Notes to the Old English
Letter of Alexander to Aristotle

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古英語『アリストテレス宛アレクサンドロス大王書翰』への註
井 上 省 紀

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訂、加筆した上で、合併したものである。

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語理解を志向する。原典は次の刊本に依拠した。

Letter of Alexander the Great to Aristotle. S. Rypins (ed.) 1924. Three
Old English Prose Texts. EETS. OS. 161, pp. 1-50; (repr.) 1971 New York:
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Notes to the Old English *Letter of Alexander to Aristotle*

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Here is the composition of the letter of Alexander, the great king and the more illustrious Macedonian king, which he writ and sent to Aristotle, his master, about the situation of India, the great country, and about the extensiveness of his expeditions and marches that he accomplished throughout the world. First he said thus in the very first part of the letter: I am always mindful, even amid the wavering perils of our battles alike, that thou, my dearest teacher exactly next to my mother and sisters, thou art the most beloved friend to me. And because I knew thee to be well learned in wisdom, thereupon I thought, therefore, to write to thee about the inhabited land of India, and about the situations of heavens, and about unnumbered kinds of snakes, and men, and wild animals to the end that thy study and most well-ordered genius might add somewhat to the knowledge of these things of mine. Although

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in thee the consummate prudence and sagacity and the learning of right do not demand any assistance, yet I willed that thou shouldst understand my deeds that thou lovest and the things that are unseen of thee which I had beheld in India through manifold hardships and through great perils with the army of the Greeks. I write to thee and make them known. And each of them is especially worthy to be had in memory according to the fashion in which I have surveyed it. I would not believe the relations of any man about a great many of the wondrous things, that they could be so, until I saw them myself with mine eyes. The earth is to be wondered at. She is shewn to the spectators through what good kind of things she produces
first or what bad kind of things then. She is bringing forth the well-known, and massive ores, and wondrous creatures. All those things were to be hardly known to the men that notice and observe them on account of the variety of the appearances. But, those things that come into my mind before all now, about those I write to thee lest useless talking

3 or shameful lying should be imputed to me. Oh! Thou thyself also knowest the characteristics of my mind have never passed the limit of truth and right as a matter of habit. And I told those things in word more sparingly than they had been done in deed. Now I, however, hope and believe that thou wilt perceive these things so that by no means mayest thou suppose me to be boasting and telling about the greatness of our warfare and battle. Therefore I often wished and willed that fewer of them should be so troublesome. I give thanks to the army of the Greeks, especially to the strength of the youth and to that unconquered army of ours, because they were with me in easy circumstances and did not turn away under hardships, but they always stayed with me in patience, so that I was named the King of all the kings. Rejoice thou in those honours, that dear teacher of mine. And now I write those things jointly to thee and to Olimpiade, my mother, and my sisters because a common love shall be for both of ye two, and if it

4 is something else, then thou appearest to be less trusted to than have I been trusting to thee till now. In the earlier letters that I sent to thee, I instructed thee and told of the eclipse of the sun and the moon, and of the orbits and positions of the stars, and of the characteristic marks of the
air. All those things can never be otherwise than they were so foreordained and set forth in order by a great intellect. And now I write all these new narratives on paper for thee. When thou shalt read them, then know thou that they were all such as it behoved the thoughts of thine Alexander to sent to thee. In the month of May we overcame and overpowered him, Darius the king of the Persians, at the river Ganges and obtained all his territory in our power there. And we appointed and assigned our high officers there, and we were made wealthy in many regal honours by the eastern peoples. I told thee about it in the earlier letter. And lest the narration should seem to ye to be writ about it more manifoldly,

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I will to let it so alone and tell of those which have now happened there. On the last days of the month of July we came into the land of India and into the locality of Pasiace. And then we overcame and overpowered Porus the king with astonishing rapidity. And we took all his country in our power, and we were honoured by the land with many kingly riches, but I willed that thou shouldst understand the things that are worthy to thee to be had in mind. First I write to thee about an enormous number of troops under him, because there were sixteen thousand of men and eight hundred of horsemen entirely arrayed in military equipments besides innumerable foot soldiers. And we captured four hundred of elephants there then, on which archers stood up furnished with weapons. And the elephants bare on their backs the towers and the turrets that the armed soldiers stood in. After that we came across the royal town of Porus with our weapons. And we
looked at his hall and those royal houses of his with care: there were
golden columns, very great, and strong, and firm. They were of exceed-
ingly great height on high: there were four hundred of columns, which we
reckoned by the measure. The walls were also golden, covered with
golden plates nailed to the thickness of a finger onto them. When I willed
to observe those things more accurately and went farther, then I saw a
golden vine, strong and firm. And those branches of its hung over the col-
umns. Then I was utterly amazed at this: that there were golden leaves on
the vine, and its tendrils and its fruits were of crystals and a sma-
raged. Moreover that kind of gem hung from among the crystals. All his
bed-chambers and his principal chambers were most especially adorned
with uniones, large pearls, and with carbuncles, that kind of gems. On
the outside they were builted of ivories that were wonderfully white and
fair: they

