# FARMER LYDIA HOYT

## THE BOYS' BOOK OF RULERS

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# Содержание

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## PREFACE

The aim of this book is to give in as concise manner as possible, consistent with graphic narration and biographical completeness, the most important and interesting events in the lives of these famous rulers; together with a brief history of the various epochs in which they lived, and a description of the manners and customs of the people comprising the several nations governed by these illustrious monarchs.

*The Author.*

# AGAMEMNON
# 1184 B.C

"The rule
Of many is not well. One must be chief
In war, and one the king." —*Iliad.*

FOR nine years the Greeks had besieged the city of Troy. This famous Trojan War, which is said to have occurred about 1184 B.C., has been embellished by romance and poetry; and although the real events have been much distorted by fabulous tales, it holds an important place in ancient Grecian history.

The marvellous Greek poet Homer has immortalized the wonderful story of this contest, in which, according to the old Grecian belief, gods and heroes fought for mastery; and it seems more fitting to the subject that we should view these events through the eyes of those ancient Greeks, whose weird yet fascinating fables peopled the mountains and seas with gods and goddesses; over whom proud Zeus or Jupiter ruled on the dread Mount of Olympus, from whence he hurled his awful thunderbolts, and shook the earth and heavens in his wrathful moods, when gods or mortals had dared to defy his imperial will. Agamemnon, king of Mycenæ, was the commander of all the Grecian hosts which for these nine years had surrounded the

walls of Troy. The cause of the quarrel may be thus briefly stated: —

Priam was the richest and most powerful of all the kings of Troy. His wife, Queen Hecuba, had dreamed that one of her children should become a firebrand which should consume the whole city. Whereupon, Priam was so alarmed, that he ordered that her next child should be exposed in a desert place among the mountains, and left to perish. Paris was this child, and when an infant, was hidden by his mother, that he might not be thus destroyed. Paris grew to be a youth of marvellous beauty, and was at length brought by his mother to the court of Priam. The king was so charmed by his beauty and accomplishments, that Paris ventured to make himself known, and was received by Priam, his father, with great kindness; for he was so pleased with the noble youth, that he ceased to remember the evil dream. This dream, however, was very strangely fulfilled years afterwards. Paris made an expedition into Greece, which country was at that time divided into many small kingdoms or states, each governed by its own king. Agamemnon was king of Mycenæ, and his brother Menelaüs was king of Sparta.

Agamemnon and Menelaüs were the sons of Plisthenes; but as their father died when they were very young, their mother Aërope was afterwards married to Atreus; and these two brothers were brought up by their step-father as his own children, to whom his name was given, as they were called Atridæ.

Atreus was afterwards murdered, and Agamemnon's uncle

Thyestes ascended the throne of Mycenæ. Agamemnon and his brother Menelaüs then fled to Sparta. The king of Sparta agreed to recover the kingdom for Agamemnon, if he would marry his daughter Clytemnestra, and make her his queen. To this Agamemnon consented, and with the aid of Tyndarus, king of Sparta, he recovered his own kingdom, and married Clytemnestra. His brother Menelaüs afterwards became king of Sparta.

During the expedition into Greece, of Paris, the son of King Priam, he visited the court of Sparta, and was received most kindly by King Menelaüs. But the handsome and fascinating Paris ill-repaid this courteous reception, for he fell in love with Helen, the beautiful wife of Menelaüs, and carried her off with him on his return to Troy. Menelaüs, enraged at this wicked treachery, persuaded his brother Agamemnon, king of Mycenæ, to espouse his quarrel, and to join him in waging war with the Trojans, to revenge his indignity, and to recover, if possible, his wife, the fair Helen, who was so exquisitely beautiful, that all who saw her fell in love with her. Agamemnon was chosen commander-in-chief of all the powerful Grecian princes who now combined their forces to fight against Troy. Homer gives us the names of the most famous of these Grecian warriors. Agamemnon was sovereign lord of all the host, and Achilles was the bravest and most valiant man amongst them. But besides these, there was the yellow-haired Menelaüs, king of Sparta, and husband of the beautiful Helen; Ajax Oïleus, or, as men called

him, the lesser Ajax, king of the Locri, swiftest of foot among the Greeks, after the great Achilles; Ajax Telamon, from Salamis; Diomed, son of Tydeus, king of Argos, and with him Sthenelus; Nestor, king of Pylos, oldest and wisest among the Greeks; Ulysses, king of Ithaca, most crafty in counsel; Idomeneus, grandson of the great judge Minos, king of Crete, and with him Meriones; Tlepolemus, son of Hercules, from Rhodes; Eumelus, from Pheræ, son of that Alcestis, who died for her husband, and was brought back from death by Hercules, according to Grecian mythology; and many more heroes too numerous to mention: but the bravest and strongest of all was Ajax, son of Telamon, and the best horses were those of Eumelus; but there was none that could compare with Achilles and the horses of Achilles, bravest of men, and swiftest of steeds.

The heroes upon the Trojan side were also great and brave. The most famous of their chiefs were Hector, son of King Priam, most valiant of all the Trojan warriors; Æneas, whose father was Anchises, and whose mother was supposed to be the goddess Aphrodité; Pandarus, from Mount Ida, to whom Apollo had given a marvellous bow; Asius, the son of Hyrtacus, who came from the broad salt river, the Hellespont; Pylæmenes, king of Paphlagonia; and Sarpedon from Lycia, whom men affirmed to be the son of Zeus himself; and lastly, Glaucus his friend.

When the Grecian fleet had started upon this expedition against Troy, a wonderful incident had occurred. The fleet of the Greeks was detained by contrary winds at Aulis, owing to

the wrath of the goddess Diana, whom King Agamemnon had offended by killing one of her favorite deer. In this emergency Calchas the soothsayer was consulted, and he declared that to appease the anger of the goddess. Iphigenia, the eldest daughter of King Agamemnon, must be sacrificed. She was accordingly led to the altar, and was about to be offered as a victim, when she is said to have suddenly disappeared, being caught up by Diana, who in pity substituted a stag in her place. Virgil, however, tells this story somewhat differently; for he relates that Iphigenia was actually sacrificed. The goddess having been appeased, the winds were favorable, and the Grecian fleet sailed onward, and arrived safely at Troy; and for nine long years these famous warriors had been waging war around the walls of that city, within which, in the palace of Paris, son of King Priam, was concealed the matchlessly beautiful Helen, and much rich treasure, which that treacherous but fascinating prince had stolen from the Greeks.

But now within the Grecian camp a strife arises between King Agamemnon and Achilles, bravest of all his host. The Greeks, having been away from home so many years, were accustomed to make frequent raids upon the surrounding cities to supply their needs, and thus to enable them to continue still longer this weary siege. They had thus ruthlessly attacked a city called Chrysa, sacred to Apollo, where was a temple of that god.

The Greeks, in their plunderings, had not dared to molest the temple or its priest; but they had carried off, with other prisoners, the daughter of the priest of Apollo, named Chryseïs.

The spoils obtained from these expeditions were divided between the various kings and heroes in the Grecian host; and the maiden Chryseïs had been apportioned as the share of King Agamemnon. The next day the priest Chryses came to the Grecian camp, bringing much gold, and wearing on his head the priest's crown, that men might thereby reverence him the more. He demanded the return of his daughter, and offered his gold as her ransom. The Grecian chiefs were favorable to his suit, but King Agamemnon angrily repulsed him, exclaiming, —

> "Hence, on thy life, and fly these hostile plains,
> Nor ask, presumptuous, what the king detains.
> Hence with thy laurel crown and golden rod;
> Nor trust too far those ensigns of thy god.
> Mine is thy daughter, priest, and shall remain,
> And prayers, and tears, and bribes, shall plead in vain."

The sorrowful priest turned away in silence, and as he walked along the seashore, he besought the aid of his god, Apollo, praying: "Hear me, God of the silver bow! If I have built thee a temple, and offered thee the fat of many bullocks and rams, hear me! and avenge me on these Greeks."

And Apollo heard him and descended with awful wrath from dread Olympus, where dwelt the gods. The rattle of his arrows filled the air, as he twanged his deadly bow, and sent the fateful shafts of pestilence upon the Grecian fleet below; meanwhile, enwrapping his own form in shadows black as night, from which

his baleful darts shot forth like lightning's flash. And so for ten long days the pestilence raged, till heaps of dead men and beasts lined the shore, and the black smoke ascended from myriad funeral piles. Then Achilles called upon the seer, Calchas, to tell them why Apollo was so wroth with them. To whom the sage replied, —

"It is on behalf of his priest that Apollo is so wroth; for when he came to ransom his daughter, Agamemnon would not let the maiden go. Now then, ye must send her back to Chrysa without ransom, and with her a hundred beasts for sacrifice, so that the plague may be stayed."

Then, with a threatening frown, King Agamemnon started from his gorgeous throne, with eyes which flashed with angry light, as he exclaimed in fury, —

"Prophet of plagues, forever boding ill! Still must that tongue some evil message bring. I will release the maid, that my people may be spared. But for this, my share of booty, shall the Greeks requite me."

Then Achilles answered, —

"We have no treasures from which to make up thy loss. Let the maiden go! and when we capture Troy, we will repay thee fourfold."

Then Agamemnon replied, —

"Shall I my prize resign while thou art possessed of thine? I will send back the maid to please Apollo; but know thou that I will seize thy share, even the girl Briseïs, that all may know that

I am sovereign here."

Whereupon, Achilles was so fierce with anger, that he fain would have slain the monarch, and had, forsooth, half drawn his sword from the scabbard, to thrust it into the haughty king. But lo! the goddess Athené stood behind him, and caught him by his long yellow locks of hair. None saw the goddess, save only Achilles, to whom he said, —

"Art thou come, fair Minerva, to witness these wrongs I bear from Atreus' son? If thou dost see his crime, see also my proud vengeance."

Whereupon, he raised his sword to strike; but the goddess said, —

"Forbear thy fury! Let great Achilles yield to reason. Put up thy sword; but if thou pleasest, use the dagger of thy tongue alone. With that, the gods permit thee to reproach him; but vengeance, leave thou to the care of heaven."

So spake the goddess, and Achilles thrust his sword back into its sheath, and in proud scorn exclaimed, while turning to the king with blazing eyes, —

"Coward! thou rulest sure a puny race, else this had been thy last affront. Thou darest not to fight, but cowerest like a dog in safe retreat within the camp; but after we have fought and conquered, thou claimest the richest booty! But know, for this my grievous wrong, the gods shall avenge it! And when the Greeks lie in heaps before the walls of Troy, slain by the dreadful Hector, then shalt thou miss the strong arm of Achilles from thy side, and

thy proud heart shalt mourn the affront thy madness gave. For thou hast made the bravest Greek thy bitterest enemy."

Then did Achilles dash his sacred sceptre on the ground, saying, —

"As surely as this sceptre, which was once a branch from off a tree, now starred with golden studs and bound with bronze, an ensign of Jove's favor, shall never blossom more, so surely shalt thou miss the arm of brave Achilles, when the Trojans press thee sore. Thou canst play the master over others, but think not to master me! As to the maid, my prize, which the Greeks gave me, let them take it again if they will, but if thou darest to invade my tent and touch whate'er is mine, thy blood shall stream forth at the point of my revengeful blade."

So saying, the great Achilles strode forth from the counsel-tent with wrathful looks, and the august brow of Agamemnon was overcast with threatening gloom. In vain had Nestor, eldest of the Grecian kings and wisest of counsellors, endeavored to quell this ominous quarrel. His words of reason moved not the two fierce warriors. And surely, in this strife, Achilles held the right, and Agamemnon showed himself a selfish, proud, and haughty monarch.

The priest's daughter, Chryseïs, was sent back to her home with offerings to the god, and Ulysses was appointed to conduct her thither. But King Agamemnon would not be persuaded to renounce his purpose of seizing upon the war-prize which had been awarded to Achilles, namely, the maiden Briseïs; and

forthwith he sent heralds to the tent of Achilles to obtain her. The heralds approached the warrior with much dread, for they feared his awful wrath. But Achilles said to them, —

"Fear not, ye heralds! It is no fault of yours that you are sent on such an errand."

Whereupon he commanded that the maiden should be brought from her tent and given to the heralds, who led her, much against her will, to the haughty Agamemnon. Then Achilles called upon his mother Thetis, who was a goddess of the sea, to avenge his wrongs. Thetis rose like a mist from the waves, and coming to Achilles, who sat upon the seashore, she comforted him and asked his trouble. Whereupon Achilles told her the cause of his anger, and besought her to go to the great Zeus, whom Thetis had once aided, when the other gods would have bound great Jove, by bringing Briareus of the hundred hands, who so fought for the mighty Jupiter, that the other gods dared no longer defy his power. And owing this kindness to the goddess Thetis, her son thought rightly that the great Jove would listen to her petitions on his behalf. So Achilles asked his mother to go to Olympus, and pray Zeus that he would help the sons of Troy and give them victory over the Greeks, whose sovereign king had thus dishonored the bravest of all his host.

This, Thetis did, going to the palace of Jupiter on the top of Olympus, and making her prayer in her son's behalf. Zeus was loath to grant it, for he knew that it would anger his wife Heré, who loved the Greeks and hated the Trojans. Yet on account

of the past favor of Thetis, he would not refuse, and in giving assent, nodded his awful head, thus causing Olympus to shake and tremble. So Zeus called one of his swift-winged messengers, called a Dream, and said, —

"Fly hence, swift Dream, and to the tent of Agamemnon go! Bid him lead all the Grecians forth to battle against Troy. Persuade him that the gods intend to give him victory."

So this false Dream, flying to Agamemnon's side, took to itself the shape of wise old Nestor, whom the king honored more than all beside, and thus the false Nestor counselled, —

"Sleepest thou, Agamemnon? Arise! for now Zeus declares that the immortal gods are favorable to thy plans, and through thy mighty hosts will send the doom of destruction upon the city of Troy; and thou shalt reap the eternal glory."

Then Agamemnon awoke from sleep and, little thinking how he had been duped by this false Dream, quickly donned his tunic, fastened his sandals on his feet, and hung from his shoulders his mighty silver-studded sword. Wrapping his great cloak around him, he took in his right hand his royal sceptre, token of his sovereignty over all the Greeks. Thus attired, in martial grandeur, he went forth and roused his chiefs, and then the heralds called the hosts to battle. Only Achilles sat apart within his tent and went not forth to battle with the Greeks.

Now, as the two forces were about to fight, Paris, the Trojan prince, rushed forth and challenged the bravest of the Greeks to fight with him. Then Menelaüs, whom he had so

greatly wronged, leapt from his chariot and rushed to meet his treacherous foe. But Paris was more beautiful in form and feature than brave in heart, and seeing the man whom he had so cruelly wronged, he was afraid to fight, and cowardlike ran back into the Trojan ranks. Then his brother, brave Hector, thus rebuked his cowardice.

"Fair art thou, Paris, beauteous indeed, but ill thy soul supplies a form so fair! Thou makest us the scorn of the proud Greeks, by thy unmanly fear. Little will it avail thee that thou art in form so stately, when thy soft curling locks and shapely limbs are lying in the dust. Thy silver lyre, nor all thy blandishments, will naught avert thy doom, for thou hast been the curse of Troy and ruin of thy race."

Then Paris, stricken with just shame, replied, —

"Thou speakest well, Hector, and thy rebuke is just. Thy heart is like iron; yet are beauty and love also the gift of the gods, and not to be despised. Now let Menelaüs and me fight for the fair Helen and all her possessions, and if he prevail, let him take her, and them, and depart to Greece. But if I prevail, then shall the Greeks depart in peace without her."

This saying, which at last betokened some spirit, pleased Hector well; and going before the Trojan ranks, holding his spear by the middle, he kept them back. The Greeks would have hurled spears upon him, but Agamemnon cried out, —

"Hold! Hector has somewhat to say to us."

Then Hector announced that Paris would fight with Menelaüs

for the fair Helen and all her wealth. To which Menelaüs readily agreed, but demanded that King Priam should himself come and, with King Agamemnon, make a covenant with sacrifice, that the fair Helen and all her wealth should go to the one who should prevail.

When the heralds went to bring the old King Priam, he was found on the wall with the beautiful Helen near him, to whom he was talking and asking the names of brave Grecian heroes whom he beheld among the hostile host. And in this wise he spake to fair Helen, —

"Come near, my daughter, tell me about these old friends of thine. Who is that warrior, that I see, so fair and strong? There are others taller than he, but none of such majesty."

And Helen answered, —

"Ah, my father, would that I had died before I left the fair land of Greece! That one is King Agamemnon, a good and brave soldier, and my brother-in-law, in the old days. And that one is Ulysses of Ithaca, who is better in craft and counsel than all other men."

Then Priam said, —

"Who is that stalwart hero overtopping all others?"

"That," said Helen, "is mighty Ajax, the bulwark of the Greeks; and as for the other chiefs, I could name them all. But I see not my two brothers, Castor and Pollux;" for she wot not that they were already dead.

Thereupon came the heralds and told King Priam that the

armies had called for him. After the covenant between the Trojan and Grecian kings, Priam and Agamemnon, Hector and Ulysses marked out a space for the fight, and Hector shook two pebbles in a helmet, to decide which one should be the first to throw the spear, Paris or Menelaüs.

The lot fell upon Paris, and the two warriors having armed themselves, came forth into the space and brandished their spears with wrathful eyes. Then Paris threw his spear. It struck the shield of Menelaüs, but pierced it not; and thereupon Menelaüs, with a prayer to Jupiter, cast his long-shafted spear. It struck the shield of Paris, pierced it through, and passing through both corselet and tunic, would have bruised the side of Paris, but he shrank aside, and so was wounded not. Then Menelaüs drew his sword and struck a mighty blow upon the top of Paris' helmet; but the sword brake in four pieces in his hand. Then he rushed forward and seized Paris by the helmet, and fain would have dragged him to the Grecian host, but the goddess Aphrodité loosed the strap that was beneath the chin, and the helmet came off in the hand of Menelaüs, and the goddess snatched Paris away, covering him with a mist, and put him safely in his own palace in Troy.

Then King Agamemnon said, —

"Now, ye sons of Troy, give back the fair Helen and her wealth!"

But just at this time the goddess Athené took upon herself the shape of Laodocus, and going to Pandarus, the false Laodocus, said, —

"Darest thou aim an arrow at Menelaüs?"

Now Pandarus had a marvellous bow made from the horns of a wild goat and tipped with beaten gold, and Pandarus strung his bow, his comrades, meanwhile, hiding him behind their shields. Then took he a sharp-pointed arrow from his quiver and laid it on the bow-string and let it fly. Right well the aim was made; but the gods decreed that the dart should not be fatal. For though it passed through belt and corselet and strong girdle, and pierced the skin so that the red blood rushed out, which sight filled Menelaüs and King Agamemnon with sore dismay, Menelaüs soon perceived the barb of the arrow, and so knew that the wound was not fatal; and when it was drawn forth by the physician Machaon, and the blood was staunched with healing drugs, King Agamemnon rejoiced that he should not thus lose his brave brother Menelaüs.

Then the mighty hosts of Greeks and Trojans went forward to the battle, and on either side the gods urged them on, Athené aiding the Greeks, and Ares – called also Mars – strengthening the Trojan warriors. Many were the valiant exploits that day performed; but we can mention but a few of them. So close pressed host on host, that the armies dashed together, shield on shield and spear on spear. Ajax Telamon slew Simoisius, and Antiphon, son of King Priam, aimed at Ajax, but missing him, slew Leucus, the friend of the valiant Ulysses.

Whereupon, Ulysses, in great anger, to avenge his death, strode boldly midst the Trojan ranks and hurled his spear at

Democoön, a son of Priam, whom he slew. At length the Trojan hosts were borne backward by the mighty onslaught of the Greeks, till Apollo cried from the heights of Pergamos, —

"On, Trojans! The flesh of these Greeks is not stone or iron, that ye cannot pierce it; and remember that the great Achilles fights not with them to-day!"

