

which would have been equivalent to the signing of a death-warrant—<sup>153</sup> when his eye caught sight of the chain, which he himself had hung round the Athenian's neck as a reward for the clever way in which he had proved the innocence of Nitetis. The sudden recollection of the woman he loved, and of the countless services rendered him by Phanes, calmed his wrath—his hand dropped. One minute the severe ruler stood gazing lingeringly at his disobedient friend; the next, moved by a sudden impulse, he raised his right hand again, and pointed imperiously to the gate leading from the court.

Phanes bowed in silence, kissed the king's robe, and descended slowly into the court. Psamtik watched him, quivering with excitement, sprang towards the veranda, but before his lips could utter the curse which his heart had prepared, he sank powerless on to the ground.

Cambyses beckoned to his followers to make immediate preparations for a lion-hunt in the Libyan mountains.

### CHAPTER XIII.

The waters of the Nile had begun to rise again. Two months had passed away since Phanes' disappearance, and much had happened.

<sup>153</sup> The same sign was used by the last Darius to denote that his able Greek general Memnon, who had offended him by his plainness of speech, was doomed to death. As he was being led away, Memnon exclaimed, in allusion to Alexander, who was then fast drawing near: "Thy remorse will soon prove my worth; my avenger is not far off." Droysen, *Alex. d. Grosse*, I. p. 240. Diod. XVII. 30. Curtius III. 2.

The very day on which he left Egypt, Sappho had given birth to a girl, and had so far regained strength since then under the care of her grandmother, as to be able to join in an excursion up the Nile, which Cræsus had suggested should take place on the festival of the goddess Neith. Since the departure of Phanes, Cambyses' behavior had become so intolerable, that Bartja, with the permission of his brother, had taken Sappho to live in the royal palace at Memphis, in order to escape any painful collision. Rhodopis, at whose house Cræsus and his son, Bartja, Darius and Zopyrus were constant guests, had agreed to join the party.

On the morning of the festival-day they started in a gorgeously decorated boat, from a point between thirty and forty miles below Memphis, favored by a good north-wind and urged rapidly forward by a large number of rowers.

A wooden roof or canopy, gilded and brightly painted, sheltered them from the sun. Cræsus sat by Rhodopis; Theopompus the Milesian lay at her feet. Sappho was leaning against Bartja. Syloson, the brother of Polykrates, had made himself a comfortable resting-place next to Darius, who was looking thoughtfully into the water. Gyges and Zopyrus busied themselves in making wreaths for the women, from the flowers handed them by an Egyptian slave.

"It seems hardly possible," said Bartja, "that we can be rowing against the stream. The boat flies like a swallow."

"This fresh north-wind brings us forward," answered Theopompus. "And then the Egyptian boatmen understand their work splendidly."

"And row all the better just because we are sailing

against the stream," added Crœsus. "Resistance always brings out a man's best powers."

"Yes," said Rhodopis, "sometimes we even make difficulties, if the river of life seems too smooth."

"True," answered Darius. "A noble mind can never swim with the stream. In quiet inactivity all men are equal. We must be seen fighting, to be rightly estimated."

"Such noble-minded champions must be very cautious, though," said Rhodopis, "lest they become contentious and quarrelsome. Do you see those melons lying on the black soil yonder, like golden balls? Not one would have come to perfection if the sower had been too lavish with his seed. The fruit would have been choked by too luxuriant tendrils and leaves. Man is born to struggle and to work, but in this, as in everything else, he must know how to be moderate if his efforts are to succeed. The art of true wisdom is to keep within limits."

"Oh, if Cambyses could only hear you!" exclaimed Crœsus. "Instead of being contented with his immense conquests, and now thinking for the welfare of his subjects, he has all sorts of distant plans in his head. He wishes to conquer the entire world, and yet, since Phanes left, scarcely a day has passed in which he has not been conquered himself by the Div of drunkenness."

"Has his mother no influence over him?" asked Rhodopis. "She is a noble woman."

