back to Macedonia by Krateros.

In the summer-time Alexander went to the cooler city of Ecbatana, as was the custom of the Persian Kings. 'Here Hephæstion fell ill. He would not follow his doctor's advice, so grew worse and died in a few days. Alexander was mad with grief. He put to death the unhappy doctor. He cut his own hair short, and ordered the manes of all the horses and mules in the town to be cut! He destroyed the battlements of the neighbouring towns. He sent messengers to the temple of Ammon to ask if Hephæstion might be worshipped as a god. He sent the dead body to Babylon and ordered £2,400,000 be spent on a funeral pile, on which the body should be burnt as soon as the

answer came from Egypt. Then he started for Babylon, and eased his feelings by hunting down some tribes of robbers in the hills which he passed on the road. He did his best to destroy them all, and seems to have regarded their slaughter as a sacrifice to the ghost of his friend.

So great was now his fame that messengers came to greet him from many a distant land—from Abyssinia, from Italy, and even from Gaul. But Arabia, which was not so far distant, sent none. Among his other plans he determined to sail round Arabia, to invade it, and add it to his empire. Ships were being built in Phœnicia. These were taken to pieces, carried to the Euphrates, put together again, and sailed down to Babylon. Others were being built in the last named town, and a harbour to hold 1000 ships was being constructed there. He was naturally anxious to see how this work was going on, and though he was warned by certain priests that danger awaited him at the capital he insisted on going. There he heard that the canal system on which the fertility of Mesopotamia depended needed alterations, and, sailing down the river to judge for himself, he spent some time in a very marshy and malarious region. Returning to Babylon he received the answer to his message to Egypt—that Hephæstion might be honoured as a hero, but not as a god. The vast pyre was now set in a blaze, and the ceremonies ended with a funeral banquet. It is said Alexander offered a prize for the man who should drink most, and that the winner and forty others died in consequence of this disgusting competition.

Alexander himself sat up drinking all the night of the 31st May. Next night again he drank to excess, and on the 2nd June he was suffering from fever—probably caught in the marshes. He was well enough to see his officers,

and ordered his army to start for the conquest of Arabia on the 5th, and his fleet, on which he himself proposed to sail, on the following day. But neither fleet nor army left Babylon. The fever grew worse on the 8th, and he could not offer the daily sacrifice as had been his custom. On the 12th he was reported to be dead, and the soldiers could only be persuaded that he was alive by being allowed to pass silently through the room where he lay. On the 13th he died, after telling his friends that he left his throne "to the strongest", and giving his signet ring to Perdikkas.

He left no heir, for Roxana's child was as yet unborn. His generals discussed what should be done, and after much talk decided that a half-witted son of Philip should be called king, and that if Roxana's child should prove to be a boy he also should be king: but Perdikkas and other generals were to rule, though they were only to be called satraps (or governors of provinces). War between these satraps followed. Perdikkas perished two years after Alexander: Antipater in 319 B. C. The idiot king and his wife were slain by the order of Olympias in 317 B. C. Roxana and her little son Alexander in 311 B. C. After confused fighting and murder which filled the empire for twenty years it was split into four parts, Syria and Babylon, Egypt, Thrace and Asia Minor, Macedonia and Greece.

And so the Persian empire was no more. In his life time Alexander had set out to conquer Persia in the name of Greece, and his conquests resulted in making Greece merely the western province of the Persian Empire, with himself as its supreme ruler. He put an end to the old Grecian system of a body of free states, uniting at times for a common end, but each independent of the other—a system which had done so much for civilization. He made him-

self master of a mighty empire, not created one. At his death that empire fell to pieces, and Greece was ruled from Macedonia, not from Persia.

Yet Alexander had not lived in vain. The Greek civilization was probably the highest the world has ever seen. Not only did Athens and other little states produce splendid philosophers, poets, artists and orators, but even their common citizens had the intelligence to appreciate the work of these great men. They loved beauty of all sorts. Their architecture, their sculpture, their pottery, all prove this. They delighted in the grace of the human form, and did all they could to develop such grace by training in the gymnasium, and by public games. Their literature is full of beautiful stories. Their poetry is most melodious. Their philosophers were among the wisest men whom Europe has ever seen. They loved liberty, and had fought for it against Persia, and Macedon, and amongst themselves. They had indeed lost it because of their dissensions, and because each state, while desiring liberty for itself, was prepared to take away its neighbour's. Yet they preserved its outward forms even when Philip or Alexander was their master.

Many Greeks followed Alexander into Persia, and wherever he went he founded new cities in which he placed Greek or Macedonian garrisons to secure his conquests for him. After his death his generals wanted soldiers, and Greeks continued to flock into Asia. Many of them settled there and founded new towns, each of which was governed in the same way as a Greek city. Thus Greek ways, Greek literature, Greek philosophy and science were carried into Asia, and Alexander, though it was no part of his plans, was the means of spreading Greek civilization to regions where it had never been heard of before.

Had he lived longer he might have carried out some of his other schemes. He might have conquered Arabia—a useless task—or died in the attempt. He might have added the tribes north of the Black Sea to his subjects, or he might have made the road which he had planned from Egypt to the Straits of Gibraltar. But it is unlikely he would have done much more for the good of mankind. At the early age of thirty-three he had won for himself an undying name, had gratified his first ambition, and had laid the foundation of a vast spread of Greek civilization. Perhaps it was well for him and for the world that he lived no longer.

And what were the causes of his wonderful success? There were at least three. First, the military spirit and discipline of the Greeks and Macedonians: secondly, the weakness of Darius and the untrustworthiness of his troops: and thirdly, the character and ability of Alexander himself.

The Greeks were a race of warriors. The Macedonians were akin to them, loved fighting as they did, and had besides been trained by Philip. With their phalanx and their long spears they were more than a match for any other army in the world.

The Asiatics did not love fighting. Vast hosts of them were assembled at Issus and Gaugamela, but in spite of their numbers they could do nothing against the invaders. Their hearts were not in the fight. They did not love their king, but were his slaves, and only fought when obliged to do so. Had Darius and his nobles not been too proud to hire more Greeks they might have made a stand. Had he carried out the plans of Memnon and cut off communication by sea between Greece and Asia he might have worn out Alexander's forces and prevented him from getting fresh

men. But he was no general. His only idea was to overwhelm Alexander by numbers: and on the two occasions when he met him in battle his courage failed him, and he fled. How could his men be expected to show more courage than their king? Why should they fight for him when he would not fight for himself?

But the chief reason of Alexander's success was his own character. He was a man of strong will and clear insight, able to form plans and steadfast in carrying them out. His generosity, his personal courage, his care for his men, made him their idol, and where he went they were ready to follow. He did not, like Darius, station himself behind his troops and run away at the approach of danger, but led them into battle, regardless of wounds, and fearless of death. His word of command was "Come," not "Go". Ambition and love of adventure took him to Asia, but could not secure him success. For this it was necessary that he should be a great general: and he was one of the greatest generals the world has seen. He was not a mere fighter. On him depended the plan of the whole campaign as well as the tactics of each battle. He had to provide for the transport of food, weapons, siege-engines, and all the thousand and one things that an army needs: and we do not find that his foresight ever failed, difficult though his task must have been when he was so far from home. He understood and trusted his men, and they loved and trusted him. He was a great general at the head of a great army. Such a combination may do much. When in addition they are opposed only by a contemptible foe there is no limit to what may be expected of them.

CÆSAR

CHAPTER I.

YOUTH AND EARLY MANHOOD

B. C. 102—68.

BETWEEN the days of Alexander and Cæsar great changes came to pass in the lands around the Mediterranean. When Alexander was born, the territories of the city of Rome did not extend far beyond her town walls. Up to that time her history had been that of a long struggle between the two castes, the patricians or descendants of the earliest settlers, and the plebeians or later comers. For a while kings ruled. Then a republic was established, governed by magistrates who were elected annually. At first these were always patricians: but as time went on the plebeians grew stronger and stronger, until at last they had more political power than their former rulers.

Fifty years after Alexander's death Rome was the mistress of all Italy. Then she added to her empire Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Spain, a part of Gaul (or France), Carthage, Illyria, Macedonia and Greece, and a great part of Asia Minor. Wealth poured into Rome. Her people, who had been sturdy, honest and religious, were spoiled by prosperity. The plebeians had gained political power, but most of the wealth which came from the provinces was kept in the hands of a few, and there was constant struggling and

fighting between rich and poor. Lands belonging to the state, which should have supported a race of hardy farmers, got into the hands of the rich. They employed slaves to cultivate them, thus driving the poor Romans from the country to the town, where they sought to keep themselves alive by selling their votes and by claiming free distributions of the corn sent to the capital by the conquered provinces. Attempts to remedy these evils led to violence and murder. There was no security for life or property. The republic was a failure.

The chief magistrates of Rome were the Quæstors, Ædiles, Prætors and Consuls. The Prætors and Consuls were, during or after their year of office made Governors of provinces, and could, if they were dishonest, make themselves very wealthy. Hence it was quite common for a rich man to spend all he had, and more, in buying votes and bribing the people with splendid shows. In this way he could get a prætorship, and be entrusted with a province, which he plundered. If charged with misconduct on his return to Rome he spent half his spoils in bribing his judges, and was allowed to enjoy the other half. Thus the magistracies, bringing not only power but wealth, were much sought for. The Tribunes were chosen by the plebeians alone, and were their special representatives. The Senate was at first a patrician body, but later on plebeians were admitted to it. It was something like the British House of Lords, and, as we shall see, was always fighting with the "Assembly," the meeting, not of representatives of the people, but of the people themselves, at which laws were made.