propped the pillars of sypresses and the pillars of laurels from outside, and
they supported golden pillars from without and stood intertwined there-
among. And there were countless treasures of gold inside and out, and
they were manifold and of more various kinds. And there were carried out
many jewelled vessels, and drinking-vessels of crystal, and golden
jars. Seldom did we find any silver there. After I had had all these things
subject to my rule, then I willed to see the depths of India. Then I arrived
in the land of the Caspians with all my army, where there was the most
fertile ground of the inhabited district then. And I really wondered at the
richness of the soil, and I admired the favourable condition of the ground
greatly, and I, even rejoicing in my mind, willed to scrutinise those lands
more carefully. Those inhabitants of the land said to us then that we had to be on our guard against various

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kinds of snakes and fierce wild animals lest we should come upon them. Their multitude abide in these hills and valleys, and in woods, and in fields and hide themselves in the holes in rocks. But I nevertheless willed to travel the dangerous way and paths rather than the safer ways to the end that I might encounter him, the Porus fleeing from the battle, before he might escape into the deserts of the earth. I took with me then two hundred and fifty of guides that knew the directer ways of the journeys. Then in the month of August we marched through the blazing sands and through the places destitute of water and any moisture. And I promised a reward to those who would expertly lead us through the unknown lands of India and would guide me along with my army into the land of Bactria unhurt. And I desired most especially that they should lead me to the hidden weavers of fine purple cloth, who, besides, span wonderfully from that kind of tree of the sun, from its leaves and from the fleece

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out of the tree, and also wrought and wove it into a very precious web; but then they, those inhabitants, had striven to do the will of our enemies rather than ours, because they led us through the lands in which there were intolerable kinds of snakes and fierce wild animals. When I myself understood and perceived for my part that those hardships befell me; because I had previously disregarded and had not heeded the more profitable advices of my friends and those men who had spoke to me with disapproval of it that I had travelled the ways; Then I commanded my warriors
and ordered them that they should equip themselves with their weapons. And they went forth in force. And moreover, those troops of mine, and those retainers of mine, and all my army, they carried with them and conveyed a huge amount of gold and jewels which they had plundered and taken by force, because they thought and feared that if they left it behind, then their enemies thereby might secretly seize it and take it away. And truly, these retainers of mine

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and all my troops were enormously enriched, so that they could hardly bear off and carry off all those burdens of the gold with them. Even so, no one of their weapons was a light load because I had commanded them to cover over all their weapons, of those warriors of mine and all my troops and army, with golden plates. And all my army was in like manner as a star or a flash of lightning on account of the abundance of the gold. It shone out and was bright as well before me as round me with magnificent array, and carried the military ensigns and the banners before me; And there was so great a wonder, a spectacle, of my army in its beauty compared to those of all the other monarchs that had been in the world; when I myself inspected and looked at my good fortune, and my glory, and the strength of my youth, and the happiness of my life, then I was somewhat puffed up with joy in my mind. But as it often happens in the

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more pleasant circumstances and in the more favourable circumstances that fate and fortune often reverse themselves and change themselves into something else, it happened to us then that we became grievously afflicted and oppressed with thirst. Thereafter we suffered and endured the thirst
with difficulty, when the retainer of mine who was named Seferus found water in a hollow stone, and then drew it with a helmet, and brought it to me. And he, my retainer, himself was thirsty; and yet he desired my life and health rather than his own. When he brought the water to me as I have said formerly, then I summoned my troops and all my noble retainers together and then poured it out down before the face of them all lest I should drink it and that retainer of mine, and my army, and all that were with me should thirst for it. And then I praised the deed of that retainer of mine Seferus before them all and bestowed the gifts of great value upon him before the face of them all