Athené also urged the Greeks to valiant deeds. This goddess aroused Diomed to battle, making a wondrous fire shine forth from his helmet, which made him seem a god, and he raged through the battle so furiously, that he was now seen amongst the Grecian ranks, now boldly invading the Trojan forces, and striking down his foes with mighty arm. Then Pandarus aimed an arrow at him and smote him on the shoulder. But the brave Diomed cared not for the arrow, and leaping from his chariot he called to Sthenelus, his charioteer, to draw the arrow from the wound; and praying to Athené for aid, he rushed madly into the Trojan ranks, slaying a man at every blow.

Meanwhile, Æneas, driving his swift chariot, said to Pandarus, —

"Climb up into my chariot, and thou shalt fight, and I will drive."

So Pandarus mounted the chariot, and the two drove towards Diomed, and as they came near, Pandarus cast his spear, which passed through the shield of Diomed and reached his corselet; whereupon Pandarus cried, —

"Ha, now he bleeds! Low will this haughty Grecian lie!"

But Diomed replied, —

"Thy dart has erred! Now I will try my spear."

And straightway he hurled his keen lance toward his boasting foe. Through nose and jaw it crashed, and cleft the tongue in two; and the bright point came forth beneath the chin.

Pandarus fell from the chariot mortally wounded, and Æneas leapt to the ground with drawn spear to defend the dead body of his friend. But Diomed raised a huge stone and hurled it at Æneas, and crushed his hip-bone, felling him to the earth.

Then had brave Æneas perished, but his goddess mother, Aphrodité, caught him in her white arms and threw her veil about him. But so great was the rage of Diomed, that he spared not even the goddess, but rushing upon her, he wounded her in the wrist, and with a shriek of pain she dropped her son; but Apollo caught him up and covered him with a thick mist. Thrice Diomed pursued, and thrice Apollo drove him back. But as the rash Diomed advanced a fourth time, the god exclaimed, —

"O son of Tydeus, beware! Nor think to match the immortal gods!"

So Apollo carried Æneas out of the battle and placed him in safety in Troy. Meanwhile, fair Venus, pale from the wound which mortal man had dared inflict, was conducted by swift-winged Iris to the stern god Mars, her brother; and Venus begged his car to mount the distant skies, where in the fair realms of the gods her wounded hand was healed by sacred balm. Then Mars went down upon the field of battle to aid the Trojans, and

Hector rushed to the front with the god Mars by his side; and he dealt death and destruction through the Grecian ranks. Juno and Minerva saw him from Mount Olympus, and they prayed Jupiter to allow them to stop him in his fury. The mighty Zeus consented, and the two goddesses yoked horses to the chariot of Juno and passed down to earth with flying strides. Having reached the battle-field, Juno took the shape of Stentor with the lungs of brass, whose voice was as the voices of fifty men, and thus she cried, —

"Shame, men of Greece! When Achilles fought, the Trojans dare not leave the city; but now they fight even by the very ships." Then Minerva chided Diomed for want of bravery, to whom he replied: "I know thee, great goddess, daughter of Jupiter! and 'tis thy commands I obey. Thou didst bid me fight with none of the immortals save only with Aphrodité; and therefore I gave place to Hector, for I perceived that he was aided by great Mars."

But Athené answered: "Heed not Ares! drive thy chariot at him and hurl thy spear. This morning did stern Mars promise to aid the Greeks, and now he joins with our Trojan foes."

So saying, the goddess pushed the charioteer of Diomed from his place, and herself mounted and seized the reins and lashed the horses furiously. With swift speed they drove together till they found the god Mars, or Ares, where he had just slain Periphas the Ætolian. Minerva was even invisible to the god, for she had donned the helmet of Hades; and so Ares, not seeing her, cast his spear at Diomed; but the goddess caught the spear and turned it

aside. Then Diomed thrust forth his spear, and Minerva leaned upon it, so that it even pierced the side of the god Mars, who shouted so loudly with the pain that the Greeks and Trojans trembled with fear; while the god of war, wounded by the fair goddess Athené, covered himself with a thunder-cloud, and in much rage ascended to Olympus.

When Ares had departed, the Greeks prevailed again; but the seer Helenus said to Hector and Æneas: "Draw back the Trojan army and encourage them; and you, Hector, go within the city and bid thy mother queen, with the daughters of Troy, take the costliest robe she hath, and go to the temple of Athené and offer it to the goddess with prayers and sacrifice, that perchance she may relent and have pity on us and keep this terrible Diomed from our walls."

This counsel prevailed, and Hector departed to the city, whence he dispatched his queen mother to Athené's temple, and exhorted his brother Paris to arm himself and come forth to battle. Hector then took a fond farewell of his much-loved wife Andromaché and his only child, called beautiful-headed as a star, and departed with Paris, who came forth clad in shining armor; and they fell upon the hosts of the Greeks and slew many chiefs of fame.

Again came Athené to help the Greeks; and meeting the god Apollo, they agreed to stay the battle for that day; and to this end inspired Hector and King Agamemnon to agree that Hector should fight alone with the bravest of the Greeks, while both

armies should rest from battle.

Then Menelaüs desired to meet brave Hector in single combat. But King Agamemnon would not consent to this, fearing his brother would perish. Whereupon it was resolved to decide the matter by lot, which fell upon Ajax the Greater, who, having armed himself, stepped forth to battle with the mighty Hector. First Hector hurled his spear, which passed through six folds of Ajax's shield. Then Ajax threw his lance, striking proud Hector's shield. Through shield, corselet, and tunic it passed, but Hector shrank from the sharp point, and the flesh was not pierced. Then again they rushed together with wild fury. And Ajax drove his spear at Hector's shield and grazed his neck, so that the blood leaped forth. Then Hector hurled a mighty stone at Ajax; but his shield broke not. Whereupon Ajax raised a mightier stone and threw it with such aim that it broke the shield of Hector and felled him backwards to the ground. But Apollo raised him up, and as they drew their swords for deadlier conflict, the heralds held their sceptres between them and bid them cease. So Hector and Ajax, both mighty warriors and brave of heart, agreed to part as friends; in token whereof, Hector gave to Ajax a silver-studded sword, and Ajax to Hector a buckler splendid with purple. So they parted, and the conflict was stayed that night. In the morning came Trojan heralds to King Agamemnon's host, saying: "This is the word of Priam and the sons of Troy. Paris will give back all the treasures of the fair Helen and much more besides, but the fair Helen herself will he not give up. But grant a truce that

we may bury our dead."

So the truce was given, and the dead of both armies were burnt. Then the Greeks and Trojans both feasted through the night. But all through the hours of darkness the terrible thunder rolled on Mount Olympus; for mighty Zeus was counselling evil against the hapless Trojans.

When the morning came, the two hosts again went forth to battle with each other. Till midday neither side prevailed; but then great Jupiter sent fear and panic amidst the Grecian forces, and they fled to their ships in terror.

As the Greeks were flying in wild confusion, brave Hector driving in his chariot pursued them; and called to his horses, "Now Xanthus, Æthon, Lampus, and Podargus, speed ye well! Ye Flame of Fire, White Foot, and Brilliant, named! carry me fast, and well repay the tender care of my sweet wife Andromaché, who often from her fair white hands has fed thee! For I would win old Nestor's marvellous shield of purest gold, and strip from off proud Diomed his boasted breastplate, wrought by the mighty Vulcan."

But Jupiter willed not that this should be; for King Agamemnon prayed aloud to Zeus for succor, and Jupiter heard his prayer, in token whereof he sent a sign, namely: an eagle flew above the Grecian hosts and dropped a kid out of his claws. Then did the Greeks take courage and renewed the fight with vigor. But the darkness came, and each host rested on their arms.

Meanwhile, King Agamemnon called a council of war, and

fain would have returned to Greece and leave this invincible city of Troy. But brave King Diomed would not receive such craven counsel, and angrily exclaimed, —

"Even though all the men of Greece depart, yet will I and Sthenelus abide the doom of Troy, for surely the gods have brought us hither."

To these brave words the Grecian chiefs agreed; and wise Nestor counselled that King Agamemnon should send to brave Achilles and seek to make peace with him that they might have the strong help of his mighty arm. To which King Agamemnon consented, and sent messengers to the tent of Achilles to seek his favor, promising him seven kettles of brass, ten talents of gold, twenty caldrons, twelve fleet horses, seven women slaves skilled in the work of the loom, and, more than all, the return of the maid Briseïs, the cause of all their quarrel; and when Troy should be taken, much spoil besides. And even more; for when they should return to Greece, King Agamemnon promised him one of his own daughters for his wife, and seven cities by the sea. But all this moved not the wrathful soul of stern Achilles, and he would not be appeased; nor would he come to help the Greeks against the Trojans, but still sat silent in his tent. Then it was decided that Diomed and Ulysses should go that night disguised into the Trojan camp, to spy out, if possible, their strength and plans. This same strategy had Hector also planned, and had already sent one Dolon, swift of foot, towards the Grecian host. But as he ran he met Diomed and Ulysses, who seized him, and under

threatenings forced him to reveal the Trojan secrets. Then did they slay Dolon, and forthwith proceeded to where some men of Thrace, allies of the Trojans, lay sleeping. These Thracians possessed most matchless steeds – horses so fair and tall, whiter than snow and fleeter than the winds. Diomed and Ulysses would fain secure these as a rich prize, and so they slew the sleeping Thracians and led the captured horses back to the Grecian hosts, and arrived in safety at the ships. The next day the battle waged hot again. Ulysses was wounded, and Paris shot an arrow and pierced the brave physician Machaon. Meanwhile, Achilles was standing on his ship and looking upon the conflict. When he beheld Nestor bearing the wounded Machaon to the ships, he called to his friend Patroclus and bid him see if Machaon's wound was fatal.

Most fierce the battle raged. On the left, the Grecians prevailed, but on the right brave Hector and his host fought even to the very ships, dealing most deadly blows. So great were the shouts of battle that old Nestor, who was tending the wounded Machaon, was roused; and going forth he met King Agamemnon, and with him Diomed and Ulysses, who had been wounded that day. Then they counselled together. Again Agamemnon advised flight; but the others thought it not good to flee thus, and they counselled King Agamemnon that he should go to the Grecian ranks, bidding them bear themselves bravely and put courage into their hearts. This did he do, and roused their waning strength to fresh exploits. Then Ajax smote brave Hector with a mighty

stone, which felled him to the ground; and the Greeks, with a great cry, rushed forth to bear him to their ranks; but the Trojans held their shields before him, and his friends lifted him up and carried him to a place of safety. But he was sorely bruised. Then Apollo, at Jupiter's bidding, poured courage into his heart and healed him of his wound, so that he rushed once more upon the field of battle, strong and well and valiant as ever. Then were the Greeks struck with dire dismay. Then did Patroclus lament to Achilles on account of the ill fortune of the Greeks, and besought the mighty warrior, if he would not fight himself in their behalf, to let him go accompanied by the valiant Myrmidons, whom Achilles always led to battle. At which the heart of Achilles was moved; and he said, —

"I will not go to battle until it reaches my own ships, but thou mayest put my armor upon thee and lead my Myrmidons to the fight."

So this was done; and when the Trojans beheld these famous Myrmidons led by one who wore the armor of the mighty Achilles, their hearts were faint with fear, for they supposed great Achilles himself had come against them. Thrice did Patroclus rush against the men of Troy, and each time slew nine chiefs of fame; but the fourth time Apollo stood behind him and struck him, and his eyes were darkened, and the helmet fell off his head, so that the waving plumes were soiled with dust. Never before had this proud helmet of Achilles touched the ground. Then Apollo broke his spear, and struck the shield from his arms,

and loosed his corselet. Then all-amazed, poor Patroclus stood defenceless; so Hector struck him dead, and seized the matchless armor of the mighty Achilles.

Fierce was the fight about the body of Patroclus, and many chiefs fell dead striving to obtain the prize. Then fled Antilochus to bear the ill tidings to the great Achilles, who, upon hearing of this dire defeat, poured dust upon his head, and called upon his goddess-mother to come to his aid.

"Why weepest thou, my son?" said the sea-goddess Thetis, rising from the waves.

"My friend Patroclus is dead, and Hector has my arms I gave him to wear, and, as for me, I care not to live unless I can avenge myself."

Thus Thetis said, —

"Be comforted, my son; to-morrow I will go to mighty Vulcan; he shall forge new arms for thee."

Even as they spoke together, so sore the Trojans pressed the Greeks, that Jupiter sent Iris to Achilles, and bade him show himself to the Greeks that they might be filled with courage.

"How can I go without arms?" replied Achilles.

But the gods gave him courage, and he went, and Athené put her matchless shield upon his shoulders, and wrapped a golden halo round his head, so that he seemed clothed in godlike armor; and he shouted to the Trojans with a mighty voice, which so filled them with fear that they fell back, and the horses of the Trojan chariots were so terrified at the flaming fire above his head that

they thrice fell back, and trampled on the Trojans, as thrice the awful voice of Achilles was heard and his shining form revealed. Thus was the body of Patroclus then secured, and carried on a bier, Achilles walking, weeping by his side.

That night the conflict rested. Meanwhile, Thetis the goddess went to the dread Vulcan, and prayed him make new armor for her son Achilles. To this did stern Hephæstus consent, saying, "Be of good cheer! I will obey thy wish; for kind thou wast to me when my mother thrust me forth from heaven because she saw I was deformed and lame. I will make such arms for Achilles as the gods themselves might proudly wear."

So great Vulcan wrought at his mighty forge. First he made a ponderous shield, and wrought upon it the earth, and sky, and sea, and sun, and moon, and stars. He pictured upon it, also, two cities; one at peace, and one in dire confusion where war raged. In the peaceful city, they led a bride to her home with music and dancing, and women stood to see the show, and in the market-place judges sat, and men bartered. But around the other city, an army was besieging, and soldiers stood upon the walls, defending. Also, he wrought fields where men ploughed, and others reaped, and vineyards where youths and maidens gathered baskets of grapes while minstrels played on harps of gold. Also, he wrought herds of oxen going to the pasture, and sheepfolds, and a dance of youths and maidens who wore coronets of gold and belts of silver. Then, too, he pictured a fierce fight between lions and angry bulls. Around the shield he wrought the mighty ocean. He

made also a corselet, brighter than fire, and a helmet of gold. At dawn the goddess Thetis brought to her son this marvellous armor, which when Achilles saw, his eyes flashed wild with joy; and seizing them, he put them on most eagerly, and rushed forth to rouse the Greeks to battle. Then an assembly was called, and Achilles stood up in the midst, saying, he had put away his wrath, and King Agamemnon, who had been wounded in the battle, declared that he had been wrong, and straightway commanded to be sent to the tent of Achilles all that he had promised him, including the maid Briseïs, which was done. The Greeks gathered again to battle. Then did the fight wage sore against the Trojans, who fled within the city gates; only brave Hector remained outside to meet the mighty Achilles, who rushed towards him to engage in single combat. Then did King Priam and Queen Hecuba beseech their much-loved son that he would come within the city walls, and not risk his life by thus meeting this dread foe; but Hector answered, —

"Woe is me if I go within the walls!"

But as Achilles came near, brandishing his great Pelian spear, while the flash of his arms was as a flame of fire, Hector trembled, and dared not abide to meet him, but fled around the walls, Achilles pursuing. Thrice they ran round the city, while the immortal gods looked down upon them from dread Olympus, and Jupiter said: "My heart is grieved for Hector. Come, ye gods! shall we save him?"

But Minerva – she who was called the goddess of wisdom, for

she sprang forth from the mighty head of Jove completely armed – thus counselled, —

"Great Sire, is it well to rescue a man already doomed to die? If it be thy august will, then do it; but the other gods approve not."

To whom Zeus answered, —

"My heart is loath, but be it as thou wilt."

Then did the goddess descend down from high Olympus in hot haste, and Athené lighted from the air at Achilles' side, and whispered: "This is our day of glory, great Achilles! Hector shall be slain; but tarry a moment, that I may give him heart to meet thee in battle; so shalt thou slay him."

Then Minerva took the form of Deïphobus, and came near to Hector, saying, "Achilles presseth thee hard, my brother; let us stay and fight him."

Then was brave Hector glad to find one of his brothers faithful to him, and answered, —

"I always loved thee best of all my brothers, good Deïphobus, and much more now to know thou darest to stand by my side in this hour of deadly peril."

Thus was Hector encouraged to meet Achilles, and Hector said to him: "Thrice, great Achilles, hast thou pursued me round the walls of Troy, and I dared not withstand thee; but now I will meet thee like a warrior. If Jupiter gives me the victory, I will do no dishonor to thy body; only thine armor will I take. Do thou the same to me."

But Achilles frowned, and answered, —

"I make no covenants with thee. There is no agreement between wolves and sheep. Show thyself a warrior if thou canst. Athené shall kill thee by my spear."

Then did they meet in deadliest conflict. Achilles threw his mighty spear; but Hector, crouching, avoided it, and the great spear fixed itself in the ground beyond. But, unseen by Hector, Athené brought it back to proud Achilles. Whereupon, Hector cried, "Thou hast missed thy aim, great Achilles. Look out for my spear!"

And as he spake, he threw his long-shafted spear with so good an aim, that it struck the very middle of Achilles' shield; but it pierced it not, and it bounded far away. And when Hector turned to his supposed brother, Deïphobus, to get from him another spear, lo! he was gone; and Hector knew then that his doom had come. Then thought he to himself: "Though Athené has cheated me, and Jupiter and Apollo are against me, if I must die, I will die in such manner as shall do honor to my name." Then he drew his mighty sword, and rushed upon Achilles. But at that same instant Achilles charged to meet him, and holding his shining shield before him, with his helmet plumes waving in the air, he raised his long-pointed spear, which gleamed like a star, and drove it through the neck of the brave Hector, so that the point stood out behind; and Hector fell dying in the dust. Then with his last breath, he besought Achilles to spare his body from the Greeks; for King Priam would ransom it with much gold and treasure, to give it burial rites. But Achilles, moved with fierce

wrath, cried, —

"Dog, seek not to entreat me! No gold could ransom thee."

Then Hector died, and Achilles drew out the spear from the corpse, and stripped off the arms. Then great Achilles did a shocking deed; for he bound the body of the dead Hector to his chariot, letting the brave and noble head lie in the dust; and so he dragged the corpse of the valiant Trojan round the walls of Troy, even to the Grecian ships. And sorrowing Priam saw him from the walls; and fair Andromaché, the wife of Hector, also beheld this dreadful spectacle, and thereupon fell in a deadly swoon; and from her beautiful head dropped the golden wreath and diadem, which Aphrodité gave her on her bridal day.

Then did old King Priam gather rich gifts, and aided by the gods, mount his swift chariot and go to the tent of great Achilles, to beg the body of his much loved son, brave Hector, praying to Jupiter that Achilles might have pity on him. This did Jove grant; for Achilles received him kindly, and gave up the body of dead Hector, which King Priam carried back into the city of Troy. For nine days the people wailed and mourned, and gathered much wood for a funeral pile, upon which they laid brave Hector; and when his body was burnt to ashes, they gathered up the white bones and put them in a chest of gold, and covered it with purple. This chest they placed in a coffin and laid upon it many stones, even until they had raised a mighty mound above it. Thus did they bury the valiant Hector, bravest of Trojan princes.

Such is a brief outline of the story of the famous Trojan War,

as told by the illustrious Homer in his matchless poem of the "Iliad." Now we return to the few further facts regarding King Agamemnon which can be culled from history.

There are two different accounts of the final overthrow and capture of Troy. According to one of these, Antenor and Æneas treacherously betrayed the Palladium to the Greeks, and at the same time threw open the gates of the city at night. The other account relates that the capture was effected by the stratagem of the wooden horse, which was planned by the cunning of Ulysses. A huge, hollow structure resembling a horse, was filled with armed men, and left standing in the plain, while the Greeks went on board their ships and sailed to the island of Tenedos, which lay not far distant. By an artful manœuvre, the Trojans were made to believe that this horse was an offering to Minerva, and that they would achieve a great triumph by carrying it into the city. Accordingly they made a breach in the wall, and transported the horse within. In the dead of night the Greeks broke out of their concealment, and set the city on fire. The fleet, on a signal given, sailed back from Tenedos; the army landed. Troy was taken and destroyed.