It was in the year 102 B. C. that Caius Julius Cæsar was born. His uncle Marius, who was then consul, was a

plebeian, but had married into the patrician Julian family. He was a famous general, and such a favourite with the people that he was chosen consul six times. Then the aristocrat Sulla came into power, and Marius was driven from Rome. He returned however and proscribed more than a thousand of his enemies—that is declared them outlaws, and offered a reward to anyone who should kill them. Few of these unhappy people escaped. He died soon after this, and Sulla again came into power. He too proscribed thousands of men, some because they were leading members of the popular party, and others merely because they were wealthy, and their property was coveted by his friends. Then he set to work to make new laws, taking from the people almost all the power for which they had fought for centuries.

We know little about the youth of Cæsar. He grew up in the troublous times referred to in the last paragraph. He was as fond of his mother Aurelia as Alexander was of Olympias. He learned Greek, and wrote a poem and a tragedy when still young, but probably these were little more than school exercises. His special friends were Marcus Tullius Cicero, the finest of Latin prose writers, and one of the greatest orators that ever lived: his brother Quintus Cicero: and Marius, the adopted son of the consul Marius. The last two both served under Cæsar in his wars in Gaul many years later. At the early age of sixteen Marius made him priest of Jupiter. This was a post which brought in a large income, and it is likely that his uncle would have done more for him had he lived longer; but he died in the eighteenth day of his seventh consulate. Three years later Cæsar married Cornelia, the daughter of the consul Cinna, and next year his daughter Julia was born.

Sulla had now returned to power; and, seeing that Cæsar, the nephew of Marius, had married the daughter of a leader of the popular party, he feared that he also would prove a strong supporter of that party. He, therefore, ordered him to divorce his wife and take another whom he would provide for him. Now Cæsar was only a boy, but he preferred death to such tyranny as this and refused to obey. Sulla then took his wife's dowry and the estate which he had inherited from his father, and deprived him of his priesthood. Still Cæsar stood out. Then Sulla offered a reward to anyone who would kill him, and Cæsar had to hide himself. At last some of his patrician friends or relatives begged the tyrant to pardon him, and he consented, saying, "Take him if you will have it so: but in him there are many Mariuses".

A few years later Cæsar first served as a soldier. The Ægean Sea was full of pirates, and an expedition was sent against them. The Roman commander found his fleet too weak for the work, and sent Cæsar to Bithynia (on the south coast of the Black Sea) to get more ships. He succeeded in this, and distinguished himself in the storming of Mitylene, where he won the crown of oak—a very high honour.

On his return to Rome Cæsar began to practise in the law courts, where his friend Cicero had won some distinction. He prosecuted a Governor of Macedonia named Dolabella for misconduct, but the prosecution failed. Realising that he needed to be taught the art of speaking, Cæsar sailed for Rhodes to study under the famous Apollonius, but on his way there he was captured by a gang of pirates. They carried him off to a small island and told him he must pay a ransom of £ 5000. He laughed at them

for not knowing the value of their prize, and promised them £12,500. They sent some of his servants for it and kept him with them. He treated them with the greatest contempt. If they made a noise when he was lying down he would send for them and order them to be quiet. He joined in their sports and exercises, and at times read to them speeches or poems which he had composed. If they did not like his compositions he would call them illiterate fellows and tell them he would crucify them. They thought this was a joke and were quite pleased with their cheerful captive. However, when his ransom came and they set him free, he went to Miletus, manned some ships, returned to the pirates' island, captured them, and crucified them all. Thus he kept his promise: but he strangled them first. Few in those days would have shown them even so much mercy.

He then went on to Rhodes and spent two years studying the art of speaking. Presently news came that an Asiatic King named Mithridates, who had fought with Rome a few years before, was ready to renew the fight. He had made himself master of all the other Asiatic kingdoms, and would have seized the Roman province, but for Cæsar, who crossed the sea to Caria, raised some troops there, and saved the Roman colonists from destruction.

He now returned to Rome. The people loved him, for they knew that he was one of their party, that he had refused to yield to Sulla, and that he had prosecuted Dolabella. In gratitude for his services in Asia they made him military tribune, and he used his power to get back for the people some of the rights which Sulla had taken from them. His studies at Rhodes had not been wasted. He was an excellent speaker. His style was plain and simple, but every word was well chosen, so that he could

say in a few words what others would say in many. Thus his hearers were readily convinced by him, and even Cicero, who was always jealous of him, praised his speaking. Like Alexander he knew how to select the best arguments, but unlike him he had studied how to put them into the best words. He gained much good will by his pleasant manners, for he was more attentive to please than young men generally are. Some said that this was due to his ambition, but he seems to have been a true gentleman and therefore polite. In after years he and some friends were asked to a supper, and their host gave them a very nasty dish. The others complained, but Cæsar ate his portion, and reproved them for their bad manners. At another time, when travelling, a storm drove him into a poor man's hut. There was only one room, and that was hardly large enough for a single man, so he said that the place of safety must be given to the weakest, and made one of his friends lie inside while he slept in the porch with the others.

CHAPTER II.

CÆSAR AS MAGISTRATE

B. C. 68—59.

CÆSAR was thirty-four years old when he was appointed Quæstor and so obtained a seat in the Senate. Alexander was only thirty-two at the time of his death. Alexander had had his position prepared for him by his father, and at Philip's death he began his career of conquest at once: Cæsar had to make a position for himself: and this helps to explain why the former's active career began so much earlier than the latter's

While he was Quæstor, Cæsar showed his sympathy with the popular party by a display of the image of his uncle Marius. Three years later when he was Ædile (head of the Public Works Department) he replaced the images of Marius and of Victory which Sulla had removed. These had been erected when Marius conquered the Cimbri, barbarians, who would, but for him, have overrun Italy. He spent much money on public buildings, and on a show of gladiators such as the people delighted in. At these cruel displays slaves trained as swordsmen were forced to fight till one of them was killed. Cæsar is said to have provided three hundred and twenty pairs of gladiators at the games with which he celebrated his ædileship. Though the people of his own time praised him for his mercy he seems to have had no more regard for human life than any other Roman. He did not care to see such shows, but sat in the theatre reading or writing while the wretched slaves were killing one another. So much did he spend during his year of office as ædile, that, though he had recovered the property which Sulla took from him, he owed about £300,000. The post of prætor which he held next was less expensive: but when, in the year after his prætorship, he was made a Governor of Spain, his creditors would not let him go till he borrowed money from Crassus, the richest man in Rome, and paid them off.

He found Spain in great disorder. A rebellion which had been put down eleven years before had left everything in confusion. There were robbers everywhere. Cæsar restored order in a single year. He put down the robbers: he established good government, and sent large sums raised by taxation to Rome: he conquered Portugal and the north of Spain: and when his year of office was ended he

returned to Rome, hoping to be rewarded with a "triumph" and the consulship. A triumph was an entry into Rome by a successful general, preceded by his troops, prisoners and spoils. The general himself, in a splendid chariot, was driven through the streets amidst the shouts of the multitude, and, lest he should think himself a god, a slave who stood behind him reminded him from time to time that he was mortal. At the "Capitol" he left his chariot and sacrificed a bull to Jupiter, king of the gods. Such a triumph was the highest honour the state could grant to any soldier.

The Senate and patricians hated Cæsar, and feared that his services would make him more popular than ever. According to the law he could only be granted a triumph while he was outside the walls. He could only apply for the consulship when in Rome. Thus, as he reached Rome at the time of the election of the Consuls, he must do without one or the other. He asked the Senate to suspend the law. They refused, and he gave up the triumph. The Senate would gladly have kept him from the consulship, but he was too strong for them. We have seen that the people of Rome loved him, and that he had the wealthy Crassus as his friend. He had also done good service to the great general Pompey whom the people worshipped, and he in return gave Cæsar his help. All that the Senate could do was to get one Bibulus elected as his fellow consul. This man was a fool but he was an aristocrat, and they hoped he might put a stop to any measures his colleague might propose.

Cæsar was now forty-three years old and had reached the highest office in the empire. There was much that needed reform. The Senate, which had been given so much power

by Sulla, cared nothing for the people. Its members only wished to rule for their own good, to grow wealthy, and to live in luxury. The judges sold their verdicts to the highest bidder. The people were driven from the land and replaced by the slaves of the wealthy. Cæsar set to work to remedy these evils. His old friend Cicero had joined the aristocratic party. Cæsar tried to win him to his side, but in vain. Cæsar must work without him. With the aid of Pompey and Crassus he felt himself strong enough.

First he ordered that the proceedings of the Senate should be published daily. Then he laid before it a law to deal with the land question. Public money was to be used to buy public land which had got into the hands of the rich. Twenty thousand of Pompey's soldiers and some of the poor of Rome were to be settled on it. The Senate fought hard against this. Cæsar invited them to revise the law if they wished, but said that if they would not pass it he would refer it to the Assembly. This he had to do. He read out the law to the Assembly, and asked Bibulus if he objected to it. Bibulus declared that it should not be passed that year. The people were in a rage. Pompey said that he would use force if the bill was opposed illegally. A vote was about to be taken when Bibulus stepped forward and said that he had consulted the sky and that the day was unpropitious. He even said that he would declare the rest of the year sacred, and that then no public business of any sort could be done. Custom allowed him to do this, but the mob would not be balked thus. They rushed on him and threw him down, and the bill was carried.

After this Cæsar and the Assembly governed Rome. Bibulus asked the protection of the Senate, but they could

do nothing for him. He therefore shut himself up in his house, and from time to time declared that nothing done by Cæsar was lawful, for the year was sacred. Cæsar took no notice of him, and people jestingly said that it was the consulship, not of Cæsar and Bibulus, but of Caius Cæsar and Julius Cæsar. Pompey had returned from the east three years before, having conquered Mithridates and arranged for the proper government of Asia. The Senate, jealous of him as it was of Cæsar, would not confirm his arrangements or make any others. Cæsar and the Assembly now confirmed them. Then he turned his attention to law-making, and passed a number of laws to protect magistrates during their term of office, to punish immorality and violence, to put a stop to bribery in the courts and at elections, to force governors of provinces to publish accounts, and to repay any profit they had made by robbery or injustice. There were others, all very necessary and good: and though they were passed without the consent of Bibulus or the Senate they were never repealed.

