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THE THEBAN LEGION.—Concluded.

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CHAPTER IX.

RELIEF TO THE CHURCH.

THE eye that measured Constantine flashed with jealous fire, or fastened upon him in admiration. He was described as superior in the royal qualities. "No one," wrote Eusebius, who once saw him standing by the side of the senior emperor, "was comparable to him for grace and beauty of person, or height of stature; and he so far surpassed his compeers in personal strength, as to be a terror to them." Broad shouldered, muscular, sturdy in health, commanding in presence, and about thirty years of age, he was a fine specimen of the military chiefs of the declining empire. Fierceness and gentleness strove together in his lion-like eye. His neat style of dress, his courtly manners, and his calm self-control were memorials of the care which Helena had bestowed upon him. For ten years he had probably not seen his father. It was part of the divine plan in his life, that this future deliverer of the church, should be reared in the very palace of its oppressors, and be instructed in all their wisdom. Galerius was the Pharaoh of

those killing times. "At that tender age, and blooming with the down of early youth, Constantine dwelt, as God's servant Moses had done, in the very home of the tyrants."

Nor should he leave it, if Galerius could prevent, unless upon some road beset with death. If some danger were to be encountered, if some one were to be put in front of the battle, if a fearful risk must be run among the savage beasts of the forests, or if some one must meet with peril in the martial games, Constantine was the chosen man. That his death was desired, if not plotted, scarcely can be questioned. But to hire an assassin, or to fall upon him openly, was too bold a measure. It would provoke the army, in which he was a favorite, and cause a civil war.

"Once more I entreat you to send my son to me," was the purport of a letter from Constantius to his colleague.

"Your father wishes you to remain here and perfect yourself in military discipline," was the version of it given to Constantine, who knew it to be false, but held his peace. To bide one's time, is a proof of moral strength. He was cultivating the reserve and discretion to which much of his greatness was due.

ALEXANDRIA OF THE PTOLEMIES.

BY PROF. J. C. MOFFAT, D. D.

UPON ascending the throne, Ptolemy Philadelphus foretokened the splendor of his reign by a sumptuous entertainment to the nobles of his kingdom and the people of Alexandria, in connection with the worship of the gods, whom they most reverently adored. His father, Ptolemy Soter, in order to secure him an undisputed succession, had abdicated in his favor. It was in the month of November, B. C. 285, when a long and successful reign had already firmly established the new Greco-Egyptian kingdom. And the act, whereby the wealthiest and wisest monarch of his time transferred the reins of state to a hardly less sagacious, and still more munificent successor, was celebrated with a splendor such as the world has seldom seen.

The solemnity was conducted, to some degree, after the order observed in the quinquennial games of Greece, but also in the style, and with more than the magnificence of the triumphal processions of ancient Egypt. In reading the description by Calixenus, we are constantly reminded of the monumental records of the Rameses, such as stand delineated upon the walls of Karnak to the present day. And yet the spirit of all was Hellenic. It was a fruit of the earliest union of matured Hellenic taste with the wealth and ostentatious manner of the East.

Within the vast extent of the palace gardens, pavilions had been erected for the accommodation of the soldiers, mechanics of the city, and foreigners; and conspicuous in the midst, and apart from all the rest, one of the most regal decorations, for the grandees of the kingdom, and the royal guests. It was of such extent as to contain one hundred and thirty couches placed in a circle; was surrounded by a portico,

and covered with the richest drapery, which, on the inside, was again hung with curtains of scarlet and white, interspersed with rare and beautiful furs; and it was everywhere profusely adorned with garments embroidered with gold, and works of the finest Greek and Egyptian art. One hundred marble statues of animals, from the hands of the first artists, couched like sphinxes around it. The spaces between were filled by pictures from Sicyonian masters and tapestries of gold, many of them containing portraits of Egyptian kings and mythological subjects. It was shaded by trees and shrubbery, and its floor covered with carpets of the finest wool, inwrought with embroidery and strewed with flowers.