This event is usually placed about 1184 B.C. In the division of the spoils, after the taking of Troy, Cassandra, one of the daughters of King Priam, fell to the lot of Agamemnon. She was endued with the gift of prophecy, and warned Agamemnon not to return to Mycenæ. This warning, however, was disregarded by the king, who, upon his return from Troy, was carried by a

storm to that part of the coast of Argolis where Ægisthus, the son of Thyestes, resided. This king, Ægisthus, had entered into a wicked agreement with Clytemnestra, wife of Agamemnon, to put that monarch to death upon his return from Troy, so that Ægisthus could seize the throne of Mycenæ, and marry Queen Clytemnestra. There are two accounts of the death of Agamemnon. One states that Ægisthus had set a watchman, with a promise of a large reward, to give him the earliest tidings of the return of the king. As soon as he learned that Agamemnon's fleet was on the coast, he went out to welcome him, and invited him to his mansion. At the banquet in the evening, with the consent of Clytemnestra, he placed twenty armed men in concealment, who fell on King Agamemnon and killed him, together with Cassandra and all their attendants. Another account makes Agamemnon to have fallen by the hands of his wife Clytemnestra, after he had just come forth from a bath, and while he was endeavoring to put on a garment, the sleeves of which she had previously sewed together, as well as the opening for his head; thus giving her time to commit the bloody deed before any succor could reach him. His death, however, was avenged by his son Orestes.

With regard to the extent of Agamemnon's sway, Homer states that he ruled over many islands, and over all Argos; meaning not the city Argos, over which Diomed ruled, but a large portion of the Peloponnesus, including particularly the cities of Mycenæ and Tiryns. Homer also says that Agamemnon possessed the

most powerful fleet; and as he was chosen the sovereign of all the Grecian kings, and commander-in-chief of all the Grecian hosts during the Trojan War, he may doubtless be called the greatest and most famous of all the more ancient Grecian rulers.

# CYRUS THE GREAT
# 599-529 B.C

"Death makes no conquest of this conqueror;
For now he lives in fame, though not in life."

*Shakespeare.*

IN a lonely and desolate country, in the depths of a dark forest, at the edge of a yawning precipice, there once lay an infant, robed in costly garments, which betokened noble or royal birth. The baby lay in a small basket cradle, made of golden wires and lined with richly embroidered cushions. It seemed to be slumbering, for it moved not, even when the afternoon shadows gathered more densely around it; and a rapacious bird of prey might have been seen hovering above its dangerous retreat, and the noise of wild beasts was heard in the dark forests around. Was there no one near to protect and care for this lovely child? Ah, see! as that vulture swoops down towards its helpless victim, a lonely watcher rushes forth from the forest, and drawing his bow, an arrow flies into the heart of the bird, which falls dead into the awful chasm below. But why does not the babe awake? and why is it left in this desolate spot? Just then a lion steals out of the brushwood, and after a stealthy glance at the tempting prey so near his reach, he prepares to spring. But again the watcher leaps

forth from the shadow, and hurls a sharp javelin with so true an aim that the lordly beast is mortally wounded, and retreats to the forest, roaring with pain. And still the infant sleeps on.

Just outside of the dreary forest is a poor herdsman's hut. Here, too, might have been found an infant; but it is crowing and smiling as it raises its chubby fists to its mouth and tries to catch the sunshine, which streams in through the open door, and falls upon the wall over its head. This baby is clothed in the coarse garments of a peasant's child. And yet the infant in the costly robes, in the wild forest, is really the dead child of a poor herdsman; and this crowing, laughing baby, dressed in peasant clothes, and lying in the lowly hut, is none other than the future Cyrus the Great, upon whom hang the destinies of a vast empire. The remarkable story regarding the birth and early boyhood of Cyrus the Great is recounted by Herodotus, one of the greatest and earliest of Grecian historians. Herodotus and Xenophon – a noted Grecian general, as well as historian – are the chief sources of information regarding most of the important historical events of that period of the world. Some parts of their accounts are thought to be historical romances, founded on facts; but as they have become a part of the history of those times, I shall gather the story of Cyrus from the events related by both these writers.

About 599 B.C. there were three kingdoms in the centre of Asia: Assyria, Media, and Persia. Astyages was king of Media. One night Astyages awoke from a terrible dream: he had dreamed that a fearful inundation had overwhelmed his

kingdom. As the deluge seemed in some mysterious manner to be connected in his mind with his only daughter, Mandane, he imagined that it portended that evil should come to his throne through her children. And so he arranged that she should marry Cambyses, ruling prince of Persia. In this manner he hoped to remove her so far distant, and place her in so weak a kingdom, that he need have no fears.

A year after his daughter's marriage to the king of Persia, Astyages had another dream, – of a great vine which overspread his kingdom. This vine also appeared to be associated in his mind with his daughter. So he called the soothsayers, who declared that it portended the future power of his daughter's son, who should become a king.

Astyages was now so alarmed that he determined to destroy the child. So, with seeming kindness, he invited his daughter Mandane to make him a visit. He placed her in a palace and surrounded her with his own spies and servants. As soon as the infant son was born, Astyages sent for an officer of his court, named Harpagus, whom he thought was unscrupulous enough to obey his evil commands. Astyages ordered Harpagus to go and request the attendants of Mandane to allow him to see the infant; and then, under pretence that his grandfather Astyages desired that the infant should be brought to him, Harpagus should take the child away, and in some manner cause it to be put to death.

Harpagus did not dare to refuse, and accordingly went to the palace in which Mandane was residing. Her attendants, not

suspecting his evil designs, arrayed the infant in its most beautiful robes, and delivered it into his care. Harpagus took the child home and consulted with his wife what he should do. He did not dare to disobey the king, and also, as Mandane was the daughter of the king, he feared to carry out the terrible deed himself.

In his perplexity he sent for one of his herdsmen, named Mitridates, living near wild and desolate forests. When Mitridates arrived, Harpagus gave the infant to him, commanding him to expose it in the forests for three days, and when the child was dead, to send him word.

The herdsman dared not refuse this wicked mission, and took the child home to his hut. His wife Spaco had at that time just lost an infant of the same age, and its dead body was still unburied. When she saw the beautiful babe of Mandane, she implored her husband to let her keep it in place of her dead child, who was accordingly arrayed in the costly robes of the young prince, while the royal baby was dressed in the coarse garments of the little dead peasant. The body of the dead infant was then placed in the royal cradle, or basket, in which the little prince had been carried from the palace; and after being exposed in the forest for three days, attended by watchers to keep away the wild beasts, the herdsman sent word to Harpagus that the infant was dead. Harpagus sent trusty messengers to see if the report was true; and when they saw the dead infant in the royal robes, they returned with the assurance that his orders had been complied with, and that they had seen the dead child. Harpagus gave orders to have

the body buried, and sent word to King Astyages that the infant was dead.

The truth about the young Cyrus was not discovered until ten years after, and came about in a very strange way. Cyrus had now grown to be a strong, bright boy of ten years of age, and was supposed to be the son of the peasant herdsman. Several of the sons of the Median nobles were accustomed to meet in the neighborhood where he lived, for their sports, and Cyrus was always their leader in all pursuits. The story goes that he was once chosen as their king in a boyish game; and one of the nobles' sons, being one of his subjects, and having disobeyed his commands, the boy king Cyrus punished him very severely. The father of the young noble complained to King Astyages of this ill treatment which his son had suffered at the hands of a peasant boy. Whereupon, the herdsman Mitridates and his supposed son were summoned to appear at court.

When the young Cyrus entered the presence of the king, Astyages was astonished at his manly bearing and his unusual beauty, and with an unaccountable feeling of interest in the supposed peasant boy, he inquired if the complaint of the noble was true. The little disguised prince looked up into the face of the dread monarch, in whose presence all his subjects trembled, and with perfect self-possession, replied, —

"My lord, what I have done I am able to justify. I did punish this boy, and I had a right to do so. I was king, and he was my subject, and he would not obey me. If you think that for this I

deserve punishment myself, here I am; I am ready to suffer for it."

Astyages was so surprised at this unlooked-for answer that he hastily commanded that Mitridates should be brought before him; and under threats of severe punishment, he demanded that he should tell him the truth about the lad; for he had grave doubts about his being the peasant's son. Mitridates, frightened by the stern manner of the king, confessed the truth, and related all the circumstances regarding the infant who had been committed to him by Harpagus.

Astyages had deeply regretted his evil intentions towards his grandson, which, as he supposed, had ended in his death, and gladly claimed Cyrus as his own. But with strange inconsistency, he was equally incensed against Harpagus, who had dared to disobey his commands, by not causing the infant to be put to death; and he determined to celebrate in a strange and most shocking manner his joy at the recovery of his grandson, and his anger at the disobedience of Harpagus. So with wicked craftiness he sent word to Harpagus that his grandson had been discovered, and commanded that Harpagus should send his son, a boy about thirteen years of age, up to the palace to be a companion for young Cyrus. Furthermore, he announced that he was about to celebrate his joy at the recovery of his grandson, by a grand festival, at which he invited Harpagus to be present.

Harpagus suspecting no evil, and rejoicing at the happy sequel of that deed which had occasioned him much disquiet, having

sent his son to the palace, according to the command of the king, related to his wife the strange events which had taken place. Neither of them were suspicious of any evil design in this seeming kindliness of Astyages, and thought it a fitting honor for their son, that he should be chosen as the companion of Prince Cyrus. Harpagus went to the festival, and was given a seat of honor at the table. Various dishes were set before the guests, and the attendants were especially attentive to see that Harpagus was most bountifully served. At the end of the feast, Astyages asked Harpagus how he had liked his fare. Harpagus expressed himself as being well pleased. The king then ordered the servants to bring in a basket, which they uncovered before Harpagus, and he beheld with horror the head, hands, and feet of his own son.

The story relates that Harpagus did not display his terrible despair by word or look; and when the wicked king asked him if he knew what he had been eating, he replied that he did, and whatever was the will of the king was pleasing to him. Such shocking cruelties reveal the wickedness of those despotic times.

Harpagus satisfied his revenge against the cruel Astyages, many years afterwards, in a manner which will be disclosed as this story continues. A king whose greed of power could condemn an own grandson to death would not scruple at other crimes. Astyages now again consulted the soothsayers as to his safety in recognizing Cyrus as his grandson and giving him his royal place at court. The Magi now replied, that as Cyrus had already been a king, even though it was only in a childish game,

still, as he had been called a king, the oracles had been fulfilled, and Astyages need fear no further danger to his kingdom. Astyages therefore sent Cyrus to his parents in Persia, who received their long-lost son with overwhelming delight; and the youthful Cyrus was no doubt astonished and rejoiced to find himself the son and grandson of powerful kings, rather than a simple peasant boy, the son of a poor herdsman.

Cyrus is described by the historians as being tall and handsome, and excelling in all youthful exploits.

Xenophon describes the life of young Cyrus in the court of his father Cambyses, king of Persia. The sons of all the nobles and officers of the court were educated together in the royal palace. They were not taught to read, as there were no books, but they had certain teachers who explained to them the principles of right and wrong, and described to them the various laws of the land, and the rules by which controversies should be settled. These were put to practical use in deciding the various cases which occurred among the boys themselves; and judges were chosen from their number who should discuss and decide these questions. Right decisions were rewarded, and wrong ones punished. Cyrus himself was once punished for a wrong decision. The case was this: —

A larger boy took away the coat of a smaller boy, whose coat was bigger than his own, and gave him his own smaller coat. The smaller boy appealed to Cyrus, who decided that each boy should keep the coat that fitted him. The teacher condemned his

decision in these words, —

"When you are called upon to consider a question of what fits best, then you should determine as you have done in this case; but when you are appointed to decide whose each coat is, and to adjudge it to the proper owner, then you are to consider what constitutes right possession, and whether he who takes a thing by force from one who is weaker than himself, should have it, or whether he who made it or purchased it, should be protected in his property. You have decided against law and in favor of violence and wrong."

The boys at this Persian court were taught many kinds of manly exercises. They were trained to wrestle and run, and were instructed in the use of all kinds of arms then known. Each one was furnished with a bow and arrows, a shield, a sword, or dagger, which was worn at the side in a scabbard, and two javelins, one of which they were to throw, and the other to keep in the hand for use in close combat with the wild beasts which they might encounter in their hunting expeditions. These excursions were often long and fatiguing, which they took by turns with the king in the neighboring forests.

They were subjected to long marches, to cold and hunger and storms, and sometimes dangerous conflicts. These experiences were considered necessary to fit them to become good soldiers in the future.

When Cyrus was about twelve years of age, he was invited by his grandfather Astyages to make him a visit in Media.

When Cyrus arrived in Media with his mother Mandane, he was surprised at the magnificence and pomp of the royal court; as the manners and habits of the Persians were very simple, and as he had been sent to Persia as soon as his royal rank had been discovered, he had not before had an opportunity of seeing the splendor of his grandfather's court.

In his first interview with Astyages, Cyrus displayed his great tact and natural courtesy. When he came into the presence of his grandfather, who wore a purple robe richly embroidered with gold and covered with precious stones, and bracelets upon his arms, and a long, flowing wig, while his face was painted and powdered, Cyrus exclaimed, —

"Why, mother, what a handsome man my grandfather is!"

Cyrus was dazzled by the great display around him, for in the Persian court, Cambyses his father, and all his nobles, were clothed with great simplicity. Mandane then said to Cyrus, —

"Which one do you think the handsomer man, your father or your grandfather?"

It was a very unwise question to ask a child, but Cyrus was equal to the emergency, and replied with great tact and politeness, —

"My father is the handsomest man in Persia, but my grandfather is the handsomest of all the Medes."

Astyages was much pleased with the aptness of this reply, and Cyrus became a great favorite with his grandfather, who lavished upon him costly garments, rich feasts, rare jewels, and

the attentions of a retinue of servants. But after the first novelty had passed away, Cyrus preferred his more simple raiment and plainer food.

At one time, Astyages invited Cyrus and his mother to one of his grand feasts in his palace, and ordered the rarest viands to be served for Cyrus in the most elegant and costly dishes. Instead of being flattered, Cyrus showed no particular pleasure or surprise, and when Astyages asked him if he did not delight in such rich and delicate food, and if the feast before him was not much finer than any he had seen in Persia, Cyrus replied, —

"We manage much better in Persia; it is very troublesome to eat a little of so many things."

"How do you manage in Persia?" asked Astyages.

"When we are hungry, we eat plain meat and bread, and so we get health and strength and have very little trouble," answered Cyrus.

Astyages then told Cyrus that he might continue his plain fare in Media, if he thought it was better for his health. Cyrus then asked his grandfather if he would give him all the costly dishes before him to do as he wished with them. To this Astyages consented, and Cyrus, calling up one of the attendants after another, presented to them as gifts the various elegant dishes with their contents. To one he said, "I give you this because you serve the king faithfully"; to another, "I make you this present because you are faithful to my mother"; and to another, "Because you have taught me to throw the javelin." Thus he went on until all the

gifts had been disposed of. Now the king had one servant, whom he honored above all others, who held the office of cup-bearer.

In those days this was an important trust, for those despotic monarchs possessed so many enemies that they were in constant danger of assassination or of being poisoned. The king's cup-bearer must superintend the food of his master, and taste all wines himself before offering them to the king.

Great dexterity and grace were necessary to perform the latter service acceptably, as the king's cup must not be placed to the lips of his cup-bearer, but a small portion must be poured into the palm of his hand, and lifted gracefully to his mouth.

Astyages' cup-bearer was a Sacian; he was an officer of high rank, tall and handsome, and magnificently dressed. In distributing his gifts, Cyrus had neglected this officer, and when Astyages asked him his reason, Cyrus replied that he did not like the Sacian. Astyages inquired the cause of this dislike, and remarked, "Have you not observed how gracefully and elegantly he pours out the wine for me, and then hands me the cup?"

Cyrus replied that he could pour out the wine and offer the cup as well as the Sacian, and requested his grandfather to allow him to try. To this the amused king consented, and Cyrus, taking a goblet of wine in his hand, retired from the room. He soon re-entered with the pompous and dignified bearing of the Sacian, and so mimicked his manner of gravity and self-importance as to occasion much mirth amongst the assembled guests.

Cyrus, having advanced to the king, presented him with

the cup, neglecting not even one single motion of the usual ceremony, except tasting the wine himself. Mandane and the king laughed heartily, and the would-be cup-bearer, becoming the child again, jumped into his grandfather's arms, exclaiming, "Now, Sacian, you are ruined; I shall get my grandfather to appoint me in your place. I can hand the wine as well as you, and without tasting it myself at all."

"But why did you not taste it?" asked his grandfather.

"Because the wine was poisoned," replied Cyrus.

"What makes you think it is poisoned?" inquired Astyages.

"Because," said Cyrus, "it was poisoned the other day when you made a feast for your friends on your birthday. It made you all crazy. The things that you do not allow us boys to do you did yourselves, for you were very rude and noisy; you all bawled together so that nobody could hear or understand what any other person said. Presently you went to singing in a very ridiculous manner, and when a singer ended his song, you applauded him, and declared that he had sung admirably, though nobody had paid attention. You went to telling stories too, each one of his own accord, without succeeding in making anybody listen to him. Finally, you got up and began to dance, but it was out of all rule and measure; you could not even stand erect and steadily. Then you all seemed to forget who and what you were; the guests paid no regard to you as their king, but treated you in a very familiar and disrespectful manner, and you treated them in the same way; so I thought that the wine that produced these effects must be

poisoned."

"But have not you ever seen such things before?" asked Astyages. "Does not your father ever drink wine until it makes him merry?"

"No," replied Cyrus, "indeed, he does not; he drinks only when he is thirsty, and then only enough for his thirst, and so he is not harmed." He then added in a contemptuous tone, "He has no Sacian cup-bearer, you may depend, about him."

"But why do you dislike this Sacian so much, my son?" asked Mandane.

"Why, every time that I want to come and see my grandfather," replied Cyrus, "he always stops me, and will not let me come in. I wish, grandfather, you would let me have the rule of him for just three days."

"What would you do?" asked Astyages.

"I would treat him as he treats me now," answered Cyrus. "I would stand at the door, as he does when I want to come in, and when he was coming for his dinner, I would stop him and say, 'You cannot come in now; he is busy.'" Cyrus repeated these words in the tones and with the grave manner of the Sacian.

"Then," continued Cyrus, "when he was coming to get his supper, I would say, 'You must not come in now; he is bathing, or he is going to sleep; you must come some other time, for he cannot be disturbed.' Thus I would torment him all the time, as he now torments me in keeping me from you when I want to see you."

When the time arrived for Mandane to return to Persia, Astyages was very desirous to have Cyrus remain with him; Mandane gave her consent if Cyrus should wish to do so. Astyages told Cyrus that if he would stay, the Sacian should torment him no more, but that he should be allowed to come into his presence whenever he wished to do so, and, moreover, he should have the use of all his grandfather's horses. He should also have boys of his own age for companions, and they would be allowed to hunt the animals in the park. They could pursue them on horseback and shoot them with bows and arrows, or throw the javelins at their prey. This pleasure of riding and hunting was a rare one to Cyrus, for the Persians had few horses, and there were no bodies of cavalry in their armies. Cyrus represented to his mother the great advantage it would be to him to be a skilful horseman, as that would give him a superiority over all the Persian youths. Mandane was somewhat anxious lest the luxurious habits and haughty manners of his grandfather should prove a bad example for Cyrus, but he assured her that she need have no fears, as his grandfather required all to be submissive to himself, and allowed imperiousness in no one but the king. So it was decided that Cyrus should remain in Media, and Mandane departed for Persia.