because of the deed. And then, when those troops of mine had been encouraged and calmed down, then we went forth by the way along which we had previously endeavoured to march. Then it was not long before we approached some river in the desert. A reed and a vine stood on the bank of the river and a silver fir-tree, that very long kind of tree, of greatness and bigness grew and flourished by the cliff. When we arrived at the river, then on account of the intolerable thirst which had been attacking myself, and also all my army, and the neats that were with us I commanded my army to be at rest and stop. When we had been encamped, then I willed to alleviate and slake my thirst. Then I tasted the water, when it was bitterer and more horrible to drink than any other that I had ever tasted. A man was not able to drink it, and neither was any neat of his able to partake of it. I was sorely afflicted with the dumb neats in my mind then, because I knew that men were able to endure the thirst more easily than the
neats. There was in company with me a vast multitude of four-footed
neats: a great multitude, one thousand, of elephants of excessive bigness
which bare and carried the gold and two thousand and four hundred of
horses besides the cavalry and twenty thousand of foot soldiers. Again
there were two thousand and five hundred of mules that carried those bur-
dens, and thirty thousand of pack-horses and oxen that bare the
wheat, and two thousand of Arabian camels, and five hundred of horned
cattle some of which were daily made into food. Besides, there were an in-
calculable number of horses, and of mules, and of Bactrian camels, and of
elephants. The immense host travelled after us. They were all afflicted
and oppressed with intolerable thirst. Consequently, those men, they
licked the iron implements at one time and they tasted oil at another and
slaked the terrible thirst with it. Thereafter some men drank the urine out
of their private parts on account of the hardship. That thing was unpleas-
ant for me on two sides then:

first, in the matter of my own distress, and, second, of my troops’. Then I
commanded each man to arm himself with his weapons and set forth and
after that also commanded strictly that, the man that was not equipped
with his weapons after the military manner, he should be thereby killed
with weapons. Thereupon they seriously wondered why in a state of so
terrible thirst they had to carry the heaviness and bigness of the weapons
where no enemy appeared, but I knew nevertheless that our course of
march was through the lands and places in which there were various kinds
of living of snakes and fierce wild animals and that, we that were ignorant
and uninformed of that land, some hardship could, therefore, come upon
us upon a sudden. Then we went forth by the bank of the river. Then it was the eighth hour of the day, when we came to some town. The town was builded on an island in the middle of the river. The town was set and made out of the reed, a kind of tree, which grew on the

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bank of the river and about which we have writ and spoke formerly. Then we noticed and perceived a few human beings dwelling in the town half naked. When they saw us, they secretly concealed themselves in their houses forthwith. Then I desired to look at the men in the face that they might shew us the way to fresh and sweet water. When we waited for a long time and no man would come to us, then I ordered a few of arrows to be sent into the town to the extent that if they would not come to us of their own will, they had to come out under compulsion for fear of a battle. When they were the more extremely affrighted and hid themselves more securely, then I commanded two hundred of my warriors out of the army of the Greeks to arm themselves with light weapons. And they advanced to the town by swimming and swum over towards the island through the river. When they had swum a fourth width of the river, then a dreadful thing befell to them: that just then there was a multitude of nightmares, more colossal and savager in appearance

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than the elephants, submerged the men to the bottom of the river and among the waves of the water, and tore them and made them bloody with their mouths, and consumed them all in such a manner that none of us knew what had become of each of them. I was terribly angry with those guides of mine then, who had led us into such danger, and then com-
manded one hundred and fifty of them to be shoved into the river. Soon after they got thereinto, those hippopotamuses got ready like so and pulled them to pieces as they had done the others before. They, the hippopotamuses, swarmed in the river as thick as ants: there were such a countless number of hippopotamuses. Then I ordered my trumpet to be blown and the army to set forth, when it was the eleventh hour of the day. And we went forth. Then we noticed men sail along the river. They had builded that which they sat on in the fashion of a ship out of the reed, out of that kind of tree, which stood on the river-bank.

