

wandering life. And how think you, did they treat them? The girl they kept in confinement, on the pretext that by so doing they should prevent me from betraying Egypt to Cambyses. But the boy—my beautiful, gentle boy—my only son—has been murdered by Psantik's orders, and possibly with the knowledge of Amasis. My heart was withered and shrunk with exile and sorrow, but I feel that it expands—it beats more joyfully now that there is a hope of vengeance.”

Nebenchari's sullen but burning glance met the flashing eye of the Athenian as he finished his tale; he gave him his hand and said: “We are allies.”

The Greek clasped the offered hand and answered: “Our first point now is to make sure of the king's favor.”

“I will restore Kassandane's sight.”

“Is that in your power?”

“The operation which removed Amasis' blindness was my own discovery. Petammon stole it from my burnt papers.”

“Why did you not exert your skill earlier?”

“Because I am not accustomed to bestow presents on my enemies.”

Phanes shuddered slightly at these words, recovered himself, however, in a moment, and said: “And I am certain of the king's favor too. The Massagetan envoys have gone home to-day; peace has been granted them and . . .”

While he was speaking the door was burst open and one of Kassandane's eunuchs rushed into the room crying: “The Princess Nitetis is dying! Follow me at once, there is not a moment to lose.”

The physician made a parting sign to his confederate,

and followed the eunuch to the dying-bed of the royal bride.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE sun was already trying to break a path for his rays through the thick curtains, that closed the window of the sick-room, but Nebenchari had not moved from the Egyptian girl's bedside. Sometimes he felt her pulse, or spread sweet-scented ointments on her forehead or chest, and then he would sit gazing dreamily into vacancy. Nitetis seemed to have sunk into a deep sleep after an attack of convulsions. At the foot of her bed stood six Persian doctors, murmuring incantations under the orders of Nebenchari, whose superior science they acknowledged, and who was seated at the bed's head.

Every time he felt the sick girl's pulse he shrugged his shoulders, and the gesture was immediately imitated by his Persian colleagues. From time to time the curtain was lifted and a lovely head appeared, whose questioning blue eyes fixed at once on the physician, but were always dismissed with the same melancholy shrug. It was Atossa. Twice she had ventured into the room, stepping so lightly as hardly to touch the thick carpet of Milesian wool, had stolen to her friend's bedside and lightly kissed her forehead, on which the pearly dew of death was standing, but each time a severe and reproving glance from Nebenchari had sent her back again into the next room, where her mother Kassandane was lying, awaiting the end.

Cambyses had left the sick-room at sunrise, on see-



ing that Nitetis had fallen asleep; he flung himself on to his horse, and accompanied by Phanes, Prexaspes, Otanes, Darius, and a number of courtiers, only just aroused from their sleep, took a wild ride through the game-park. He knew by experience, that he could best overcome or forget any violent mental emotion when mounted on an unmanageable horse.

Nebenchari started on hearing the sound of horses' hoofs in the distance. In a waking dream he had seen Cambyses enter his native land at the head of immense hosts; he had seen its cities and temples on fire, and its gigantic pyramids crumbling to pieces under the powerful blows of his mighty hand. Women and children lay in the smouldering ruins, and plaintive cries arose from the tombs in which the very mummies moved like living beings; and all these—priests, warriors, women, and children—the living and the dead—all had uttered his,—Nebenchari's,—name, and had cursed him as a traitor to his country. A cold shiver struck to his heart; it beat more convulsively than the blood in the veins of the dying girl at his side. Again the curtain was raised; Atossa stole in once more and laid her hand on his shoulder. He started and awoke. Nebenchari had been sitting three days and nights with scarcely any intermission by this sick-bed, and such dreams were the natural consequence.

Atossa slipped back to her mother. Not a sound broke the sultry air of the sick-room, and Nebenchari's thoughts reverted to his dream. He told himself that he was on the point of becoming a traitor and a criminal, the visions he had just beheld passed before him again, but this time it was another, and a different one which gained the foremost place. The forms of Amasis,—

who had laughed at and exiled him,—of Psamtik and the priests,—who had burnt his works,—stood near him; they were heavily fettered and besought mercy at his hands. His lips moved, but this was not the place in which to utter the cruel words which rose to them. And then the stern man wiped away a tear as he remembered the long nights, in which he had sat with the reed in his hand, by the dull light of the lamp, carefully painting every sign of the fine hieratic character in which he committed his ideas and experience to writing. He had discovered remedies for many diseases of the eye, spoken of in the sacred books of Thoth and the writings of a famous old physician of Byblos as incurable, but, knowing that he should be accused of sacrilege by his colleagues, if he ventured on a correction or improvement of the sacred writings, he had entitled his work, "Additional writings on the treatment of diseases of the eye, by the great god Thoth,"<sup>49</sup> newly discovered by the oculist Nebenchari."<sup>50</sup>