Cyrus now applied himself with great diligence to acquire all the various accomplishments and arts then most highly prized, such as leaping, vaulting, racing, riding, throwing the javelin, and drawing the bow. In the friendly contests among the boys,

Cyrus would courteously challenge those superior to himself in these exercises, thus giving them the pleasure of winning the prize, and benefiting himself by thus having the greater stimulus of contesting with attainments higher than his own. He accordingly made rapid progress, and speedily learned to equal and then surpass his companions without occasioning any envy or jealousy.

It was their favorite amusement to hunt the deer in his grandfather's park; but at last, so vigorous had been their onslaught, that the animals were wellnigh exhausted, and Astyages went to great trouble to secure further supplies. Cyrus then requested that they be allowed to hunt in the forests, and hunt the wild beasts with the men. As Cyrus had now grown up into a tall, robust young man, able to sustain the fatigues of the hunt, his grandfather consented that Cyrus should go out with his son Cyaxares. The party set out in high spirits. There were certain attendants appointed to keep particular guard over Cyrus, and prevent him from rushing rashly into danger. His attendants told him that the dangerous animals were bears, lions, tigers, boars, and leopards; and as they often attacked man, he must avoid them; but that he could hunt the stags, goats, and wild sheep as much as he pleased. They also told him of the dangers in riding over a rough country where the broken ground and steep, rocky precipices made riding difficult, and hunters driving impetuously over such a country were often thrown from their horses, or fell with them into the chasms and were killed. Cyrus promised to

remember their warning; but no sooner had he entered into the excitement of the chase than he forgot all their counsels, and riding furiously after a stag, his horse came to a chasm which he was obliged to leap. But the distance was too great, and the horse fell upon his knees as he reached the farther side, and for a moment before he recovered his footing Cyrus was in imminent danger of being precipitated to the bottom of the deep precipice. But Cyrus was fearless; and as soon as his horse had regained his feet and cleared the chasm, he pressed on after the stag, overtook him, and killed him with his javelin. As soon as his frightened attendants came up to him, they reproved him for his reckless daring, and they threatened to report to his grandfather. Just at the instant he heard a new halloo, as fresh game had been started, and forgetting all his resolutions, Cyrus sprang upon his horse with a loud shout and followed the chase. The game now started was a dangerous wild boar, and Cyrus instead of shunning the peril, as he should have done in obedience to his grandfather's orders, dashed after the boar, and aimed so true a thrust with his javelin against the beast as to transfix him in the forehead. The boar fell dying upon the ground, and Cyrus waited for the party to arrive, with pride and triumph. When his uncle Cyaxares came near, he reproved Cyrus for running such risks, and said that if his grandfather knew what he had done, he would punish him. "Let him punish me," said Cyrus, "if he wishes after I have shown him the stag and the hoar, and you may punish me too if you will only let me show him the animals I have killed."

Cyaxares consented, and ordered the bodies of the beasts and the bloody javelins to be carried home. Cyrus presented them to his grandfather, who thanked him for the presents, but said he had no such need of game as to require his grandson to thus expose himself to danger. "Well, grandfather," said Cyrus, "if you don't wish the meat yourself, will you let me give it to my friends." Astyages agreed to this, and Cyrus divided his booty amongst all his young companions who had hunted with him in the park. The boys took their several portions home, giving glowing accounts of the skilful exploits of the giver. Thus was Cyrus thus early ambitious of spreading his own fame.

When Cyrus was about sixteen years of age he went with his uncle Cyaxares on an excursion for plunder into some neighboring provinces. Neither the kings of those times nor their historians seem to have considered such expeditions as unjust or wrong, but rather as a more noble enterprise than even their favorite hunting. In this expedition Cyrus so distinguished himself by his exploits, that his father, hearing the reports thereof, concluded that if his son was beginning to take part as a soldier in military campaigns, it was time to recall him to his own country. He therefore sent for Cyrus to return home.

There was great sadness in the Median court when Cyrus departed, for he had become a special favorite with king and people.

The succeeding events of Cyrus' life take us more out of the field of romance and are more strictly confined to the facts of

history. Cyrus on his return to Persia grew rapidly in strength and stature, and soon became distinguished for his manly beauty, his personal grace, and winning manners, as well as excelling all others in the martial accomplishments he had acquired in Media. He gained great ascendancy over the minds of others, and as he advanced to manhood his thoughts turned from athletic sports and hunting to plans of war and ambitions for more extended dominions.

Meanwhile, Harpagus, who had always meditated revenge upon Astyages for the horrible death of his son, though at the time he had been too wary to express resentment, was constantly watching every opportunity to work evil against the king. Fifteen years had now passed since the terrible deed was committed. He remained all this time in the court of Astyages, where he outwardly demeaned himself as the friend and zealous subject of the king, but meanwhile he plotted revenge.

He kept up a constant communication with Cyrus, and at last went so far as to try to induce him to collect an army and march into Media against Astyages. The plausible motives which he suggested made it appear to Cyrus as though he would only be endeavoring to free his own Persia from ignoble bondage, as Persia was a Median dependency. Meanwhile, Harpagus sympathized with all the disaffected Medians, whose numbers rapidly increased, as the tyranny of Astyages made numerous enemies.

At length the time came when Harpagus thought the right

moment had arrived for a revolt. Cyrus had now determined to attempt the enterprise. Astyages had been guilty of some unusual acts of oppression, by which he had produced great dissatisfaction among his people. Harpagus found the principal men around him willing to enter into the conspiracy, so he desired that Cyrus should come into Media with as large a force as he could raise, and head the insurrection against the government of Astyages.

Harpagus did not dare to trust this message to any messenger, and so he took this novel way of communicating with Cyrus. He wrote a letter to Cyrus, and then taking a dead hare he opened the body and concealed the letter within, and then neatly sewed up the skin again so that no signs remained of the incision. He then delivered the hare to some trusty servants, who should also carry hunting weapons, as though about to go upon some hunting expedition. He also commanded that they should give the hare to Cyrus himself, and that he should open it alone. The plan was successful; the hare reached the hands of Cyrus in safety, and opening it, he read a letter which was in substance as follows: —

"It is plain, Cyrus, that you are a favorite of Heaven, and that you are destined to a great and glorious career. You could not otherwise have escaped, in so miraculous a manner, the snares set for you in your infancy. Astyages meditated your death, and he took such measures to effect it as would seem to have made your destruction sure. You were saved by the special interposition of Heaven. You are aware by what extraordinary incidents you were

preserved and discovered, and what great and unusual prosperity has since attended you. You know, too, what cruel punishments Astyages inflicted upon me for my humanity in saving you. The time has now come for retribution. From this time the authority and the dominions of Astyages may be yours. Persuade the Persians to revolt. Put yourself at the head of an army and march into Media. I shall probably myself be appointed to command the army sent out to oppose you. If so, we will join our forces when we meet, and I will enter your service. I have conferred with the leading nobles in Media, and they are all ready to espouse your cause. You may rely upon finding everything thus prepared for you here. Come, therefore, without delay."

Cyrus determined to comply with the proposal of Harpagus. He therefore resorted to deceit, or, as he called it, stratagem. Thus war upholds and justifies falsehood and treachery under the name of stratagem. Cyrus had a letter prepared in the form of a commission from Astyages, appointing him commander of a body of Persian forces to be raised in the service of the king. He then read this false letter at a public assembly, and called upon all the Persian warriors to join him.

Cyrus did not at first make known to them his designs, but commanded them all to assemble on a certain day at a place named, and each one was to provide himself with an axe. When they were thus mustered, he marched them into the forest, and employed them all day in felling trees. He gave them, moreover, only the coarsest food. When the day was over, he ordered them

all to assemble again on the morrow. When they came the next day, instead of hard work and poor food, most sumptuous feasts had been provided for them, and they spent the day in merriment and revelry.

In the evening Cyrus called them all together and revealed to them his plans, and said to them that if they would follow him, they should live in ease and plenty; otherwise, if they should continue as they were, they would spend their lives in toil and privation; and he reminded them of the two days just spent, and asked them which they preferred to live. The soldiers received his proposals with joy, and eagerly promised to follow him into Media. When everything was ready, Cyrus led his army into Media. In the meantime Astyages, hearing of his insurrection, had collected a large force, and as had been anticipated, placed it under the command of Harpagus. When the battle was joined, the honest part of the Median army fought valiantly at first; but discovering that they were being deserted by their comrades, they fled in confusion. Cyrus, thus reinforced by the deserting Medians with Harpagus at their head, now found himself the leader of a large force, and advanced toward the capital. When Astyages heard of the treachery of Harpagus and the desertion of his army, he was frenzied with rage. The long-dreaded prediction of his dream seemed about to be fulfilled, and the Magi who had assured him that he was safe, as Cyrus had been a king when a boy, had proved themselves false.

He directed them all to be seized and crucified. He then

ordered every man capable of bearing arms, into the ranks, and putting himself at the head of this large force, he marched against Cyrus. But he was defeated, and he himself was taken prisoner. Harpagus was present when he was taken, and he exulted in triumph over his downfall. Harpagus asked him what he thought now of the supper in which he had compelled a father to feed upon the flesh of his own child. Astyages asked Harpagus if he thought the success of Cyrus was owing to what he had done. Harpagus replied that it was, and revealed to him how he had schemed for his destruction, and the preparation he had made in aid of Cyrus, so that Astyages might see that his downfall had been effected by Harpagus himself, in terrible retribution for the shocking crime he had committed so many years before.

The result of this battle was the complete overthrow of the power and kingdom of Astyages, and the establishment of Cyrus on the throne of the united kingdoms of Media and Persia.

Cyrus treated his grandfather with kindness, though he kept him in a sort of imprisonment. The people rejoiced in his downfall, and were well pleased with the milder and more equitable government of Cyrus. Astyages met His death years after, in a strange manner. Cyrus sent for him to come into Persia, where he was then himself residing. The officer who had Astyages in charge, led him into a desolate wilderness, where he perished from hunger and exposure. Cyrus punished the officer for this crime, though it was supposed by some that it was done by the secret order of Cyrus, in retribution, perhaps, for the evil

intentions of Astyages toward himself in his infancy, which, if they had been obeyed, would have resulted in his own death from the same cause.

The character and nobleness of Cyrus, as evinced by numerous generous deeds throughout his life, would, however, seem to refute such a supposition. Harpagus continued in the service of Cyrus, and became one of his most celebrated generals.

Such is one of the stories of the accession of Cyrus to the thrones of Media and Persia. Another account gives a different version of it, and states that Astyages died while king of Media, and was succeeded by his son Cyaxares, brother to Cyrus' mother Mandane, or Mandana, as her name is given by some historians. The years of the reign of Cyrus are computed differently. Some make his reign thirty years, beginning from his first setting out from Persia at the head of an army to succor his uncle Cyaxares, who was in war with the Babylonians. Others make the duration of it to be but seven years, because they date only from the time when, by the death of Cambyses and Cyaxares, Cyrus became sole monarch of the entire empire of both Media and Persia. But as Cyrus seems to have been the leader in both the Median and Persian empires long before the death of these kings, he probably ruled them both in partnership with them; and notwithstanding Cyrus conquered and acquired Babylon by his own valor, he complacently allowed his uncle Cyaxares, whose forces had been engaged with his own, to hold the first rank. This Cyaxares is

called in the Bible Darius the Mede; and it was under his reign in Babylon, which only lasted two years, that Daniel the prophet had several revelations. But as our interest is more particularly in the life and conquests of Cyrus himself, rather than those of Cyaxares and Cambyses, and as the vast power and dominion of both Media and Persia seemed to have been owing to the valor and executive ability of Cyrus alone, our story will confine itself to the achievements of Cyrus the Great, without further mention of Cambyses or Cyaxares.

We now come to the history of Cyrus and Crœsus, and before we recount the conquest of the kingdom of Lydia, it will make it more interesting, perhaps, to give a slight sketch of Crœsus, king of Lydia, and also to mention the oracles which played such an important part in the history of this king. The country of Lydia, over which this famous king ruled, was in the western part of Asia Minor bordering on the Ægean Sea. Crœsus, king of Lydia, acquired the enormous riches for which he was so famous, from the golden sands of the river Pactolus, which flowed through his kingdom. The river brought down the gold particles from the mountains above, and the slaves of Crœsus washed the sands, thus separating the metal, which was obtained in such vast quantities that this king's name has become a proverb for fabulous wealth, in the old saying, "Rich as Crœsus."

The people of those days, however, had a very different story of the origin of the gold in the river Pactolus. Their legend was that ages before, a certain king named Midas had rendered some

service to a god, who thereupon promised to grant him any favor he should ask. Midas prayed that the power might be granted him of turning everything he touched into gold. This power was bestowed by the god, and after Midas had turned many objects into gold, he began to find his gift very inconvenient, and was in danger of starving to death in the midst of all his wealth. For no sooner had he touched any food than it straightway became gold. Midas was then as anxious to get rid of his dangerous gift as he had been to secure it.

He implored the god to take back the gift.

The god told him to go and bathe in the river Pactolus, and he should be restored to his former state.

Midas did so, and was saved, but in the operation a great portion of the sands of the river were transformed to gold.

Crœsus was at one time visited by a famous Grecian lawgiver, named Solon. Crœsus received Solon with great distinction, and showed him all his treasures.

One day the king asked Solon, who of all the persons he had ever met, he considered to be the happiest man.

Of course Crœsus imagined that the sage would name himself, the king, as the happiest mortal. But Solon gave him the name of Tellus, a quiet Athenian citizen.

Crœsus asked why he should place such a man before a monarch occupying such a throne as his own.

Solon replied, —

"You are now at the height of your power, but I cannot decide

whether you are a fortunate and happy man, until I know your end."

Crœsus had two sons. One was deaf and dumb, the other was a young man of much promise; but he was killed while hunting.

As soon as Cyrus had become established on his throne as king of the Medes and Persians, his power began to extend westward toward the empire of Crœsus, king of Lydia.

Crœsus was roused from the dejection into which he had been plunged by the death of his son, by the danger which now threatened his kingdom. In his uncertainty regarding the future, he determined to consult the oracles. The three most important of these oracles were situated, one at Delphi, one at Dodona, and the third at the Oasis of Jupiter Ammon.

Delphi was a small town built on the southern side of Mount Parnassus. This mount was a famous place. From a deep cavern in the rocks there issued a stream of gaseous vapor, which was said to inspire all persons inhaling it with a spirit of divination and poetry. A temple was built upon this mountain, in which a priestess resided, and she gave responses to all who came to consult the oracle. When she gave her answers, she sat upon a three-legged stool, which was afterwards called the sacred tripod. This oracle became so renowned that many monarchs came great distances to consult it; and they made very costly presents to the shrine. The deity who was supposed to dictate the predictions was Apollo. Crœsus sent messengers to all of the various oracles to ask what should be the result of his contest with

Cyrus. The replies were all unsatisfactory, except the Delphic oracle. Crœsus now decided that this was the oracle upon which he must rely, and immediately made preparations to send most magnificent and costly presents to the Delphic shrine. Some of the treasures were to be deposited in the temple, and some were to be offered as a burnt sacrifice to the god.

After the ceremonies were completed, everything that had been used in the services, including gold and silver vessels, richly embroidered garments, and numerous other costly articles, were gathered into one vast funeral pile and burnt. So much gold had been employed in making these things, that it melted in the fire and ran into plates of great size. These were then collected and formed into an image of a lion, which was placed in the temple. Crœsus also presented the temple with a silver cistern, or tank, large enough to hold three thousand gallons of wine. There was one strange piece of statuary which he sent to this shrine, which we must not omit to mention. It was a statue of gold of a woman-servant in the household of Crœsus. It was called The Breadmaker. Its origin was this: —

When Crœsus was a child, his mother died, and his father married again. His stepmother desired to have one of her children succeed to the throne instead of Crœsus. So she gave some poison to the woman who was accustomed to make the bread for the family, telling her to put it in the portion intended for Crœsus. This servant, however, instead of minding the wicked queen, revealed the plot to Crœsus, and put the poison in the bread of

the queen's own children. In gratitude for his preservation by this slave, Crœsus ordered a statue of gold to be made in her honor, when he came to the throne; and this he sent to the temple at Delphi. After Crœsus had presented all these magnificent gifts to the shrine, he consulted the oracle. The answer was as follows: —

"If Crœsus crosses the Halys and prosecutes a war with Persia, a mighty empire will be overthrown. It will be best for him to form an alliance with the most powerful states of Greece."

Crœsus was much pleased with this answer, and then asked furthermore, whether his power would ever decline.

The oracle replied, —

"Whenever a mule shall mount upon the Median throne, then, and not till then, shall great Crœsus fear to lose his own."

These replies strengthened the belief of Crœsus that he should be victorious; but as the sequel shows, we will learn how vague and indefinite were the answers of the oracles, and so given that they could correspond with the event, whatever might be the result.

Crœsus now sent ambassadors to Sparta to seek their aid, and meanwhile went on making great preparations for his campaign. When all things were ready, the army commenced its march eastward until it reached the river Halys.

The army encamped upon its banks until some plan could be formed for crossing the river. Crœsus had with his army a very celebrated engineer named Thales. This engineer succeeded in getting the army of Crœsus over the river by ordering a large

force of laborers to cut a new channel for the river behind the army, into which the water flowed, and Crœsus and his force passed on. Cyrus had heard of his approach, and soon the armies were face to face.

Cyrus had been conquering all the nations in his path, as he went forward to meet Crœsus, and thus had been reinforced by all of the neighboring people, except the Babylonians, who were allied with Crœsus against him. A great battle was fought at Pteria, which continued all day, and at its close the combatants separated without either of them having gained much advantage.

Crœsus thinking that this battle was enough for the present, and supposing that Cyrus would now go home, having found that he could not overcome him, determined to return to his own city Sardis, and there prepare for a more vigorous campaign in the spring.

Cyrus quietly remained in his position until Crœsus had time to return to Sardis. Whereupon, he followed with his entire army.

Crœsus was now thoroughly alarmed, and collecting all the forces he could command, he marched forth to a great plain just without the city, to meet Cyrus.

The Lydian army was superior to that of Cyrus in cavalry, and upon this plain they would have a much greater advantage. To avoid this, Cyrus ordered all his large train of camels, which had been employed as beasts of burden, to be drawn up in line in front of his army, each one having a soldier upon his back, armed with a spear.

It is said that horses cannot endure the sight or smell of a camel; and when the two armies met, the cavalry of Crœsus, riding furiously to the attack, were confronted by the line of huge, awkward camels, with their soldier riders. The horses were so frightened by the spectacle, that they turned and fled in dismay, trampling down their own forces, and causing complete confusion in the Lydian army. The army of Crœsus was totally defeated, and they fled into the city of Sardis and entrenched themselves there.

Cyrus now besieged the city for fourteen days, endeavoring to find some place to scale the walls which surrounded it. One part of the wall passed over rocky precipices which were considered impassable. At length one of the soldiers of Cyrus, named Hyræades, observed one of the sentinels, who was stationed on the wall overlooking the precipice, leave his post, and come partway down the rocks to get his helmet, which had dropped down. Hyræades reported this incident to Cyrus, and so an attempt was made to scale the walls at that point. It was successful, and thus the city was taken. It is reported that in the confusion and noise of storming the city the life of Crœsus was saved by the miraculous speaking of his deaf-and-dumb son. Cyrus had commanded his soldiers not to kill Crœsus, but that they should take him alive, and he should then be brought to him. As Crœsus was escaping with his son a party of Persian soldiers took him prisoner, and were about to kill him, not knowing who he was, when the dumb boy cried out, —

"It is Crœsus; do not kill him!"

Cyrus had not ordered Crœsus to be spared from any motives of kindness; but that he himself might determine his fate.

He commanded Crœsus to be put in chains, and a huge funeral pile to be built in a public square, and Crœsus and fourteen of the young Lydian nobles were placed upon the pile.

Just as the torch was applied, Crœsus cried out in a tone of anguish and despair, —

"Oh, Solon! Solon! Solon!"