While the morning star was yet low in the sky, the magnificent procession began to move through the already crowded streets of Alexandria. The first division of it was in honor of that bright star. It was followed by one in honor of Ptolemy Soter and his queen. Numbers of thrones made of ivory and gold were borne in this part of the pageant: among the rest, that of Ptolemy, whereon lay a crown made of ten thousand pieces of gold coin; also horns, the ancient symbols of power, one of them thirty cubits long, made of the most precious metal. A separate mystic crown of gold, studded with precious stones, and of enormous magnitude, was deposited at the door of a temple dedicated to Berenice, the queen of the abdicating monarch, and with it an ægis of gold, part of the compliment paid by Philadelphus to his mother. Along with these, a vast number of golden chaplets were borne by young maidens sumptuously attired. One of those chaplets was two cubits high and sixteen in circumference.

But the greatest display was reserved for the third division which marched in honor of the gods. Especially was the part of it pertaining to Dionysus beyond all parallel recorded in Greek annals, for the vastness and variety of its designs, and the amount of wealth lavished upon it. Independently of all that went to the honor of the other gods, that subdivision alone consisted of more than fifty portions, some of which must have exhausted the revenues of a province. The gorgeous chariot of Dionysus, drawn by one hundred and eighty men, in which the statue of the god, draped in a purple robe embroidered with gold, appeared in the act of pouring libations of wine from a golden goblet, was furnished with every symbol and utensil of his worship, all of the most precious materials, and was followed by priests and priestesses, and newly initiated votaries, and companies of followers from various nations, and crowds of Bacchantes wearing garlands of snakes, or of yew, or of vine, or ivy leaves. Another chariot, drawn by sixty men, bore a statue of Nyssa, so constructed by mechanism as to rise, from time to time, and pour libations of milk from a golden vessel. And that was followed by a wagon, drawn by three hundred men, on which was a wine press twenty-four cubits in length and fifteen in breadth, full of grapes, which sixty satyrs were trampling, while singing to the accompaniment of the flute. Silenus presided over them, and the new wine ran out over the street. In another wagon, drawn by six hundred men, a wine vessel, made of leopard skins and holding three thousand measures of wine, suffered its contents also to flow out in a continuous stream. It was followed by one hundred and twenty satyrs and sileni bearing casks of wine, and garlands and goblets all of gold. Another wagon, drawn by six hundred men, carried a silver vessel containing six hundred measures of wine. And next to it were two silver goblets twelve cubits in circumference and six in height, richly adorned with figures in relief. These were followed by a wilderness of gigantic vessels and

delphic tripods, all of gold, and by the sacred officers who carried articles of gold-plate pertaining to the worship of Dionysus, and which were of such number, magnitude, and diversity that the mere enumeration of them confuses the understanding.

In another part of the same division, Dionysus was represented by a statue twelve cubits high, riding upon an elephant, clad in a purple robe, and having a crown of vine and ivy leaves of gold, and a thyrsus of gold. An immense retinue followed him of maidens and sileni and satyrs; and these were followed by twenty-four chariots, drawn by four elephants apiece, and these by a great number drawn by zebras, ostriches, and various other animals. Then came cars drawn by camels and bearing palanquins, on which sat women from India, habited as prisoners. There were also camels bearing frankincense, and myrrh, and saffron, and cassia, and cinnamon, and other spices, by the hundreds of pounds, and Ethiopians bearing presents, among which were six hundred elephants' tusks, two thousand fagots of ebony, sixty gold and silver goblets, and other precious articles; an exact reproduction of what appears upon the monuments of Rameses the Great. Then came huntsmen and attendants leading four and twenty hundred dogs, Indian, Thyrcanian, Molossian, and other celebrated breeds; then one hundred and fifty men carrying trees, from which were suspended birds and beasts of all kinds that make their abode on trees; then cages full of parrots and peacocks, and pheasants and other birds of Ethiopia. And these were followed by immense numbers of sheep and cattle of different breeds from India and Ethiopia and Greece; and these again by groups of leopards, and panthers, and lynxes, and other wild and rare animals.