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When we asked them, the men, about fresh water, then they answered us, and told in their language where we could find it, and said that we could find a certain vastly great natural pool in which there was fresh and sweet water abundantly and that we could arrive at it very quickly if we were diligent. And then for this reason that we had been able to endure so many hardships, we, thereby, marched all the night afflicted with thirst and utterly fatigued with the burdens of our weapons. And during the whole night that we marched, thence lions, and bears, and tigers, and leopards, and wolves annoyed us continuously, and we withstood them. Then on the following day, when it was the eighth hour of the day, then we came to the natural pool that had previously been foretold to us. It was all surrounded one mile in breadth with a wood then. There was, however, a way to the lake. I was then rejoicing at the sweet and fresh water and then at once slaked my thirst first,

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and then all my troops. Then I ordered our horses and all our domestic
animals to be watered forthwith, for they had been severely wasted by thirst. Soon after that I commanded the army to be encamped, and the encampment was then twenty of furlongs in length and in breadth likewise. After they had been encamped, then I ordered those groves to be cut down and that wood to be felled that it might be the easier for men to walk to the body of water, to the natural pool by which we were encamped. Then I ordered all those horses, and domestic animals, and elephants of ours to be gathered and ordered them to be brought to the middle of our camps and among the tents lest any of them should perish, because it was unknown to us what might happen to us in the space of the night. And then I also commanded that fire should be kindled out of the wood which had been cut down there. The army that was with me, they did so then. And they kindled one thousand and also five hundred of fires there then, because

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I did it that we might have light and help from the fire if some hostile thing should befall to us at night. When we had kindled as many of the fires as had by then seemed to us good, then my trumpet was blown, and I took food, and so did all my army. It was one hour to evening then. And then I ordered two thousand of the golden lanterns to be lit which I had with me. Then before the rising of the moon, there came scorpions, that species of reptile, then because they had been in the habit of making use of the body of water. There was a great multitude of reptiles: there were an incalculable number of reptiles. And they hastened to those camps of ours incredibly and fell down into them. Then after that there came horned serpents, Carastis, that kind of snake. They were all various in colour, because some of them were red, some black, others white. Those scales of some’s
shone and glittered then as though they had been golden. When a man looked on,

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all the land resounded with the whistling of those reptiles. And not a little fear of them was also upon us, but then we defended ourselves with shields and also slew and killed them with long-shafted spears, and many were also destroyed by fire. We endured these sufferings thus: that we fought and strove so against the reptiles for the space of at least two of hours in the night. After they, the reptiles, had drunk of the water, then they departed thence and did not annoy us at all. Then it was the third hour of the night when we willed to rest ourselves, then there came again serpents more wonderful and more terrible than the others had been: they had two heads, and also some had three. They were of remarkable bigness: they were as massive as columns, and also some were higher and more massive than they. Those reptiles came thither out of the neighbouring hills and caves to the end that they might drink the water. The reptiles moved and crawled strangely: those breasts of theirs were upturned and they moved on the

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back. And all the while that they were executing this movement they rent and tore the earth with the scales and with the mouth alike. They, the reptiles, had three-forked tongues, and when they breathed, then the breath went out of them as regards the mouth by breathing like a burning torch. The breathing, the breath, of the reptiles was quite deadly and poisonous, and many men died from that pestilential breathing of theirs. We fought with these reptiles for a longer time than one hour in the night, and
they, the reptiles, killed thirty of men out of the army and twenty of my own retainers. I made, however, a request to the army then that they should have the good courage for the things which had come upon us, so many troubles and hardships. Then it was the fifth hour of the night, when we had a mind to rest ourselves, but then there came such great white lions in a like shape to bulls; and they all walked roaring fearfully. When the lions came thither, then they rushed upon us at once, and we shielded ourselves from them as far as we could. And such trouble and such hardships, together with the wild beasts, were befallen to us in the black night and in the dark. So also there came leopards of immense bigness, and many other wild animals and also tigers worried us there in the night. Even so, there came bats, which were so large in a like shape to doves, and they struck against our faces and pulled us. They, the bats, also had teeth in a like shape to men's, and they wounded and rent those men with them. In addition to the other afflictions and troubles that had come upon us, suddenly came then some hugely bulky wild beast larger than any of the others. The wild beast had three horns on the forehead and was fearfully furnished with the horns. The Indians call the wild beast Odontotyrannus. The wild beast had a head similar to a horse's and was of a black colour. When it, this wild beast, drunk of the water, then it beheld that encampment of ours, and then rushed upon us and upon