The officers who had charge of the execution asked him what he meant, and Cyrus, also hearing him, and being desirous of receiving an explanation of his mysterious words, commanded the fires to be put out, and ordered Crœsus to be unbound and to be brought to him. Cyrus now treated Crœsus with much kindness.

Crœsus was very much incensed against the oracle at Delphi for having deceived him by false predictions; but the priests of the oracle replied that the destruction of the Lydian dynasty had long been decreed by fate on account of the guilt of Gyges, the founder of the line, who had murdered the rightful monarch, and usurped the crown. The oracles had foretold that a mighty empire would be overthrown, and Crœsus had wrongly imagined that it referred to the destruction of the kingdom of Cyrus. As to the other prediction made by the oracle, that when he should find a mule upon the throne of Media, he would lose his own, this had been fulfilled, as Cyrus, who was descended from the Persians

on his father's side, and from the Medians on his mother's, had thus become a hybrid sovereign, represented by the mule.

In his advance towards the dominions of Crœsus in Asia Minor, Cyrus had passed to the northward of the great and celebrated city of Babylon. He had now conquered all the nations from the Ægean Sea to the river Euphrates. He then subdued Syria and Arabia. After this he entered into Assyria and advanced towards Babylon, the only large city of the East yet unsubdued.

The taking of Babylon is one of the greatest events in ancient history, and the principal circumstances with which it was attended were foretold in the Bible many years before it happened. Babylon, at this time, was the most magnificent city in the world. It was situated in a large plain, and was surrounded by walls which were eighty-seven feet thick, three hundred and fifty feet high, and sixty miles in circumference. These walls were in the form of a square, each side of which was fifteen miles long. They were built of large bricks cemented together with bitumen, which bound bricks so firmly together that the mortar soon became harder than the bricks themselves. This wall was surrounded by a deep, wide trench filled with water. The great wall of Babylon contained 200,000,000 yards of solid masonry, or nearly twice the cubic contents of the famous wall of China. Each of the bricks was stamped with the name of Nebuchadnezzar. The wall was so wide that four chariots could move abreast upon its summit. Two hundred and fifty towers,

each ten feet higher than the walls, rose above the parapet. One hundred gates of brass opened to as many streets. Each of the fifty streets was fifteen miles long, and one hundred and forty feet broad, crossing each other at right angles; these avenues divided the city into six hundred and seventy-six squares, each being two and a half miles in circuit. The buildings were erected around these squares with an open court in the centre, containing beautiful gardens and fountains. The river Euphrates flowed through the city, and was spanned by a bridge, five hundred feet long and thirty feet wide. Above the bridge rose an obelisk one hundred and twenty-five feet high. As the melting of the snows upon the mountains of Armenia caused the river Euphrates to overflow its banks in the months of June, July, and August, two artificial canals were cut, some distance above the city, which turned the course of these waters into the Tigris before they reached Babylon. To keep the river within its channel, they raised immense artificial banks on both sides, built with bricks cemented with bitumen. In making these works it was necessary to turn the course of the river another way. For this purpose a prodigious artificial lake was dug, forty miles square, one hundred and sixty in circumference, and thirty-five feet deep.

Into this lake the whole river was turned by an artificial canal, cut from the west side of it, until the entire work was finished, when the river was allowed to flow into its former channel. This lake was kept, however, as a reservoir, as a means of irrigating the surrounding fields.

Along the banks of the river were the famous Hanging Gardens, where the many terraces bloomed with brilliant flowers, and were shaded by groves of trees, and cooled by fountains of sparkling water. These beautiful gardens, which were considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World, were constructed by Nebuchadnezzar to please his wife Amytis, whose native land was Media, as she was the daughter of Astyages.

Surrounded by a triple wall, and guarded by gates of brass, rose the magnificent royal palace, whose walls were adorned by pictures of the chase, and martial and festive processions, and whose apartments were furnished with the rich carpets of Persia, the costly fabrics of Damascus, and the jewels of Bokhara.

Rising above all the other structures was the lofty Tower of Belus, or Babel. The tower was six hundred feet high, and was crowned with a statue of Belus, forty feet high, made of pure gold, which shone resplendent in the sunlight, or gleamed with matchless beauty in the soft moonlight. It is said that this tower far exceeded the greatest pyramid of Egypt in height. The ascent to the top was by stairs round the outside of it; and as the tower proper was composed of eight stories, each decreasing gradually in size, the entire tower formed a pyramid. In the different stories were many rooms, which were richly adorned with tables, censers, cups, and other sacred vessels of massive gold. Diodorus, one of the ancient historians, estimates the value of the riches contained in this temple to amount to $93,240,000. This temple stood in the time of Xerxes, but on his return from

his Grecian expedition, he entirely destroyed it, having plundered it of all its immense treasures. Alexander the Great purposed to rebuild it, and employed ten thousand men to remove the rubbish which had accumulated around it, but after they had labored two months, Alexander died, and that put an end to the undertaking.

Belshazzar gave a great feast in his palace to all his chief officers and nobles, even though Cyrus the Great was then besieging Babylon. It was during this impious feast, after Belshazzar had commanded that the sacred vessels, which had been taken from the Temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem, should be desecrated by being used by his drunken guests as wine-goblets, that the marvellous writing appeared upon his palace wall, and the words "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin" were traced in letters of fire by a mysterious hand. Belshazzar was aroused from his drunken carousal and filled with terror on account of the strange omen. None of his magicians could interpret its meaning. At last his mother, Queen Nitocris, remembered the old prophet Daniel, and his previous wonderful interpretations for Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel, being summoned, declared that it predicted the destruction of his kingdom, which should be divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Swiftly, indeed, did the dread catastrophe overtake the wicked king. Cyrus had caused great ditches to be dug on both sides of the city, above and below, so that the water of the river Euphrates might run into them. That very night he caused those great receptacles to be opened; and while Belshazzar and his

drunken army were carousing in mad revellings, the channel of the river was emptied, and the hostile forces marched into the dry channel in two bodies of troops; one entering above the city, and one below. A guide who had promised to open all the gates to Cyrus left open the gates of brass which were made to shut up the descents from the quays to the river.

Thus the army of Cyrus was enabled to penetrate into the very heart of the city without opposition. Arriving at the royal palace, they surprised the guards and killed them. Then rushing into the palace, and meeting the king, who had seized a sword, and stood in the midst of his frightened and helpless guests, the soldiers of Cyrus killed Belshazzar.

Cyrus, having entered the city, put all to the sword who were found in the streets. He then commanded the citizens to bring him all their arms, and afterwards to shut themselves up in their houses. Early the next morning, the garrison which kept the citadel, learning that the city had been taken, and their king killed, surrendered themselves to Cyrus. Thus did this prince, almost without striking a blow, find himself in possession of the strongest place in the world.

In the first year after Cyrus conquered Babylon, he published the famous edict permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem. Cyrus at the same time restored to the Jews all the vessels of the temple of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought from Jerusalem, and placed in the temple of his god Belus, or Baal.

After this conquest, Cyrus established his residence in the

midst of the countries within his vast dominions. He spent seven months of the year at Babylon in the winter season, because of the warmth of that climate; three months at Susa in the spring; and two months at Ecbatana, during the heat of summer.

There is an interesting story, told by Xenophon, of a princess, named Panthea, in connection with the expedition of Cyrus against the Assyrians. Among the prisoners of war taken by his army was a very beautiful princess, Panthea, the wife of Abradates, king of Susiana. Her husband was an Assyrian general, though he himself was not captured at this time with his wife. Cyrus committed this princess to the care of one of his young nobles, named Araspes. This nobleman fell in love with Panthea, and ventured to express to her his admiration for her. She was offended; and when Araspes continued his declarations of love, she complained to Cyrus. Cyrus severely reproved his officer for proving unworthy of the trust reposed in him. Araspes, mortified and repentant, was overwhelmed with fear and remorse. Cyrus, hearing of this, sent for Araspes, and instead of upbraiding him, sent him upon a trusty and difficult mission as a spy among the Assyrians. The loss of so brave an officer, who was supposed to have gone over to the enemy, greatly affected the army. Panthea, who imagined that she had been the cause of this loss to Cyrus, told him that she would supply the place of Araspes with an officer of equal merit. Accordingly, she sent for her husband Abradates. Upon his arrival, she told him of the kindness and consideration with which she had been treated by

Cyrus, the generous conqueror.

"And how," said Abradates, "shall I be able to acknowledge so important a service?"

"By behaving towards him as he has done towards me," replied Panthea.

Whereupon, Abradates immediately expressed his gratitude to Cyrus, and offered to espouse his cause as his faithful ally. Cyrus received him with a noble and courteous manner and accepted his offer. Abradates then fitted up for Cyrus one hundred chariots at his own expense, and provided horses to draw them, from his own troop. These armed chariots were a very expensive sort of force. The carriages were heavy and strong and were usually drawn by two horses. They had short, scythe-like blades of steel projecting from the axletrees on each side, by which the ranks of the enemy were mowed down when the chariots were driven among them. Each chariot could hold one or more warriors beside the driver of the horses. The warriors stood on the floor of the carriage, and fought with javelins and spears. Abradates made one chariot much larger than the rest for himself, as he intended to command this corps of chariots.

His wife Panthea took much interest in these preparations, and unknown to Abradates, she furnished from her own treasures a helmet, a corselet, and arm-pieces of gold for her husband. She also provided breast-pieces and side-pieces for the horses. When the day arrived for Abradates to go into battle with his chariot corps, Panthea presented her munificent gifts to him, which

were most royal. Besides the defences of gold, there were other articles for ornament. There was a purple robe, a violet crest for the helmet, waving plumes, and costly bracelets. Abradates was greatly astonished, and exclaimed with surprise and pleasure, —

"And so to provide me with this splendid armor and dress, you have been depriving yourself of all your finest and most beautiful ornaments!"

"No," lovingly replied Panthea; "you are yourself my finest ornament, if you appear in the eyes of others as you do in mine; and I have not deprived myself of you."

There were many spectators present to see Abradates mount in his gorgeous chariot and drive away; but the attention of the beholders was centred upon the exquisite beauty of Panthea, as she stood by the side of his chariot to bid adieu to her husband. This was their last parting.

As Panthea turned away from the royal train, her husband waved her a fond farewell.

On the field of battle Abradates displayed heroic courage. His chariot was observed by Cyrus, in the thickest of the fight, rushing fearlessly into the places of the greatest danger.

The victory was gained by Cyrus; but Abradates was killed in his chariot; and when Cyrus inquired about him, it was reported that Panthea was then attending to the interment of the body on the banks of a river which flowed near the field of battle.

Cyrus immediately went to the spot, where Panthea sat weeping over the remains of her beloved husband. Cyrus leaped

from his horse, and knelt beside the corpse, exclaiming, —

"Alas! thou brave and faithful soul, and art thou gone?"

Cyrus said what he could to console Panthea; but she was unconsolable. He gave directions that everything should be furnished for her comfort. Panthea thanked him for his kindness.

After Cyrus had left her, Panthea sent away all her servants but her waiting-maid, saying that she wished to be alone with the dead body of her husband. She then drew forth a small dagger, which she had kept concealed beneath her robe; and telling her maid to envelop her dead body in the same mantle with her husband, and to have them buried together in the same grave, she pierced her heart with the weapon before her affrighted servant could prevent the fatal wound. Abradates and Panthea were buried together in one grave, as the heart-broken wife had requested, over which Cyrus erected a lofty monument to their memory.

Cyrus, finding himself master of all the East by the taking of Babylon, did not imitate the example of most other conquerors, who sully the glory of their victories by their cruelties and wicked lives. Cyrus is justly considered one of the wisest conquerors and one of the most accomplished of the princes to be found in profane history. He was possessed of all the qualities necessary to make a great man. Cicero observes, that during the entire time of the rule of Cyrus he was never heard to speak one rough or angry word.

Cyrus, according to his belief, was very religious. He was,

to be sure, a pagan; but he reverenced sacred things, and as his deliverance of the Jews showed, he acknowledged the power of Jehovah, even though we have no account of his complete conversion from idolatry. But his devotion to what he held to be religion is an example for the worshippers of the one true God.

Cyrus, having established himself in the midst of his wide kingdom, with his chief residence at Babylon, resolved to appear before the people in an august religious ceremony, by marching in a grand cavalcade to the places consecrated to the gods, in order to offer sacrifices to them. He ordered the superior officers of the Persians and allies to attend him; and he presented each one with a suit of clothes of the Median fashion. These were long garments, of various colors, of the finest and brightest dyes, richly embroidered with gold and silver. One of the historians gives this description of this gorgeous pageant.

"When the time appointed for the ceremony was come, the whole company assembled at the king's palace by break of day. Four thousand of the guards, drawn up four deep, placed themselves in front of the palace, and two thousand on the two sides of it, ranged in the same order. All the cavalry were also drawn out, the Persians on the right, and that of the allies on the left. The chariots of war were ranged half on one side and half on the other. As soon as the palace gates were opened, a great number of bulls of exquisite beauty were led out, by four and four. These were to be sacrificed to Jupiter and other gods, according to the ceremonies prescribed by the Magi.

Next followed the horses that were to be sacrificed to the sun. Immediately after them a white chariot, crowned with flowers, the pole of which was gilt; this was to be offered to Jupiter. Then came a second chariot of the same color, and adorned in the same manner, to be offered to the sun. After these followed a third, the horses of which were caparisoned with scarlet housings. Behind came the men who carried the sacred fire in a large hearth.

"When all these were on the march, Cyrus himself made his appearance upon his car, with his upright tiara upon his head, encircled with the royal diadem. His under-tunic was of purple mixed with white, which was a color peculiar to kings; over his other garments he wore a large purple cloak. His hands were uncovered. A little below him sat the master of the horse, who was of a comely stature, but not so tall as Cyrus, for which reason the stature of the latter appeared still more advantageously.

"As soon as the people perceived the prince, they all fell prostrate before him and worshipped him; whether it was that certain persons appointed on purpose, and placed at proper distances, led others by their example, or that the people were moved to do it of their own accord, being struck by the appearance of so much pomp and magnificence, and with so many awful circumstances of majesty and splendor.

"The Persians had never prostrated themselves in this manner before Cyrus till on this occasion. When Cyrus' chariot was come out of the palace, the four thousand guards began to march; the other two thousand moved at the same time, and placed

themselves on each side of the chariot.

"The eunuchs, or great officers of the king's household, to the number of three hundred, richly clad, with javelins in their hands and mounted upon stately horses, marched immediately after the chariot. After them were led two hundred horses of the king's stable, each of them having embroidered furniture and bits of gold. Next came the Persian cavalry divided into four bodies, each consisting of ten thousand men; then the Median horse, and after those the cavalry of the allies. The chariots of war, four abreast, brought up the rear and closed the procession. When they came to the fields consecrated to the gods, they offered their sacrifices first to Jupiter and then to the sun. To the honor of the first, bulls were burnt, and to the honor of the second, horses. They likewise sacrificed some victims to the earth, according to the appointment of the Magi; then to the demigods, the patrons and protectors of Syria. In order to amuse the people after this grave and solemn ceremony, Cyrus thought fit that it should conclude with games and horse and chariot races.

"The place chosen for them was large and spacious. He ordered a certain portion of it to be marked out, and proposed prizes for the victors of each nation, which were to encounter separately and among themselves. He himself won the prize in the Persian horse-races, for nobody was so complete a horseman as he. The chariots ran but two at a time, one against another. Some days after, Cyrus, to celebrate the victory he had obtained in the horse-races, gave a great entertainment to all his chief

officers, as well strangers as Medes and Persians. They had never yet seen anything of the kind so sumptuous and magnificent. At the conclusion of the feast he made every one a noble present, so that they all went home with hearts overflowing with joy, admiration, and gratitude; and all-powerful as he was, master of all the East and so many kingdoms, he did not think it descending from his majesty to conduct the whole company to the door of his apartment.

"Such were the manners and behavior of those ancient times, when men understood how to unite great simplicity with the highest degree of human grandeur."

There are two accounts given of the death of Cyrus. Herodotus relates that Cyrus made war against the Scythians, and after having attacked them, made a feint of retreating, leaving a great quantity of provisions and wine behind him. The Scythians, supposing he had indeed departed, seized the booty and were soon thoroughly drunk from the effects of the wine. While they were still in a drunken slumber, they were surprised by Cyrus and completely routed. The son of Tomyris, queen of the Scythians, had commanded the vanquished army, and was taken prisoner. When he recovered from his drunken fit and found himself in captivity, with a disgrace hanging over his head which he could never hope to wipe out, he killed himself in despair. His mother, Queen Tomyris, determining to avenge the death of her son, collected a large force; and meeting the Persians in a second battle, they were defeated, and more than two hundred thousand

of their number were killed, together with their king, Cyrus. Tomyris was so enraged against Cyrus, that even his death did not suffice her vengeance; but it is said that she ordered his head to be cut off and flung into a vessel full of blood. This shocking account, however, is not given by Xenophon, who relates that when Cyrus perceived the time of his death to be near, he ordered his children and officers of state to be assembled about him. After thanking the gods for their favors to him, he declared his oldest son, Cambyses, to be his successor, and left the other, whose name was Tanaoxares, several important governments. Having taken his leave of them all, he addressed these words to his sons: —

"I could never imagine that the soul only lived while in a mortal body, and died when separated from it. But if I mistake, and nothing of me shall remain after death, at least fear the gods, who never die, who see all things, and whose power is infinite. Fear them, and let that fear prevent you from ever doing, or deliberating to do, anything contrary to religion and justice. For my body, my sons, when life has forsaken it, enclose it neither in gold or silver, nor any other matter whatever; restore it immediately to the earth. Adieu, my dear children; may your lives be happy. Carry my last remembrance to your mother. And for you, my faithful friends, receive this last farewell, and may you live in peace." Having said these words, he covered his face and died, sincerely lamented by all his people.

# ALEXANDER THE GREAT
# 356-323 B.C

*"Self-conquest is the greatest of victories." – Plato.*

ONE day a terrible event transpired in the ancient city of Ephesus. The magnificent temple of Diana, one of the famous Seven Wonders of the World, was in flames. The people from all parts of the country flocked to the scene of the imposing conflagration. This marvellous temple had been built at the expense of all Asia Minor. One hundred and twenty-seven kings had contributed one hundred and twenty-seven magnificent columns of Parian marble, which were sixty feet in height, and wrought by the most famous artists. Pliny says that two hundred and twenty years were occupied in rearing this vast structure. But now the flames mount higher and higher. All the efforts of the distracted people to subdue them are in vain. See! the rapacious tongues of fire are nearing the sacred image of the goddess, which the Ephesians believed had fallen from heaven. Why does not Diana, the great goddess, prevent the destruction of this, her most imposing and sacred shrine? The people call upon her in their wild despair; but still the flames devour with fury the magnificent structure, and the air is rent with the cries of the horror-stricken multitude. That very night, while the heavens

were still red with the lurid light of the burning temple, another event occurred upon the other side of the Ægean Sea, in the royal palace of the kingdom of Macedon. A tiny infant first opened its eyes upon this strange world; and above his royal cradle, king and nobles bent in gratified delight, and welcomed the little stranger with proud joy. But what had this helpless babe to do with the burning temple in Ephesus? This baby was the infant Alexander the Great; and so superstitious were the people of those times that in order to explain the strange fatality of a great goddess like Diana allowing her magnificent temple to be burned and destroyed without any miraculous intervention on her part, to punish such a sacrilegious desecration of her shrine by wicked mortals, the historians of those days declared that as Diana was at that time lending her aid and presence to insure the future greatness of the new-born infant Alexander, it was on account of her absence on so beneficent an errand, that her temple was not guarded from this impious destruction.

But what mortal had so dared to insult the gods, as to apply the torch to this most sacred shrine? At last it was discovered that a person named Herostratus had fired the temple; not by accident, but with wicked intent. Upon being put to the torture in order to force him to confess the motive for so infamous a crime, he declared that it was to immortalize his own name, that he might be known to all posterity as the destroyer of this famous structure. A decree was then published that all should be prohibited from mentioning his name. But this decree only

caused greater curiosity, and scarcely one of the historians of those times have failed to mention the name of this wicked and vain man.