"She could not even move his resolution to marry Atossa, and was forced to be present at the marriage-feast."

"Poor Atossa!" murmured Sappho.

"She does not pass a very happy life as Queen of Persia," answered Crœsus; "and her own naturally impetuous disposition makes it all the more difficult for her to live contentedly with this husband and brother; I am sorry to hear it said that Cambyses neglects her sadly, and treats her like a child. But the marriage does not seem to have astonished the Egyptians, as brothers and sisters often marry here."<sup>154</sup>

"In Persia too," said Darius, putting on an appearance of the most perfect composure, "marriages with very near relations are thought to be the best."<sup>\*</sup>

"But to return to the king," said Crœsus, turning the conversation for Darius' sake. "I can assure you, Rhodopis, that he may really be called a noble man. His violent and hasty deeds are repented of almost as soon as committed, and the resolution to be a just and merciful ruler has never forsaken him. At supper, for instance, lately, before his mind was clouded by the influence of wine, he asked us what the Persians thought of him in comparison with his father."

"And what was the answer?" said Rhodopis.

"Intaphernes got us out of the trap cleverly enough," answered Zopyrus, laughing. "He exclaimed: 'We are of opinion that you deserve the preference, inasmuch as you have not only preserved intact the inheritance bequeathed you by Cyrus, but have extended his dominion beyond the seas by your conquest of Egypt.' This answer did not seem to please the

<sup>154</sup> Marriages with a sister or a deceased wife's brother were not uncommon among the Egyptians. This is confirmed by numerous testimonies. *Diod. I. 27. Cod. Justin. V. Tit. V. Leg. VIII.* Also by Greek writers. *Cor. Nep. I. v. Cim. I.* The history of the Ptolemies, and especially of Philadelphus, is full of examples of such marriages.

<sup>\*</sup> See note 130.

king, however, and poor Intaphernes was not a little horrified to hear him strike his fist on the table and cry, 'Flatterer, miserable flatterer!' He then turned to Croesus and asked his opinion. Our wise friend answered at once: 'My opinion is that you have not attained to the greatness of your father; for,' added he in a pacifying tone, 'one thing is wanting to you—a son such as Cyrus bequeathed us in yourself.'<sup>155</sup>

"First-rate, first-rate," cried Rhodopis clapping her hands and laughing. "An answer that would have done honor to the ready-witted Odysseus himself. And how did the king take your honeyed pill?"

"He was very much pleased, thanked Croesus, and called him his friend."

"And I," said Croesus taking up the conversation, "used the favorable opportunity to dissuade him from the campaigns he has been planning against the long-lived Ethiopians, the Ammonians and the Carthaginians. Of the first of these three nations we know scarcely anything but through fabulous tales; by attacking them we should lose much and gain little. The oasis of Ammon is scarcely accessible to a large army, on account of the desert by which it is surrounded; besides which, it seems to me sacrilegious to make war upon a god in the hope of obtaining possession of his treasures, whether we be his worshippers or not. As to the Carthaginians, facts have already justified my predictions. Our fleet is manned principally by Syrians and Phœnicians, and they have, as might be expected, refused to go to war against their brethren. Cambyses laughed at my reasons, and ended by swearing, when he was already somewhat intoxicated, that he could carry out

<sup>155</sup>. Herod. III. 34.

difficult undertakings and subdue powerful nations, even without the help of Bartja and Phanes."

"What could that allusion to you mean, my son?" asked Rhodopis.

"He won the battle of Pelusiam," cried Zopyrus, before his friend could answer. "He and no one else!"

"Yes," added Croesus, "and you might have been more prudent, and have remembered that it is a dangerous thing to excite the jealousy of a man like Cambyses. You all of you forget that his heart is sore, and that the slightest vexation pains him. He has lost the woman he really loved; his dearest friend is gone; and now you want to disparage the last thing in this world that he still cares for,—his military glory."