our encampment upon a sudden. It did not care for the heat of the glowing flame and fire which there was in front of it, but it passed and walked over
all. When I gave strength to that vigour of the army of the Greeks and we willed to shield ourselves from it, then it killed twenty-six of my warriors at once in one onslaught, and it trode fifty-two down, and it made them cripples so that they were not able to be useful for any occupation to me. And then we scarcely shot it with arrows and also with long-shafted spears and slew and killed it. Then it was before dawn, when there appeared a pestiferous cloud of a white colour and also different colours: it was variegated in rings. And among the pestiferous cloud that appeared to be such there many men died from that pernicious stench of its. Then there also came into the army Indian mice in a like shape to foxes... of the size of them. Thereupon they bit and wounded

our four-footed animals, and many died from their wounds. Although they wounded some of those men, yet each of them escaped from death. Then it was previous to dawn when there came fowls called Nocticoraces, which were in a like shape to a gerfalcon. They, the fowls, were of a brown colour, and those beaks and claws of theirs were all black. The fowls beset the bank of the natural pool wholly; and the fowls were no nuisances to us nor griefs, but they drew up with their claws the wonted fish that were in the natural pool and tore them. Then we neither put them, the fowls, to flight thence nor did harm to them, but thereupon they departed thence. When it was day-light, then I gave orders to all my guides that had led me into such hardships and then commanded them to be bound and those bones and shanks of theirs to be broken in pieces that at night
they might be sucked by the reptiles that sought water, and I also ordered those hands of theirs to be hewed off, because they deservedly suffered the punishment for the torture into which they had led and brought us of their own accord before. Then I ordered my trumpet to be blown and the army to march by the way which we had previously endeavoured to travel. Then we marched through the lands easily defended and over the ground difficult of access. Then again there was collected a great army of Indian men, the barbarous, who inhabited those lands, and then against them did we fight. When we perceived hotter fights, a hotter war, coming to us again, then we abandoned the perilous ways and paths, and then we travelled the more advantageous. And so with my army, uninjured, we came into the land of Bactria, enormously enriched by gold and other riches, and we were received there kindly and courteously. When we

had set forth out of the land, out of Bactria, again, then we arrived in the borders of the Medes and the Persians, and then we had again a bitter fight there anew. And I was encamped there with them, with my army, for twenty of days. Then it was the space of seven of nights after we had set out thence that we came to the land, to the station, where Porus the king was camped with his army. And he really trusted to the strongholds of the land rather than his fight and war. When he wished that he might know of me and my warriors, then he enquired of the messengers of my camps and asked about it. When it was told me that he desired to know of me and my army, then I laid my kingly robes aside and clad myself in strange clothes and myself in mean garments as if I had been
some common man and I had been in need of food and wine. Then

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I was among the camps of Porus as I have mentioned formerly. As soon as he heard of me there then and he was told that there a man was come from Alexander’s camps, then he commanded me to be taken to him at once. When I was led to him, then he inquired of me and asked what Alexander the king was doing, and what sort of man he was, and what age. I derided him with my answers then and said to him that he was grown weak with age and was aged to such an extent that he was not able to become warm otherwise than at the fire and at live coals. Then at once he was truly glad and joyful of those mine answers and words, because I said to him that he was grown so weak with age, and then he also said, “How is he, so superannuated a man, able to succeed in any struggle with me, indeed, because I am myself young and vigorous?” When he asked me about his affairs more earnestly, then I said that I did not know about many of his affairs and had seldom seen him, the King, because I was man

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to his retainer and was a keeper of his cattle, his herdsman. When he heard those words, then he gave me a writing, a letter, and demanded of me that I should deliver it to Alexander the king, and also promised me a reward if I would deliver it to him. I promised him that I would so do as he had bidden me. So I was departed thence thereupon and came back to my camps. Then before I read the writing as well as after that, thence I was deeply moved to a burst of laughter. Consequently, master, I tell these things to thee, and Olimpiade, my mother, and my sisters that ye may hear and recognise the overweening presumption of the barbarian king. I
had by then reconnoitred the camp of the king and his strongholds that he had marched into with his army. Then on the next morning Porus the king came

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into my power forthwith in company with all his army and noble retainers, since he had recognised that he had not been able to make war against me. And getting rid of the enmity that had previously been between us, thereby he became a friend to me and all the army of the Greeks, my comrade and allay. And then I restored his kingdom to him: then with the gladness of the unhoped-for favour to the kingdom none of which he himself had looked to, thence he shewed all his treasure to me thereupon, and then he enriched both me and also all my troops by gold. And he had cast and wrought both of the images of Hercules and Liber, those two gods, in gold and had erected them both on the eastern part of the earth; then I willed to know whether the images were cast quite as he had said and then ordered them both that had been cast in gold to be bored through. Then I ordered the holes through which they were investigated to be closed up and filled up with gold again

