

CLEOPATRA.

Being an Account of the Fall and Vengeance of Harmachis, the Royal Egyptian.

AS SET FORTH BY HIS OWN HAND.

By H. RIDER HAGGARD,
Author of "King Solomon's Mines,"
"She," "Allan Quatermain,"
Etc., Etc., Etc.

"Do not afraid," I answered, "Perchance thou didst see naught but what was in thy mind. All things are shadows. How canst thou then know thy shadow, or what is and what only seems to be? But how loest thou? Remember thou, this sport is played on an end."

"It goes well," she said. "By to-morrow's dawn these tales will have gone round, and thou wilt be more feared than any man in Alexandria. Follow me, I pray thee."

CHAPTER XI.
OF THE WAYS OF CHARMION; AND OF THE CROWNING OF HARMACHIS AS THE KING OF LOVE.

THE following day I received the writing of my appointment as Astrologer and Magician-in-Chief to the Queen, with the pay and perquisites of that office, which were not small. Also rooms were given me in the palace, through which I passed at night to the high watch tower, whence I looked on the stars and drew their auguries. For at this time Cleopatra was much troubled about matters of political and not knowing how the great struggle among the Roman factions would end, but being very desirous to side with the strongest, she took constant counsel with me as to the warning of the stars. These I read to her in such manner as best seemed to fit the high interest of my ends. For Antony, the Roman Triumvir, was now in Asia Minor, and rumor ran very wrong because it had been told to him that Cleopatra was hostile to the Triumvirate, in that her General, Serapion, had aided Cassius. But Cleopatra protested loudly to me and others that Serapion had acted against her will. Yet Charmion told me that, as with Alienus, it was because of a prophecy of Diocorides, the unlucky, that the Queen herself had secretly ordered Serapion so to do. Nevertheless, this did not save Serapion, for to prove to Antony that she was innocent, she dragged the general from the sanctuary and slew him. Woe be to those who carry out the will of tyrants if the scale should rise against them! And so Serapion perished.

Meanwhile all things went well with us, for the minds of Cleopatra and those about her were so set upon affairs abroad that neither she nor they thought of revolt at home. But day by day our party gathered strength in the cities of Egypt, and even in Alexandria, which was as another hand, all things being forced there. Day by day those who doubted were won over and sworn to the cause by that oath which can not be broken, and our plans of action more firmly laid. And every other day I went forth from the palace to take counsel with my uncle Sepsa, and there at his house met the nobles and the great priests who were for the party of Kheim.

Of Cleopatra, the Queen, I saw much, and never was I more astonished at the wealth and splendor of her mind, that richness and variety was as a woven cloth of gold throwing back all lights from its changing face. She feared me somewhat, and therefore was fain to make a friend of me, asking me many matters that seemed to be beyond the province of my office. Of the Lady Charmion also I saw much—indeed, she was ever at my side, so that I scarce knew when she came and when she went. For with that soft step of hers would she draw nigh, and I would turn to find her at hand, and watching beneath the long lashes of her downward eyes. There was no service that was too hard for her, and no task too long, for day and night she labored for me and for our cause. But when I thanked her for her loyalty and said it should be had in mind in that time which was at hand, she stamped her foot and pouted with her lips like an angry child, saying that, among all the things which I had learned, this was as a woven cloth of gold's service, and payment and was its own guardian. And I being innocent in such matters and foolish that I was, holding the ways of women as of small account, read her sayings in the sense that her services to the cause of Kheim, which she loved, brought with them their own reward. But when I praised so fine a spirit she burst into angry tears and left me wondering; for I knew naught of the trouble at her heart. I knew not then that, unawares, this woman had given me all her love and

that she was rent and torn by pangs of passion fixed like arrows in her breast. I did not know—how should I know it, who never looked upon her otherwise than as an instrument of our joint and holy cause! Her beauty never stirred me; nay, not even when she leaned over me and breathed upon my hair, I never thought of it otherwise than as a man thinks of the beauty of a statue. What had I to do with such delights? I was sworn to Isis and dedicated to the cause of Egypt. O ye Gods, bear me witness that I am innocent of this thing, which was the source of all my woe and the woe of Kheim!