"Don't blame him," said Bartja, grasping the old man's hand. "My brother has never been unjust, and is far from envying me what I must call my good fortune, for that my attack arrived just at the right time can hardly be reckoned as a merit on my part. You know he gave me this splendid sabre, a hundred thorough-bred horses, and a golden hand-mill\* as rewards of my bravery."

Croesus' words had caused Sappho a little anxiety at first; but this vanished on hearing her husband speak so confidently, and by the time Zopyrus had finished his wreath and placed it on Rhodopis' head, all her fears were forgotten.

Gyges had prepared his for the young mother. It was made of snow-white water-lilies, and, when she placed it among her brown curls, she looked so won-

\* See note 219.

derfully lovely in the simple ornament, that Bartja could not help kissing her on the forehead, though so many witnesses were present. This little episode gave a merry turn to the conversation; every one did his best to enliven the others, refreshments of all kinds were handed round, and even Darius lost his gravity for a time and joined in the jests that were passing among his friends.

When the sun had set, the slaves set elegantly-carved chairs, footstools, and little tables on the open part of the deck. Our cheerful party now repaired thither and beheld a sight so marvellously beautiful as to be quite beyond their expectations.

The feast of Neith, called in Egyptian "the lamp-burning," was celebrated by a universal illumination, which began at the rising of the moon.<sup>156</sup> The shores of the Nile looked like two long lines of fire. Every temple, house and hut was ornamented with lamps according to the means of its possessors. The porches of the country-houses and the little towers on the larger buildings were all lighted up by brilliant flames, burning in pans of pitch and sending up clouds of smoke, in which the flags and pennons waved gently backwards and forwards. The palm-trees and sycamores were silvered by the moonlight and threw strange fantastic reflections on the red waters of the Nile—red from the fiery glow of the houses on their shores. But strong and glowing as was the light of the illumination, its rays had not power to reach the middle of the giant

<sup>156</sup> Herodotus (II. 62.) speaks of this "burning of lamps" (*λυχνόκαϊα*) in honor of the goddess Neith (Pallas Athene). In Homer, Pallas Athene appears with an oil-lamp in her hand. *Odys.* XIX. 34. Strabo (396) speaks of an eternal lamp, which was kept burning in honor of Athene Polias in her ancient temple on the Acropolis.

river, where the boat was making its course, and the pleasure-party felt as if they were sailing in dark night between two brilliant days. Now and then a brightly-lighted boat would come swiftly across the river and seem, as it neared the shore, to be cutting its way through a glowing stream of molten iron.

Lotus-blossoms, white as snow, lay on the surface of the river, rising and falling with the waves, and looking like eyes in the water. Not a sound could be heard from either shore. The echoes were carried away by the north-wind, and the measured stroke of the oars and monotonous song of the rowers were the only sounds that broke the stillness of this strange night—a night robbed of its darkness.

For a long time the friends gazed without speaking at the wonderful sight, which seemed to glide past them. Zopyrus was the first to break the silence by saying, as he drew a long breath: "I really envy you, Bartja. If things were as they should be, every one of us would have his dearest wife at his side on such a night as this."

"And who forbade you to bring one of your wives?" answered the happy husband.

"The other five," said the youth with a sigh. "If I had allowed Oroetes' little daughter Parysatis, my youngest favorite, to come out alone with me to-night, this wonderful sight would have been my last; to-morrow there would have been one pair of eyes less in the world."

Bartja took Sappho's hand and held it fast, saying, "I fancy *one* wife will content me as long as I live."

The young mother pressed his hand warmly again, and said, turning to Zopyrus: "I don't quite trust you, my friend. It seems to me that it is not the anger of

your wives you fear, so much as the commission of an offence against the customs of your country. I have been told that my poor Bartja gets terribly scolded in the women's apartments for not setting eunuchs to watch over me, and for letting me share his pleasures."

"He does spoil you terribly," answered Zopyrus, "and our wives are beginning to quote him as an example of kindness and indulgence, whenever we try to hold the reins a little tight. Indeed there will soon be a regular women's mutiny at the king's gate, and the Achæmenidæ who escaped the swords and arrows of the Egyptians, will fall victims to sharp tongues and floods of salt tears."

