

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.

Gown, would strike no more, but stood



I PASSED HIM DOWN.

waiting. And the eunuchs had surely slain me, for Cleopatra stood like one who watches in a dream and makes no sign. Already was my head dragged back and their knife points at my throat, when Charmion, rushing forward, threw herself upon me, and, calling them "Dogs!" desperately thrust her body before them in such a fashion that she could not be slain. Now Brennus, with an oath, seized first one and then another and cast them from me.

"Spare his life, Queen!" he cried, in his barbarous Latin. "By Jupiter, he is a brave man! Myself feiled like an ox in the shambles, and three of my boys finished by a man without armor, and taken unawares! I grudge them not to such a man! A boon, Queen! Spare his life, and give him to me!"

"Ay, spare him! spare him!" cried Charmion, white and trembling.

Cleopatra drew near and looked upon the dead and him who lay dying as if he had dashed him to the ground, and on me, her lover of two days gone, whose head rested now on Charmion's white robes.

I met the Queen's glance. "Spare not!" I gasped; "see this!" Then a flush gathered on her brow, methinks it was a flush of shame!

"Dost love this man at heart, Charmion," she said, with a little laugh, "that thou thrustest thy tender body 'twixt him and the knives of these sexless hounds?" and she cast a look of scorn upon the eunuchs.

"Nay," answered the girl, fiercely. "But I can not stand by to see a brave man murdered by such as these."

"Ay!" said Cleopatra, "he is a brave man, and gallantly he fought; never have I seen so fierce a fight even in the games at Rome! Well, I spare his life; though 'tis weak of me, womanish weak. Take him to his chamber and guard him till he is healed or dead."

And then my brain reeled, a great sickness seized upon me, and I sank into the nothingness of swoon.

Dreams, dreams, dreams! without end and ever changing, as for years and years I seemed to toss upon a sea of agony. And through them a vision of a dark-eyed woman's tender face and the touch of a white hand soothing me to rest. Visions, too, of a Royal countenance bending at times over my rocking bed—a countenance that I could not grasp, but whose beauty flowed through my fevered veins and was a part of me—visions of childhood and of the fond lovers of Abouthis, and of the white-haired Amenehat, my father—ay! and an ever-present vision of that dread hall in Amenti, and of the small altar and the Spirits clad in flame! There I seemed to wander everlastingly, calling on the Holy Mother, whose memory I could not grasp; calling ever and in vain! For no cloud descended upon the altar, only from time to time the voice pealed aloud: "Strike out the name of Harmachis, child of Earth, from the living Book of Her, who Was and Is and Shall Be! Lo! lo! lo! lo!"

And then another voice would answer: "Not yet! not yet! Repentance is at hand; strike not out the name of Harmachis, child of Earth, from the living Book of Her, who Was and Is and Shall Be! Lo! lo! lo! lo!"

I woke to find myself in my own chamber in the tower of the palace. So weak was I that I scarce could lift my hand, and lift seemed but to flutter in my breast as if I were a dying dove. I could not turn my head; I could not stir; yet in my heart there was a sense of rest, and of dark trouble done. The light hurt my eyes; I shut them; and as I shut them, heard the sweep

of a woman's robes upon the stair, and a swift, light step that well I knew. It was that of Cleopatra!