49. The discovery of nearly every science is attributed to the ibis-headed god Thoth, the writer or clerk of heaven, whom the Greeks compared to their god Hermes. (See Pietschmann, *Hermes Trismegistos*, L. 1875.) He is second in rank to Osiris, the logos, the reason, whose counsels aid the creative power. Thoth, the "thrice greatest" (Trismegistos) was said to have written six books on the healing art, in which anatomy, the doctrine of disease, and the use of medicines are said to have been treated, besides diseases of the eye. The book on the use of medicine has been preserved to the present day in the Papyrus Ebers. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* VI. 260. See Iamblichus, *De Myst. Aegypt.* VI. 4. Isis also was glorified as a healing divinity and in later times Serapis. Diod. I. 25. Tacit. *Hist.* IV. 81.

50. In the writings of the ancient Egyptians which have come down to us, we read constantly of books and documents, which had been found under this or that statue of a god. This was certainly intended as a proof of their sanctity and divine authorship. It is true that in some works the name of the author is given; as for instance the Legend of the two brothers (Papyr. d'Orbiney) the author of which was named Anana. In the Papyrus Anastasi IV. seven other authors are named: Kagabu, Hora, Merapu, Bek en Ptah, Amen Mes, Sun-



He had resolved on bequeathing his works to the library at Thebes,<sup>51</sup> that his experience might be useful to his successors and bring forth fruit for the whole body of sufferers. This was to be his reward for the long nights which he had sacrificed to science—recognition after death, and fame for the caste to which he belonged. And there stood his old rival Petammon,

ro, and Mer Ptah. One of the hermetic books was devoted entirely to diseases of the eye, to which a large portion of the Papyrus Ebers was also allotted. The "book on the eyes" commences p. 56, line 1. The first prescription is for the alleviation of inflammation in the eye. Other remedies are given for watering of the eyes, blear-eyes, etc. Page 56, line 7 treats of iridectomy; page 57, lines 2-4 contains a remedy for contraction of the pupil; p. 57, lines 5-6 has a cure for white spots (albugo) in the eyes. Granulation, fatty matter in the visual organs, etc., are also mentioned. Page 63, line 8, gives a prescription for the eyes taken from the directions of a Semite from Byblos. It was in Alexandria too, in the third century B. C., that Herophilus of Chalcedon discovered and named the retina of the eye. In the Papyrus Ebers the physician Nebsecht and the priest Chui are mentioned.

51. The library of Thebes, which according to Diodorus bore the inscription *ψυχῆς ἰατροεῖον*, "place of healing for the soul," contained, according to Iamblichus, *De Myst. Aegypt.* VIII, 1., 20,000 hermetic or sacerdotal books. It was in the Ramesseum, which, according to Diodorus of Osymandyas, was erected to Rameses Miamun, ("the beloved of Ammon") of the monuments, in the fourteenth century B. C. Champollion discovered what must formerly have been the space occupied by the library in the ruins of the Ramesseum. At the entrance were representations of Thoth, the god of wisdom, and Safech, the goddess of history. Many of the hieratic papyri which we possess are dated from this library and it is often mentioned in the Egyptian books. Lepsius even discovered at Thebes the tombs of two of the librarians under Rameses Miamun. Their possessors were father and son, this office, like most others, having been hereditary. They were called "governors of the books," and "presidents of the books." See Lepsius, *Chronologie Einleitung*, p. 39. The libraries seem always to have belonged to the temples. At Dendera, Edfu, and especially at Philoe, the inscriptions state in which rooms of the temples the manuscripts were preserved. Thus in the Ritual of the Dead, 17. 47. 48. we read of the library of Osiris Seb; Galen speaks of a library belonging to the temple of Ptah at Memphis, where medical manuscripts had also been preserved. Gal. *De comp. med. sec. gen.* V. 2. and we know that there was one attached to the Serapeum at Alexandria. See Parthey's *Monograph, das Alexandrinische Museum*. Fr. Richtel, with the ingenuity peculiar to him, ascertained the number of works preserved in the Alexandrine library.

by the side of the crown-prince in the grove of Neith, and stirred the consuming fire, after having stolen his discovery of the operation of couching. Their malicious faces were tinged by the red glow of the flames, which rose with their spiteful laughter towards heaven, as if demanding vengeance. A little further off he saw in his dream Amasis receiving his father's letters from the hands of the high-priest. Scornful and mocking words were being uttered by the king; Neithotep looked exultant.—In these visions Nebenchari was so lost, that one of the Persian doctors was obliged to point out to him that his patient was awake. He nodded in reply, pointing to his own weary eyes with a smile, felt the sick girl's pulse, and asked her in Egyptian how she had slept.