These events happened about 356 B.C. Alexander was born the heir to the throne of one of the Grecian kingdoms. His father was King Philip of Macedon. The kingdom of Macedon was in the northern part of Greece. The mother of Alexander was Olympias, the daughter of the king of Epirus, which was a kingdom lying west of Macedon. Olympias was a woman of very strong character, but possessed also some unlovely traits. His father, King Philip, was a great warrior, and during the boyhood of Alexander, he made many conquests in various parts of Greece. Alexander was much favored in the circumstances of his early life, and also in the possession of a superior mind, and handsome face and figure, and most winning manners. He was born to rule; and had he always used his many gifts as wisely as he employed his executive powers and physical courage, he would have been one of the greatest of men, whereas now he can be called only one of the greatest of conquerors, whose life was marred by some of the most terrible of vices.

But the boy Alexander is intensely attractive and interesting. He seemed to possess few of the faults of youth. He was active, and full of ardor and enthusiasm, and at the same time he was calm and prudent in emergencies, and very thoughtful and far-seeing. He was kind and considerate, faithful to his friends, and generous to his foes. He possessed a remarkable mind,

and delighted in study and in improving conversation with his teachers. He was privileged to be a pupil of the famous Aristotle. The progress of the pupil was equal to the care and ability of the preceptor. Alexander became very fond of philosophy and metaphysics, even though a young boy; and he did not omit mathematics and the study of the wonders of nature. But Alexander applied himself chiefly to the study of morality, as it contributes to the good conduct of a prince and the best government of a people. How sad it was that, with all these desirable qualities of heart and mind, his later years were marred by the greatest of vices, and his natural noble impulses were deadened by a life of brutal ferocity and drunken debauchery, which tarnished the brightness of his glory and sullied the reputation of a great conqueror, whose brilliant actions and intrepid bravery dazzled the eyes of friends and foes!

But we must not suppose that the youthful Alexander was a melancholy dreamer or an embryo philosopher. His greatest delight was to read of the exploits of the Grecian heroes, which were described by Homer, an ancient poet who lived four or five hundred years before the time of Alexander. There were then no printed books, but these and other works were written on parchment rolls, which the young scholars were taught to read. As Homer's tales were written in Greek, which was the native language of Alexander, he could understand them very easily, and was greatly excited with the stirring scenes there depicted. Aristotle ordered a beautiful copy of Homer's poems to be

prepared expressly for his princely pupil. Alexander afterwards carried this copy with him in all his campaigns; and years after, when he was fighting the Persians, among the spoils taken from them was a very costly casket, which King Darius had used for jewels or perfumes. This box was always afterwards employed by Alexander as a receptacle for his beautiful copy of Homer; and he placed it with his sword beneath his pillow at night. Although he was a prince, he was not brought up in habits of luxury. The Greeks in those days had no firearms, and in battle combatants fought in hand-to-hand conflicts. It was the business of the officers to lead the men on, and set them the example of bravery by performing themselves deeds of daring and valor. It was considered necessary to accustom the young, even though princes, to hardship and fatigue. Alexander was full of energy and spirit. He early evinced a great degree of ambition; and when news of his father's many conquests would be brought to the court in Macedon, Alexander often remarked to his companions, in a tone of sorrow and dejection, —

"There will be nothing left for us to conquer."

The story of Bucephalus, his famous horse, illustrates the courage and also the keen observation of Alexander. A spirited war-horse had been sent to Philip while Alexander was quite a young boy. The king and his courtiers went out into one of the parks to view and try the horse; but so furious was the animal that no one dared to mount him, as he seemed entirely unmanageable. Philip was very much provoked, and gave orders that the horse

should be sent back into Thessaly, as useless.

Alexander had stood quietly by, noticing the actions of the animal and attentively studying his traits. He perceived that the horse seemed to be frightened at his own shadow; and he begged the consent of his father to allow him to try the experiment of mounting him. Philip at last gave a reluctant consent, as the attempt seemed so hazardous for a young boy, when all his experienced grooms condemned the horse as too vicious to be subdued. Alexander, however, quickly turned the frightened creature round, so that he could not see his shadow; and patting him on the head and neck, reassured him with the gentle tones of his voice; and as he became less restive, he sprang upon the animal and gave him full rein to run as he pleased. King Philip and his nobles first looked on in terror, then in admiration, as the splendid steed flew over the plains like the wind, with his intrepid rider seated in calm grace upon his back, evidently perfectly fearless and self-possessed. Having allowed the horse to tire himself with his free run, Alexander reined him in with perfect ease, and returned safely to the king. Philip was so pleased and proud of his son that he embraced Alexander when he had alighted, and kissing his forehead, he said to him, "My son, seek a kingdom more worthy of thee, for Macedon is below thy merit." This Bucephalus afterwards became the famous war-horse of Alexander the Great, and many surprising stories are told of his marvellous sagacity. When this horse was saddled and equipped for battle, he seemed to realize his proud position, and

would allow no one to approach him but Alexander. When his master wished to mount him, he would kneel upon his forelegs. Some historians relate that when Alexander was fighting in a desperate battle, and had plunged too imprudently amidst his infuriated foes, Bucephalus, though severely wounded, bore his master to a place of safety, although he was himself bleeding to death, pierced with the fatal darts of the enemy. Then, perceiving that Alexander was safe, he fell exhausted, and expired. Others say that Bucephalus lived to be thirty years of age, and that Alexander so mourned for him at his death that he built a city on the spot where his faithful horse had been buried, and called it Bucephalia in honor of the noble and trusty steed.

When Alexander was only sixteen years of age, his father, Philip, made him regent of Macedon while he was absent on a great military campaign against the other Grecian states.

At this time some ambassadors from the Persian court arrived in Macedon. In the absence of Philip, Alexander received them with courtesy. They, supposing that he would be interested in hearing about the splendors of the Persian court, entertained him with stories of the famous Hanging Gardens of Babylon; and the vine of gold, the grapes of which were emeralds, rubies, and other precious stones; and the marvellous golden plantain-tree. But Alexander, instead of appearing absorbed and delighted with these glowing accounts of fabulous wealth, inquired about the geography of the country, the various roads, and the strength and power of the Persian king. What battles he had fought,

how he behaved towards his enemies, and how he governed his people. The ambassadors, astonished at such maturity in one so young, and filled with admiration for the Grecian prince, began to compare among themselves Alexander and their own Artaxerxes, saying, "This young prince is great, while our king is only rich."

When Alexander was eighteen years of age, King Philip took him with him on one of his military campaigns, during which Philip fought one of his great battles in Bœotia. Philip gave the command of one of the wings of his army to Alexander; and so valiantly did he lead his troops, that his wing was victorious, and Philip and his command had to exert themselves to prevent being outdone by the youthful prince. His mother, Olympias, was of a haughty and imperious temper, and Philip himself was headstrong and obstinate, and the result of their frequent quarrels was a final separation, and Philip obtained a divorce from his wife, she returning to the court of her father. Philip then married a young and beautiful princess, and at the wedding festivities an incident occurred which illustrated the traits of both father and son. The uncle of the new queen, having made some disparaging remark about Olympias, the mother of Alexander, that prince threw the cup from which he had been drinking at the offender's head. Attalus, the queen's uncle, then threw his cup at Alexander, and Philip, enraged at such disturbance at the feast, seized his sword, and rushed towards his son. Having a lame foot, he stumbled, and fell upon the floor; and Alexander,

looking upon him with scorn and contempt, exclaimed, "What a fine hero the states of Greece have to lead their armies, a man who cannot get across the floor without tumbling down!" He then turned away and left the palace, and afterwards joined his mother in Epirus, and espoused her cause in the quarrel with his father.

Philip had been planning a great expedition into Asia. He had formed a strong combination among the states of Greece, and had raised a large army. Alexander is said to have taken sides with his mother, not so much out of filial devotion, as because he was jealous of his father's conquests, and desirous himself of reaping the glory which seemed to await the Grecian army in the coming campaign. Before setting forth upon this expedition, Philip desired to become reconciled to his son Alexander, and Olympias. He realized the importance of securing the co-operation of Alexander in his plans; and it would be dangerous to leave his own kingdom with a son so near in open hostility. Whereupon, Philip sent conciliatory messages to Olympias and Alexander, and he proposed that one of his own daughters should marry the present king of Epirus, who was the brother of Olympias. His overtures were peacefully received; and Olympias and Alexander returned to Macedon, where great preparations were made for the proposed wedding festivities. Philip determined that this event should be celebrated with most gorgeous pomp and splendor.

He received very costly presents from the other states of Greece; and though their professions of friendship were very

hollow on both sides, he took this occasion to pay marked attention to their kings and generals; and they sent him golden crowns, most beautifully wrought, and large embassies, expressing their good wishes. Athens, the seat of literature in Greece, sent a poem, in which the history of Philip's expedition into Persia was related in anticipation, and in which he was described as being most triumphantly successful.

The wedding was at length celebrated with much splendor, and the day after the nuptials was devoted to games and processions. In one of the latter, which was a religious ceremony, twelve statues of the gods, carved with marvellous art, were carried with great pomp through the streets. A thirteenth, which surpassed them all in magnificence, was a statue of Philip, representing him as a god. The procession was moving towards a great theatre, where games and spectacles were to be exhibited. At length Philip himself appeared in the procession. He had ordered that a wide space should be left around him, so that he might be more plainly visible to the populace, and also as a proof of his confidence in the love of his people, thus to expose himself without a guard. He was clothed in white robes, and adorned with a sparkling crown. Just as the statues of the gods had been carried into the theatre, and as that of Philip was about to be born in, an officer of the guards, a young Macedonian nobleman, named Pausanias, advanced quickly towards King Philip, and before the spectators suspected his design, he plunged his dagger into the heart of the king, who fell dead upon the ground. All was

now confusion. The murderer was instantly cut to pieces by the guards; and an officer of state hastened to inform Alexander of his father's death, and his succession to the throne. An assembly of the leading statesmen was hastily summoned, and Alexander was proclaimed king. It was by some supposed that the motive which induced Pausanias to murder Philip was a private revenge for a personal insult he had received from the uncle of Philip's present wife, which insult Philip would not notice. But others believed that the murder was instigated by the other states of Greece, who were hostile to Philip. Demosthenes, the celebrated orator, was Philip's bitterest enemy, and he used his eloquence in stirring up the Grecians against him. These orations were called his Philippics.

Alexander's first measures were to punish his father's murderers. Although it could not be ascertained who were involved in the plot, several were suspected, and put to death. Alexander decided not to make any change in his father's appointments, and to carry out his proposed campaigns. There were two officers in particular, who were the especial confidants of Philip, – Antipater and Parmenio. Antipater had charge of the civil, and Parmenio of military affairs. Alexander, at this time, was only twenty years of age; and Parmenio, a very distinguished general, was sixty years old. But the genius, power, and enthusiasm of Alexander's character made even men of such age and experience willing to obey his orders, and aid in the execution of his plans.

The Macedonians advised Alexander not to attempt to hold all the states of Greece; but to relinquish the conquests of Philip, and join with them in an alliance. But Alexander determined to march boldly into their midst, and demand their continued subjection, which his father had gained. This was a bold measure for so young a prince. He thereupon collected his forces, and set forth at their head. He first marched his troops to the banks of the Danube, which he crossed in one night. He defeated the king of the Triballi in a great battle, and subdued several barbarous nations. While he was thus engaged, several of the Grecian cities, inflamed by the eloquence of Demosthenes, who harangued the people, calling Alexander "a child, a hare-brained boy," formed a powerful alliance against him. A false report that Alexander was dead inspired the Thebians with a boldness which proved their ruin. Alexander, having secured his kingdom from the barbarians, marched with much expedition towards Greece, and passed the Strait of Thermopylæ. He then said to his army, "Demosthenes called me, in his orations, a child, when I was in Illyria, and among Triballi; he called me a young man, when I was in Thessaly; and I must now show him, before the walls of Athens, that I am a man grown." At the Pass of Thermopylæ, a great council was held between Alexander and the Thessalians, who were favorable to his claims. Alexander now appeared so suddenly before the city of Thebes, as to astonish them. He demanded only that they should deliver up to him the two ringleaders of the revolt against him, and then he promised

a general freedom to the citizens. But the Thebans insultingly replied that they would only comply, if two of his generals were delivered to them. Alexander now determined upon a speedy punishment, and attacked them so vigorously, that the city was taken, and a large number of the Thebans were killed. Alexander then resolved to make Thebes a warning to all the Grecian states, and the city was accordingly destroyed, and thirty thousand of the Thebans were sold into slavery. He, however, set the priests at liberty; and those who had opposed the revolt, and also the descendants of Pindar, the famous poet. Alexander now sent word to Athens, and demanded that they should deliver up to him ten orators, whom he supposed had influenced the people against Philip and himself. The Athenians, though in this dilemma, were still unwilling to deliver up their orators to death; and at last, one Demades, who was a friend of Alexander's, offered to undertake the embassy alone, and plead for them. Alexander, having now satiated his revenge, and believing that the Grecians were enough subdued to be controlled, waived his demand.

He then summoned all the monarchs and potentates of Greece, to meet him at Corinth, that he might obtain from them the same supreme command against the Persians which had been conferred by them upon his father Philip. The deliberations of the assembly were short, and Alexander was appointed generalissimo against the Persians.

There is a story told of Alexander and the philosopher Diogenes, who was then at Corinth. Alexander supposed that

Diogenes would of course come with the officers and governors of cities, and philosophers, who waited upon him immediately to congratulate him upon his election. But Diogenes did not come, and so Alexander, having curiosity to see a man who would thus slight a king, condescended to call upon Diogenes. Attended by his courtiers, he paid the philosopher a visit.

Diogenes was found lying in the sun, and seeing the crowd of people advance toward him, he sat up and fixed his eyes upon Alexander.

That prince was surprised to see so great a philosopher in such seeming poverty, and accosting him kindly, asked him courteously if there was anything he wanted.

"Yes," replied Diogenes, "that you would stand a little out of my sunshine."

The courtiers of the monarch were astounded at such audacious boldness; but Alexander exclaimed, —

"Were I not Alexander, I would be Diogenes." For Alexander perceived, that even with all his wealth and power, he was in some sense inferior to a man to whom he could give, and from whom he could take, nothing.

Alexander now returned to Macedon to prepare for his great expedition into Asia. As king of Macedon he possessed large estates and revenues, which were his own personal property, independent of the state. He apportioned these among his officers and generals, both those who were to go with him, and those who were to remain to guard his kingdom, over which he

placed Antipater as viceregent during his absence.

He displayed such generosity in his gifts, that his friends asked him what he had reserved for himself.

"Hope," replied Alexander.

After all things were ready, Alexander celebrated the religious sacrifices and ceremonies. This great Macedonian festival was held in honor of the Muses, as well as Jupiter. The Muses, according to the belief of the Greeks, were nine singing and dancing maidens, who were very beautiful in face and form, graceful in motion, and brilliant in mind. They were supposed to have first come from Thrace, and having gone to Mount Olympus, they were made goddesses by Jupiter. At last they selected for their place of residence a palace in Mount Parnassus. They were worshipped all over Greece and Italy as the goddesses of music and dancing. Afterwards arts and sciences were assigned to them, – one being the goddess of history, another of astronomy, another of tragedy, etc.

Alexander celebrated these festivities with great magnificence and pomp, and then bid a long farewell to his native land. His army consisted of about thirty thousand foot and four or five thousand horse. But they were all brave men. His officers were experienced men of sixty years of age, who had served under Philip his father. Parmenio commanded the infantry, Philotas his son the cavalry. Alexander sent a fleet of one hundred and fifty galleys over the Ægean Sea, to land at Sestos, to be ready to transport his army across the Hellespont. The army marched

to Sestos by land. Having arrived there, Alexander left Parmenio to conduct the transportation of the army, while he himself went in a single galley to visit the ruins of Troy, which city was the scene of Homer's poems, which had so charmed Alexander in his early years. So Alexander resolved that his first landing in Asia should be at Troy. As they approached the Asiatic shore, Alexander took the helm and steered the galley himself, and just before he reached the land, he stood upon the prow and threw a javelin at the shore as he approached, as a sign of his purpose to take possession. He then leaped upon the land before any of his crew, and afterwards offered sacrifices to the gods, having erected altars on the shore to Jupiter, Minerva, and to Hercules.

A large part of Asia Minor had been settled by the Greeks, and sometimes these cities had been under Grecian rule, and sometimes under Persian. They were now included in the dominion of Persia. One of these cities, called Lampsacus, had incurred the anger of the Greeks, because it had formerly revolted from their rule. Alexander determined to destroy this city. The ambassador sent by the city to implore his mercy was a famous historian, who had once been Alexander's teacher. Alexander knowing his errand, and fearing his former friendship might weaken his resolve, declared with a solemn oath, as the ambassador approached him, that he would not grant the request he was about to make. The witty historian replied, —

"I have come to implore you to *destroy* Lampsacus."

Alexander, pleased with the readiness of the reply, kept his

oath; and of course the city was saved.

In his progress onward, Alexander found himself obliged to cross either Mount Ida, or a river which descended from its slopes, called the Granicus. As they neared the river, some of the Grecian scouts, or as they were called by the Greeks, *prodromi*, reported that the opposite side was lined with Persian troops, waiting to dispute the passage.

Parmenio counselled Alexander against an immediate crossing, but Alexander was unwilling to delay. Accordingly, the army advanced to the banks in order of battle. The centre portion of the Grecian troops was arranged in a peculiar manner, and was called a phalanx. The men composing it were heavily armed. They bore a shield upon the left arm, and they carried spears sixteen feet long and pointed with iron, which they clasped firmly with both hands, with the points projecting in front. These men were placed in line, one behind another, to the number of sixteen, all facing the enemy. So that a phalanx contained sixteen thousand men. The spears were so long, that when drawn up in close lines, the points of eight or ten of the ranks projected in front, forming a bristling wall of sharp points of steel. This wall no force could penetrate; men, horses, elephants, rushed upon it, only to meet inevitable destruction. If their enemies threw javelins from a distance, the shields upon their arms were held in such a manner as to form a mass of close scales of metal, upon which the javelins fell harmlessly. The troops upon the sides of the phalanx were called the wings, and were composed

of cavalry and foot-soldiers, who were more lightly armed, and could therefore move with greater speed.

Alexander commanded one wing, and Parmenio the other. The Persians had assembled in vast numbers upon the opposite shore. The Grecian army, led by Alexander, descended into the stream, and moved on through the water. The Persians dashed down the farther banks, and strove to oppose their landing. A terrible battle ensued, the soldiers grappling with each other in the midst of the waves, and the Granicus ran red with the blood of the wounded. Alexander was fearless and irresistible, and his long white plume, waving from his shining helmet, was a conspicuous target for the arrows and javelins of the enemy. At one time, meeting the foe in close combat, a Persian horseman aimed a blow at his head with a sword. The weapon took off the white plume, and cut into the helmet of Alexander, who immediately stabbed his antagonist through the heart. Just as a second Persian had raised his sword to strike a fatal blow upon the exposed head of the Grecian hero, a Macedonian general cut the uplifted arm from the assailant's body, and saved the life of Alexander the Great. The Persians were defeated, and Alexander landed his brave band of warriors upon the opposite bank, while the terrified Persians fled in dire confusion.

Darius himself had not commanded this Persian force, and he employed all of the following winter in preparing for a vigorous defence of his dominions from the encroaching foe.

Alexander, however, did not remain idle during the winter.