Then came another image of Dionysus as fleeing to the altar of Rhea, when pursued by Juno. There were also groups of other images, as those of Alexander and Ptolemy, and those representing gods and cities, all robed in the richest materials and crowned

with golden diadems, or with chaplets of olive and ivy leaves made of gold. The chariot which bore them was also furnished with a golden buffet full of articles of gold plate, and a golden goblet containing five measures. It was followed by women in similarly sumptuous attire, representing the subject cities of Ionia and the islands of Greece; and these by chariots bearing utensils, sacred to Dionysus, of gigantic size and of precious materials, among which was a golden thyrsus, ninety cubits long, and a spear of silver sixty cubits long.

The chronicler of these particulars seems to grow weary with enumerating, and yet, although professing to give only specimens, can not refrain from returning to the subject to add that among the much, which he has omitted, were twenty-four enormous lions, with other fierce animals, great numbers of chariots full of statues of gods and mighty kings, three hundred harpers playing upon harps, entirely of gold, and crowned with golden crowns; and one part of the procession, which, if not singular, was certainly queer, consisted of two thousand bulls, all of the same color, with their horns gilded and frontlets of gold and golden crowns in the middle of their foreheads, and around their necks and on their breasts, necklaces and breastplates made of gold.

The next part of the procession was in honor of Jupiter, in a style of corresponding magnificence. Other divisions followed in honor of many other gods, and of Alexander the Great, who was then held to be of the number of the gods. This statue was entirely of gold, with statues of Minerva and of Victory on either hand, and borne in a chariot drawn by elephants.

The last grand division proceeded in honor of the evening star. The fatigued chronicler contents himself with mentioning only a few specimens, and out of his list we select one or two, as for example, a breastplate of gold twelve cubits broad, one of silver eighteen cubits broad, a thunderbolt of gold, ten cubits long, twenty

golden shields, and sixty complete suits of armor, all of gold, garlands of oak leaves studded with precious stones, four hundred wagons full of silver plate, twenty wagons of gold plate, and eight hundred wagons of perfumes and spices. And the whole was closed by a procession of troops to the number of fifty-seven thousand six hundred infantry, and twenty-three thousand two hundred cavalry, all armed and appointed in the most complete and superb manner.

That magnificent pageant was far from being an unmeaning show. It was designed to impress the world with the vastness of the resources which the king of Egypt had transferred to the successor of his choice. A throne so fortified was not to be lightly assailed. It was also of a nature to propitiate the prejudices and the religious feelings of the Egyptians. For hundreds of years had that people kept up an international intercourse with the Greeks, on the most friendly terms. Many Greeks had settled in Lower Egypt, and Greeks, in general, were friends and admirers of the Egyptians. Both had suffered from Persian aggression. But the Greeks had been successful in war with Persia, where all others had failed. The Egyptians in their brave, but only partially successful struggles, had been prepared to welcome the Greeks as their deliverers. To them the victories of Alexander were a cause of rejoicing. Their friends of old time had come to their assistance, and delivered from the Persian yoke the Egyptians held themselves to be again free. The prudence of Ptolemy Soter in separating himself, so far as he did, from complication in the quarrels of his fellow-generals, and in devoting his attention to the reconstruction of Egyptian independence under his rule, confirmed that favorable feeling. Ptolemy actually became a Pharaoh in the eyes of his native subjects; and as such does his dynasty appear, with their proper hieroglyphic symbols, upon the monuments of their time. He so identified himself with his people, that they felt not as if they were governed by a Greek conqueror,

but as if they had adopted the Greek prince, who had delivered them from foreign despotism and internal distraction. Cordially they accepted his rule and gave him the surname of *Deliverer* (*Soter*).

Thirty-seven years of internal peace, under his hand, had blessed the nation with prosperity and wealth. The annexation of Syria and Cyrene flattered Egyptian pride with those foreign possessions, which had been the greatest object of ambition to their ancient kings. It was consistent with the whole policy of Ptolemy, and with the tendency of things, to reproduce the religious pageants, with which the Sesostris, Rameses, and other ancient Pharaohs celebrated their triumphs. To Egyptians well read in their national records, familiar with the traditions of their ancient power, accustomed as were their eyes to behold the pictorial histories of such triumphal processions upon the walls of their temples, the coronation ceremonies of Ptolemy Philadelphus must have been gratifying, as evidence of the returned prosperity of their nation. It went, accordingly, to transfer much of the pride, with which they regarded the memories of their ancient kings, to the new dynasty.