"Oh! you most impolite Persian!" said Syloson laughing. "We must make you more respectful to these images of Aphrodite."

"You Greeks! that's a good idea," answered the youth. "By Mithras, our wives are quite as well off as yours. It's only the Egyptian women, that are so wonderfully free."

"Yes, you are quite right," said Rhodopis. "The inhabitants of this strange land have for thousands of years granted our weaker sex the same rights, that they demand for themselves. Indeed, in many respects, they have given us the preference. For instance, by the Egyptian law it is the daughters, not the sons, who are commanded to foster and provide for their aged parents, showing how well the fathers of this now humbled people understood women's nature, and how rightly they acknowledged that she far surpasses man in thoughtful solicitude and self-forgetful love. Do not laugh at these worshippers of animals. I confess that I cannot understand them, but I feel true admiration for

a people in the teaching of whose priests, even Pythagoras, that great master in the art of knowledge, assured me lies a wisdom as mighty as the Pyramids."

"And your great master was right," exclaimed Darius. "You know that I obtained Neithotep's freedom, and, for some weeks past, have seen him and Onuphis very constantly, indeed they have been teaching me. And oh, how much I have learnt already from those two old men, of which I had no idea before! How much that is sad I can forget, when I am listening to them! They are acquainted with the entire history of the heavens and the earth. They know the name of every king, and the circumstances of every important event that has occurred during the last four thousand years, the courses of the stars, the works of their own artists and sayings of their sages, during the same immense period of time. All this knowledge is recorded in huge books, which have been preserved in a palace at Thebes,\* called the "place of healing for the soul." Their laws are a fountain of pure wisdom, and a comprehensive intellect has been shown in the adaptation of all their state institutions to the needs of the country. I wish we could boast of the same regularity and order at home. The idea that lies at the root of all their knowledge is the use of numbers, the only means by which it is possible to calculate the course of the stars, to ascertain and determine the limits of all that exists, and, by the application of which in the shortening and lengthening of the strings of musical instruments, tones can be regulated.<sup>157</sup> Numbers are

<sup>157</sup> Zeller, *Geschichte d. Philosophie der Griechen*, I. 292. We agree with Iamblichus in supposing, that these Pythagorean views were derived from the Egyptian mysteries.

\* See note 51.

the only certain things; they can neither be controlled nor perverted. Every nation has its own ideas of right and wrong; every law can be rendered invalid by circumstances; but the results obtained from numbers can never be overthrown. Who can dispute, for instance, that twice two make four? Numbers determine the contents of every existing thing; whatever is, is equal to its contents, numbers therefore are the true being, the essence of all that is."

"In the name of Mithras, Darius, do leave off talking in that style, unless you want to turn my brain," interrupted Zopyrus. "Why, to hear you, one would fancy you'd been spending your life among these old Egyptian speculators and had never had a sword in your hand. What on earth have we to do with numbers?"

"More than you fancy," answered Rhodopis. "This theory of numbers belongs to the mysteries of the Egyptian priests, and Pythagoras learnt it from the very Onuphis who is now teaching you, Darius. If you will come to see me soon, I will show you how wonderfully that great Samian brought the laws of numbers and of the harmonies into agreement.<sup>158</sup>—But look, there are the Pyramids!"

The whole party rose at these words, and stood speechless, gazing at the grand sight which opened before them.