How strange is this love of woman, that it is so small in its beginning and in its end so great! See, at the first it is even as the little spring of water welling from a mountain's heart. And at the last what a mighty river that floweth argoies of joy and makes wide lands to smile. Or, perchance it is a torrent to wash in a flood of ruin across the fields of Hope, bursting in the barriers of design, and bring to tumbled nothingness the tenement of man's purity and the temples of his faith. For when the invisible conceived the order of the universe, he set within its plan this seed of woman's love to bring about the growth of the world, that by its most unequal growth it should come to the level of heights and lows, and now it brings the noble to the level of the dust. And thus, while woman, that great surprise of Nature, is, Good and Evil can never grow apart. For still she stands, and, blind with love, shoots the shuttle of our fate, and pours sweet water into the cup of bitterness, and poisons the wholesome breath of life with the doom of her desire. Turn this way and turn that, she is at hand to meet thee. Her weakness is strength, her might is thy undoing. Of her thou art, to her thou wast. She is thy slave, yet holds thee captive; at her touch honor withers, locks open, and barriers fall. She is infinite as ocean, she is variable as heaven, and her name is the Unforeseen. Man strives not to escape from woman and the love of woman; for, by where thou wilt, she is yet thy fate, and what'er thou buidest thou buidest it for her!

And thus it came to pass that I, Harmachis, who had put such matters far from me, was yet doomed to fall by the thing I held of no account. For, see, this Charmion; she loves me—why, I knew not. Of her own thought she learned to love me, and of her love came what shall be told. But I, knowing naught, treated her even as a sister, walking as if we were hand in hand with her toward our common end.

And so the time passed on till, at length, all things were made ready. It was the night before the night when the blow should fall, and there were revelings in the palace. That very day had I seen Sepsa, and with him the captains of a band of five hundred men, who should burst into the palace at midnight on the morrow when I had slain Cleopatra the Queen, and put the Roman and the Gallic legions to the sword. That very day had I suborned the Captain Paulus, who, since I drew him through the gates, was my will's slave. Half by fear and half by promises of great reward I had prevailed upon him, for his was the watch, at the signal on the morrow night to unbar that small gate which faces to the west.

All was made ready—the flower of Freedom that had been five and twenty years in growth was on the point of bloom. In every city, from Abu unto Athue, armed companies were gathered, and from their walls spies looked out, awaiting the coming of the messenger who should bring tidings that Cleopatra was no more, and that Harmachis, the Egyptian, had seized the throne. All was prepared, triumph hung to my hand as a ripe fruit to the hand of the plucker. Yet, as I sat at the royal feast my heart was heavy, and a shadow of coming woe lay cold within my mind. I sat there in a place of honor, rich to the majesty of Cleopatra, and looked down the lines of guests, bright with gems and garlanded with flowers, marking those whom I had doomed to die. There before me lay Cleopatra's self, in all her beauty, which thrilled the beholder as he is thrilled by the rushing of the midnight gale, or by the sight of stormy waters. I gazed on her as she touched her lips with wine and toyed with the chaplet of roses on her brow, bethinking me of the dagger beneath my robe that I had sworn to bury in her breast. Again, and yet again, I gazed and strove to hate her, strove to rejoice that she must die—and could not. There, too, behind her—watching me now, as ever, with her deep-fringed eyes—was the lovely Lady Charmion. Who to look at her innocent face, would believe that she was the setter of that snare wherein should miserably perish the Queen who loved her? Who would dream that locked in her girlish breast was the secret of so much death? I gazed, and grew sick at heart because I must anon my throne with blood, and by evil sweep away the evil of the land. At that hour I wished, indeed, that I was naught but some humble husbandman, who in its season sows, and in its season garners the golden grain! Alas! the seed that I had been doomed to sow was the red seed of Death, and now I must reap the fruit of the harvest!