Its religious character was another important feature. One of the chief causes of an Egyptian's hatred to the Persians was the disrespect with which they treated his religion. Persians were monotheists, and despised the ceremonies and the objects of worship which the Egyptians revered. Greek mythology, on the other hand, was largely modified by the Egyptian: the later Greek religion was positively derived from that of Egypt, in many respects; and under Greek names the Egyptians still recognized many of their own gods. But the first Ptolemies also more directly revered the religion of Egypt. The coronation pageant combined the expression of both. The native priesthood and the religious of every grade were gratified with the revived respect to their national religion, and with the magnifi-

cent imitation of its most imposing ceremonies.

Those solemnities were like the old Pharaonic in another respect. They indulged in similar exaggeration of the regal power and extent of dominion representing as subject to Egyptian nations which had only been overrun, invaded, or approached by Egyptian arms, or to which there was even slighter claim. It gratified the pride of the nation to behold Indians, Ethiopians and Greeks appear in the procession, with the products of their respective countries, as if adorning the triumph of an Egyptian king.

There was also that which flattered the Greek element of the Ptolemean kingdom. The great features of the exhibition were Egyptian; but the style of the execution was Greek, and to the Greeks the principal divisions appeared in the light of their own mythology; and the successful royal house whom it honored was of their own blood. Macedonians, at least the noble and royal, were now recognized as belonging to the Hellenic race. And the same feeling was sustained by the patronage of Greek art and literature at the court of the Alexandrian princes.

A cogent argument was embodied in the display of enormous wealth made on that occasion. All inhabitants of Egypt, native, Greek and Hebrew, and all visitors to Alexandria, then both numerous and influential, were impressed by the evidence, thus given, of the prosperity of the country. Ptolemy Soter had been distinguished by the comparative simplicity of his way of living, and for the preference of the good of his kingdom before his own emolument. His wealth was not the hoard of avarice or extortion, but the naturally accumulated deposit from the influx of revenue, in a rich and prosperous country, uninterrupted in its industry for a whole generation. It was a magnificent testimony to the wisdom and success of the Ptolemean rule and an argument for its continuation.

Nor are we to regard it as having

exhausted the treasures to which Philadelphus became heir. Comparatively little of what was exhibited was really expended. The whole reign of Philadelphus was sumptuous, and yet at the end of thirty-eight years, closed with a surplus of seven hundred and forty thousand talents, a sum perhaps not less than fifteen hundred millions of United States dollars. No Hellenic monarch had ever before

wielded such resources of imperial munificence. In the history of the Hellenic race, the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus is the summit of material wealth. Athens cultivated Greek talent to the perfection of its type, but it was Alexandria which provided it with the largest resources of learning, and developed its powers in science and criticism. But there also it first came under the bondage of royal patronage.

THE ORIOLE.

BY REV. T. HEMPESTEAD.

WHERE meadows are green and the apple boughs
 Are high, the Oriole swings;
 Of threads and grass is the rare-built house
 Where the clear-toned Oriole swings—
 Happy singer, silver-throated; Tropic wonder, golden-coated,
 Sliding down an argent way
 To the rose-bud heart of May,
 Down like Mars, the fiery-fronted, to a violet cloud, his tomb;
 Quenched like a cloven tongue of flame in a mid-air wave of bloom—
 All day sliding in and out through the gates of apple bloom,
 Where the Greening's million torches all the humming air illum—
 Out and in,
 On breezes crystalline, cool and thin,
 Out and in at the gulfs of bloom
 That whiten the evening's spicy gloom,
 Flit the Oriole's wings.

On the lithe, long limb of the cherry tree,
 Whose fruit, small, glistening, dark and round,
 Blackens the dusty August ground,
 Swinging and swaying marvelously,
 A mansion floating in air I see—
 What can it be?
 What can it be but the trysting place
 Of a joyous, beautiful, praiseful race?
 Where shooting out and glancing in,
 Through leaves that whisper, rustle and spin,
 Leaves that titter, quiver and wail,
 Lean and pale
 At the silken blows of the zephyr's flail,
 Flit the Oriole's wings.

On the butternut bough below the barn,
 Trailing a thread of linen yarn,
 The orange Oriole swings.