Cæsar has been accused of ambition. It is said that on his way to Spain he saw a miserable village, and that one of his companions remarked, "I suppose that there is not much competition for high office here". Cæsar replied, "I would rather be the first man in this village than the second in Rome". Whether this story is true or not, we know that he desired high office: but the use he made of it shows that he did not want it so much for his own good as for that of Rome.

CHAPTER III.

CÆSAR IN GAUL

B. C. 58.

WHAT was to become of Cæsar when his consulship was over? The Senate feared that if they made him governor of a province he would come back more powerful than ever: so, early in his consulship, they decided to make him head of the Forest Department. They did not then know what sort of man he was. Before the end of his year of office the Assembly decided that he should, for five years, be governor of Gaul within the Alps and Illyricum—that is what we now call north Italy and a part of the east coast of the Adriatic. To this the Senate, seeing that they could do nothing against the Assembly, added Gaul beyond the Alps, that is the south-east part of France which is still called Provence or “the Province”, and gave him leave to do what he pleased in the rest of France, Switzerland and Belgium. Cæsar did his best to ensure that his work as Consul should not be undone. Pompey and Crassus were his friends. Two consuls friendly to Cæsar’s party were elected, and he left Rome, not to return to it for nine years.

There were many tribes in Gaul who were constantly fighting with one another and with the Germans who came across the Rhine seeking new lands. In bygone days the Gauls had come down to Rome and plundered it, and in the days of Marius barbarians from central Europe had invaded Gaul and sought to make their way into Italy. There is always unrest where barbarism and civilisation meet. The barbarians give trouble, are defeated, and their

country is annexed: and then there is similar trouble with the next tribe. This was Cæsar's experience: and in course of time he conquered all Gaul, though it is not likely that he had any such intention when he first went to his province.

For nearly three months Cæsar was outside Rome collecting troops and making ready for his departure. Then he heard news which made him start in a hurry. A Swiss tribe, the Helvetii wished to find a new home. Their own land was too small for them, and they determined to invade Gaul. At a fixed date they burned down their towns and villages and destroyed all their property which they could not carry with them, so that no one might think of returning home. Their easiest way was to cross the Rhone and march through the Roman province: but ninety-two thousand fighting men with their families would lay waste any country through which they passed, and Cæsar made up his mind to stop them. There was only one legion or regiment of 6,000 men in the province. Cæsar joined this legion, collected a few more men and hastened to Geneva.

There was only one bridge over the river, and this Cæsar destroyed. The Helvetii sent a message asking leave to cross, and Cæsar told them he would give them a reply in a fortnight. This fortnight he spent in making trenches and forts at every place where the river could be forded. The enemy tried hard to cross, but were always driven back. At last they gave up the attempt, and marched by a more difficult road which would lead them into the land of the Ædui, who were allies of the Romans. Cæsar hastened to Italy. He had three legions there already, and he soon raised two more. With this force he crossed the mountains and rejoined his general Labienus whom he had left by the Rhone. The Helvetii were then in the land of the Ædui

devouring everything. He followed them and found them crossing the River Saone. Three-fourths of them were already across. He fell on the remaining fourth, and few of them escaped. The others made their way up the Saone. Cæsar made a bridge in a single day and followed them. They now asked for peace, and promised to go to any part of Gaul which he should choose for them. He told them to go back to Switzerland. This they refused to do. They continued their march laying waste the country as they advanced. The Romans followed at their heels. The Ædui promised to provide food, but did not do so: and at last Cæsar was obliged to turn away from the Helvetii towards Bibracte, the Æduan capital. Now the Helvetii thought he was flying and turned to follow him. This was what Cæsar wanted.

He arranged his troops on a mountain, putting three legions of old soldiers in the centre, and his two new ones with his Gallic allies in their rear to guard the baggage. Cæsar sent away first his own horse, and then all others, that his men might see that he had no thought of flight. His troops charged the on-coming Swiss, hurled their javelins, and then attacked with their swords. The Swiss had formed a phalanx, and so closely were they crowded that many javelins went through two men's shields: and as they could not pluck them out they had to throw away the shields. After a hard fight the Swiss retreated towards another mountain their rear-guard still fighting bravely. It was an hour after noon when the fight began, and not till sunset were the Swiss driven back to the second mountain. Even then the fight went on for some hours, for the enemy had made a rampart of their wagons, and hurled weapons from behind it. At last however Cæsar captured the camp,

and the Helvetii fled, never resting all night. Cæsar halted three days to bury the dead and care for the wounded, but he sent on messengers to the tribe through whose land the Helvetii were passing that he would treat them as enemies if they helped the invaders with food. The spirit of the Helvetii was broken. Half their fighting men had fallen, and they sent ambassadors to ask for peace. This Cæsar granted, on condition that they should give up their arms and go to their own homes. He arranged that they should be supplied with corn until next harvest. Some who had stolen away after the surrender he tells us he "treated as enemies". One tribe was given land by the Ædui and settled among them. The rest returned to Switzerland—only 110,000 of the 368,000 who had left it.

One danger to the peace of Gaul was at an end, but another remained. A hundred and twenty thousand Germans had crossed the Rhine and settled in Alsace. They and their friends on the other side of the river would, if left alone, soon overrun Gaul. They had already fought with the Ædui who (as we have seen) were allies of Rome. Cæsar sent to the German chief Ariovistus and asked him to come and talk matters over. Ariovistus proudly answered, "If I wanted anything of you I would come. If you want anything of me you can come to me. Why are you bringing an army near the land which I have conquered?" Cæsar replied that Ariovistus must bring no more men across the Rhine, and must restore the hostages he had taken from the Ædui: and that Cæsar, as Governor of Gaul, intended to protect his allies. Ariovistus dared Cæsar to come on, and see how men could fight who had not slept under a roof for fourteen years.

Not only were the Germans fierce and strong, but they

had many friends in Gaul. Every Gallic tribe had its two parties. Just as in Philip's days every Greek state was divided into the friends and foes of Philip, so the Gauls had their parties for and against the Ædui. The foes of the Ædui encouraged the invasion of the Germans, but Cæsar resolved to stop it, and told his men that he was going to fight the invaders. When his troops heard this they were very much afraid. They had been told wonderful tales about these wild people. They were giants: the very glance of their eyes was terrible: no one could fight against them. The soldiers declared that if ordered to march they would refuse. Cæsar spoke first to his officers and then to his men. He reminded them how they had conquered the Helvetii, and told them that the Germans were not different from other barbarians. They had been beaten by Marius: even the Helvetii had defeated them. He was sure his men would not mutiny. If the others refused to advance he would go on with the Tenth Legion—always Cæsar's favourite legion—who would certainly follow him. This speech aroused the pride of the Tenth and the shame of the other legions and they declared they would go on wherever Cæsar went. The Æduan chief led them on till they were only twenty-four miles from the army of Ariovistus, who now said that he was willing to meet Cæsar. At his suggestion it was agreed that each should take with him a guard of cavalry. Cæsar, suspecting some trick, took the horses of his Æduan allies, and mounted the Tenth Legion upon them. One soldier was heard to say jestingly that Cæsar had promised them a reward, and that he was better than his word, for he had promoted them to be cavalry.

Cæsar left his guard a furlong and a half to his rear: Ariovistus did the same: and each advanced with only ten

men. Cæsar repeated his former demands. Ariovistus replied haughtily that the part of Gaul where they were was his, not the Romans', and he bade Cæsar go back to the Province. He went on to say that certain members of the Senate had sent him messages asking him to kill Cæsar, but that he would rather be Cæsar's friend. Whilst he was talking thus, it was brought to Cæsar's notice that the German bodyguard had approached his own and had begun to throw darts and stones at them. He at once broke off the conference and joined his men. The Germans were easily driven off, and Cæsar did not follow them, for he thought that if a battle was fought, then he might be accused of taking treacherous advantage of the conference.

Every day for five days Cæsar drew up his troops outside his camp, hoping that the Germans would attack him, but they would not. Ariovistus suggested another meeting, but this time Cæsar refused. Instead, he fortified a new camp close to the Germans. Ariovistus attacked this, and was beaten off. German prophetesses advised him not to fight again till the new moon, and perhaps he would have taken this advice if Cæsar had let him do so: but Cæsar now attacked them, and all the courage of the Germans was useless. Their women were even rushing about, urging them to fight bravely in defence of their wives and daughters. They did their best, but it was in vain. The Romans were better armed and better trained than they, and after a fierce battle they were driven into headlong flight. Such of them as escaped tried to cross the Rhine, either by swimming or in boats. Those who failed to cross were drowned or slain without mercy. The Germans who had assembled on the east bank ready to cross retreated: and all danger from that quarter was at an end for the time. Cæsar left

Labienus in charge of the army which he quartered among the Sequani, a tribe friendly to the Germans, and went back to his province south of the Alps to look after its affairs.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NERVII

B. C. 57.

THE wintering of Cæsar's troops in Gaul made the people of Belgium and northern France fear for their liberty. Vast numbers of them agreed to attack the Romans, and Cæsar on his return found that he must face fifteen Belgian and German tribes who had promised to raise 318,000 men to fight for freedom. Of all these tribes the fiercest was the Nervii, a people living near the present border of France and Belgium. They admitted no merchants to their land, saying that merchants brought luxuries which make men less hardy. They drank no wine for the same reason. After some fighting Cæsar found himself in the country of these people, and here he was nearer to meeting disaster than in any other battle which he ever fought.

He was approaching the river Sambre, and had sent on some officers to choose ground for a camp. A Roman camp was not merely a collection of tents, but was always strongly fortified. No matter how far the men had marched, they must dig a deep trench around the camp, and throw up a wall before they could rest.

