

By ROBERT CLANCY

Alexander the Great took time out from conquering the world to visit the famous Oracle of Ammon in Egypt. He told no one just what went on during his consultation, but when he emerged he was extremely pleased, and henceforth began to advertise himself as the son of Zeus. It was a very important consultation, influencing all of Alexander's later deeds, and consequently the state of the world right down to the present. This hitherto unknown interview between Alexander and the Oracle is now made known here for the first time.

After making his obsequies, the Macedonian king began questioning the Oracle:

ALEXANDER: Tell me, Oracle, what is my destiny?

ORACLE: Your destiny is in your hands.

AL: I take that to mean that my destiny lies in the power of my conquering arms. And when am I to stop?

OR: When the world grows weary of strife.

AL: Ha! No fear of that. But tell me, is there any limit to what I may conquer?

OR: That which cannot be subdued enjoys the sun whether it shines or not.

AL: (remembering Diogenes) A free spirit . . . But men hail me as a liberator. Is it not my glorious mission to bring liberty to the world?

OR: If it can be done by conquest, you can do it.

AL: Good! But one thing troubles me. This great Empire I am building—what is to become of it after I die? Will my descendants be able to perpetuate my work?

OR: He who brings liberty to the world needs no successor.

AL: How so? Can it mean—can it possibly mean—that I am immortal?

OR: He who strives to release man from his ancient bonds will live forever. Forever will his place be in the hearts of men. The laws he gives are laws of God. The bonds once broken, man will willingly obey such laws forever.

AL: (awed) Am I then the son of—God?

OR: There can be no other Father.

AL: Oh, what a revelation! I always thought I deserved a better father than Philip. And now, Oracle, your answers are a bit impersonal. Tell me, does all this really apply to *me*?

OR: If the sandal fits, wear it.