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and then ordered a sacrifice to be offered to both the gods. Then we went forth and willed to notice and observe more of those more wonderful and more magnificent things, but then, as we journeyed then, we did not see anything else but the waste fields, and a wood, and dunes by the ocean, which were inaccessible for men on account of wild animals and reptiles. Then I went along by the sea to the end that I might try whether I could journey round all the earth that the ocean surrounds; but then
those inhabitants said to me that the sea, all the ocean, was in darkness to such an extent that no man could traverse it by ship. And then I willed to travel through the left quarters of India lest anything in the land should be covered over or concealed from me. As we journeyed, then all the land was dried up, and a fen, and reeds, and reedy fen-lands. Then there came some wild beast

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out of the fen, out of the fastness, all of a sudden. All the back of the wild beast was studded with pegs such as snoods. And the wild beast had a round head like the moon; and the wild beast was called Quasi Caput Luna. And those breasts of its were similar to those of a hippopotamus, and it was furnished and provided with hard and great teeth. And then it, the wild beast, slew my two warriors. And we could not wound the wild beast either with a spear or with any weapon then, but we only just felled it with iron hammers and sledge-hammers and beat it to death. Then we reached the woods of India, the uttermost parts of the earth, thereupon, and then I commanded the army to be encamped there by the river that was called Biswicmon. The camps were fifty of furlongs in length and in breadth likewise. Then I willed to sit at meat, when it was the eleventh hour of the day, then on a sudden it was commanded that we should endeavour to take up

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our weapons and that there should be great need for us; that we should defend ourselves. As had been enjoined on us, so we did then and got the weapons for ourselves, when there came out of that wood a great multitude of elephants, an immense host of the wild beasts. They came thither
to the end that they might attack those camps of ours. Then immediately I ordered the horses to be harnessed up and the cavalry to mount and commanded them to get control of a great flock of swine on horses and drive it against the elephants, because I knew that swine were hateful to the wild beasts and that their grunting could affright them. And then, soon after the elephants saw the swine, then they were affrighted and set out towards the wood at once; And we lodged in the encampment safely for the night, for I had fortified it with a bulwark that neither wild beasts nor other hardships could hurt us. When it was day-light, then we marched into another inhabited land of India. Then we

came into some great field. We saw rough women and men there then. They were as shaggy and hairy as wild animals, and they were nine of feet high. And they were a naked people: they took no interest in any clothing. The Indians called these men Ictifafonas. They drew up those whales from the neighbouring rivers and meres, and eat them, and lived on them, and drunk water after that; When I willed to notice and observe the men closer at hand, then they fled into the waters forthwith, and they hid themselves there in the holes in rocks. When we saw among those groves of trees and those trees a great multitude of cenocephaluses afterwards, which were come to the end that they might wound us, then we shot them with arrows and put them to flight thence forthwith. They retired into the wood then. Then we marched into the deserts of India subsequently, and we saw nothing of wonder or magnificence there then. And then we came back into the land of Pasiace
whence we had set out before, and we were encamped there by the pieces of water that were near, and we pitched all our tents there in the evening, and a great many fires were also kindled there. Then there came a really strong wind and a breaking all at once; And the wind grew fierce to such an extent that it blew down many of those tents of ours, and it also distressed our four-footed animals deeply then. Thereupon I ordered all the tents and loads to be collected together again. And they, the loads and the things of those camps of ours, were collected together with difficulty for the wind. And then we were encamped in a more sheltered and warmer valley; When we had been encamped and all our things had been ready to hand, then I commanded all the army that they should sit at meat and take food. And they did so then. When it approached evening, then the winds began to grow again, and the weather began to get rough. And the intense cold grew in the evening, when much snow fell there, and it

snowed so heavily as if great fleece had fallen down. When I saw the immenseness and greatness of the snow, then methought and I knew that it would overwhelm all the encampment. Then I commanded the army that they should tread down the snow with feet. And all the fires were nearly quenched and extinguished by the greatness of the snow. There was, however, a favour to us in one respect: that the snow did not continue there for a longer time than one hour. Then soon afterwards, there was an intensely black cloud, mist, and then also came out of the black cloud burning fires. Thereafter the fires fell on the earth like burning torches, and all the field burned because of the burning of the fires. Then men said that they supposed that it was the anger of gods that had come
upon them there. Thereupon I commanded the army to tear the old clothing in pieces, and hold them against the fires, and shield themselves therewith. Then long afterwards, we had a serene and good night after