The officers chose a place where the ground sloped gently down to the river, and as soon as the men came up, they were set to work to dig and make all arrangements to

render themselves safe from attack. On the other side of the river the land sloped up, and for about a furlong and a half there were no trees. Above that the hill was covered with woods. A few cavalry were seen on the open slope, and Roman horsemen, slingers and archers crossed the stream, which was broad but shallow, and attacked them. They retired into the woods, but came out again from time to time and renewed the skirmish. The Romans did not care to follow them into the woods, so never found out that 60,000 Nervii were concealed there.

Some Gauls had informed the Nervii of the usual order of Cæsar's march. They reported that each legion was always followed by a great many baggage wagons, so that if the Nervii waited till they saw these wagons, they might attack and overcome the single legion in front of them and plunder the baggage before any help could be given by the other troops. But Cæsar knew better than to march in this way when he was near the enemy. He had put six legions in front: then the baggage of the whole army: and two more legions as a rear-guard.

The men in the wood watched the Romans advance and begin their digging. They saw the baggage coming over the opposite hill-top: and took this as their signal to attack. So swiftly did they come on, that Cæsar tells us that they seemed to be leaving the wood, crossing the river, and attacking his men, at the same instant. The surprise was complete. The cavalry were driven back before this furious charge. The infantry were busy digging, or were scattered, cutting turf. Cæsar ordered standards to be raised as a signal to the men to hasten to the ranks, and trumpets to sound the call to fight: but he could give no special orders as to how, or where the line was to be drawn up. Luckily

for him the men had fought plenty of battles before, and knew what to do. Their officers were all with them, for Cæsar had forbidden them to leave the men before the camp was finished. Seeing that there was no time to lose, they did not wait for orders, but acted as seemed best to them. Many of the men, unable to find their own comrades without undue delay, joined the first body of troops they could see, and drew up to meet the on-coming Belgians. Many of them had not even time to put on their helmets.

Cæsar gave such orders as were possible, and hastened to and fro to encourage the troops. He bade his tenth legion remember their former courage, and stand bravely against the enemy's attack. The Nervii were now within a javelin's cast, so he gave the signal to fight, and moved on to another part of the field.

The troops had taken up their positions where they could, not as a skilful general would have arranged them. They were, moreover, troubled by very thick hedges which kept them from moving freely, and even from seeing what was going on around them. Hence they could not easily give one another the help which might be needed. The sixth and tenth legions, who were on the left of the Roman army, were attacked by the people of Arras. The latter, out of breath with their wild charge, were soon driven down the slope and across the river: and though they rallied for a time on the other slope, the Romans, led by Labienus, put them to flight once more. The eighth and eleventh legions beat back the tribes from St. Quentin, and drove them to the river bank. But the seventh and twelfth, who were on the right of the Roman force were in a very different plight. Owing to the advance of Labienus, the left flank of these troops was unprotected. Seeing this, the

whole force of the Nervii charged them, and attacked them in front and on both flanks at once. The cavalry of the Gallic allies, who had returned to the attack, were again put to flight, and the enemy entered the camp and began to plunder the baggage. The camp followers, who, on seeing the ninth and tenth legions cross the river, had prepared to advance and plunder, now thought all was lost and took to flight, as did some friendly cavalry of the Gauls. These last rode home and spread a report that Cæsar's army was destroyed.

Cæsar, coming to the right wing found matters going very badly. The men of the twelfth legion were driven together by the attacks on their flanks and were so crowded that they could hardly use their swords: most of their officers were killed or wounded: one cohort (or company of 600 men) had lost all its officers and its standard-bearer: men in the rear were retiring from the fight, and the others were lessening their efforts. It was time something was done to prevent a disaster. Cæsar took a shield from a soldier in the rear, for he had not had time to get his own, and advanced to the front of the line. Then he called upon the officers by name, and urged the men to continue the fight. He ordered them to open their ranks so as to have room to use their swords. His presence and example at once cheered up the soldiers who began to fight well once more. Seeing that the seventh legion too was hard pressed, Cæsar led the twelfth to them; and forming the two so as to face the enemy in two directions, he induced the seventh also to fight more boldly.

Meantime Labienus, who had taken the enemy's camp at the top of the opposite hill, looked back and saw how his comrades were surrounded. He sent the tenth legion to



“YET THE BRAVE NERVII WOULD NOT RETIRE.”

their aid. The troops which had formed the rear-guard on the march also came up, and the Nervii had to defend themselves instead of attacking the Romans. Seeing this, the cavalry came on again, anxious to wipe out the disgrace of their two flights; and even the camp followers joined in the attack, yet the brave Nervii would not retire. They fell in heaps, but those who still lived mounted on the bodies of the slain, and, catching the javelins which the Romans hurled at them, threw them back at the enemy.

At last it was over. The slaughter was terrible. A few escaped, and joined their old men, women and children who had been left in a position protected by a marsh, and thence they sent an offer to surrender. Cæsar did not wish to be harsh, and accepted their offer, ordering that they should be left in peaceful possession of their own lands and towns.

We may remember how Alexander nearly lost his life at the capital of the Malli. We see that Cæsar, like him, was ready to take an active part in a fight when it was necessary. Alexander, however, rushed into danger from mere love of adventure and recklessness. Had he waited till more scaling ladders were brought the town would have been taken without the serious risk of the loss of his life, which would have endangered the safety of the whole army. Cæsar showed the same fearlessness: but he only risked his own person when he saw that there was much to be gained by his doing so. On this occasion his example changed defeat into victory and saved two legions—perhaps the whole army—from destruction.

Cæsar was fighting against the Belgæ all the summer of the year 57 B. C. When the time came for his troops to go into winter quarters there was peace throughout Gaul, none being bold enough to attack him. He returned again

to Italy to look after his province and his own affairs. The people of Rome were so pleased with his victories that the Senate decreed a fifteen days' thanksgiving—an honour which had never been bestowed on any general before.

CHAPTER V.

INVASIONS OF BRITAIN

B. C. 55 and 54.

IN the year 56 B. C. Cæsar was employed in fighting with tribes on the north coast of the Bay of Biscay. These tribes, after giving hostages for their good conduct, had seized upon some Roman ambassadors who had come to them seeking supplies for the troops in winter quarters. Next year there was another German invasion. The invaders were slaughtered without mercy, and Cæsar, building a bridge across the Rhine in ten days, made a short expedition into Germany. He did not wish to stay there, but only to show the enemy what the Romans could do, just as Alexander displayed the Macedonian power by crossing the Danube.

After this expedition, there were still a few weeks before the cold weather might be expected, and Cæsar resolved to invade Britain. He tells us that his reason for this was that the Britons had helped the Gauls in almost all their wars with him, and that he thought it would be good to learn about the country and its people. No one could tell him much. A few merchants had crossed the Channel, but had not gone inland. He did not expect to be able to conquer the country in a few weeks, but wished to get information.

For all his wars in Gaul there had been some reason, good or bad. The Helvetii and Germans were real dangers to the Roman Province. The Belgæ had plotted to attack the Romans. The coast tribes had treacherously seized upon ambassadors. But for this new war there seems to have been no excuse. It is not likely that Cæsar troubled himself as to whether it was right or wrong. The Britons were barbarians and he a Roman. Their rights therefore need not be considered. He was curious. He wanted to learn about the strange land, to see whether it was worth adding to the Roman empire, to gratify his love of fighting and adventure; and that was enough. A great conqueror seems never to think that he has won enough victories. So, all Gaul being quiet for a while, Britain must be attacked.

Cæsar began to collect all the ships he could find and to build more. He brought round the war-ships which he had built for the campaign of the year before to a port—perhaps Wissant—on the Straits of Dover. News of his preparations was carried across the channel by merchants, and ambassadors came from several British tribes offering to submit to Rome. He promised to visit them shortly.

Eighty ships were at length collected, and two legions, that is ten or twelve thousand men, put on board. Eighteen more ships were to take the cavalry across, but they had been prevented by unfavourable winds from coming to the port where the army was. A good wind springing up the infantry went on board, and the cavalry were sent along the coast to their ships.

About ten next morning the fleet arrived off Dover. The cliffs there are very high and steep, and Cæsar tells us that the enemy could cast a dart from the top of them on to the beach below. The Britons were both on the cliffs

and on the beach, and it seemed too dangerous to land, so the fleet sailed on to a place where there were no cliffs—probably near Deal.

There were no high cliffs here, but to land was by no means easy. The Britons had travelled along the coast as fast as the ships could sail, for many of them were provided with horses and chariots. The ships were too large to get close to the shore. In order to land, the Romans, clad in heavy armour, must leap into deep water and wade to the beach; while the Britons, naked or nearly so, could move freely, and fight from the shore or in shallow water as they pleased. The Romans were afraid, Cæsar therefore ordered his war-ships to leave the transport vessels, to row to the British flank, and attack the enemy with slings, arrows, and stones or darts thrown from machines. The war-ships and engines were both strange to the Britons, and they retired a little. Then, as the Romans still hesitated, the standard-bearer of the tenth legion cried, "Leap fellow soldiers, unless you wish the enemy to capture your eagle!" (the standard of the legion). So saying he jumped into the water. His comrades were ashamed to leave him alone, and did as he did. The soldiers in the other ships followed their example, and there was a fierce battle in the water. At last the Romans, aided by men in boats from the war-ships, forced their way to the shore, formed up in order of battle, and put the Britons to flight. Having no cavalry, Cæsar could not pursue the fugitives very far; but they felt that they were beaten, and asked for peace. Cæsar blamed them for treachery, for, he said, they had sent ambassadors to Gául to beg for peace, and yet had opposed his landing—a complaint which rather recalls the fable of the wolf and the lamb,—but he promised to pardon them if they would give hostages.