"I do not know," she answered, in a voice that was hardly audible. "It seemed to me that I was asleep, and yet I saw and heard everything that had happened in the room. I felt so weak that I hardly knew whether I was awake or asleep. Has not Atossa been here several times?"

"Yes."

"And Cambyses stayed with Kassandane until sunrise; then he went out, mounted his horse Reksch, and rode into the game-park."

"How do you know that?"

"I saw it."

Nebenchari looked anxiously into the girl's shining eyes. She went on: "A great many dogs have been brought into the court behind this house."

"Probably the king has ordered a hunt, in order to deaden the pain which he feels at seeing you suffer."

"Oh, no. I know better what it means. Oropastes



taught me, that whenever a Persian dies dogs<sup>52</sup> are brought in, that the Divs may enter into them."

"But you are living, my mistress, and . . ."

"Oh, I know very well that I shall die. I knew that I had not many hours more to live, even if I had not seen how you and the other physicians shrugged your shoulders whenever you looked at me. That poison is deadly."

"You are speaking too much, my mistress, it will hurt you."

"Oh let me speak, Nebenchari! I must ask you to do something for me before I die."

"I am your servant."

"No, Nebenchari, you must be my friend and priest. You are not angry with me for having prayed to the Persian gods? Our own Hathor was always my best friend still. Yes, I see by your face that you forgive me. Then you must promise not to allow my corpse to be torn in pieces by dogs and vultures.\* The thought is so very dreadful. You will promise to embalm my body and ornament it with amulets?"

"If the king allows."

"Of course he will. How could Cambyses possibly refuse my last request?"

"Then my skill is at your service."

"Thank you; but I have still something else to ask."

52. As soon as a Persian was dead, the *Drukhs Naqus*, or unclean demon of death, rushed to the spot in the form of a fly and seated himself on the corpse and on one of the living who were present, bringing destruction and taint. *Vendid.* Farg. VII. 2-24; Even to this day, the Parsees hold dogs before dying people. Ritter, *Erikunde* IV. p. 1092. Possibly they do this in hopes that the spectre of death may enter into the animals; but the eyes of two especially spotted dogs were said to have the power of scaring the evil *Drukhs*. The latter remark is from the Dutch translator. See also Tiele, *Godsd. v. Zarath.* p. 184.

\* See vol. I. note 110.

"You must be brief. My Persian colleagues are already making signs to me, to enjoin silence on you."

"Can't you send them away for a moment?"

"I will try to do so."

Nebenchari then went up and spoke to the Magi for a few minutes, and they left the room. An important incantation, at which no one but the two concerned might be present, and the application of a new and secret antidotal poison were the pretexts which he had used in order to get rid of them.

When they were alone, Nitetis drew a breath of relief and said: "Give me your priestly blessing on my long journey into the nether world, and prepare me for my pilgrimage to Osiris."

Nebenchari knelt down by her bed and in a low voice repeated hymns, Nitetis making devotional responses.

The physician represented Osiris, the lord of the nether world—Nitetis the soul, justifying itself before him.\*

When these ceremonies were ended the sick girl breathed more freely. Nebenchari could not but feel moved in looking at this young suicide. He felt confident that he had saved a soul for the gods of his native land, had cheered the last sad and painful hours of one of God's good creatures. During these last moments, compassion and benevolence had excluded every bitter feeling; but when he remembered that this lovely creature owed all her misery to Amasis too, the old black cloud of thought darkened his mind again.—Nitetis, after lying silent for some time, turned to her new friend with a

\* See vol. I. note 251.



pleasant smile, and said: "I shall find mercy with the judges of the dead now, shall not I?"

"I hope and believe so."

"Perhaps I may find Tachot before the throne of Osiris, and my father . . ."

"Your father and mother are waiting for you there. Now in your last hour bless those who begot you, and curse those who have robbed you of your parents, your crown and your life."

"I do not understand you."