He marched from province to province, meeting with many adventures. During this time Parmenio had remained in the western part of Asia Minor, with quite a large force. As the spring approached, Alexander ordered him to meet him at Gordium. One reason which influenced Alexander in this plan was the desire to attempt to untie the famous Gordian knot. The story of the Gordian knot was this: —

Gordius was a sort of mountain farmer. One day he was plowing, and an eagle flew down and alighted upon his yoke, and remained there until he had finished his plowing. This was an omen; but Gordius did not know what it meant. So he went to a neighboring town to consult the prophets and soothsayers. On his way he met a maiden who was going forth to draw water. Gordius fell into conversation with her, and related to her the occurrence which had just transpired. The maiden advised him to go back and offer a sacrifice to Jupiter. Finally she consented to go back with him and aid him. The affair ended in her becoming his wife, and they lived in peace and happiness for many years upon their farm. They had a son named Midas. The father and mother were accustomed to go out in their wagon drawn by oxen, with Midas as their driver. One day they were going into the town in this manner, at a time when it happened that there was an assembly convened, which was in a state of great perplexity, on account of civil dissensions in the country. They had just inquired of an oracle what they should do. The oracle said that "a cart would bring them a king who would terminate their eternal broils." Just

then Midas came up, driving the cart in which his father and mother were seated. The assembly thought at once that this must be the cart meant by the oracle, and they made Gordius king by acclamation. They took the cart and yoke to preserve as sacred relics, consecrating them to Jupiter, and Gordius tied the yoke to the pole of the cart by a thong of leather, making a knot so close and complicated that nobody could untie it again. It was called the Gordian knot. The oracle afterwards said that whoever should untie this knot should become monarch of all Asia. Thus far, nobody had succeeded.

Alexander was very desirous of examining this wonderful knot and trying his own fortune. He accordingly went into the temple where the sacred cart had been placed, and after looking at the knot, he became convinced that it could not be untied, whereupon he cut it to pieces with his sword.

From this story comes the old saying, when any one gets out of a difficulty by very violent means, "He has cut the Gordian knot."

After leaving Gordium, Alexander proceeded with his whole army against Darius, who was now advancing to meet him.

On a very warm day, after a long and fatiguing march, the Grecian army reached the river Cydnus, a small stream which came down from Mount Taurus, near the city of Tarsus. Alexander, warm and weary, plunged into the cold mountain stream, and was taken with a violent chill, and as he was lifted out of the water, he fainted away. He was borne to his tent. A severe

and protracted fever came on. Alexander bewailed this enforced delay, and summoned his physicians, to whom he said, —

"The present condition of my affairs will not admit either of slow remedies or fearful physicians. A speedy death is more eligible to me than a slow cure. In case the physicians think it is in their power to do me any good, they are to know that I do not so much wish to live as to fight."

All his physicians but one, however, were afraid to dare any violent and hazardous remedies, especially as an unfavorable result would endanger their honor; for Darius had published that he would reward with a thousand talents the man who should kill Alexander.

His old family physician, named Philip, who had attended him from childhood, offered to give him a dose of medicine which would be speedy in its effects, but desired three days to prepare it. During this interval of waiting Alexander received a letter from Parmenio, who had been left behind in Cappadocia, warning him against this physician Philip, and stating that Darius had bribed him by promising a thousand talents, and his sister in marriage. Alexander courageously refrained from divulging its contents, and placed the letter under his pillow.

When Philip entered the tent with the medicine, Alexander took the cup, and handing the letter at the same time to the physician, he swallowed the dose without waiting his perusal of it. After reading the letter, Philip replied, —

"Royal sir, your recovery will soon clear me of the guilt of

murder, with which I am charged."

Three days after, Alexander showed himself to his army, who were filled with delight at his wonderful recovery; and the accused physician was now the recipient of the most lavish praises, and looked upon with the deepest reverence, because he had saved the life of their sovereign.

Slowly Darius marched in stately grandeur to meet his advancing enemy. A description of his martial procession reads more like a picture of a grand tournament than the march of an army. One of the historians thus describes this gorgeous pageant: —

"The king advanced with his troops towards the Euphrates. It was a custom long used by the Persians never to set out upon a march till after sunrise, at which time the trumpet was sounded for that purpose from the king's tent. Over this tent was exhibited to the view of the whole army the image of the sun set in crystal, as the Persians were worshippers of the sun and fire.

"The order they observed in their march was as follows: First, they carried silver altars, on which there was fire, called by them sacred and eternal; and these were followed by the Magi, singing hymns after the manner of their country. They were accompanied by three hundred and sixty-five youths, corresponding to the number of days in a year, clothed in purple robes. Afterwards came a chariot consecrated to Jupiter, drawn by white horses, and followed by a courser of a prodigious size, to whom they gave the name of the sun's horse; and the equerries

were dressed in white, each having a rod of gold in his hand.

"Ten chariots, adorned with sculptures in gold and silver, followed after. Then marched a body of horse, composed of twelve nations, whose manners and customs were various, and all armed in a different style. Next advanced those whom the Persians called the Immortals, amounting to ten thousand, who surpassed the rest of the barbarians in the sumptuousness of their apparel. They all wore gold collars, were clothed in robes of gold tissues, with surtouts completely covered with precious stones. Then followed those called the king's relations, to the number of fifteen thousand, in habits very much resembling those worn by women, and more remarkable for the vain pomp of their dress than the glitter of their arms. Then came the king's guards; they carried the cloak of the monarch, and walked before his chariot, in which he seemed to sit as on a high throne. This chariot was enriched on both sides with images of the gods in gold and silver; and from the middle of the yoke, which was covered with jewels, rose two statues a cubit in height, the one representing war, the other peace, having a gold eagle between them, with wings extended, as ready to take its flight.

"But nothing could equal the magnificence of the king. He was clothed in a vest of purple, striped with silver, and over it a long robe glittering all over with gold and precious stones, that represented two falcons rushing from the clouds and pecking at one another. Around his waist he wore a gold girdle, called cidaris, after the manner of women, from which hung his

scimitar, the scabbard of which flamed all over with gems. On his head he wore a tiara, or mitre, round which was a fillet of blue mixed with white. On each side of him walked two hundred of his nearest relations, followed by ten thousand pikemen, whose pikes were adorned with silver and tipped with gold; and lastly, thirty thousand infantry, who composed the rear-guard. These were followed by the king's horses, four hundred in number, all of which were led.

"Then came the chariots of his wife Statira and his mother Sysigambis, with the several female attendants of both queens, riding on horseback. After them came fifteen large chariots, in which were the king's children and those who had the care of their education, escorted by a band of household officers. Then followed three hundred and sixty carriages, containing the ladies of the court, dressed in the costumes of princesses.

"After these marched six hundred mules and three hundred camels, which carried the king's treasure, and were guarded by a great body of archers. After these came other chariots, in which rode the wives of the crown officers and of the greatest lords of the court; then the sutlers and servants of the army. In the rear were a body of light-armed troops, with their commanders, who closed the imposing procession."

Darius, at the head of six hundred thousand men, and surrounded with this mighty pomp, considered himself invincible, and imagined that he had only to show his gorgeous army to the few Grecian troops led by the boy Alexander, in order

to inspire such awe as should cause them to fly in terror.

The two opposing forces came in sight of each other upon a plain near the city of Issus. It was now evening. At midnight the army of Alexander had reached a defile in the chain of mountains called Mount Taurus. Among these mountains there are various tracts of open country, and upon one of these the army of Darius was encamped. Alexander ascended one of the eminences from whence he could look down upon the great plain beyond, which was dimly illuminated by the smouldering fires of the Persian encampment. Alexander there sacrificed by torchlight to the gods of the Grecians, and returning to his army, prepared for an early conflict. In the morning, at break of day, Alexander began his march down to the plain. The battle waged hotly all day, and at sunset all the valleys and defiles around the plain of Issus were thronged with the vast masses of the Persian hosts, flying in confusion from the victorious Macedonians. The flight of Darius had been so sudden that he had left his wife and mother and children and much of his treasure behind in the deserted camp. He pressed on in his chariot as far as he could, and then mounted a horse and fled for his life. Alexander and his army soon abandoned the pursuit, and returned to take possession of the Persian camp. The tents of King Darius were filled with gold and silver vessels, caskets, boxes of rich perfumes, and many articles of luxury. The greater part of his vast treasures, however, he had previously sent to Damascus, where they were afterwards captured by Parmenio. So that Alexander came into

possession of all his splendid treasures, upon which he had so prided himself. Alexander treated the captive wife, mother, and children of Darius with great kindness, and gave them every attention he would have paid to honored guests.

Darius got together a small remnant of his army and continued his flight. After he had crossed the Euphrates, he sent an ambassador to Alexander to make propositions for peace. He offered him any sum he desired as a ransom for his wife, mother, and child, and agreed to become his ally and friend if he would deliver them up and depart to his own dominions. Alexander replied by a brief letter. He reminded him that the Persians had been the first to invade Greece. "I am acting only on the defensive," wrote Alexander. "The gods, who always favor the right, have given me the victory. I am now monarch of a large part of Asia, and your sovereign king. If you will admit this, and come to me as my subject, I will restore your wife, mother, and child without any ransom. And, at any rate, whatever you decide in respect to these proposals, if you wish to communicate with me on any subject hereafter, I shall pay no attention to what you send unless you address it to me as your king."

As the vast army of the Persian king had now been defeated, none of the smaller kingdoms or provinces thought of resisting. They yielded one after another, and Alexander appointed governors of his own to rule over them. He then advanced along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, until he reached the city of Tyre.

The Tyrians wished to avoid a quarrel if possible, and so sent complimentary congratulations to Alexander, presenting him with a golden crown. Alexander replied courteously, and stated that his reason for coming to Tyre was to offer sacrifices to Hercules, a god whom the Tyrians worshipped. The Tyrians, fearful of allowing him to enter the city, sent him word that it would not be in their power to receive him in the city, but that he could offer the sacrifice on the site of ancient Tyre, as there was a temple sacred to Hercules among the ruins there.

This answer displeased Alexander, and he now determined to build a broad causeway from the mainland to the island upon which the present city of Tyre stood. This causeway he would build out of the ruins of old Tyre, and then march his army over it and take the new city. His soldiers accordingly commenced this work. But the Tyrians constantly harassed the workers; now attacking them with arrows and javelins; then they took a large galley and filled it with combustibles, and towing it near the enemy's works, they set fire to it; and putting it in motion towards the pier where there was the largest collection of engines and machines, the vessel drifted down upon Alexander's works, and notwithstanding the most strenuous efforts of the Macedonians, the whole mass was destroyed. Not long after this the sea itself came to the aid of the Tyrians, and a fearful storm destroyed the portions of the work which had escaped the fire. Whereupon the Tyrians deridingly inquired, "Whether Alexander was greater than Neptune, and if they pretended to prevail over that God?"

But Alexander was not to be defeated by fire, or storm, or the hostile Tyrians, and again ordered his men to repair the pier. Meanwhile, Alexander himself collected and equipped a fleet, and sailed into the Tyrian seas.

The fleet of galleys now protected the men at work on the pier, and Alexander began to prepare for the final assault. He proposed to force his entrance on the southern side of the city, where there was a large breach in the wall.

The plan was successful. He prepared a number of ships, with platforms raised upon them in such a manner that on getting near the walls they could be let down, and form a sort of bridge, over which the men could pass to the broken fragments of the wall, and thence ascend through the breach above.

The ships advanced to the proposed place of landing. The bridges were lowered, and before the Tyrians realized their danger the city was filled with thirty thousand infuriated soldiers, who showed them no mercy. Thus the city was stormed.

Alexander here displayed a brutal ferocity which tarnished the brightness of his victory. The inhabitants were put to the sword, some were executed, some thrown into the sea; and it is said that two thousand were crucified along the seashore.

Prosperity and power were beginning to exert a baneful influence upon the character of Alexander. He became haughty, imperious, and cruel. About this time Darius sent him a second communication, proposing terms of peace. Darius offered him a large sum of money for the ransom of his wife, mother, and child,

and agreed to give him all the country he had conquered. He also offered him his daughter Statira in marriage. He recommended that he should be content with his conquests, and added that he could not hope to succeed in crossing the mighty rivers of the East, which were in the way of his march toward the Persian dominions.

Alexander replied "that if he wished to marry the daughter of Darius, he could do it without his consent; as to ransom, he was not in want of money; and as to the offer of Darius to give him all the territory west of the Euphrates, it was absurd for a man to speak of giving what was no longer his own; that he had crossed too many seas in his military expeditions, since he left Macedon, to feel any concern about the *rivers* that he might find in his way; and that he should continue to pursue Darius wherever he might retreat in search of safety and protection, and he had no fear but that he should find and conquer him at last."

The siege and storming of Tyre has been considered one of the greatest of Alexander's exploits.

After the subjugation of Tyre, Alexander commenced his march for Egypt. His route led him through Judea. This was about three hundred years before the birth of Christ. A Jewish writer, named Josephus, who lived and wrote a few years after Christ, relates the circumstances of Alexander's visit to Jerusalem.

When Alexander had been besieging Tyre, he had sent to Judea for supplies, which were refused, as the Jews were subjects

of Darius. Hearing that Alexander was about to pass through Jerusalem, they began to fear a fate like that of Tyre. Accordingly the high priest Jaddus, who was the chief magistrate at Jerusalem, caused great sacrifices to be offered to Almighty God, and public and solemn prayers were made, to implore his guidance and protection.

The day after these services he told the people that they need fear nothing; for God had appeared to him in a dream, and directed him what to do. "We are not to resist the conqueror," said he, "but go forth to meet him and welcome him. We are to strew the city with flowers, and adorn it as for a festive celebration. The priests are to be dressed in their pontifical robes, and lead the procession, and the people are to follow. In this way we are to go out to meet Alexander as he advances, and all will be well."

When Alexander met this procession he stopped, and appeared both pleased and surprised. He advanced to meet the high priest with an air of the profoundest reverence.

Parmenio, astonished at such a sudden change in his sovereign, asked for an explanation. To which Alexander replied, —

"When I was in Macedon, before setting out on this expedition, one night I had a remarkable dream. In my dream this very priest appeared before me, dressed just as he is now. He exhorted me to banish every fear, to cross the Hellespont boldly, and to push forward into the heart of Asia. He said that God would march at the head of my army, and give me the victory

over the Persians. I recognize this priest as the same person who appeared to me then. It is through his encouragement and aid that I am here, and I am ready to worship and adore the God whose service he administers."

Alexander then joined the high priest in the procession, and returned with him to Jerusalem. The high priest afterwards read and interpreted to Alexander some of the prophecies of Daniel, which were supposed to refer to that conqueror; and Alexander then assured the Jews that they should be protected in their rights, and especially in their religious worship.

Alexander next proceeded to the city of Gaza. This was a place of considerable importance, and was under command of a governor, named Betis, whom Darius had appointed. This Betis refused to surrender the place to Alexander; whereupon, he besieged it for two months. Having captured the city, Alexander treated the wretched captives with extreme cruelty. He cut the garrison to pieces, and sold the inhabitants into slavery. Then becoming still more brutal, his punishment of Betis was most shocking. He ordered him into his presence, and said to him, "You are not going to die the simple death that you desire. You must suffer the worst torments that revenge can invent."

Betis calmly looked at Alexander, without reply. This still more incensed the cruel conqueror.

"Observe his dumb arrogance," said Alexander; "but I will conquer him. I will show him that I can draw groans from him, if nothing else."

He then ordered holes to be made through the heels of his helpless victim; and passing a rope through the wounds, commanded the body to be fastened to a chariot, and dragged about the city until the poor captive was dead. Thus had prosperity and conquest degraded the character of Alexander.

Having destroyed Gaza, with such inhuman brutality, Alexander now formed a more ambitious project. The heroes of Homer were represented as sons of the gods; and Alexander now began to aspire to supernatural honors, and accordingly resolved that he should be declared to be the son of a god. He determined to visit the temple of Jupiter Ammon, in the Oasis of Siwah, and bribe the priests there to declare his divine origin.

The priests at the great temple of Jupiter Ammon received Alexander with marks of distinction and honor. After most solemn and magnificent ceremonies, the priests, pretending to confer with the god in the temple, declared that Alexander was indeed his son; and accordingly they paid him almost divine honors. Alexander, in his subsequent orders and decrees, styled himself Alexander king, son of Jupiter Ammon.

On his return from the Oasis, Alexander began building a city at the mouth of the river Nile. This city he called Alexandria. This city is the only monument of his greatness which still remains. Upon an island near the coast, opposite the city of Alexandria, a magnificent lighthouse was erected, which was considered in those days one of the Seven Wonders of the world. It was said to have been five hundred feet high.

The building of the city of Alexandria was one of the most beneficent acts of Alexander. How much better for the world, as well as for his own true glory, if good deeds had been the rule instead of the exception in the life of this famous man!

Alexander was now master of Asia Minor, Phœnicia, Judea, and Egypt. He now continued his pursuit of Darius.

The Persian army had crossed the Tigris river, and encamped upon the extensive plain of Arbela. Here Darius waited the approach of his relentless foe.

The night before the noted battle between Alexander and Darius, the conqueror, who had come within sight of the Persian host, having completed his arrangements for the morrow's conflict, retired to rest. Early in the morning Parmenio awoke him, and expressed surprise at his sleeping so quietly when such vast issues were at stake. "You seem as calm," said he, "as if you had fought the battle and gained the victory."

"I have done so," replied Alexander; "I consider the whole work done, when we have gained access to Darius, and forced him to give us battle."

Alexander is thus described as he appeared at the head of the army on this important occasion. "He wore a short tunic, girt close around him, and over it a linen breastplate, strongly quilted. The belt by which the tunic was held was embossed with figures of beautiful workmanship. Upon his head was a helmet of polished steel, surmounted with a white plume. He wore also a neck-piece of steel, ornamented with precious stones; he carried

a shield, lance, and sword."

The Persians employed elephants in their wars. They also had chariots, armed with long scythes. But the terrible Macedonian phalanx, with columns of infantry and flying troops of horsemen on either side, cut through the mighty mass of their enemies with irresistible force. The elephants turned and fled. The Persian troops were routed, and Darius himself was obliged to flee. Alexander went to Babylon, where he was received as a conqueror. The storehouse of the Persian treasures were at Susa, a strong city east of Babylon. Alexander then marched to Susa, and took possession of the vast treasures collected there. Besides these treasures, Alexander here found a number of trophies which had been brought from Greece by Xerxes, some hundred years before. Alexander sent them all back to Greece. He then proceeded in a triumphal march to Persepolis, the great Persian capital. Here Alexander exhibited another striking instance of wicked weakness. He was giving a great banquet to his officers. Among the women at this feast was a vain and foolish woman named Thais. While the guests were half intoxicated from the effects of wine, this Thais, seizing a burning torch and waving it above her head, proposed that they should set fire to the great palace of Persepolis, which had been built by Xerxes, and amuse themselves by watching the imposing conflagration. Alexander, flushed with wine, consented; and the drunken guests sallied forth, alarming the inhabitants with their boisterous shouts and flaming torches. Arriving at the magnificent palace, they applied

their torches, and the gorgeous structure was soon a frightful mass of lurid flames. Alexander, sobered by the sublime and awful spectacle, repented of his wild folly. He ordered the fire to be extinguished; but it was too late; the infamous deed was done; the grand old palace was a hopeless mass of ruins, and another blot, which never can be effaced, tarnished the fame and character of Alexander.