She entered, and her footfall drew nigh. I felt her come! Every pulse in my poor frame beat an answer to her footfall, and my eyes opened, and I saw her face, and she was in my chamber, and her eyes were fixed on me in their struggle! She leaned over me; her ambrosial breath played upon my face. I could hear the beating of her heart! Lower she leaned, till at last her lips touched me softly on the brow. "Poor man!" I heard her murmur. "Poor, weak, dying man! Fate hath been hard to thee! Too good wert thou to be the sport of such a one as I, the pawn that I must move in my play of policy! Ah! Harmachis! thou shouldst have ruled the game! They could give thee learning, those plotter priests; but knowledge of mankind they could not give thee, nor fence thee 'gainst the march of Nature's law. And thou didst love me with all thy heart—ah! well I know it! Manlike, thou didst love the eyes that, as a pirate's lights, beckoned thee to shipwrecked ruin, and didst hang dotting on the lips that led thy heart away and call thee 'slave!' Well, the game was fair, for thou wouldst have slain me; and yet I grieve! So thou dost die, and this is my farewell to thee! Never may we meet again on earth; and perchance, 'tis well; for who knows, when my hour of tenderness is past, how I might deal with thee didst thou live! Thou dost die, they say—those learned, long-faced fools, who, if they let thee die, shall pay the price! And where, then, shall we meet again when my last throw is thrown? We shall be equal there, in the kingdom that Osiris rules. A little time, a few years—perchance to-morrow, and we shall meet; then, knowing all I am, how will thou greet me there? Nay, here, as there, still must thou love me; for injuries can not touch the immortality of such a love as thine! Contentment alone can, like acid, eat away the strong love of noble hearts and reveal the pitiful truth in its poor nakedness. Still must thou love me, Harmachis; for what- ever my sins, yet am I great and set above thy scorn. Would that I could have loved thee as thou lovest me! Almost did I so when thou sleepest those guards; and yet, no, thou not."

"Oh, what a fenced city is my heart, that none can take it, and on when I throw wide open the doors no man may win its citadel! Oh, to put away this loneliness and lose me in another's soul. Oh, for a year, a month, an hour to quite forget policy, peoples and my pomp of place, and be but a loving woman! Harmachis, fare thee well! Go join Great Julius, whom thine art called up from death before me, and take Egypt's greetings to him. Ah, well I fooled

thee; and I looked Caesar—perchance before 'tis done fate will find me myself I shall be fooled! Harmachis, fare thee well!"

She turned to go, and as she turned I heard the sweep of another dress and the light fall of another woman's foot.

"Ah! 'tis thou, Charmion. Well, for all thy watching, the man dies."

"Ay," she answered, in a voice thick with grief. "Ay, O Queen, so say the physicians. Forty hours hath he been in stupor so deep that at times his breath could hardly lift his tiny feather's weight, and scarce could my ear, placed against his breast, take notice of the rising of his heart. For ten long days I now have watched him day and night, till mine eyes stare wide open with want of sleep, and for faintness, scarce can I keep myself from falling. And of all my labor this is the end! The blow of that accursed Brennus has done its work, and Harmachis dies!"

"Love counts not its labor, Charmion, nor can it weigh its tenderness in the scale of purchase. That which it hath given, and craves for more to give and give, till the soul's infinity be drained. Dear to thy heart are these nights of watching; sweet to thy weary eyes is that sad sight of strength brought so low that it hangs upon thy weakness like a babe unto its mother's breast! For, Charmion, thou dost love this man who loves not thee, and now that he is helpless thou canst pour thy passion o'er the unanswering darkness of his soul and cheat thyself with dream of what yet might be!"

"I love him not, as thou hast proof, O Queen! How can I love one who would have slain thee, who art as my heart's sister?" "Tis for pity that I nurse him."

She laughed a little as she answered: "Tis his love's own twin. Wondrously wayward are the paths of woman's love, and thou hast shown thine strangely, that I know. But the more high the love the more deep the grief wherewith it can fall—ay, and thence soar again to heaven, once more to fall! Poor woman, thou art thy passions' plaything; now tender as the morning sky, and now, when jealousy grips thy heart, more cruel than the sea. Well, thus are we made. Soon, after all this troubling naught will be left thee but tears, remorse and memory."

And she went forth.

CHAPTER XXI.

OF THE TENDER CARE OF CHARMION; OF THE HEALING OF HARMACHIS; OF THE SAILING OF THE FLEET OF CLEOPATRA FOR CILICIA; AND OF THE SPEECH OF BRENNUS TO HARMACHIS.

CLEOPATRA went, and for awhile I lay silent, gathering up my strength to speak. But Charmion came and stood over me, and I felt a great tear fall from her dark eyes upon my face, as the first heavy drop of rain falls from a stormy cloud.

"Thou goest," she whispered—"thou goest, fast whither I may not follow! O Harmachis, how gladly would I give my life for thine!"