The Pyramids lay on the left bank of the Nile, in the silver moonshine, massive and awful, as if bruising the earth beneath them with their weight; the giant graves of mighty rulers. They seemed examples of man's creative power, and at the same time warnings

<sup>158</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphys.* I. 5.

of the vanity and mutability of earthly greatness. For where was Chufu now,—the king who had cemented that mountain of stone with the sweat of his subjects? Where was the long-lived Chafra who had despised the gods, and, defiant in the consciousness of his own strength, was said to have closed the gates of the temples in order to make himself and his name immortal by building a tomb of superhuman dimensions?<sup>159</sup> Their empty sarcophagi are perhaps tokens, that the judges of the dead found them unworthy of rest in the grave, unworthy of the resurrection, whereas the builder of the third and most beautiful pyramid, Menkera, who contented himself with a smaller monument, and reopened the gates of the temples, was allowed to rest in peace in his coffin of blue basalt.<sup>160</sup>

There they lay in the quiet night, these mighty pyramids, shone on by the bright stars, guarded by the watchman of the desert—the gigantic sphinx,—and

<sup>159</sup> Herodotus repeats, in good faith, that the builders of the great Pyramids were despisers of the gods. The tombs of their faithful subjects at the foot of these huge structures prove, however, (especially in E. de Rougé's *Recherches sur les monuments qu'on peut attribuer aux VI. premières dynasties, &c.*), that they owe their bad repute to the hatred of the people, who could not forget the era of their hardest bondage, and branded the memories of their oppressors wherever an opportunity could be found. We might use the word "tradition" instead of "the people," for this it is which puts the feeling and tone of mind of the multitude into the form of history.

<sup>160</sup> Bunsen, *Aegyptens Stelle in der Weltgeschichte* II. 169 and following, Pl. XVII. and in Vyse, *Pyramids of Ghizeh* II. Unfortunately the sarcophagus went down on the coast of Spain, in the ship which was conveying it to Europe. The Arabian geographer, Idrisi, states that shortly before the date at which he was then writing (1240) the pyramid had been opened, and that a mummy had been found in the sarcophagus with a gold plate by its side covered with unknown characters. Birch's translation of the inscription restored by Lepsius is probably the first. It is given in *Vyse's Pyramids* II. p. 94. The inscription restored by Lepsius and artistic representations of every portion of the city of the dead in Memphis, may be found in Ebers, *Aegypten in Bild und Wort* I. p. 33 and following.

overlooking the barren rocks of the Libyan stony mountains. At their feet, in beautifully-ornamented tombs, slept the mummies of their faithful subjects, and opposite the monument of the pious Menkera stood a temple, where prayers were said by the priests for the souls of the many dead buried in the great Memphian city of the dead. In the west, where the sun went down behind the Libyan mountains,—where the fruitful land ended and the desert began—there the people of Memphis had buried their dead; and as our gay party looked towards the west they felt awed into a solemn silence.

But their boat sped on before the north-wind; they left the city of the dead behind them and passed the enormous dikes\* built to protect the city of Menes from the violence of the floods; the city of the Pharaohs came in sight, dazzlingly bright with the myriads of flames which had been kindled in honor of the goddess Neith, and when at last the gigantic temple of Ptah\*\* appeared, the most ancient building of the most ancient land, the spell broke, their tongues were loosed, and they burst out into loud exclamations of delight.

It was illuminated by thousands of lamps; a hundred fires burnt on its Pylons, its battlemented walls and roofs. Burning torches flared between the rows of sphinxes which connected the various gates with the main building, and the now empty house of the god Apis<sup>161</sup> was so surrounded by colored fires that it

161. More has been said on the characteristic marks of the sacred bull Apis farther on in the text, and on the festival held at his discovery. Great lamentation was made at his death, and he was buried with incredible pomp. In the reign of Ptolemy Lagi the Apis having died of old age, his keeper not only expended on his funeral all the ready money then in store, but borrowed 50 silver talents from the king for

\* See vol. I. note 141.

\*\* See vol. I. note 56.

gleamed like a white limestone rock in a tropical sunset. Pennons, flags and garlands waved above the brilliant picture; music and loud songs could be heard from below.

“Glorious,” cried Rhodopis in enthusiasm, “glorious! Look how the painted walls and columns gleam in the light, and what marvellous figures the shadows of the obelisks and sphinxes throw on the smooth yellow pavement!”

