

THE MAILED FIST.

What did the militarism of
Alexander the Great achieve?

(Written specially for the "Stretcher" from a report of lecture given by Dr. D.M. Kay, C.F., at Lembet Camp, Salonika).

As a large number of the battlegrounds of Alexander the Great have been opened up by the conflict of today, a short discussion on Alexander's expedition will be of interest. Alexander the Great, son of Philipp of Macedon, was born here in Macedonia in the year 355 B.C., and right from his earliest years the fighting instinct was strong in him. Everyone has heard the story of the boy who said "Philipp my father will have conquered the whole world before I am grown". There was no luxury in those days, and fighting was specialised in by Philipp, who adopted a new formation for his soldiers. His infantry was ranged in groups 16 by 16. The front man was the Lochagos, or Sergeant Major, who was the bravest man in the Company. Behind him came a Sergeant, then a Corporal, and then the rank and file. This was called a Lochos (one file of 16) and the whole company was called Syntagma, the formation being called Phalanx (it was thus that the term "Phalanx" originated). On the wings he had light mounted infantry, who were armed with lances about 21 feet in length, held about 6 feet from the butt.

Philipp was assassinated by Pausanias in the year 336 B.C., and the engine of war which Alexander inherited was highly efficient. At that time there was no Kingdom of Greece, but a Council of Greek Cities, and by this council Alexander was voted to be leader of the Hellenes. Two years after his father's death, Alexander gathered up his highly trained army consisting of 35,000 infantry, 4,500 cavalry, secretaries, historians, and a prophet, and led them off on their Asiatic campaign. The crossing from Europe to Asia took place

at the Dardanelles, and although his coming was known to Darius—the ruler of the greater portion of the then known world—no steps were taken to oppose his landing. His first movements were towards the sea of Marmora, and King Darius gave instructions to the local governors to vanquish him. Memnon, one of these, gathered together a huge force and assembled at the Granicus River to give battle. The fight was a bloody one, and almost the whole Persian infantry was annihilated. In the battle Alexander fought valiantly in the middle of his men, but his life was saved by Kleitos, his friend. The march was continued to Sardis, inland from Smyrna, and although difficult of access the news of Alexander's previous success caused the Governor to capitulate at once to the Macedonian. City after city then fell before the invader, who at length decided to push on and meet King Darius himself. Mitelus was besieged and overthrown, and the invading army came on to Tarsus where Alexander developed severe fever. King Darius, hearing this, determined to attack, but ere he was able to move Alexander and his army had moved out and taken the pass of Syria Phoenicia. The Persian King then decided to attack Alexander in the rear, which was exactly what the latter desired as the configuration of the country afforded natural defence. By a clever manoeuvre Alexander was able to get his enemy at a disadvantage and in spite of overwhelming numbers Darius' army was completely shattered, and his wife and mother taken captive. Alexander then pushed on down the coast to Tyre and Sidon, the latter of which made a stubborn resistance, and held out for seven months. Palestine came next, and after conquering it the Philistine city of Gaza was besieged and taken.

The invincible army then moved on to Egypt, but no opposition was offered there. Governors were set up in each of the large centres and the city of Alexandria established. The Egyptian Gods were worshipped by the Conqueror who had a special sanctuary erected in Luxor Temple. After a three months sojourn, Alexander returned again to

Palestine, and came on to Nineveh. About this time he received letters from Darius offering to give him all the land west of the Euphrates if he would agree to peace, but his offer was refused. Darius thereupon raised a mighty army, and gave battle again, near Arbela. The victory again rested with Alexander, and shortly afterwards Darius was conquered and slain. The march was then continued to the Caspian Sea where Alexander met and married Roxana. India was next visited and the Punjab conquered, after which Alexander returned to Babylon.

During his stay in Egypt, Alexander had been told by the priests that he was of divine origin, and during his latter journeys he was recognised by the people whom he conquered as such. His own followers, however, refused to make obeisance to him. At a banquet, Alexander called on Kleitos, his most trusted friend, to worship him, and on the latter refusing, the conqueror drew a dagger and slew him. When he realised what he had done, his grief was uncontrollable.

In Babylon, while at the zenith of his power, Alexander contracted fever. His last physician had been crucified because he had been unable to cure one of the King's favourites. In a few days Alexander died, and instantly his mighty empire collapsed.

No better attempt to establish a world empire by the mailed fist was ever made, but like all others it failed, and today his name is scarcely known even here in his birthplace.

"GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD AND—"

What did the chicken say -
In a "sidey" kind of way -
When first he saw the day?
"Ma-me-laid!"

What did the messroom say—
In a sad but furious way—
When they saw it every day?
"Marmalade!!!"

A DIALOGUE.

Characters: Pte. Brown (on leave),
Mahmud (a Cairene).
Scene: Outside Sault's, Cairo.
Time: The Present—8.30 a.m.

Pte. Brown: (discovered dressed in drills, tailor made, of course, looking more like an imaginative lady artist's private soldier hero, than part of the Empire's Military Machine. He is smoking a cigarette, "Flag" brand, his pocket being unable to attain the ideal to which his clothes aspire. He is impatient, tapping his aggressively shining boots with a two piastre cane; his wristlet watch he occasionally regards but with evident mistrust). In soliloquy: "Why in the name of Jimmy Allan did I ever leave the Pig Island? I want to see the Pyramids, get up in the middle of the night to catch the tram at half-past-eight, get here with five minutes to spare, wait half-an-hour and still no tram. George distinctly told me in the 'Caffy' last night, 'No. 14 car, every half-hour'; the old ticker must be goosed, wish I'd bought a camera."

Enter Mahmud: (Clad in flowing burnouse, turban, and ridiculous tan boots, and carrying a cane slightly better than Pte. Brown's). To Brown very pleasantly: "Good morning, Mister New Zeelan', you wanta guide to-day?"

Pte. Brown: "Impshee yallah, you—"

Mahmud: (scenting a possible delicate reader, breaks in)—"No, please, you wanta guide, me verry good de guide; me take you to Peeramid de Cheops, de Spinkis, de temple built tree t'ousan' dears before de Kries, me guida Captaine las' nigh', me guida Moses, me no sharge you much—you giveit whatu like, me verry poor man, me two wives—one Cairo, one Soudan, fife schildrens, no mungaree."

Brown: "Iskoot, mafeesh faloos, impshee!"

Mahmud: "Ah! enta tarifa Arabi, ah, enta, koiess kiteer, eddini min fadlak b'ksheesh."

Brown: "Oh, shut up, get out, or I'll..."