Then at length I opened my eyes, and as best I could I spoke:

"Dear as thy grief, dear friend," I said, "I live yet; and, in truth, I feel as though new life had gathered in my breast!"

"Thou livest!" she cried, throwing herself upon her knees beside my couch. "Thou livest—and I thought thee gone! Thou art come back to me! Oh! what say I! How foolish is a woman's heart! 'Tis this long watching! Nay; sleep and rest thee, Harmachis!—why dost thou talk! Not one more word, I command thee, by that long-headed fool! Nay, thou shalt have no draught! There, sleep, Harmachis; sleep!" and she crouched down at my side and laid her cold hand upon my brow, murmuring: "Sleep, sleep, sleep!"

And when I woke up there still she was, but the lights of dawn were peeping through the casement. There still she knelt, one hand upon my forehead, and her head, in all its disarray of curls, resting upon her outstretched arm. "Charmion," I whispered, "have I slept?"

Instantly she was wide awake and gazing on me with tender eyes. "Yea, thou hast slept, Harmachis."

"How long, then, have I slept?"

"Nine hours."

"And thou hast held thy place there, at my side, for nine long hours?"

"Yea, it is naught; I also have slept—I feared to waken thee if I stirred."

"Go rest thee," I said. "It shames me to think of this thing. Go rest thee, Charmion!"

"Vex not thyself," she answered—"see, I will bid a slave water thee, and to wash all my mighty love and hate rise from the deck of my death-like sleep and rent me in their struggle! She leaned over me; her ambrosial breath played upon my face. I could hear the beating of her heart! Lower she leaned, till at last her lips touched me softly on the brow. "Poor man!" I heard her murmur. "Poor, weak, dying man! Fate hath been hard to thee! Too good wert thou to be the sport of such a one as I, the pawn that I must move in my play of policy! Ah! Harmachis! thou shouldst have ruled the game! They could give thee learning, those plotter priests; but knowledge of mankind they could not give thee, nor fence thee 'gainst the march of Nature's law. And thou didst love me with all thy heart—ah! well I know it! Manlike, thou didst love the eyes that, as a pirate's lights, beckoned thee to shipwrecked ruin, and didst hang dotting on the lips that led thy heart away and call thee 'slave!' Well, the game was fair, for thou wouldst have slain me; and yet I grieve! So thou dost die, and this is my farewell to thee! Never may we meet again on earth; and perchance, 'tis well; for who knows, when my hour of tenderness is past, how I might deal with thee didst thou live! Thou dost die, they say—those learned, long-faced fools, who, if they let thee die, shall pay the price! And where, then, shall we meet again when my last throw is thrown? We shall be equal there, in the kingdom that Osiris rules. A little time, a few years—perchance to-morrow, and we shall meet; then, knowing all I am, how will thou greet me there? Nay, here, as there, still must thou love me; for injuries can not touch the immortality of such a love as thine! Contentment alone can, like acid, eat away the strong love of noble hearts and reveal the pitiful truth in its poor nakedness. Still must thou love me, Harmachis; for what- ever my sins, yet am I great and set above thy scorn. Would that I could have loved thee as thou lovest me! Almost did I so when thou sleepest those guards; and yet, no, thou not."

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so weak I felt the tears roll a-down my cheek.

"Weep not!" she said, hastily, and turning her face aside. "Be a man, and brave these troubles out. Thou hast sown, now must thou reap; but after harvest the waters rise and wash away the roots, and then once more comes seed time. Perchance, yonder in Cilicia, a way may be found when once more thou art strong whereby thou mayst fly—if in truth thou canst bear thy life apart from Cleopatra's smile; then in some far land must thou dwell till these things are forgotten. And now my task is done, so fare thee well. And now will I come and see that thou needest naught."

So she went, and thenceforward was I nursed, and that skillfully, by the physician and two women slaves; and as my wound healed so my strength came back to me, slowly at first, then most swiftly. In four days from that time I left my couch, and in three more I could walk an hour in the palace gardens; another week and I could read and think, though I went no more to court. And at length one afternoon Charmion came and bade me make ready, for in two days would the fleet sail, first for the coast of Syria, and thence to the gulf of Issus and Cilicia.