Cæsar had drawn up his ships above high-water-mark, but since there are no tides in the Mediterranean he knew nothing of the spring tides, specially high tides, which occur at full and new moon. Next full moon there was a storm. His ships floated off, were dashed against each other, and many were damaged. As soon as the Britons heard of this their chiefs held a meeting. They now knew how few Romans these were, and that they were without cavalry, ships, and corn, for the storm had driven back to Gaul the eighteen ships on which the cavalry were; so they resolved to fight once more, and to begin by stopping all supplies which might reach the Romans. The ambassadors secretly left the camp, and summoned men from a distance to cut the Romans off from the surrounding country, hoping thus to starve them; for they thought that if they succeeded in destroying this expedition, no other would dare to invade their country.

Cæsar did not know what the Britons were planning, but the fact that the promised hostages were not sent made him think that they meant mischief. He had never intended to stay all the winter in the island. His men were set to work to repair the damage done by the storms. Materials were brought from Gaul, and the timber and brass work of ships completely wrecked were used to mend the others. So hard did his soldiers work, that in a short time all the ships but twelve were ready for the return voyage.

One day, when one of the two legions had gone out to get corn, some men who were guarding the gate of the camp noticed more dust than usual in the direction in which the troops had gone, and reported it to the general. He at once guessed the truth — that his men had been attacked while they were reaping. He hastened to their help, and was none

too soon, for he found that they had been surrounded. They were crowded together, and the enemy were showering darts and arrows on them from all sides. The Britons had guessed which way they would go, had waited until they laid aside their arms and were scattered in the fields, and had taken them by surprise, killing a few of them, and surrounding the rest with their cavalry and chariots.

We have seen how Darius used chariots against Alexander. They were common in the east, but in Europe they seem to have been used only by the Britons. They could, Cæsar tells us, check their horses in an instant even when going down a steep hill: they would run out along the pole between the horses and back again to the chariot, when going at full speed. They would drive among the enemy, casting darts around them breaking his ranks, and terrifying him with the rush of the horses and the noise of the wheels. Then, leaping from the chariot the warrior would fight on foot, while his charioteer drove to a little distance and waited for him, ready to take him to a place of safety if he should be worsted. The Roman foragers, to whom this kind of fighting was new, were terrified, so that it was lucky for them that Cæsar came when he did. The Britons on seeing this fresh force retreated, and Cæsar marched his troops back to camp. A few days later he defeated a large force of the islanders, and this led them to beg for peace once more. He now demanded twice as many hostages as he had asked for before, and, having obtained them, he embarked for Gaul.

The people of Rome were delighted when they heard of the results of the year's fighting. A German host destroyed, the Rhine bridged, and Germany invaded; and now an expedition to Britain, a country so distant that people hardly

believed in its existence: a country whose interior even the Gauls did not know! The Senate had decreed a fifteen days thanksgiving for the defeat of the Belgæ. This time they made it twenty days.

Cæsar had resolved to return to Britain next year. He spent the winter in Italy as usual, but ordered his troops to build as many ships as possible in readiness for the invasion and to repair the old ones. He knew better now what sort of ships he would want—broad low ships which would not sink deeply in the water,—and himself planned what they were to be like. He set things in order in his Italian province, put down some risings in Gaul, and then prepared to embark. He had determined to take with him five legions, and a fairly large body of Gaulish cavalry. Labienus was to stay in Gaul to keep order.

Taking advantage of a south-west breeze, the great fleet set sail at sunset: and by rowing hard the soldiers brought their ships to their last year's landing place about mid-day. The Britons had gathered to oppose them, but when they saw the eight hundred ships they were frightened and hid themselves, so that the troops landed without difficulty. Six thousand men were left to guard the ships, while Cæsar, after nightfall, followed the Britons inland for about twelve miles. In the early morning he came upon a river, and the enemy, after a vain attempt to prevent his crossing it, retreated to a wood which they had fortified. Cæsar took the wood, but would not follow them farther, for not much daylight remained, and his camp must be made and entrenched before dark.

Next day, when he was about to begin the pursuit of the Britons, news came that a storm had again destroyed his fleet. He was forced to return to the coast, and found

that the wind had driven the ships ashore, despite their anchors, that almost all were badly damaged; and that forty were utterly broken up. He therefore ordered all the ships which were of any use to be drawn up out of reach of the tide, and to be surrounded by the same trench and mound as protected the camp. Orders for the building of new ships in Gaul were given: the soldiers toiled at the repairs day and night for ten days: and then Cæsar returned to the river where he found the Britons in greater force than ever. They had placed themselves under the command of Cassivelaunus, a prince who ruled the land north of the Thames and had his chief town where St. Albans now stands.

The Britons could not fight a regular battle against the disciplined Romans, but harassed them as they advanced. Their horses and chariots enabled them to escape easily from Cæsar's heavily armed troops. They would often, by their flight, tempt a few Romans to follow them, and, having drawn them from their comrades, suddenly dismount and fight these few men on foot. They never fought in close order, but had scattered bodies of men ready to relieve each other, so that when one was weary a fresh one could take its place. Their resistance grew less after two days' hard fighting, but they still did what they could to trouble the Romans.

Cæsar resolved to cross the Thames and invade the territory of Cassivelaunus. There was no bridge, and he could only hear of one ford—perhaps somewhere near Sunbury. The Britons had driven sharp stakes into the bank and into the river bed to hinder the invaders. Remains of these could still be seen eight centuries later. "They were not of much use, however, for the Romans dashed into the

water, and though it came up to their shoulders, they crossed so quickly that the Britons fled. Cassivelaunus now dismissed all his forces except 4000 charioteers. These watched the Romans, warned the inhabitants to flee as the invaders advanced, drove off the cattle, and attacked any troops who went too far from the main body. Cæsar therefore ordered his troops to do as much damage as they could to the country near their line of march, but not to straggle far.

Before Cæsar left Gaul the chief of the Trinobantes—the people of Essex and Middlesex—had come and offered to submit to him, complaining that Cassivelaunus had killed his father, and that he himself had only escaped death by flight. Now the Trinobantes sent messengers promising submission and begging for protection. Cæsar sent their chief back to them and asked for forty hostages and a supply of corn. These they despatched at once, and Cæsar took steps to protect them from Cassivelaunus. Five other tribes then submitted, and Cæsar advanced to St. Albans where he found the “capital”—hardly what we should call a town, for it was little more than a piece of woodland into which cattle could be driven for safety, naturally strong and protected by a ditch and a mud wall. Cæsar attacked it from two sides and took it with little loss, slaying many of the enemy and capturing their cattle. Cassivelaunus now tried to force Cæsar to retreat by stirring up an attack upon his camp and ships, but when this failed, thinking it useless to struggle on, he sent ambassadors to ask for peace. Cæsar did not wish to spend the winter in Britain, especially as he had heard of revolts in Gaul. He therefore granted peace on condition that hostages were given, that a tribute should in future be paid to Rome, and that Cassivelaunus



ATTACKED ANY TROOPS WHO WENT TOO FAR
FROM THE MAIN BODY

should not attack the Trinobantes. Having received the hostages he returned to the sea and found his ships repaired, but he had so many prisoners that he could not embark both them and his troops at once. He therefore sent one half across and waited for the ships to come back. Bad weather prevented the return of many of them, nor could the ships built by Labienus get across; so at last he crowded the rest of his men into such vessels as he had, and, favoured by very calm weather, got safely back to Gaul.

Thus ended Cæsar's invasions of Britain. They left as little mark behind them as Alexander's march through India. What had he gained? The tribute was never paid. The Roman empire was not extended. A century passed away before even the southern part of the island was subdued. Britain was a poor country so that there was not much plunder to bring back. There were, however, vast numbers of prisoners who were sold as slaves, and this brought much wealth both to the general and to his troops. Cæsar had gratified his curiosity and love of adventure. He had gained fame and popularity, and pleased the pride of the Roman people who loved to think their armies were irresistible. He had gained a good deal of information about the country and its people. He had been told that the island was triangular and given a fair idea of its size. He had heard of Ireland and the Isle of Man. He had also heard of other islands where the sun did not rise for a whole month in winter, and had himself made observations with a water clock, and found that the summer nights were shorter than in Gaul. The people of Kent, he tells us, were invaders from Belgium: those north of the Thames, the original inhabitants of the island. All were like the Gauls in their ways, but the northern tribes were less

civilised, stained their bodies with blue dye to make themselves look more terrible in battle, and grew very little corn, but lived chiefly on milk, cheese and flesh. It is strange that the Britons should have spoken of such long winter nights. Of course the story was untrue of any islands near Britain, but it seems as if some of them must have met with travellers from the extreme north of Europe. Cæsar thought the story worth repeating, but does not say that it is true. In the same way, when writing of the forest which covered the greater part of Germany and central Europe, he speaks of strange beasts there, but takes care not to let us think he has seen them. He describes the reindeer, but makes the curious mistake of saying that it has but one horn which rises in the midst of its forehead. He describes the elk, which he says has no joints to its legs. It therefore rests by leaning against a tree. Huntsmen notice which trees it uses and cut them nearly through. When an elk leans against one of them it gives way, the poor beast falls down, cannot rise, and is easily caught! When telling us a traveller's tale like this Cæsar is careful not to let us think he is speaking from his own knowledge. If he tells us that a thing happened, or that he has observed any fact or custom, we may be quite sure it is true. If he had only heard it we may be equally sure that he thought it possible or probable, but we may judge for ourselves whether to agree with him or not. It is this utter truthfulness which makes his writings so valuable.

PHARSALIA

CHAPTER VI.

