

pebbles that create a slight ripple near the side and are soon lost in the full-flowing waters of the stream. In this campaign he proved himself a man of action, who knew now to take advantage of a victory gained over his opponents. This series of brilliant successes in Asia Minor was interrupted only by his visit to Gordium, once the far-famed Capital of the Phrygian Kings, wherein was preserved the chariot of the celebrated Midas. An ancient prophecy had promised the sovereignty of Asia to him who would untie the bark knot which bound the yoke to the pole. Alexander visited the citadel in which the chariot was guarded, in order to endeavour to accomplish a task that had hitherto baffled the efforts of the wisest heads. Some historians say that Alexander drew out a peg and thus untied the knot; others maintain that he cut it with his sword. Which of these versions is the true one is a matter of little import, all historians unite in stating that the gods by a terrific storm of thunder and lightning proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that Alexander had solved the difficulty. This incident, which appears so trivial to the grave historian of our day, aroused enthusiasm in the breasts of the Greeks for their great commander, because they considered him to be the favourite son of the gods. Alexander took advantage of these outbursts of fidelity and devotedness to push rapidly forward; city after city opened its gates to the conquering hero, and soon Alexander had arrived at the very borders of Persia. The countless hosts of Darius were being rapidly concentrated at Issus. Alexander, with his heroic little band of devoted Greeks, fearlessly advanced to join issue with them, and in one mighty onslaught overcame the insipid mercenaries of the East. At the close of the fight Darius fled and left his treasures, his wife, his family, and his retinue in the hands of his conqueror. Alexander, by this victory, also obtained possession of Phœnicia and Egypt, almost without striking a single blow.

Then followed his famous interview with the high priest Jaddus of Jerusalem. He intended to chastise the inhabitants of the city for their loyalty to the cause of the Persian king, but the grace of the Almighty changed his design as he recog-

nized in the venerable patriarch a person who had appeared to him in a dream and promised him the empire of the East. Alexander was filled with such an admiration for this saintly man that he not only confirmed the privileges enjoyed by the Jews, but also bestowed upon them many tokens of his special favour, and ever afterwards continued to be their true protector. After this short intermission from military operations, Alexander advanced to Arbela, and once more administered to Darius a crushing defeat. The victory of Arbela was decisive; the three Capitals, Babylon, Susa and Persepolis, surrendered to him, Darius became a fugitive and a prisoner in the hands of one of (his own) generals. Alexander gave the Persians no time to recruit and shortly after overcame Darius in another battle, in which the Persian troops were completely vanquished and Darius himself was murdered by Bessus, his trusted though treacherous general. Alexander, having now subjugated the whole of Persia, advanced to India and became the ruler of that far-famed land. After this brilliant campaign the youthful conqueror of the world returned to Susa to settle the affairs and government of his immense dominions.

Having thus briefly outlined the military exploits of Alexander, it is incumbent upon us to give a short appreciation of his character. We shall consider him as a general, as a statesman and as a man. He was beyond doubt the greatest general of antiquity. He was noted for his bravery, intrepidity, and the lightning rapidity of his actions. When in a battle the fates seemed to be against him, and it appeared that fickle fortune had at last ceased to smile upon her favourite son; by one strategetic movement he regained the prestige he had lost, threw his opponents into confusion, and left them dumbfounded and utterly routed. Some historians censure Alexander for his rashness; these, however, do not take into consideration the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed. They first establish an ideal conception of what in their opinion a general should be and then proceed to pass sentence upon Alexander, according to this artificial standard. Alexander's seeming rashness was in almost every instance in conformity with