the hardships had ceased to detain us. And then we took food without injurious affairs and rested ourselves afterwards. And then I buried there five hundred of my retainers that had perished and become dead there amidst the snows and hardships and the fires which had come upon us there in the camps; And then I commanded the army to set forth out of the encampment thereupon. And then we marched forth by the sea. And we saw those high projecting ridges, and a valley, and the Ethiopian Sea there; moreover, we saw the great and mightier mountain which is called Enessios and that cavern of Liber, the god. Then I commanded condemned men to be shoved therein that I should know whether the story which I had previously been told about it was the truth: that no man was able to enter there and be sound ever afterwards unless he entered the cavern with offerings. After that it was also proven in the death of those men, because they perished on the third day after they

went into the cavern; And I prayed the divine powers humbly and earnestly that they might also honour me, the King and Lord of all the world, with glorious triumphs and that I might be led back into Macedonia to Olimpiade, my mother, and to my sisters and relatives. Then I willed to march into the land of Pasiace again. When I had set out with my troops, then there came two old men towards us on the way. Then I inquired of them and asked whether they knew about anything magnificent
in those lands. They answered me then and said that it was not a longer
journey than a man could traverse within ten days and that I, however,
could not accomplish the journey with all my troops together because of the narrowness of the ways, but that I could perform it in com-
pany with four thousand of men that I might see a magnificent something.
I was then exceedingly glad and joyful for those words of theirs. Then I
spake

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to them again and said to them with gentle words, "Tell me, la, ye two
old men, what sort of magnificent and illustrious thing it is that ye two
promise me that I will be able to see there." Then one of them two an-
swered me and said, "Thou seest, King, if thou accomplishest the jour-
ney, those two trees of the sun and the moon speaking in Indian and in
Greek. One of them two is the tree of the sun of the male sex, the
other, the tree of the moon of the female sex, and they tell what sort of
good thing or grievous thing shall happen to him to the man that enquireth
of them." I did not believe them then but supposed that they mocked at
me and said by way of insult, and so I said to my companions, "My glory
existeth from the eastern part of the world to the western part. And these
old decrepit barbarians defame me here now." I had a mind to order them
to be punished. They swore fervently then that they had said the sooth
and had not told any lie about those affairs. Then I willed to ascertain

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whether they had told me the truth, and my companions asked of me that
they might not be deprived of such mighty works, but that since it wasn't
a great distance to traverse, they might learn it by trial whether such was
it. Then I took three thousand of men with me and let the rest of my army remain there in Pasiace under Porus the king and under my high officers. Then we set forth, and the guides led us through the places deficient in water and through the insupportable lands of wild animals and reptiles that were called by wondrous names in Indian. When we drew near to the inhabited land, then we noticed both women and men clad in the skins of panthers and the hides of tigers, wild beasts, and wear no other. When I inquired of them and asked of what sort of race of people they were, then they answered me and said in their language that

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they were Indians. That place was spacious and pleasant, and there was a large amount of balsam, incense, and also it flowed out of the boughs of the trees, and the men of the land lived on it and eat it. When we scrutinised the place more intently and walked amid those groves, then I wondered at the pleasantness and fairness of the land. The bishop of that place came to meet us then. He, the bishop, was ten of feet high, and all that body of his was black without the teeth that were white, and, those ears of his pierced through, the ear-rings wrought in manifold kinds of gems were suspended. And he was clad in the skins of wild animals. Then he, the bishop, came to me, when he greeted me immediately and saluted according to the custom of his country, and also he asked me what I had come thither for and what I desired there. I answered him then that it pleased me to see the holy trees