B. C. 48.

WE are told that an Indian sage whom the Greeks called Kalanos, illustrated to Alexander the folly of wide conquests by spreading a dried skin on the ground and stepping on it. As soon as he trod on one edge another rose up. He could only keep it flat by sitting on the middle of it. This difficulty was now experienced by Cæsar. All Gaul had submitted to Rome: but when he went to his province in Italy there was sure to be a rebellion. In one case an entire legion was destroyed, and the same fate would have happened to a second but for Cæsar's learning of its danger and hastening to its help. For three years, from 54 to 52 B. C. there were constant risings. In the last named year all Gaul united under one leader, and the Roman power was almost overthrown: but the skill of Cæsar and the courage of his troops won the day. The Gallic leader yielded himself up and was sent as a prisoner to Rome, and the rising was at an end. There was some fighting next year also, but for the most part it was spent in arranging for the peaceable government of the country: and affairs were so settled that we do not hear of any more war in Gaul for seventy years.

During his visit to Italy in the year 56 B. C., Cæsar had met Pompey and Crassus, and they had arranged that the last two should be consuls in the following year, that Pompey should then have the Government of Spain and Crassus that of Syria, while Cæsar should hold his governor-

ship of Gaul for five more years. Their wealth and power enabled them to carry out these arrangements, and so it happened that Cæsar stayed in Gaul much longer than had been expected. Doubtless he arranged this so that he might finish the work he had begun. Pompey had married Cæsar's daughter, and loved her dearly. So long as she lived the two men were great friends: but unluckily for both of them, in the year 52 B. C. she died. From this time Pompey ceased to trust Cæsar, and after a while he altogether took the side of the Senate. Crassus had been killed in Parthia in the preceding year: and so Cæsar lost his most powerful friends.

The Senate hoped that it might be able to ruin him. It could do nothing while he was Governor of Gaul and at the head of a great army. It could do nothing if he were again appointed consul, and they knew that he meant to seek election on his return to Rome. If he were neither governor nor consul they could prosecute him for some offence, real or imaginary, and bribe the judges to convict him. Cæsar hoped to be elected consul before giving up his governorship, and without going to Rome: but Pompey and the Senate got new laws passed which made this impossible. It seemed clear that there must be a civil war. Cæsar proposed that both he and Pompey should give up their provinces and their armies, but this proposal came to nothing. The Senate decided that each of them should provide a legion for a war in Parthia. To do this, Pompey requested Cæsar to send him back a legion which he had lent to put down the rebellion in Gaul. Cæsar sent this legion together with one of his own, and Pompey kept them both in Italy. Cæsar offered to give up his province beyond the Alps and ten legions, if he might be allowed

to keep nearer Gaul and two legions till he was elected consul: and to resign everything as soon as he was elected. But the Senate would not listen. They authorised the consuls "to see that the Republic took no hurt," which meant that they declared war against Cæsar.

When this news reached him, he had but one legion with him. He told his men how ungratefully he and they were being treated after all their hard work for the empire, and they expressed their faithfulness to him. One man, however, was false. Labienus, one of his best generals, deserted and joined Pompey. Cæsar sent his baggage after him, and marched southward. When news reached Rome that he had crossed the river Rubicon, the boundary of his province, there was a panic. Pompey and the Senate fled. They had only two legions, all the rest of Pompey's army being in Spain. They tried to raise fresh troops, but men enlisted unwillingly. Cæsar was joined by a second legion and continued to advance. He was welcomed everywhere. A man named Domitius, who had been appointed to the governorship of Gaul, occupied the town of Corfinium in the Appenines, and sent to Pompey begging that he would bring his two legions, and surround Cæsar in the mountains. Pompey refused. Cæsar besieged Corfinium, and Domitius was taken prisoner. Cæsar dismissed him, even allowing him to take away the public money with which he had been supplied for the pay of his troops. These troops joined Cæsar's ranks, and Cæsar wrote to his friends, "I will use a new way of conquering: compassion and generosity shall make me strong". And well did he keep his word.

Pompey now fled to Brindisi where he found ships to take him across the Adriatic to Durazzo. Italy and Gaul belonged to Cæsar: Spain and the rest of the empire to

Pompey and the Senate. Cæsar determined not to leave an enemy in his rear, but to subdue the forces in Spain before following Pompey. First, however, he must visit Rome. He did not stay there long. Most of the senators and both consuls had gone with Pompey. Cæsar bade the tribunes summon the Senate. He told them that if they would not govern, he would, and requested them, but in vain, to arrange an agreement between Pompey and himself. They would only talk. Cæsar went to the Assembly and obtained leave to take such money as he needed from the Treasury. He, by an edict of his own, restored the property of the members of the popular party whom Sulla had outlawed (most of this property being in the hands of the senators now at Durazzo). Then he passed on to Spain. Much remains to tell besides the story of campaigns and battles; so we will only say that, though his task was a hard one, Cæsar was as successful as usual. Some of Pompey's generals ordered that any of Cæsar's soldiers who might be taken prisoners should be murdered, but Cæsar would not imitate this cruelty. He found young nobles whom he had spared at Corfinium fighting against him, but he dismissed them unhurt. Spain was subdued, for the time at least, and Cæsar returned to Rome.

It was⁹ the practice in Rome, in times of great danger, to appoint a "Dictator", a man with absolute power. He held office, not for a fixed time like the consuls and prætors, but just so long as might seem necessary. There being no regular Senate in the capital, Cæsar was now given this office, and the first use he made of it was to arrange for the election of Consuls. He was himself elected. He could only spend eleven days in Rome. Much civil business needed to be done, but most of it must wait. Creditors

were oppressing their debtors. Cæsar made arrangements for their relief. There were complaints of injustice in the courts. Cæsar would not consider these himself, but ordered retrials. He also found time to recall certain men exiled by the Senate, and to grant some privileges to the people of nearer Gaul. Then with twelve legions, their ranks much thinned by war, he hastened to Brindisi, resolved to attack Pompey before Pompey was ready to invade Italy.

The latter's army was far stronger than Cæsar's, and very much better supplied with money and all necessities. Besides he had a hundred and thirty good ships with which to oppose Cæsar's crossing, while Cæsar had only twelve fighting ships and enough transports to carry half his men. He might have marched round by land, but this would have exhausted his troops: and perhaps he thought that he would take the enemy by surprise by trying what seemed impossible. However that may be, he did cross with 15,000 men. He proposed peace, but Pompey would none of it. The Pompeian fleet watched Brindisi harbour, and kept the second half of the army back for months: but at last they made their escape and joined their comrades. Pompey had not attacked Cæsar when he was weak, and now that he found him ready to fight, though his own army was much the larger of the two, he shut himself up in a fortified camp by the sea, while Cæsar built works all along the landward side of it. A fight followed in which Cæsar was punished for trying to besiege a force stronger than his own. Many officers and nearly a thousand of his men were slain. Some hundreds of prisoners were taken. Labienus begged Pompey to give these men to him. He mockingly addressed them as "old comrades" and then ordered his troops to murder them.

Cæsar retreated into Thessaly. Pompey followed slowly. His plan was to let Cæsar exhaust his army by marching in search of supplies, but the senators who were with him would not consent to this. They had twice as many men as Cæsar, and thought that their general's hesitation was needless. He knew best, but was forced to yield to their impatience. Labienus assured them that Cæsar's men were not the veterans who had fought in Gaul, but newly raised troops. On the 9th August B. C. 48, two months after the fight at Durazzo, a council of war was held. It was agreed to fight that day. Labienus, Pompey, Domitius, the two consuls, the senators, all swore that they would not return to their camp except as conquerors, and the army was led forth and arrayed in the plain of Pharsalia.

Pompey's right wing was protected by a small river. He himself was on the left, commanding the two legions he had taken from Cæsar. He proposed to send numbers of cavalry, archers and slingers around Cæsar's right, to beat back his cavalry and attack him in flank and rear. Cæsar foresaw this plan. He had only a thousand horse, but mingled a thousand active picked men with them to fight on foot, and posted a reserve ready to help this mixed force, if necessary. He himself commanded the Tenth Legion, which was on the right, opposite Pompey. He made a speech to his men as usual. A centurion (or captain of one hundred men) named Crastinus cried, "I shall earn your thanks this day, dead or alive". He kept his word. His company had cut its way through the front rank of the enemy when he was slain by a sword-thrust.

Cæsar's troops were arranged in three ranks. The first and second advanced at a run, Pompey ordered his men to stand and receive the charge so as not to exhaust them-

selves. Seeing the Pompeians stand still, Cæsar's men paused to recover breath: then charged on again, hurled their darts at the enemy, and attacked them with their swords. Meantime the Pompeian cavalry, 7,000 strong, attacked and beat back Cæsar's mingled body of horse and foot, and hoped to ride round to the rear of the infantry. They knew nothing of the reserve which was ready to oppose them. These men had been instructed in a new method of attack. They were not to throw their darts, but to use them as spears, and to thrust at the faces, not at the bodies, of the horsemen. Many of the Pompeian cavalry were young patricians or senators, unused to war, and proud of their beauty. Scared by this unexpected way of fighting they turned and fled to the hills, followed by the rest of the cavalry.

Not content with this success, the reserve advanced and attacked the left flank of the enemy's infantry: and Cæsar, seeing that the danger of being surrounded was over, ordered his third rank forward to help the first and second. This settled matters. Pompey fled to his tent, while his army retired within their camp and tried to defend the ramparts. It would have been in vain to attack the camp in the morning; but now that Pompey's men were beaten and Cæsar's cheered by success, it seemed wise to attack. The camp was stormed. Pompey fled. His infantry followed his cavalry to the hills to seek for safety. Cæsar called his men from the plundering of the camp to follow the fugitives, and overtook them before night. Seeing that he could stop their water supply, he set his men to dig a new channel for the stream on which they depended, on seeing which the Pompeians offered to surrender. Labienus and others who despaired of mercy, made their escape.