"Why, Harmachis, what ails thee?" said Cleopatra, smiling her slow smile. "Has the golden skein of stars got tangled, my astronomer? or dost thou plan some new feat of magic? Say what is it, that thou dost so poorly grace our feast. Nay, now, did I not know, having made inquiry thereon, that things so low as we poor stars grow pale!" This I said of the moon, which is the sign of the Holy Mother whom Cleopatra dared to rival, naming herself Isis come to earth.

"Happily said," she answered, clapping her white hands. "Why, here's an astronomer who hath wit and can shape a compliment. Nay, such a wonder must not pass unnoted, lest the Gods resent it. Charmion, take thou this chaplet from my hair and set it upon the learned brow of our Harmachis. King of Love he shall be called, whether he will it or will it not."

Charmion lifted the chaplet from Cleopatra's tresses and bearing it to where I was, with a smile set it upon my head, yet warm and fragrant from the Queen's hair, but so roughly that she pained me somewhat. And this she did because she was wroth, although she smiled with her lips and whispered: "An omen, Royal Harmachis." For though she was so much a woman, yet, when she was angered, she suffered jealousy, Charmion had a childish way.

Having thus fixed the chaplet, she courted me low before me, and with the softest tone of mockery named me, in the Greek tongue, "Harmachis, King of Love." Thereon Cleopatra laughed and pledged me as "King of love," and so did all the company, fluting the jest a merry one. For in Alexandria they love not those who live straightly and turn aside from women.

But I sat there, a smile upon my lips and black anger in my heart. For, knowing who and what I was, it irked me to think myself a jest to the frivolous nobles and light beauties of Cleopatra's Court. But chiefly was I angered against Charmion, because she laughed the loudest, and then I did not know that laughter and bitterness are often the veils of a sore heart where-with it wraps its weakness from the world. "An omen," she said it was—that crown of flowers—and so it proved indeed. For I was about to barter the double diadem of the Upper and the Lower Land for a wreath of passion's roses that fade ere they are fully bloom, and Pharaoh's ivory bed of state for the pillow of a faithless woman's breast.

"King of Love!" they crowned me in their mockery; ay, and King of Shame! And I, with the perfumed roses on my brow, by descent and ordination the Pharaoh of Egypt—bethough me of the imperishable halls of Abothis and of that other crowning which on the morrow should be consummated. But still smiling, I pledged them back, and answered with a jest. For rising, I bowed before Cleopatra and craved leave to go. "Venus," I said, speaking of the planet that we know as Donau on the morning and Bonou in the evening, "was in the ascendant. Therefore as new-crowned King of Love, I must now pass to do my homage to thy Queen." For these barbarians name Venus Queen of Love.

And so amid their laughter I withdrew me to my watch tower, and, dashing that shameful chaplet down, amid the instru-



"AN OMEN, ROYAL HARMACHIS."

ments of my craft, made pretense to note the rolling of the stars. There I waited, thinking on many things that were to be until such time as Charmion should come with the list of the doomed and the messages of my uncle Sepsa, whom she had that evening seen.

At length the door opened softly, and she came jeweled and clad in her white robes, even as she had left the feast.

CHAPTER XII.
OF THE COMING OF CLEOPATRA TO THE CHAMBER OF HARMACHIS; OF THE THROWING FORTH OF THE KERCHIEF OF CHARMION; OF THE DEATH OF HER FRIENDSHIP TO HER SERVANT HARMACHIS.

LENGTH thou art come, Charmion," I said. "It is over late."

"Yes, my lord; but by no means could I escape Cleopatra. Her mood is strangely crossed to-night. I know not what I may portend. Strange whims and fancies blow across it like light and contrary airs upon a summer sea, and I can not read her purpose."

"Well, well, enough of Cleopatra. Hast thou seen our uncle?"

"Yes, Royal Harmachis."

"And hast thou the last list?"

"Yes, here they be," and she drew them from her bosom. "Here is the list of those who, after the Queen, must certainly be put to the sword. Among them thou wilt note the name of that old Gaul, Brennus; I grieve for him, for we are friends; but it must be. It is a heavy list."