Thereon, with all formality, and in writing, I craved leave of Cleopatra that I might be so feeble, arguing that I could not travel. But she answered a message was sent to me that I must come. And so on the appointed day I was carried on a litter down to the boat, and together with that very soldier who had cut me down, the Captain Brennus, and others of his troop (who, indeed, were sent to guard me), we rowed aboard the vessel where she lay at anchor with the rest of the great fleet. For Cleopatra was voyaging as though to war in much pomp, and escorted by a mighty fleet of ships, wherewith her galley, built like a house, loomed through-out with cedar and silken hangings, was the most beautiful and costly that the world has ever seen. But on this vessel I went not, and, therefore, it chanced that I saw not Cleopatra nor Charmion till we landed at the mouth of the River Cydnus. The signal being made, the fleet set sail; and the wind being fair, on the evening of the second day we came to Joppa. Thence we sailed slowly with contrary winds up the coast of Syria, making Caesarea and Ptolemais and Tyros and Berytus and past Lebanon's white brow crowned with his crest of cedars, on to Hircacia and across the Gulf of Issus to the mouth of Cydnus. And ever as we journeyed the strong breath of the sea brought back my health, till at length, save for a line of white upon my head, where the sword had fallen, was almost as I had been. And one night, as we drew near Cydnus, while Brennus and I sat alone together on the deck, his eye fell upon the white mark his sword had made, and he swore a great oath by his heathen gods. "Ah! thou hast died, lad," he said, "methinks I could never again have held up my head! Ah! that was a coward stroke, and shamed am I to think that I should have struck it, and thou on the ground and with thy back to me! Knowest thou that when thou didst lie 'twixt life and death, every day I came to ask tidings of thee and I swore by Taranis that if thou didst die I'd turn my back upon that soft, palace life and then away to the North."

"Nay, trouble not, Brennus," I answered; "it was thy duty."

"Mayhap! but there are duties that a brave man should not do—may, not at the bidding of any Queen who ever ruled in Egypt! Thy blow had dazed me or I had not struck! What is it, lad? art in trouble with this Queen of ours? Why art thou dragged a prisoner upon this pleasure party! Knowest thou that we are strictly charged that if thou dost escape our lives shall pay the price!"

"Ay, in sore trouble, friend," I answered; "ask me no more."

"Thou, being of the age thou art—there's a woman in it, that swear I—and, perchance, though I am rough and foolish, I might make a guess. Look thou, lad, what sayest thou? I am a-weary of the service of Cleopatra and this hot land of deserts and of luxury, that sap a man's strength and drain 'is pocket; and so are others whom I wot of. What sayest thou; let's take one of these unwieldy vessels and away to the West! I'll lead thee to a better land than Egypt—a land of lake and mountain and great forests of sweet-scented pine; ay, and find thee a girl fit to mate with, mine own niece—a strong girl, and tall, with wide blue eyes, and long, fair hair, and arms that would crack

thy ribs were she to hug thee! Come, what sayest thou? Put away the past, and away for the bonny North, and be a son to me."

For a moment I thought, and then sadly shook my head; for though sorely was I tempted to be gone, I knew that in Egypt lay my fate, and my fate I might not fly.

"It may not be, Brennus," I answered. "Tain would I that it might be, but I am bound by a chain of destiny which I can not break, and in the land of Egypt I must live and die."

"As thou wilt, lad," said the old warrior, "early shall I have loved to marry thee among my people and make a son of thee. At the least, remember that while I am here thou hast Brennus for a friend. And one thing more; beware of that beautiful Queen of thine, for, by Taranis, perchance an hour may come when she will hold that she knowest too much, and then—"

and he drew his hand across his throat. "And now good night, a cup of wine, then to sleep, for to-morrow the foilers—"

[Here several lengths of the second roll of papyrus are so broken as to be indecipherable. They seem to have been descriptive of Cleopatra's voyage up the Cydnus to the city of Tarsus.]