“And how mysterious the sacred grove looks yonder!” added Croesus. “I never saw anything so wonderful before.”

“I have seen something more wonderful still,” said Darius. “You will hardly believe me when I tell you that I have witnessed a celebration of the mysteries of Neith.”

“Tell us what you saw, tell us!” was the universal outcry.

“At first Neithotep refused me admission, but when I promised to remain hidden, and besides, to obtain the same purpose (£6,750). Some of the priests who presided over the Apis-temple are said to have expended 100 talents (£22,500) on the animal's burial. Diod. I. 84. The Egyptians ascribed the gift of prophecy to Apis, (Plin. VIII. 71.), and seem to have considered him as symbolizing a period of 25 years. This supposition has been confirmed by the results of Mariette's excavations in the Serapeum and in the Apis-tombs, and by the deciphering of inscriptions on the so-called Apis-stelae. Mariette found a stone statue of the bull, covered with beautiful inscriptions, and a number of colossal Apis-sarcophagi. The statue was sent to Paris. A. Mariette, *Le Sérapéum de Memphis*. The dates on these Apis-stelae are of the greatest importance for the chronology of later Egyptian history, especially that of the 26th dynasty, which can be accurately determined by their means. We recommend as interesting Mariette's *La mère d'Apis*. He was said by many of the ancient writers to have been generated by a moonbeam, and dedicated to the moon as the Mnevis-bull of Heliopolis to the sun. Pomp. Mela. I. 9. 7. We cannot here discuss the place he held in the Egyptian religion. Much on this subject is to be found in Reinisch, *Die Aegyptischen Denkmäler in Miramar* p. 178. Also in Mariette's writings.

freedom of his child, he led me up to his observatory, from which there is a very extensive view, and told me that I should see a representation of the fates of Osiris and his wife Isis.<sup>162</sup>

"He had scarcely left, when the sacred grove became so brightly illuminated by colored lights that I was able to see into its innermost depths.

"A lake,\* smooth as glass, lay before me, surrounded by beautiful trees and flower-beds. Golden boats were sailing on this lake and in them sat lovely boys and girls dressed in snow-white garments, and singing sweet songs as they passed over the water. There were no rowers to direct these boats, and yet they moved over the ripples of the lake in a graceful order, as if guided by some magic unseen hand. A large ship sailed in the midst of this little fleet. Its deck glittered with precious stones. It seemed to be steered by one beautiful boy only, and, strange to say, the rudder he guided consisted of one white lotus-flower, the delicate leaves of which seemed scarcely to touch the water. A very lovely woman, dressed like a queen, lay on silken cushions in the middle of the vessel; by her side sat a man of larger stature than that of ordinary mortals. He wore a crown of ivy on his flowing curls, a panther-skin hung over his shoulders and he held a crooked staff in the right hand. In the back part of the ship was a roof made of ivy, lotus-blossoms and roses; beneath it stood a milk-white

162. These performances in the sacred grove of Neith seemed to have belonged to the external apparatus of the mysteries. The stage on which they took place was the lake of *Sa-el-Hagar*. It exists to this day, and Herodotus (II. 170.) implies that near it was a tomb of Osiris. He says (171) "These plays represented the fates of the above-mentioned, and were called Mysteries." See note 164.

\* See vol. I. note 150.

cow<sup>163</sup> with golden horns, covered with a cloth of purple. The man was Osiris, the woman Isis, the boy at the helm their son Horus, and the cow was the animal sacred to the immortal Isis. The little boats all skimmed over the water, singing glad songs of joy as they passed by the ship, and receiving in return showers of flowers and fruits, thrown down upon the lovely singers by the god and goddess within. Suddenly I heard the roll of thunder. It came crashing on, louder, and louder, and in the midst of this awful sound a man in the skin of a wild boar, with hideous features and bristling red hair, came out of the gloomiest part of the sacred grove, plunged into the lake, followed by seventy creatures like himself, and swam up to the ship of Osiris.<sup>164</sup>

"The little boats fled with the swiftness of the wind, and the trembling boy helmsman dropped his lotus-blossom.