"Is so," I answered; "when men write out their count they forget no item, and our count is long. What must be, must be. Now for the next."

"Here is the list of those to be spared, as friendly or uncertain; and here that of the towns that certainly will rise so soon as the messenger reaches their gates with tidings of the death of Cleopatra."

"Listen on her brow. 'Of a truth, Harmachis,' she said, with a sigh, as she sank into a seat, 'the path to Heaven is hard to climb! Ah! I am weary, for those stairs are many. But I was minded, my astronomer, to see thee in thy haunts.'"

"I am honored overmuch, O Queen!" I said, bowing low before her.

"Art thou now? And yet that dark face of thine hath a somewhat angry look. Thou art too young and handsome for this dry trade, Harmachis. Why, I vow, thou hast cast my wreath of roses down amidst thy rusty tools! Kings would have cherished that wreath along with their choicest diadems, O Harmachis! and thou dost throw it down as a thing of no account! Why, what a man thou art! But stay; what is this? A lady's kerchief, by Isis! Nay, now my Harmachis, how came this here? Are our poor kerchiefs also instruments of thy high art? Oh, fie, fie!—have I caught thee, then? Art thou, indeed, a fox?"

"Nay, most Royal Cleopatra, nay!" I said, turning for the kerchief which had fallen from Charmion's neck had an awkward look. "I know not, indeed, how the frisky came here. Perchance some of the women who keep the chamber may have let it fall."

—A little learning is a dangerous thing; but the danger is not in the learning but the littleness.

—Whatever you or your friends do is never wholly wrong; whatever your enemy or his friends do is never wholly right.

—The man who doesn't know where his next dollar is to come from always sends it where his last went.—Philippa Times.

—When you can induce a man to hold your horse in the rain, how natural it is to tarry around the fire on the inside.—Aitchison Globe.

—Praise never gives us much pleasure unless it concurs with our own opinion, and extol us to those qualities in which we chiefly excel.—Hume.

—As I know more of mankind I expect less of them, and am readier to call a man good on easier terms than I was formerly.—Dr. Johnson.

—Common courtesy is quite distinct from a matter of common courtesy, but some people don't seem to know it.—Merchant Traveler.

—He who bears failure with patience is as much of a philosopher as he who succeeds; for to put up with the world needs as much wisdom as to control it.

—A slight divergence at the outset carries the arrow far out of the way at the end, just as a false step in starting gives life a result that is disastrously wide of the mark. To begin well is to begin true, and with a sure aim.—United Presbyterian.

FOREIGN GOSSIP.

—Disease has ravaged some of the grouse preserves in Scotland, an alarming extent. On one moor recently out of 300 birds killed all had to be buried.

—The government monopoly articles of Honduras are gunpowder, tobacco, cigars and liquor. It retains complete and absolute control of the liquor traffic.

—Although slavery does not exist, properly speaking, in China, in the eyes of the law the large boat-population and actors fill the position of slaves.

—There is in Windsor castle a gold punch-bowl and ladle for which George IV. paid 10,000 guineas, and the investment is wholly profitless because there is never a drop of punch brewed in it.

—When the construction of a railroad is undertaken in China the natives burn a temple, and then persuade the people that it is a manifestation of the wrath of the gods against the road.

—London lawyers now employ shorthand in their office work. The entries, drafts, affidavits and the multitude of other documents they are called upon to prepare are now taken down in shorthand at their dictation and are copied from that.

—In a village in the canton of Lucerne, Switzerland, there is a society of old maids. It numbers eighty, and, queer enough, it is under the patronage of the St. Catherine Matrimonial Agency. They perform acts of charity, and are highly esteemed in their neighborhood.

—There are now such a large number of foreign officers studying at Berlin that the German Government has established an international military academy for their accommodation. There are a great many Turks and also several Chinese officers.

—An association in London, called the Sunday Society, occupies itself with arranging the opening of private collections to the public on the Sabbath. For two Sundays recently the Duke of Wellington has opened Apsley house to those who wished to see its treasures.