And [the writing continues] to those who could take joy in such things the eightmost, indeed, have been a gallant one. For the stern of our galley was covered with sheets of beaten gold, the sails were of the scarlet of Tyre, and the oars of silver dipped in the water to the measure of music. And there in the center of the vessel, beneath an awning alight with gold embroidery, lay Cleopatra, attired as the Roman Venus (and surely Venus was not more fair), in a thin robe of whitest silk, bound in beneath her breast with a golden girdle delicately graven o'er with scenes of love. All about

her were little rosy boys, chosen for their beauty, and clad in bright, save downy wings strapped upon their shoulders, and on their backs Cupid's bow and quiver, who fanned her with fans of plumes. And upon the vessel's decks, handling the cordage that was of silken web, and softly singing to the sound of harps and the beat of oars, stood no rough sailors, but women lovely to behold, some clad as Graces and some as Nereids—that is, scarce clad at all, save in their scented hair. And behind the couch, with drawn sword, stood Brennus, in splendid armor and winged helm of gold; and by him others—among them—in robes richly worked, and knew that I was indeed a slave! On the high poop also burned golden censers filled with the costliest incense, wherewith the fragrant steam hung in little clouds about our wake.

Thus, as in a dream of luxury, followed by many ships, we glided on toward the wooded slopes of Taurus, at whose foot lay that ancient city of Tarsish. And as we came the people gathered on the banks and ran before us shouting: "Venus is risen from the sea! Venus hath come to visit Bacchus!" We drew near to the city, and all its people—every one who could walk or be carried—crowded down in thousands to the docks, and with them came the whole army of Antony, soot length the Tribune was left alone upon the judgment seat.

With them came Dellius, the false-tongued, fawning and bowing, and in the name of Antony gave the "Queen of Beauty" greeting, bidding her to a feast that Antony had made ready. But she made him answer, and said: "Forsooth, 'tis Antony who should wait on us; not we on Antony. Bid the noble Antony to our poor table this night, else we dine alone."

Dellius went, bowing to the ground; the feast was made ready; and then at last I set eyes on Antony. Clad in purple robes he came, a great man and beautiful to see, set in the stout prime of life, with bright eyes of blue, and curling hair, and features cut sharply as a Grecian gem. For great he was of form and royal of mien, and with an open countenance, wherewith his thoughts were writ so clear that all might read them; only the weakness of the mouth belied the power of the brow. He came accompanied by his generals, and when he reached the couch whereon Cleopatra lay he stood astonished, gazing on her with wide-open eyes. She, too, gazed on him earnestly; I saw the red blood run up beneath her skin, and a great pang of jealousy seized upon my heart. And Charmion, who saw all beneath her downcast eyes, saw this also and smiled. But Cleopatra spoke no word, only she stretched out her white hand for him to kiss; and he, saying no word, took her hand and kissed it.

"Behold, noble Antony!" she said at last in her voice of music, "thou hast called me, and I am come."

"Venus has come," he answered in his deep tones, and still holding his eyes fast fixed upon her face. "I called a woman; a Goddess hath risen from the deep!"

"To find a God to greet her on the land," she laughed with ready wit. "Well, a truce to compliments, for being on the earth 'tis a Venus is a hungered. Noble Antony, thy hand!"

"The trumpets blared, and through the bowing crowd, Cleopatra, followed by her train, passed hand in hand with Antony to the feast."

[Here there is another break in the papyrus.]

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

HE WAS FORGIVEN.

A Wee Boy's Mother Couldn't Stand His Calm Resignation.

A Lewiston little boy declared a philosophical independence and accepted the consequences in so matter-of-fact a way that it may make a story, even if it is not so very funny. His mother dressed him up in a new flannel shirt and sent him to school. The shirt irritated his cuticle, or, in other words, he itched.

When he came home that night he was cross, and very cross for so small a boy, and he declared he and the shirt had parted company forever. The next morning, as the mother prepared to dress him for school the boy drew the line at the shirt. "No," said he, "I don't want to wear that shirt." A brief debate ensued, in which the boy appeared to have formed his opinion and to have decided to stick to it. The question, when put to the house, was carried by the boy, who would not don the shirt.