Twenty-four thousand men were taken prisoners. Cæsar made them an encouraging speech, and none of them was hurt save one, who was killed for trying to escape after he had surrendered. Yet it had been the practice of the Pompeians to treat all Cæsar's men whom they could catch as traitors to the state, and to slay them without mercy. Fifteen thousand Pompeians were killed or wounded in the battle and the flight. Cæsar only lost thirty officers and a hundred and seventy men.

Pompey fled to the coast where he found a ship to take him to the island of Mytilene. Here he met his wife, and they embarked together, wondering whither to flee. They sought shelter at Cyprus, but the Cypriotes had heard of the battle, and would not risk Cæsar's anger. They sailed to Egypt. Pompey had done good service to the late king, and hoped his son might prove grateful. He was asked to land, and a small boat was sent for him. No sooner did he step ashore than he was foully murdered.

He had done the state good service. He was a great general, but a weak man. Unhappily he was swayed by the Senate, and this led to the disastrous civil war, which was far from ending with his death. Why he forsook Cæsar we do not know. Perhaps he was jealous of so great a man. Had he been faithful to his alliance, and content with the second place in the Republic, untold disasters might have been avoided. But it was not to be. Vanity or lack of judgment led him astray, drenched the world in blood, and brought him to this miserable end.

CHAPTER VII.

CÆSAR AS DICTATOR

B. C. 49--44.

CÆSAR followed Pompey to Egypt, and on his arrival was presented with his rival's head. A civil war was going on between the king, Ptolemy (a descendant of Alexander's general of that name whom we saw leading his troops up Mahaban) and his sister Cleopatra. He took the side of Cleopatra, and this delayed him when he should have been at Rome, and gave the Senate time to prepare to fight him once more. When at last he did get away, there was work to be done in Asia. The Parthians, after the defeat and death of Crassus, had invaded the Roman province of Syria. Cæsar, preferring the interests of the empire to his own, marched through Asia Minor to Armenia, and defeated the Parthians. When he returned to Rome there was plenty of work to do, but he could only stay three months. The senators who had fled with Pompey were sitting as a "Senate" at the African town of Utica; and having allied themselves to the African king Juba, were burning Roman houses, and killing every friend of Cæsar whom they could find. Cæsar therefore sailed to Africa, and after a campaign lasting six months, fought the great battle of Thapsus. He was victorious. Labienus and a few others fled to Spain where a party had risen in favour of the Senate, and thither, after another visit to Rome, Cæsar followed them. His last battle, the Battle of Munda, was fought on the 17th March, B. C. 45. Here Labienus fell. Pompey's two sons fled, but one of them

was hunted down and slain. The Civil War was at an end, and Cæsar might devote himself to work for the good of Rome.

We have seen that he was in Rome five times after he left Gaul. His first visit in April, B. C. 49, lasted five days only: his second eleven. The other three taken together did not exceed fifteen or sixteen months. We must now consider how this time was spent.

His victories, his clemency, his sympathy with the people, all made him beloved by them: but they raised him up many enemies among the rich and the patricians. In his first visit the Senate, as we have seen, would do nothing: and with the help of the tribunes he obtained such money as he wanted and went his way. On his second he was appointed Dictator—an office which he needed in order to arrange for the election of consuls at which he was himself chosen. After the death of Pompey his enemies dared do nothing openly against him. At each of his visits to Rome he was appointed Dictator, and at last he was given that post for life. Other offices and honours were showered on him. He was made Censor—an officer who considered cases of morals and could even remove any unworthy member from the Senate. He was king in all but name.

Before speaking of the use he made of his power we must say a few words as to the state of Rome in his days. When she was a small city it was easy for her people to meet in their Assembly and make their own laws. Now, however, there were Roman citizens all over Italy and even in distant colonies. How could they ever meet, and how could the Roman mob, careless of everything but its own interest, govern an empire justly?

Jealous of the authority which was entrusted to their magistrates, the Romans had passed laws which enabled a

single consul or tribune to veto—that is to make of no effect—the acts of the others. We have seen how Bibulus tried to do this in Cæsar's first consulate. This made the passing of laws almost impossible if any party disapproved of them, for it was generally possible to bribe some magistrate to use his veto.

The provinces were regarded merely as means to supply money, food, and luxuries for Rome. Wealth poured in from them, but most of it went into the purses of the rich. The poor remained miserably poor. The wealthy employed slaves to work on their farms and in their shops, and the free citizens idled about the town, supplied with corn for little or nothing from the public stores, and amused by the bloody games at the circus which were provided by the wealthy to keep them in a good temper.

The rich lent money to the poor at very high rates of interest, and the laws allowed a debtor who could not pay to be sold as a slave or sent to jail.

Respect for law and virtue which had been very marked in their ancestors had disappeared. Fights in the streets between bands of swordsmen hired to protect their employers were common. Judges were willing to be bribed, so that crime generally went unpunished if the criminal was wealthy.

Cæsar's first dictatorship lasted only eleven days. We have already seen how much work he got through in that short period. His action in favour of oppressed debtors had to be supplemented later on, and his laws, as extended by his successor Augustus, were the foundation of our present law of bankruptcy. Under them a debtor could no longer be enslaved. To increase the wealth of the country and the employment of labour a law was passed against

hoarding, and the wealthy were forced to invest some of their capital in land, instead of lending it out at high rates of interest.

Cæsar reduced the number of persons who received free grants of corn from 320,000 to 150,000. He founded Roman colonies to which the unemployed could be sent, and so provided land for the soldiers who were disbanded after the Civil War. He decreed that the holders of great estates must employ a certain number of free labourers; and he imposed import duties with the double purpose of making the rich pay more to the state, and of encouraging manufactures in Italy.

Governors of provinces were no longer appointed by the Senate, allowed to plunder as they pleased, and to bribe the judges to acquit them if they were prosecuted on their return to Rome. They were appointed by Cæsar and were personally responsible to him. The tribute to be paid by the provinces was regulated on fairer principles, and reduced in amount. There were already laws against extortion in the provinces. He revised them and expelled from the Senate all who had offended against them. Laws were also passed against high treason and against bribery at elections.

There still exist copies of parts of laws made by Cæsar for the municipal government of the city of Rome and of her colonies. He gave extended liberties to Gaul beyond the Alps and probably to Sicily. And amidst all this mass of varied law-giving he found time to revise the calendar. Rome had then, as Islam has now, twelve lunar months in the year. But unlike Islam she aimed at beginning the year somewhere about the shortest day, so that the months might recur at the same season. For this purpose, when

the error of ten or eleven days a year had mounted up to a month, the priests would announce a year of thirteen months. Cæsar as high priest must have had something to do with this, and he thought it unsatisfactory. He consulted an Egyptian astronomer, who told him that the year was $365\frac{1}{4}$ days long. He, therefore, decreed that in future the months should not be real lunar months, but as nearly one-twelfth of a year as possible. He fixed their lengths almost as they are now, and arranged for an extra day in February once in four years, thus making the average length of the year nearly right. It was sixteen centuries before another correction was thought necessary. The change must have caused some trouble when first introduced. The year 46 B. C. had already been lengthened by the priests by an extra month of 23 days. Cæsar added 67 more days to it, so that, instead of having their usual 355 days or so, that year consisted of 445. No wonder it was called "The year of confusion!"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE IDES OF MARCH

B. C. 44.

WHEN Cæsar returned from Spain in the Autumn of B. C. 45, having defeated the last army of the Senate, his foes thought that he would at last avenge himself. Supposing his former mercy to be due to weakness they expected him to follow the example of his uncle Marius. He did nothing of the sort. He once more declared that no one should suffer for what had been done during the Civil War. He

gave office to friend and foe alike. Caius Cassius had sought to kill him: Marcus Brutus had fought against him at Pharsalia: Marcellus had moved his recall from Gaul, and publicly insulted him. Cæsar gave magistracies to Brutus and Cassius, and recalled Marcellus from exile. Yet he could not make friends of his foes. They would not forgive his success: they would not forgive his laws which favoured the people: they would not forgive their own loss of power: and least of all would they forgive his true greatness of mind and nobility of nature. Yet what could they do? What they did do was to cringe upon him, to flatter him, to bestow such honour upon him as might make him ridiculous and unpopular: and while all this was done in public they were secretly plotting to murder him.

They struck medals in his honour: they resolved to put his statue with those of the Roman kings: they gave him the title of "God", appointed priests for his worship, and decreed that a temple should be built in honour of "Jupiter-Cæsar and the goddess Clemency." They offered him the consulship for ten years, and gave him the title of "Imperator" or emperor. Lastly they offered him the crown. Of course he had already kingly power, but the name of king had been hateful to the Romans ever since they had driven the tyrant Tarquin from the throne 450 years before. He was asked privately whether he would accept the kingship, and refused. A crown was placed on his statue, but removed by the tribunes. A man in the crowd hailed him as king, but he quietly replied, "I am not king, but Cæsar." Lastly at a feast on the 15th February, his friend Mark Antony, who was then consul, publicly offered him a crown, which, to the great delight of the mob, he publicly refused. Perhaps he had arranged this himself to put an end to what

might prove a dangerous question. Perhaps his friends really wished him to have the empty honour of the name of king. In either case suspicion began to spread that he was ambitious. It is true that he had shown himself to be a friend of the people, but who knew whether all these high honours might not make him a tyrant?

Cæsar had no body-guard. It would be easy to murder him. It would be well, however, to make the people distrust him, or they might slay his murderers. He would soon be setting out for a campaign to Parthia. If anything was to be done no time must be lost. Some sixty or eighty senators, most of whom had been Cæsar's enemies, and had been pardoned by him, formed a conspiracy. Brutus and Cassius were the chief of these, and probably the former really thought that he was doing the state a service by killing a tyrant. Others had fought on Cæsar's side, and now turned against him. Trebonius had done badly in Spain, but had been named for a future consulship by Cæsar. Decimus Brutus had been a successful general under Cæsar in Gaul, and had gained there a fortune of something like £500,000. Perhaps they thought that Cæsar owed his power to them, and that they would be greater men if he were out of the way. In any case they joined in the plot, and it was agreed that the great Dictator should be murdered on the ides, that is the fifteenth, of March.