—King Humbert, before leaving Naples, ordered that a bronze wreath should as soon as possible be deposited on Garibaldi's grave in place of the flowers he had put there. He said: "Our country and my house owe so much to Garibaldi that this island must bear from myself and my son a tribute of everlasting gratitude."

—Belgium is an uncomfortable country for embezzlers. A cashier employed by the city of Ghent, who embezzled 103,000 francs of the municipal cash, has just caught it very hot indeed. He has been sentenced to forty years' imprisonment and five years' police supervision to follow, has been fined 8,450 francs and ordered to restore the entire sum he has embezzled, and will, in addition, lose all his civil rights.

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WHERE MAN THRIVES.

A Maryland Town in Which Nearly All Are Giants and Methuselahs.

"Back in Montgomery County, eleven miles from Laurel, on the Baltimore & Ohio railroad, is the little village of Sandy Spring, a Quaker settlement, whose population is but seventy-five persons, yet which is noted for the length of time its inhabitants live and the stature they attain," said Robert H. Moran a day or two ago.

"Now, I am not what you would call a little or a young man. I am 77 years old, six feet tall, and weigh 300 pounds, yet I can not hold a candle to some of the chaps who live there. The old people there are dying off, though. Now, there was the Penn family. Mary lived to be 100 years old. Edward died at 100. Lizzie was 103 when she died, and Joseph was 101. Joshua lived to be 99 and 10 months. Mary No. 3 was 98, and another Mary was 99. William Thompson was one of the oldest men in town. He died at 113 years. The Bell boys were triplets. They were Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Every one of them was over 100 years old, and the smallest of them was 6 feet 4 inches high. Both the others were 6 feet 5. Then there were two men, one named Davis and the other Thatcher, both of whom were over 100. Isaac Moore lived to be 102. Mrs. Russell died at 104. Mrs. Kirk was 101. Billy Matthews and Will McCormick were each 101 when they died. Billy Simpson was 100, and Mahlon Chandler is now living at 100. Cornelius Sullivan was 94. William Brown was 92 when he left us, and Jimmy Whiteside is still living, hale and hearty, at 96. Now there is a raft of men over 80 years. Among those who are dead are William Thompson, Randall Thompson and Joe Thompson. Joshua Lewis, Ephraim Murphy, Henry Stabler and Edward Stabler. Caleb Stabler, Richard Tucker, Porry Lizer, and Jeff Higgins are still living. There is such a raft of boys over 80 that it isn't worth while to mention them."

"Now for the big fellows: Ed Penn was 6 feet 4, and Josh was 6 feet 2. Robert Sullivan was 6 feet 5. He had two sons, Will and George, who were 6 feet 4 and 6 feet 3 respectively. Mahlon and Nelson were brothers, and each was 6 feet 4 inches high. There was Richard Sullivan, whom we used to call Long Dick. He was 6 feet 4. He had two sons, Ed and Perry, who are still living, both 6 feet 2. Dr. Artemas Riggs was a daisy. He was 6 feet 5 inches tall, weighing 260 pounds, without an ounce of superfluous flesh, and was one of the best men in the county. There were three men who were named William Brown, and we had to nickname them to distinguish them. There was Big Bill Brown, 6 feet 3. Long Bill Brown was 6 feet 5, and Little Bill Brown was 6 feet 2 1/2. Isaac Moore was 6 feet 2, but his son Nathan went him one better and was 6 feet 3. Porry Lizer is still living. He is over 80 years old, is 6 feet 2 in his stockings, weighs 220 pounds, is straight as an arrow, and one of the best men in the county. I tell you what, if you have any children and want them to live long and grow big, just send them to Sandy Springs."—Baltimore Sun.

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A WONDERFUL DOG.

How He Saved Four Boys from Almost Certain Death.