Notwithstanding Alexander's evil deeds, he was kind to his mother. He sent her rich presents after his conquests; and though she was proud and imperious, and made Antipater, whom Alexander had left in command in Macedon, much trouble, so that Antipater was forced to complain of her, Alexander said that a single tear of his mother's would outweigh ten thousand accusations against her. Olympias, however, did not repay his devotion with equal nobleness; she wrote frequent letters to him full of petty fault-finding, and making unkind comments upon his officers and generals; and though Alexander showed her respect, he evinced more love towards the mother of Darius, treating her and the captive children of his foe with the greatest kindness and consideration. After the battle of Arbela, while Alexander marched to Babylon and Susa, Darius had fled to Ecbatana. He was thus in one of the Persian royal palaces, while his family were with his conqueror at another. The wife of Darius had died before this time, while still a captive in the Grecian camp. Many of the forces of Darius had gone over to Alexander's side, about forty thousand remaining faithful to him. But among

these seeming friends were treacherous foes. A general, names Bessus, formed the plan of seizing Darius, and making him a prisoner, and then taking the command of the army himself. If Alexander should be likely to conquer him, he would then try to save himself by giving up Darius. If, on the other hand, their forces should be successful, he would then get Darius out of his way by assassinating him, and usurping the throne. Bessus communicated his plans to many of the chief officers, who agreed to become parties in the plot. The Grecian soldiers in the Persian army revealed this conspiracy to Darius, but he would not believe in the treachery of his countrymen. As Alexander advanced, Darius had retreated from Ecbatana, and Alexander followed him. While halting for rest, a Persian nobleman came into the Macedonian camp, and informed Alexander that the enemies' forces were two days' march in advance. Bessus was in command, and Darius deposed, the plot having been successfully carried out. Alexander immediately set forward in pursuit of Bessus and his royal prisoner. Alexander had now been two years advancing from Macedon into the heart of Asia, in pursuit of Darius. His conquest would not be complete until that monarch was captured. As soon as Bessus and the Persian army found that Alexander was close upon them, they attempted to hurry forward in the hope of escaping. Darius was in a chariot. They urged this chariot on, but it was too cumbersome for rapid flight. Bessus and his chief conspirators then called upon Darius to mount a horse and escape with them, leaving the rest of the

army to its fate. Darius refused. Having become convinced of their treachery, he said he would rather trust himself in the hands of Alexander than to such traitors as they. Bessus and his confederates, exasperated by this reply, thrust their spears into Darius' body as he sat in the chariot, and galloped away. Darius remained in his chariot, wounded and bleeding. His many sorrows had at last overwhelmed him. His kingdom was lost; his beloved wife was in the grave; his family were in captivity; his cities were sacked; his palaces and treasures plundered; and now, betrayed and abandoned, he was dying, slain by his treacherous countrymen, whom he had trusted as his friends. Alone, deserted by all the world, he, the once mighty monarch of vast dominions, now lay there, faint and bleeding, waiting the coming of death or his victorious conqueror.

The Macedonians at last discovered the chariot in which Darius was lying pierced with spears. The floor of the chariot was covered with blood. They raised him a little, and he spoke; he called for water. A Macedonian soldier went to get some; others hurried to find Alexander, and bring him to the spot where his long-pursued enemy was dying. When the soldier returned with the water, Darius received the drink, and then said to those about him, "That he charged them to tell Alexander that he died in his debt, though he had never obliged him; that he gave him a multitude of thanks for the great humanity he had exercised towards his wife, mother, and his children, whose lives he had not only spared, but treated them with the greatest consideration and

care, and had endeavored to make them happy; that he besought the gods to give victory to his arms, and make him monarch of the universe; that he thought it was not necessary to entreat him to revenge his murder, as this was the common cause of kings." Then taking Polystratus, one of the Macedonians who had brought him the desired water to relieve his agonizing thirst, he continued, "Give Alexander thy hand, as I give thee mine, and carry him in my name the only pledge I am able to offer, – of my gratitude and affection." Saying these words, Darius breathed his last.

Alexander, coming up a moment after, was shocked at the spectacle before him, and wept bitterly. He then spread his own military cloak over the dead monarch. Having ordered the body to be embalmed, it was then enclosed in a costly coffin, and sent to Sysigambis, the mother of Darius, in order that it might be buried with the ceremonies usually paid to Persian monarchs, and be entombed with his ancestors.

The Persian generals under Bessus now resolved to betray him, as he had betrayed his master. They sent word to Alexander that they would deliver him into his hands if he would send a small force to the place where they designated. Accordingly this command was entrusted to a Macedonian officer named Ptolemy, who found Bessus in a small walled town, to which he had fled for refuge.

When Bessus was brought to Alexander, that monarch ordered the prisoner to be publicly scourged, and then caused his face

to be mutilated in a manner customary in those days when a criminal was condemned to be stamped with a perpetual mark of infamy. Alexander then sent the traitor as a second present to Sysigambis, to be dealt with as her revenge for the death of Darius might dictate.

After being terribly tortured, the miserable Bessus paid the last penalty of his crimes by a most shocking death, inflicted upon him by Sysigambis, to avenge her murdered son.

Alexander was now twenty-six years of age. He was now the undisputed master of all western Asia. His wealth was boundless, his power was supreme, but his character was fearfully demoralized. He lived in the palaces of the Persian kings, and gave himself up to all sorts of vices. He spent his time in drunken debaucheries. The strong sentiment of love and respect with which he had formerly inspired all around him was gone, and conspiracies and treason prevailed. When the suspicions of Alexander were aroused, he put to death some of his most trusted officers.

At last there was a conspiracy, in which Philotas, the son of the faithful Parmenio, was implicated. Being arrested and put to the torture, Philotas accused his father, in the hopes of saving himself. Though there was no evidence against that trusty general, Alexander caused them both to be put to death.

The death of Parmenio and his son, in this violent manner, raised much unfavorable feeling against Alexander.

Another case exemplifies the wicked deeds of Alexander

when under the influence of wine, and puffed up with vain-glorious pride.

One of his oldest and most faithful generals, named Clitus, was present at one of the frequent banquets given by Alexander. That monarch, excited with wine, had been boastfully recounting his own exploits, and had spoken disparagingly of those of his father Philip in comparison. Clitus, also heated with wine, began to praise Philip, under whom he had fought; and then growing bolder, he upbraided Alexander for the death of Parmenio. Alexander, frenzied with wine and rage, seized a javelin, hurled it at Clitus, and struck him down, saying, "Go then, and join Philip and Parmenio." Alexander, as soon as he came to himself, was overwhelmed with remorse and shame. He could not, however, restore Clitus to life, or remove the disgrace from his own name.

Alexander continued for two or three years his expeditions and conquests in Asia. He penetrated into India as far as the banks of the Indus. But his soldiers refused to go further. He made an address to his army, but he could not change their decision. At last one of his officers said to him: —

"We have done all for you that it was possible for man to do. We have crossed seas and land. We have marched to the end of the world, and you are now meditating the conquest of another, by going in search of new Indias, unknown to the Indians themselves. Such a thought may be worthy of your courage and resolution, but it surpasses ours, and our strength still more. Look at these ghastly faces, and these bodies covered with wounds

and scars. Remember how numerous we were when first we set out with you, and see how few of us remain. The few who have escaped so many toils and dangers have neither courage nor strength to follow you any further. They all long to revisit their country and their homes, and to enjoy for the remainder of their lives the fruits of all their toils. Forgive them these desires so natural to man."

Alexander was bitterly disappointed, but found himself obliged to relinquish further conquest. He returned to Babylon, where his triumphal entrance was a scene of magnificence and gorgeous splendor.

But his life soon evinced the hopeless degradation into which he had fallen. He not only indulged in vice himself, but encouraged others to follow his evil example. He would offer prizes at his banquets to those who would drink the most, thus causing forty deaths at one of his entertainments.

Alexander now entered upon a life of the most effeminate luxury and profligate dissipation. He separated himself more and more from his old Macedonian friends, and delighted in Persian associates. He married Statira, the eldest daughter of Darius, and gave the youngest daughter to his particular friend Hephæstion, who was his chosen companion in all his drunken revels.

Alexander's habits of intoxication and vice rapidly increased. On one occasion, after he had spent a whole night in drinking and carousing, some of the guests proposed that they should begin a second banquet instead of retiring.

Alexander half intoxicated, agreed. There were twenty present at this new feast. Alexander, to show how much he was able to drink, pledged each one separately, and then all together.

There was a very large cup, called the bowl of Hercules, which he now called for, and having filled it to the brim, he drank it off, and again filled the huge bowl, and again drank the entire contents. His strength soon failed him, and he sank to the floor.

They bore him away to his apartments. A violent fever followed this terrible debauch, which his physicians in vain tried to allay. At last, finding he must die, he drew his signet ring off from his finger; this was the token that he felt all was over. He handed the ring to one of his friends, saying, "When I am gone, take my body to the temple of Jupiter Ammon, and inter it there."

Being asked to whom he left his kingdom, he replied: "To the most worthy." Thus died Alexander the Great, at the age of thirty-two.

Preparations were now made to convey his body with royal pomp to its last resting-place, in accordance with his orders.

A very large and magnificent funeral carriage was built. "The spokes of the wheels were overlaid with gold, and the axles were adorned upon the outside with massive golden ornaments. The platform, or floor, of the carriage was eighteen feet long and twelve feet wide. Upon this there was erected a magnificent pavilion, supported by Ionic columns, profusely ornamented, both within and without, with purple and gold. The interior of the pavilion was resplendent with gems and precious stones.

"A throne was raised in the centre of the platform, richly carved and gilded. It was empty; but the crowns of the various nations over which Alexander had ruled were hung upon it. At the foot of the throne was the coffin, made of solid gold, containing the remains of the great conqueror. The arms of Alexander were placed between the throne and the coffin.

"On the four sides of the carriage were sculptured figures representing Alexander. There were Macedonian soldiers, Persian squadrons, elephants of India, troops of horse, and various other emblems of the departed hero's conquests, sculptured upon this magnificent funeral carriage. Around the pavilion was a network of golden lace, to which bells were attached, which tolled mournfully as the carriage moved slowly along. Sixty-four mules, selected for their great size, drew this ponderous car. Their harness was mounted with gold and enriched with precious stones."

Notwithstanding all this gorgeous pomp, the body of Alexander never reached its first destination. Ptolemy, the officer, to whom Egypt was given in the division of Alexander's empire, came forth to meet this solemn procession, and preferring that the body of Alexander should be buried in the city of Alexandria, it was interred there, and an imposing monument was erected over his grave. This monument is said to have remained standing for fifteen hundred years, though no remains of it are to be found.

The most fitting comment upon the life and character of

Alexander the Great will be found in these brief words of Napoleon Bonaparte, who said of Alexander: “He commenced his career with the mind of Trajan, but closed it with the heart of Nero and the morals of Heliogabalus.”

# JULIUS CÆSAR
# 100-44 B.C

"The elements
So mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, This was a man!"

*Shakespeare.*

THERE was wild tumult in the ancient city of Rome. The populace thronged the streets, carrying stones and bludgeons. Armed troops hurried hither and thither. The members of the Senate, a sort of House of Lords, were assembled in confusion; and their blanched faces denoted the terror which rendered them powerless to help. Several of the principal citizens had been murdered, and the other Roman lords, or patricians, knew not how soon their doom might come. But who was their terrible foe? Had some wild barbarian horde invaded their land and taken possession of their proud and magnificent city? Why did the nobles and men of rank tremble; and why were the common people roused to this wild outburst of fury?

It was no barbarian enemy, but civil discord amongst themselves, which thus filled the streets with murderers and the patricians with terror. Two powerful rivals were fighting for the possession of the Eternal City, which, at that time, was mistress

of the world.

Marius, the plebian, or champion of the common people, had roused the populace to fight against Sylla, the patrician, who had been absent with his army in Italy. Sylla had been appointed by the Senate to command the forces which were to wage war with Mithridates, a powerful Asiatic monarch. But during his absence, his enemy, Marius, had contrived to have this appointment revoked, and to gain for himself this coveted command. Two officers, called tribunes, were sent to Sylla's camp, to inform him of this advantage which his rival had gained over him. Sylla killed the two officers for daring to bring him such a message, and immediately marched towards Rome.

Marius, in retaliation, caused some of Sylla's friends in the city to be put to death, and with his bands of soldiers endeavored to resist the entrance of Sylla and his army by throwing stones upon the troops from the roofs of the houses as they entered the city. Sylla then ordered every house to be set on fire, from which missiles had been thrown, and thus the helpless citizens were endangered by lawless and infuriated mobs on the one side, and relentless flames on the other. Marius was conquered, and obliged to flee for his life. He was an old man of seventy years of age. The Senate declared him a public enemy, and offered a large sum for his head. Alone and friendless, Marius wandered from place to place, enduring the greatest privations, and encountering many dangers, till at last he crossed the Mediterranean Sea, and took refuge in a poor hut among the ruins of ancient Carthage.

Surely it would seem that his days of conquest were over. Alone, starving, helpless, old, and banished, with a heavy price set upon his head, his fortunes seemed indeed hopeless.

Leaving this fallen champion in his hut, amidst the ruins of a past power which could only remind him of his own hopeless prospects, we must return to the city of Rome, and look upon another scene.

A religious procession is wending its way through the famous Forum. This Forum was a magnificent square, surrounded by splendid edifices and adorned with sculptures and statues and many gorgeous trophies of past victories. There were vast colonnades forming covered porticoes, where the populace assembled and where courts of justice were held. This Forum was constantly embellished with new monuments, temples, statues, arches, and columns by the successful generals, as they returned in triumph from foreign campaigns. Here the various orators delivered their famous orations which inflamed the people to arms, or moved them to wild outbursts of enthusiastic applause in favor of some successful candidate, or calmed their boisterous tumult into silent and breathless attention to the impassioned and eloquent words which fell from the lips of these intellectual monarchs over the minds of their less gifted countrymen. It is night now in this great public square, and as the procession of priests and attendants slowly pass beneath a row of majestic colonnades and enter one of the temples, we note the face and figure of the foremost one. He is scarcely more than a

boy, but he wears the purple robe called *læna*, and a conical mitre known as the *apex*, which mark his distinguished rank as holding the office of *Flamen Dialis*, or High Priest of Jupiter. This youth, seventeen years of age, is tall and fair, and though slender in form, is handsome and noble in bearing. He is descended from patrician families of high rank and proud position; and as he passes within the portal of the sacred temple, the beholder would involuntarily cast upon him an admiring glance, and if a stranger, would surely inquire who was this comely, noble youth who so early in life was distinguished by so high an office and royal bearing.

Again we enter the Forum, but it is now high noon. A noted orator has ascended the pulpit, where public speakers were accustomed to stand when addressing the assemblies. This pulpit was ornamented with brazen beaks of ships, which had been taken by the Romans in their many wars. Such a beak was named a rostrum, and the pulpit so adorned was called the *Rostra*, or the Beaks, – often termed in modern books a rostrum. As the orator of the day began to speak, a youth might have been seen pressing through the crowd, and listening with wrapt attention to the eloquent words which fell from the speaker's lips. As the burst of impassioned appeal became more persuasive, the dark eyes of the youth flashed with responsive fire, and his cheek glowed with a flush of kindling enthusiasm. Though he wears now the robes of a Roman patrician, we recognize him as the same person whom we beheld at midnight entering the temple in the attire of

a High Priest of Jupiter.

Again the scene changes to midnight, but it is not in the Roman Forum, but at a grand feast in one of the sumptuous palaces of a Roman lord. Amidst a party of gay and joyous young men, seemingly intent only upon luxurious pleasures, we see once more the face and figure of this same youth who has already so attracted our interest and admiration. Priest, student, devotée of pleasure, little did his companions or acquaintances imagine that this young Julius Cæsar, patrician born, but at the same time personally inclined towards the plebeian party, would become Julius Cæsar, future Master of Rome, and therefore ruler of nearly all of the then known world. This Julius Cæsar became the greatest hero of Roman history, and ranks as one of the three heroes of ancient days, – Alexander of the Greeks, Hannibal of the Carthaginians, and Julius Cæsar of the Romans, forming the famous trio.

Again we must return to the old exile among the ruins of Carthage. One day he is awakened from his hopeless despondency by wild rumors from Rome. His rival and enemy, Sylla, had equipped a fleet and sailed away to wage war with Mithridates. The friends of Marius now rally again, and the old exile is brought back from Africa in triumph and given the command of a large army. As he pretended to be the friend of the common people, they flocked to his standard. Vast multitudes of revolted slaves, outlaws, and desperadoes joined his forces, which now advanced toward Rome. As soon as Marius gained

possession of the city, he began a dreadful work of murder and destruction. He beheaded one of the consuls, and ordered his head to be set up as a spectacle of horror in the public square. Blood ran like a red river in the streets of Rome. Patricians of the highest rank and station were everywhere seized without warning, without trial, and put to torture and death.

It is midnight in the great city, and under cover of the darkness, the evil deeds of blood-thirsty men, fired by hatred and lawless ambition, are renewed with fresh ferocity.

Against his bitterest enemies Marius contrived special modes of execution, in order to wreak upon them his insatiable revenge for his exile, and consequent sufferings and privations.

See! a party of men, composed of soldiers, and an enfuriated mob of people are dragging a lord of noble rank up to the top of a high rock, known as the Tarpeian Rock, from the summit of which state criminals were hurled down the precipice, upon sharp rocks below, where they were left to die in awful torture. This patrician, or Roman noble, had incurred the especial animosity of Marius, and so by his orders, the proud old man is torn from family and friends; and without trial, with the senate powerless to help, he is dragged here at midnight to suffer the ignominious and terrible death of a state criminal. This noted Tarpeian Rock still stands in Rome, and it received its name from this ancient story. In early times there was a Roman girl, named Tarpeia, living in the ancient city, when it was besieged by an army from a neighboring country. The soldiers of the besieging forces

wore golden bracelets upon their arms, as well as shields; and upon demanding that Tarpeia should open the gates to them, she declared that if they would give her, "those things they wore upon their arms," she would comply with their demands. She meant, of course, their bracelets; but not knowing the word by which they were designated, she brought upon herself a fearful doom. The soldiers agreed to grant her desire, and so she opened to them the gates. As they passed within, they threw their shields upon the poor girl, in proud derision, instead of giving her the coveted bracelets, exclaiming, "Here are the things we wear upon our arms." Tarpeia was crushed to death beneath the weight of the ponderous shields; and so the spot where she fell became a rock of blood, and was ever afterwards called, in remembrance of her sad fate, the Tarpeian Rock. There is a further legend connected with this spot, for some of the ignorant people believe that in the interior of one of the many caverns, which have been found perforating this rock, Tarpeia still sits, enchanted, covered with gold and jewels. But should any one attempt to find her, he is fated to lose his way, and never to return from his reckless adventure. But the bloody triumph of Marius was of short duration. He was seized with a fatal sickness, and the cruel tyrant was obliged to meet an enemy he could not conquer. Death meted out to him some of the horrible torments he had inflicted upon others, as he died in delirious ravings, haunted by the presence of phantom foes. His son Marius assumed his father's power; but Sylla, having returned from the Asiatic wars, and in

his turn taking possession of the city of Rome, the followers of Marius were put to death with the same ferocity with which they had murdered others, and Sylla even exceeded the bloody deeds which had so brutally been performed by his hated rival. Thus the city of Rome was again plunged into wild confusion, and the scenes of murder and massacre, with all their shocking horrors, were re-enacted.

It is at this time that the young Julius Cæsar first becomes a prominent figure in that bloody drama. Although Julius Cæsar was a patrician by birth, he was favorable to the plebian party. The elder Marius had married his aunt, and Cæsar himself had married a daughter of Cinna, who was four times consul, and was a powerful and ardent partisan of the party of Marius. Julius Cæsar, although at this time a very young man, was too prominent a person to be overlooked by Sylla, in his vengeance against the plebian party. The friends of Julius Cæsar tried to plead his youth with Sylla, saying that surely such a mere boy could do no harm. But Sylla had marked the aspiring spirit of the young nobleman, who with all his love of gayety and pleasure had not neglected his studies, and who was already gaining the dangerous reputation of an eloquent orator. Sylla now demanded that Julius Cæsar should divorce his wife Cornelia, the daughter of Cinna. Cæsar absolutely refused, partly from devotion to his wife, and partly from a proud indomitable spirit, which thus early was a prominent trait in his character, and which made him brave any danger rather than allow himself to be controlled. Knowing

that punishment for his refusal to comply with the commands of Sylla would be destruction, Cæsar fled from Rome. Sylla deprived him of his rank and titles, confiscated the property of his wife and his own estates, and placed his name on the list of public enemies.

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.