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of the sun and the moon. Then he answered, "If thy companions are free from contact with women, then they are allowed to walk into the sacred
grov... forbad me to, and said that it was not
permitted to any man to kill any neat or cause bloodshed there, and directed me that I should pray to the foot of the trees that the sun and the moon might answer me with trustful answers concerning the things about which I would inquire. After these things had been done thus, we saw the light of the sun from the west then, and the light touched at the tops of the trees. The priest said then, "Now, all men, look up! And whatsoever things ye may enquire after, let each of ye meditate in his heart secretly. And no man must tell his thought in public in words that conceal nothing." When we stood quite near to the groves, the oracles, then I reflected in my mind whether I could gain all the world in my power by fighting and then, honoured with triumphs afterwards, I could

return into Macedonia to Olimpiade, my mother, and my sisters. The tree answered me in Indian speech then and said thus, "Thou, unconquered in battles, Alexander, thou becomest the King and Lord of all the world, but thou comest not into thy native land nevertheless, whence thou hast set out formerly, because the abode of thy spirits hath formerly fixed it so under pain of losing thine head." Since I was ignorant of the language, Indian speech, in which the tree spake to me, the bishop interpreted it to me then and said so. When my companions heard it that I was not allowed to return into my native land alive, then they were, therefore, desperately sad. Then I willed to ask again about more in the evening, but then the moon was not up yet. When we walked into the holy grove again and then we stood by the trees again, then we
said our prayers to the trees at once as we had done before. I also took therein with me my three most faithful friends that were my special confidants, who were, first, Perdicus, and, second, Clitomus, and, third, Pilottus, because I did not dread that any one of them might deceive me and because it was not right therein on account of the nobleness of that place to kill anyone in the place; Then I reflected in my mind and considered in mine in what sort of place I had to die. As soon as the moon rose, then she touched at the topmost parts of the trees with her splendour and the tree answered my thought and said thus, “Alexander, thou hast lived to the complete end of thy life, but in the month of May in the following year thou diest in Babylon by the hand of one in whom thou least supposest thou art deceived.” I was in a very sad

mood then, and so were my friends then that were there with me, and they wept helplessly, because my health was dearer to them than their own safety. Then we set out back towards our companions. And they willed to sit at meat, and I willed to remain silent because of the trouble of my mind, but then my companions entreated of me that in so great anxiety and distress of mind I would not mortify myself by fasting. Then I eat a great big meal contrary to the desire of my heart and then went to my resting-place betimes, because I willed to be ready at the rising of the sun that I might go thereinto again. Then on the morrow, when it dawned, then I started from sleep and then awoke my most faithful friends that I should walk into the holy place, but then the bishop rested himself yet and was clad and wrapped in
the skins of wild animals. The men in those lands are in want of iron and lead and have abundance of gold, and the men in the lands live on balsam. And clear, and sweet, and very pure water wells out of the neighbouring mountain; therefore the men drink it and live on it. When they sleep, then they rest without a bed and a bolster, but on the skins of wild animals, of which their bedding is. Then I awaked the bishop, and the bishop was three hundred years of age. When he, the bishop, had arisen, then I walked into the sacred place and for the third time began to enquire of the tree of the sun through the hand of what sort of man my end was determined or what sort of deathday my mother and my sisters had to experience immediately. The tree answered me in Greek then and said thus, “If I tell thee about the end of

thy life, thou changest the fate easily and seizest his hand. But I tell thee the truth that after an interval of a year and eight months thou diest in Babylon, distroyed not with a weapon made of iron as thou supposest, but with poison. Thy mother departeth from the world through a shameful and disgraceful death, and she lieth unburied on a road as food for birds and wild animals. Thy sisters survive happily for a long time. But then, thou, although thou, thou livest for a little while, yet thou becomest the King and Lord of the world. But enquire not thou anything of us two any more nor ask because we two have exceeded the limit for us two of daylight, but return thou to Pasiace and Porus the king.” My companions wept for this reason then, because I was allowed to live for so little a while. But then the bishop gave orders that they should not weep
lest the holy trees should be offended with their weeping and tears. And no other man than my most faithful friends heard the answer of the trees. And no man was allowed to tell it publicly lest, those barbarous kings whom I had previously reduced to subjection by force, thence they should delight in it that I was allowed to live for so little a while. And no more was any man allowed to make it openly known to the army lest they should be discouraged for that cause and the slower to do my will and promote my glory, because they had to come to advancement with me. And the sudden end of my life was not so unbearably painful to me as it was to me that I had less achieved glory than my desire to live had been fulfilled. I write about those things, that beloved master of mine, to the end that first thou mayst rejoice in the success of my life and also exult in those honours. And moreover,

may my memory remain undisturbed eternally and flourish as an example to earthly kings that they may the more certainly know that my glory and mine honour were greater than all the other kings' that had ever been in the world.