Nit is a big jet-black Newfoundland dog who lives in the northern part of New York City, and is supposed to be jointly owned by Oscar and George Smith. One Saturday afternoon the brothers, with two other boys, tramped up to the Bronx river to a disused mill-dam, determined to have some fun, and of course Nit was along. Presently they found an old boat, twelve feet long, fastened by a rusty chain to a stake. They climbed in, and were amusing themselves by rocking it, when the chain broke and the boat drifted out from the shore. Hardly more than fifty yards down the river the water runs over the dam and falls twenty feet on the jagged rocks. There were no oars in the boat and nothing to use as a substitute. In the middle of the river the boat swung lazily around until the prow pointed toward the dam, and then it began to drift slowly down stream. Nit had stood on the shore with ears and tail erect, watching the boat drift away, and apparently considering it a good joke. But when the boat began to move toward the dam Nit became ill at ease, and ran barking and whining up and down the bank. The boys were thoroughly alarmed by this time, too. They cried out for help, and Nit, telling them by a sharp, short bark to wait for him, sprang into the water and beat his way toward the boat, now dangerously near the dam. Nit swam right in front of the boat, and tried to stop it with his body, but the current swung the stern around. Finding that this wouldn't do, Nit swam around the boat twice, thinking very earnestly all the time. Having solved the difficulty, as he thought, he sprang up on the gunwale and seized it with his teeth. This lifted him so far out of the water that he couldn't swim. Then he let go his hold and went around the boat once more for another idea. He got it, and then the question arose how to convey it to the frightened youngsters. Nit swam close to the boat, and sticking his head over the gunwale, looked imploringly into little Oscar's face, and whimpered. Oscar misunderstood, and thought Nit was tired and wanted to come in for a rest. He seized the leather strap and tried to lift him in. But Nit instantly dropped back into the water, and pointing his head toward the shore, began swimming for all he was worth. Gradually the downward course of the boat was stopped. It swung around in answer to Nit's powerful legs, and slowly drew near the shore. It grounded within a few feet of the dam, and the boys sprang out as happy a lot of youngsters as lived. They started homeward on a run, with Nit barking and frolicking around them.—Golden Days.

THE SULTAN'S POSITION.

Like That of Other Oriental Rulers It Is Decidedly Unsafe.

His Majesty, the ruler, leads by no means a happy life, notwithstanding his income of \$10,000,000 a year, and that he has his wives by the score. His predecessors lived in a great palace on the banks of the Golden Horn, or rather of the Bosphorus at the point where the Horn commences. In front of this palace stands the yacht of the Sultan, and there is usually a gunboat or two stationed near by to guard it. The last Sultan woke one morning to find the guns of these ships sighted on the palace, and a set of Turkish rebels demanded his surrender. The present Sultan has a palace away back on the hills. The grounds which surround it contain many acres, and there are watch-towers built here and there among them. In these guards are stationed, who keep the landscape ever before their eyes, and who would at the least hostile demonstration inform His Majesty. He has thousands of soldiers connected with his own body-guard, but he trusts very few, and like one of the former Sultans, he places implicit confidence only in his mother. He has had a number of revolutions during his reign, and if you look over the history of Turkey you will find that assassination is a very common fate for a Sultan. I saw the Turkish monarch several times while I was in Constantinople. He is a tall, nervous little man, with a Roman nose, with a pair of bright, black eyes, which sparkle as they look out under his red fez cap. He wears a suit of black clothes, much like those of a preacher, and his coat is buttoned high at the throat. He does not look like a healthy man, and there is more timidity than braggadochio about his bearing. It is said at Constantinople that he dares not go about unattended through the streets of the Turkish quarter, and his home is on the European side of the water. When he takes a ride through his capital the whole army at Constantinople turns out to guard him. Yellow sand is sprinkled over the road in order that his royal bones be not jolted, and he has a couple of the most noted of his Generals in the carriage with him. I am told that he is really fond of his subjects, notwithstanding the dangers of his situation, and that he would do much for the bettering of his kingdom if it were not for the plots and plotters which continually surround him. His situation is practically the same as that of the other Asiatic monarchs of the courts which I visited. Not one of them felt secure and safe upon his throne, and all of the countries of Asia have their political factions and their political intrigues.—F. G. Carpenter, in National Tribune.

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