

PLUTARCH

Historian, Ancient Greece

Excerpt from writings, A.D. 90, Translated by John Dryden

... For when any of his friends were sick, he would often prescribe them their course of diet, and medicines proper to their disease... He was naturally a great lover of all kinds of learning and reading; ...

... While Philip [Alexander's father] went on his expedition against the Byzantines, he left Alexander, then sixteen years old, [in charge] in Macedonia, ... not to sit idle, [he] reduced the rebellious ..., drove out the barbarous inhabitants, and plant[ed] a colony of several nations ..., [He] called the place after his own name, Alexandropolis.

...When he came to Thebes, ... the city ... was sacked and razed. Alexander's hope being that so severe an example might terrify the rest of Greece into obedience, ... thirty thousand, were publicly sold for slaves; and it is computed that upwards of six thousand were put to the sword.

Alexander, by founding more than seventy cities among the barbarian tribes, ... suppressed their savage and uncivilized customs ... Those whom Alexander conquered were more fortunate than those who escaped ... [He desired to give] all the races in the world ... one rule and one form of government, making all mankind a single people.

...And that the Grecians might participate in the honour of his victory he sent a portion of the spoils home to them particularly to the Athenians ... , and [with] all the rest he ordered this [message] to be sent: "Alexander the son of Philip, and the Grecians, ... won these from the barbarians who inhabit Asia. All the plate and purple garments, and other things of the same kind that he took from the Persians, except a very small quantity, which he reserved for himself, he sent as a present to his mother.

PLUTARCH (continued)

...For when his affairs called upon him, he would not be detained, ... either by wine, or sleep, spectacles, or any other diversion whatsoever...

...and Alexander, who was now proclaimed King of Asia, returned ... and rewarded his friends and followers with great sums of money, and places, and governments of provinces. Eager to gain honour with the Grecians, he wrote to them that he would have all [cruel governments] abolished, that they might live free according to their own laws... He sent also part of the spoils into Italy, ... to honour the zeal and courage of their citizen[s].

...Meantime, on the smallest occasions that called for a show of kindness to his friends, there was every indication on his part of tenderness and respect.

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