"Curse those who robbed you of your parents, crown and life, girl!" cried the physician again, rising to his full height, breathing hard as he said the words, and gazing down on the dying girl. "Curse those wretches, girl! that curse will do more in gaining mercy from the judges of the dead, than thousands of good works!" And as he said this he seized her hand and pressed it violently.

Nitētis looked up uneasily into his indignant face, and stammered in blind obedience, "I curse."

"Those who robbed my parents of their throne and lives!"

"Those who robbed my parents of their throne and their lives," she repeated after him, and then crying, "Oh, my heart!" sank back exhausted on the bed.

Nebenchari bent down, and before the royal physicians could return, kissed her forehead gently, murmuring: "She dies my confederate. The gods hearken to the prayers of those who die innocent. By carrying the sword into Egypt, I shall avenge king Hophra's wrongs as well as my own."

When Nitētis opened her eyes once more, a few hours later, Kassandane was holding her right hand, Atossa kneeling at her feet, and Crœsus standing at the

head of her bed, trying, with the failing strength of old age, to support the gigantic frame of the king, who was so completely overpowered by his grief, that he staggered like a drunken man. The dying girl's eyes lighted up as she looked round on this circle. She was wonderfully beautiful. Cambyses came closer and kissed her lips; they were growing cold in death. It was the first kiss he had ever given her,—and the last. Two large tears sprang to her eyes; their light was fast growing dim; she murmured Cambyses' name softly, fell back in Atossa's arms, and died.

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We shall not give a detailed account of the next few hours: it would be an unpleasant task to describe how, at a signal from the principal Persian doctor, every one, except Nebenchari and Crœsus, hastily left the room;—how dogs were brought in and their sagacious heads turned towards the corpse in order to scare the demon of death;\*—how, directly after Nitētis' death, Kassandane, Atossa and their entire retinue moved into another house in order to avoid defilement;—how fire was extinguished throughout the dwelling, that the pure element might be removed from the polluting spirits of death;<sup>53</sup> how spells and exorcisms were muttered,<sup>54</sup> and how every person and thing, which had approached or been brought into contact with the dead body, was subjected to numerous purifications with water and pungent fluids.

<sup>53</sup> In winter fire might be brought back to the deceased's dwelling nine days after the death, in summer not until a month had passed. *Vendid.* Farg. V. 130.

<sup>54</sup> The entire tenth Fargard of the *Vendidad* is devoted to these spells.

\* See note 52.



The same evening Cambyses was seized by one of his old epileptic attacks. Two days later he gave Nebenchari permission to embalm Nitetis' body in the Egyptian manner, according to her last wish. The king gave way to the most immoderate grief; he tore the flesh of his arms, rent his clothes and strewed ashes on his head, and on his couch. All the magnates of his court were obliged to follow his example. The troops mounted guard with rent banners and muffled drums. The cymbals and kettle-drums of the "Immortals" were bound round with crape. The horses which Nitetis had used, as well as all which were then in use by the court, were colored blue and deprived of their tails; the entire court appeared in mourning robes of dark brown, rent to the girdle,\* and the Magi were compelled to pray three days and nights unceasingly for the soul of the dead,<sup>55</sup> which was supposed to be awaiting its sentence for eternity at the bridge Chinvat\*\* on the third night.

Neither the king, Kassandane, nor Atossa shrank from submitting to the necessary purifications; they repeated, as if for one of their nearest relations, thirty prayers for the dead, while, in a house outside the city gates, Nebenchari began to embalm her body in the most costly manner, and according to the strictest rules of his art.<sup>56</sup>

55. The number of prayers to be said according to the degrees of relationship with the deceased are to be found *Vendidad* Farg. XII. 1.

56. Embalming was practised in three different ways. The first cost a talent of silver (£225.); the second 20 Minæ (£60.) and the third was very inexpensive. Herod. II. 86-88. Diod. I. 91. The brain was first drawn out through the nose and the skull filled with spices. The intestines were then taken out, and the body filled in like manner with aromatic spices. When all was finished, the corpse was left 70 days in a solution of soda, and then wrapped in bandages of

\* See note 29.

\*\* See note 15.

For nine days Cambyses remained in a condition, which seemed little short of insanity. At times furious, at others dull and stupefied, he did not even allow his relations or the high-priest to approach him. On the morning of the tenth day he sent for the chief of the seven judges and commanded, that as lenient a sentence as possible should be pronounced on Gaumata. Nitetis, on her dying-bed, had begged him to spare the life of this unhappy youth.