On the night of the 14th while he was signing some letters at the dinner table, his friends were discussing what death is the best. Cæsar looked up and said, "That which is unexpected". Next morning the Senate was to sit in a hall built by Pompey. Cæsar had arranged to attend, but his wife Calpurnia, having dreamed an evil dream, begged him not to go. Rather to please her than because he be-

lieved in dreams, Cæsar was inclined to stay at home: but the conspirators, fearing that something might happen to change his plans, sent Decimus Brutus to him. Brutus, hearing of Calpurnia's dream, declared that Cæsar would be laughed at if he stayed away for such a reason, and persuaded him to attend the meeting.

They had not gone far when they met a man who professed to be a prophet, and who had warned Cæsar to beware of the Ides of March. Seeing him, Cæsar said, "Well, the Ides of March have come". "Yes, but they are not over", was the reply. A man who had heard something of the conspiracy put a note into Cæsar's hand, warning him of his danger, and begged him to read it, as it concerned himself. "What concerns me shall be attended to last", he replied: and he never opened the note.

The Senate House was reached. Antony was with Cæsar, and might have helped him: but Trebonius led him away, pretending that he had something of a private nature to talk about. Some of the conspirators were standing behind Cæsar's chair. The others followed him, and as soon as he was seated, one of them, Cimber by name, begged that his brother who was in exile might be recalled. Cæsar refused this petition. Others crowded round to join in the request. Then Cimber seized his robe while Casca, another conspirator, struck him on the neck with a dagger. Cæsar had no weapon but a "style"—a steel spike used for writing on tablets covered with wax. He turned on Casca and grasped his dagger. But now blows fell on him thick and fast. He tried to defend himself with his style, and wounded Cassius in the arm: but what could one man do against so many? There stood near him a statue of his great enemy Pompey, which had been removed by



BUT WHAT COULD ONE MAN DO AGAINST SO MANY?

Cæsar's friends during the Civil War, but replaced by Cæsar. The struggle had brought him to the base of this statue, when he saw his friend Marcus Brutus about to stab him. "And you too, my son!" he cried, and ceased to struggle, as if life was not worth fighting for when so dear a friend turned against him. He covered his face with his long robe, and fell at the base of Pompey's statue, pierced with twenty-three wounds.

The senators had looked on, surprised and terrified. None had tried to help or hinder the cruel murderers. Now they rose and left the house in a body. The conspirators marched to the capitol, waving their bloody daggers in the air and crying that they had slain the tyrant. The people were bewildered. Their friend was dead, but was he a tyrant as they were now told? Next day Brutus addressed them and they listened to him in silence. They respected him, so heard what he had to say: but they loved Cæsar, so could not applaud the speech. But when Cæsar's will was opened, and it was found that he had left a sum of money to every citizen, and had given them his beautiful garden for the public use, they were furious. They took his mangled body, tore down the benches in the forum---or public meeting place---and built a great funeral pyre, on which they burnt his body. It was clearly unsafe for Brutus and Cassius to remain in Rome, and they and their friends fled.

We have seen that on the death of Alexander his empire broke up at once. Something of the same sort seemed likely to happen now. The strong hand was removed. Civil war broke out again. Antony, Cæsar's nephew Octavian, and Lepidus, agreed to divide the imperial power between them, and proscribed their enemies as Marius and

Sylla had done. Brutus and Cassius raised an army in the east, but were defeated by Octavian and Antony in the two battles of Philippi, and both committed suicide. Octavian and Antony quarrelled. The latter was defeated and he too, died by his own hand.

But the Roman empire did not break up. Octavian was Cæsar's chief heir, and it is likely that Cæsar had meant him to be his successor. Certain it is that after a long period of disorder he became supreme, and was made emperor under the title of Augustus Cæsar. Following in the footsteps of the great Julius, he raised Rome to a height of glory and prosperity such as she had never known before. The useless attempt to rule a great empire for the benefit of a single city was given up. The provinces received more self-government, though they were closely bound together for defence. Rome was a great centre of civilization. Her art, her literature, her philosophy, were never equal to those of Greece. But as a military power and as a law-giver she was unequalled. Cæsar's work lived after him. He had put personal rule in the place of the old worn out republican idea: and though bad emperors arose as time went on, it was reverence for a personal head which was needed, and which made Rome for centuries the pride and admiration of the world.

Cæsar was a tall man, fair, graceful, and well-proportioned. He had piercing dark eyes, and a handsome intellectual face. He was a skilful horseman, but generally marched on foot to encourage his troops. When travelling he used a coach, for it was his custom to save time by writing or dictating letters on a journey. His habits were simple, and he expected his officers to follow his example. The gluttony which prevailed in Rome among the rich

disgusted him, and he made laws against extravagance in food. His officials would sometimes carry off an expensive dish from a banquet under the eyes of the host and his assembled guests.

Cæsar was no more a slave of superstition than was Alexander. He was a priest, and knew all about the trickery which the priests practised in interpreting omens. He was once told that a sheep which had been sacrificed had no heart, a thing which would have been terribly ominous had it been true. He treated the report with contempt. On landing in Africa he stumbled and fell. With ready wit he grasped some sand in his hands and cried, "I hold thee fast Africa!" This was only one instance of his presence of mind. Neither his foreign, nor his political enemies could find him unprepared. We have seen for example that when the Nervii led him into an ambush, he was at once ready with plans which led to their defeat. Again though he had but one legion with him when he was pronounced a public enemy by the Senate, he was ready to drive both them and Pompey out of Italy.

A marked feature of his character was his liberality. He valued money only as a means to power. He gained a vast fortune in Gaul, and spent it for the good of Rome—not giving it away in foolish extravagance like Alexander. He paid £800,000 for ground on which to build a forum. After the Civil War he gave each of his foot soldiers £200, and each of his cavalry twice as much.

Like Alexander he was beloved by his troops. He understood them and cared for them. In his many fights he risked their lives as little as possible, and their losses were remarkably small. He knew his officers well, and never failed in his "Commentaries" to mention by name

any one of them who seemed worthy of praise. On the other hand, if one of them made a mistake he mentions it, but does not blame the man. Before the African War there was a mutiny in which his beloved tenth legion took part. They came to him demanding that they might be disbanded. "I disband you" said Cæsar. Then he began to address them saying "Citizens". Hearing this word they cried out, begging him not to call them so, but to use his old name for them. If he would but call them "Fellow-soldiers" they would obey him. He would not listen to them for a time, but told them how, while they were mistrusting him, he had secured lands for them all, and money to pay part of their arrears of wages, and that the balance should be paid in bonds bearing interest. All this they should now have. They begged to be allowed to stay with him, and he at length granted their request. Alexander suppressed a mutiny with equal fearlessness, and with equal success, but by very different methods. He appealed to the fear and self-interest of his men. Cæsar to their affection for him.

People of Cæsar's days were astonished at his clemency. A modern writer, on the other hand, says he was hard, stern and cold: like a god rather than a man: not a god of Love, but a god such as philosophers have conceived, sufficient to Himself and caring nothing for His creatures: caring no more for mankind and their sufferings than the man does for flies or beetles. We must remember that Cæsar was a Roman and compare him with men of his own race and age. To the Roman there was nothing sacred in human life. A man who would send scores of gladiators to slaughter each other would seem to us a monster. The Romans thought him a public benefactor. In Gaul Cæsar

slew his enemies without mercy, though he spared all that submitted. For treachery he had no forgiveness. When the people of a certain Gallic town attacked him after pretending to surrender he sold 53,000 of them into slavery. When one of the coast tribes arrested his ambassadors, he put to death all their Senate and sold the rest of them as slaves. He inflicted horrible punishments at times, especially in his last year in Gaul, when it seemed that terrible examples were needed to end constant rebellions. But we never hear of him taking pleasure in cruelty. He cared nothing for the fights of gladiators. He never committed such a vile act as did Alexander when he tortured to death the brave defender of Gaza. We cannot imagine Cæsar acting as Alexander did when he sat behind a curtain and watched the torture of Philotas. And when he came to fight against other Romans we find him always readier to forgive than to punish. "They would have it so," he said, with deep regret when he viewed the dead at Pharsalia.

Cæsar was calm: Alexander passionate. Cæsar was sober: Alexander drunken. Parmenio served Alexander faithfully: Alexander murdered him. Marcellus wronged and insulted Cæsar: Cæsar pardoned him. Both were great generals, but Cæsar was also a statesman. Alexander's ambition was selfish, but Cæsar's was directed to the service of his nation. Each had great designs which were stopped by his death. Cæsar intended to invade Parthia which had for years troubled the peace of the Roman province of Syria. He proposed to make a digest of the Roman laws: to establish great libraries: to drain certain marshes, make a new harbour at the mouth of the Tiber, and cut a canal through the Isthmus of Corinth. Yet he was 58 years old

when he was murdered, and had several times been heard to say that he had lived long enough.

The amount of work that he did is amazing. We are told that he could dictate four or more letters to as many secretaries at the same time. He found time to write histories of his own wars, which he called "Commentaries." He meant them for notes to be expanded by other writers: but they were so excellent that no one dared try to improve them. He wrote works on auguries, on astronomy, and on grammar besides political tracts. As a speaker and as a writer he was only second to Cicero.

When we consider that he excelled not only as a general, but as a statesman and a writer; when we recall the number and variety of the reforms he brought about in Rome; when we realize that by his change in her system of government he kept her empire from crumbling to pieces, so that she enjoyed a new lease of life which lasted for centuries; we shall think it no exaggeration to say that he was the greatest man who ever lived, and that never has the course of the world's history been so profoundly influenced by any single man as it has by Julius Cæsar.