"If you will not wear it," said his mother, "I will send you back to bed."

Back to bed he went. He got no dinner. Afternoon came. A neighbor went into see him, his mother telling her that she had a bad boy up-stairs. The boy lay there in bed wide awake, his little cheeks flushed with the situation, but showing no sign of a change of heart.

"Don't you want to go to school?" asked the neighbor.

"School?" was the reply. "I shall never go to school again."

"Don't you want to?"

"Yes, but I can't. I've got to stay here."

"All your life?"

"Yes'm," was the reply. "all my life. I shan't ever get up again, probably."

What would a mother's heart do against so philosophic an acceptance of the termination of a career as this? What but kiss him at tea and go and buy the little bunch of pluck (some downy little undershirts that should never tickle him).—Lewiston (Me.) Journal.

THE COMING MECHANIC.

He Will Be a Different Man from the Artisan of To-day.

The coming mechanic, says an exchange, bred in training schools, will be a very different man from the mechanic of the present. Even the young mechanic who is now learning in the shop will, in some very important respects, be at a disadvantage when he comes into contact and competition with the young mechanic who is now in the school.

The shop graduate may be "practical," and the school graduate will be equally "practical," with the added advantage of wide theoretical knowledge. The shop graduate may be able to do all the work planned or designed for him, and the school graduate will be able, not only to do the work, but also to do the planning and the designing. In every way the school graduate will have all the good points of the shop graduate, with added good points due to wider information, while he will lack most of the bad points of the shop graduate.

All this means that the coming mechanic is to be a very different person from the present and past mechanic. There will be a great change for the better wrought by the modern training school. The boy in the shop may be set to turn a wheel. He simply sees it in position, and he does what he is told to do, without asking or knowing the reason why it is done. The boy in training school goes through the same practice under full instructions concerning the nature of the material, the proper cutting speed, and every thing else connected with the job. The shop boy finishes, and is simply tired, muscularly or nervously. The school boy finishes, and feels himself master of that particular job. Can any mechanic fail to appreciate the wide difference between two mechanics trained in ways so different?—Scientific American.

UNPARALLELED NERVE.

A Utica (N. Y.) Woman Who Apparently Is Made of Brass.

Yesterday morning a lady walked into an up-town doctor's office and asked permission to use his telephone. The gentlemanly physician acquiesced with pleasure, but was somewhat astonished to hear his visitor call up another doctor's office. She had some difficulty with the telephone, and requested the doctor to do the talking for her. First she wanted him to tell his brother practitioner, Dr. G—, that she was sick and that she would immediately be down to see him. "Great Scott," ejaculated the latter, "don't send her down here. She has hung up every doctor in town. Tell her I have an urgent call and won't be in again to-day. Send her to Dr. B—." In terms the most suave the doctor told his visitor that Dr. G— would be unable to see her, but that she might do well to see Dr. B—.

"But tell him that it is serious, and that I must see him," she said. The doctor made another effort, but he heard the man at the other end of the line hanging up his receiver in a most desperate fashion. The woman finally confided to him that she guessed she would go up street and see another Doctor G—, who she was sure would comfort her ill.

The doctor whose office was thus invaded found it necessary to take a long rest to recover from the shock which he afterward said was given to him by witnessing so severe and aggravated a case of "nerve." He subsequently found that not long before the same patient had gone into one Dr. J—'s office and secured his services to telephone a drug store to see why the medicine prescribed for her by Dr. B— had not been sent up.—Utica (N. Y.) Herald.

Nothing Like Being Prepared.

Lawyer (the ordinary kind)—What time was it when you saw the defendant strike this blow?

Witness (the extraordinary kind)—Seven and one-half minutes past ten.

"Seven and one-half minutes past ten. Will you be kind enough to tell me how you come to be so exact?"

"I thought some fool might ask me, so I looked at my watch."—Philadelphia Inquirer.



"NOBLE ANTHONY, THOU HAST CALLED ME."