One hour later the sentence was submitted to the king for ratification. It ran thus: "Victory to the king! Inasmuch as Cambyses, the eye of the world and the sun of righteousness, hath, in his great mercy, which is as broad as the heavens and as inexhaustible as the great deep, commanded us to punish the crime of the son of the Magi, Gaumata, with the indulgence of a mother instead of with the severity of a judge, we, the seven judges of the realm, have determined to grant his forfeited life. Inasmuch, however, as by the folly of this youth the lives of the noblest and best in this realm have been imperilled, and it may reasonably

byssus spread over with gum. The microscopical examinations of mummy-bandages made by Dr. Ure and Prof. Czermak have proved that byssus is linen, not cotton. The manner of embalming just described is the most expensive, and the latest chemical researches prove that the description given of it by the Greeks was tolerably correct. L. Penicher maintains that the bodies were first somewhat dried in ovens, and that then resin of the cedar-tree, or asphalt, was poured into every opening. *Traité sur les embaumements selon les anciens et les modernes*. Paris 1699. According to Herodotus, female corpses were embalmed by women. Herod. II. 89. The subject is treated in great detail by Pettigrew, *History of Egyptian Mummies*. London. 1834. Czermak's microscopical examinations of Egyptian mummies show how marvellously the smallest portions of the bodies were preserved, and confirm the statements of Herodotus on many points. The monuments also contain much information in regard to embalming, and we now know the purpose of nearly all the amulets placed with the dead.



be apprehended that he may again abuse the marvellous likeness to Bartja, the noble son of Cyrus, in which the gods have been pleased in their mercy to fashion his form and face, and thereby bring prejudice upon the pure and righteous, we have determined to disfigure him in such wise, that in the time to come it will be a light matter to discern between this, the most worthless subject of the realm, and him who is most worthy. We therefore, by the royal will and command, pronounce sentence, that both the ears of Gaumata be cut off, for the honor of the righteous and shame of the impure."

Cambyes confirmed this sentence at once, and it was executed the same day.

Oropastes did not dare to intercede for his brother, though this ignominious punishment mortified his ambitious mind more than even a sentence of death could have done. As he was afraid that his own influence and consideration might suffer through this mutilated brother, he ordered him to leave Babylon at once for a country-house of his own on Mount Arakadris.<sup>57</sup>

During the few days which had just passed, a shabbily-dressed and closely-veiled woman had watched day and night at the great gate of the palace; neither the threats of the sentries nor the coarse jests of the palace-servants could drive her from her post. She never allowed one of the less important officials to pass without eagerly questioning him, first as to the state of the

57. This mountain is mentioned in the inscription of Behistân I. §. IX. With reference to Gaumata's punishment, the same which Herodotus says was inflicted on the pretended Smerdis, we would observe that even Persians of high rank were sometimes deprived of their ears. In the Behistân inscription (Spiegel p. 15 and 21.) the ears, tongue and nose of the man highest in rank among the rebels, Fravartis, (Phraortes) were cut off. Similar punishments are quoted by Brisson. *De regn Persar.* II. p. 334-5.

Egyptian Princess, and then what had become of Gaumata. When his sentence was told her as a good joke by a chattering lamp-lighter, she went off into the strangest excitement, and astonished the poor man so much by kissing his robe, that he thought she must be crazed, and gave her an alms. She refused the money, but remained at her post, subsisting on the bread which was given her by the compassionate distributors of food. Three days later Gaumata himself, with his head bound up, was driven out in a closed *harmamaxa*. She rushed to the carriage and ran screaming by the side of it, until the driver stopped his mules and asked what she wanted. She threw back her veil and showed the poor, suffering youth her pretty face covered with deep blushes. Gaumata uttered a low cry as he recognized her, collected himself, however, in a moment, and said: "What do you want with me, Mandane?"

The wretched girl raised her hands beseechingly to him, crying: "Oh, do not leave me, Gaumata! Take me with you! I forgive you all the misery you have brought on me and my poor mistress. I love you so much, I will take care of you and nurse you as if I were the lowest servant-girl."

A short struggle passed in Gaumata's mind. He was just going to open the carriage-door and clasp Mandane—his earliest love—in his arms, when the sound of horses' hoofs coming nearer struck on his ear, and looking round he saw a carriage full of Magi, among whom were several who had been his companions at the school for priests. He felt ashamed and afraid of being seen by the very youths, whom he had often treated proudly and haughtily because he was the brother of the high-priest, threw Mandane a purse of gold, which his brother