"The dreadful monster then rushed on Osiris, and, with the help of his comrades, killed him, threw the body into a coffin and the coffin into the lake,<sup>165</sup> the waters of which seemed to carry it away as if by magic. Isis meanwhile had escaped to land in one of the small boats, and was now running hither and

163. The ivy was the plant of Osiris, the cow, the animal sacred to Isis. Diod. I. 17. Plut. *Isis and Orisis* 37. Herod. II 41. Isis is almost always represented with the head of a cow, and is again called "*ehe*" (the cow). There must certainly be a connection between this word and the name Io.

164. We have taken our description of this spectacle entirely from the Osiris-myth, as we find it in Plutarch, *Isis and Orisis* 13-19. Diod. I. 22. and a thousand times repeated on the monuments. Horus is called "the avenger of his father," &c. We copy the battle with all its phases from an inscription at Edfu, interpreted by Naville.

165. Here we have departed in some measure from Plutarch's version, in which Typhon artfully induces Osiris to lie down in the coffin.\*



thither on the shores of the lake, with streaming hair, lamenting her dead husband and followed by the virgins who had escaped with her. Their songs and dances, while seeking the body of Osiris, were strangely plaintive and touching, and the girls accompanied the dance by waving black Byssus scarfs in wonderfully graceful curves. Neither were the youths idle; they busied themselves in making a costly coffin for the vanished corpse of the god, accompanying their work with dances and the sound of castanets. When this was finished they joined the maidens in the train of the lamenting Isis and wandered on the shore with them, singing and searching.

"Suddenly a low song rose from some invisible lips. It swelled louder and louder and announced, that the body of the god had been transported by the currents of the Mediterranean to Gebal\* in distant Phœnicia. This singing voice thrilled to my very heart; Neithotep's son, who was my companion, called it "the wind of rumor."

"When Isis heard the glad news, she threw off her mourning garments and sang a song of triumphant rejoicing, accompanied by the voices of her beautiful followers. Rumor had not lied; the goddess really found the sarcophagus and the dead body of her husband on the northern shore of the lake.<sup>166</sup> They

<sup>166</sup> It is natural, that Isis should find the body of her husband in the north. The connection between Phœnicia and Egypt in this myth, as it has been handed down to us by Plutarch, is very remarkable. We consider the explanation of the close affinity between the Isis-and-Osiris and the Adonis myths to lie in the fact, that Egyptians and Phœnicians lived together on the shores of the Delta where the latter had planted their colonies. Plutarch's story of the finding of Osiris' dead body is very charming. *Isis and Osiris*. Ed. Parth. 15. The

\*Better known by its Greek name of Byblos.

brought both to land with dances; Isis threw herself on the beloved corpse, called on the name of Osiris and covered the mummy with kisses, while the youths wove a wonderful tomb of lotus-flowers and ivy.

"When the coffin had been laid under this beautiful vault, Isis left the sad place of mourning and went to look for her son. She found him at the east end of the lake, where for a long time I had seen a beautiful youth practising arms with a number of companions.

"While she was rejoicing over her newly-found child, a fresh peal of thunder told that Typhon had returned. This time the monster rushed upon the beautiful flowering grave, tore the body out of its coffin, hewed it into fourteen pieces<sup>167</sup> and strewed them over the shores of the lake.

"When Isis came back to the grave, she found nothing but faded flowers and an empty coffin; but at fourteen different places on the shore fourteen beautiful colored flames were burning. She and her virgins ran

coffin had been overgrown and enclosed by an Erica, which supported the roof of the king of Byblos. This was wafted to Isis' ears by a marvellous breath of rumor (*πνεύματι δαιμονίῳ φήμης*). She went to Byblos and seated herself by a spring, weeping and in poor raiment. She spoke with no one save with the maidens of the queen, whose hair she braided and breathed into them a wonderful perfume, which she alone possessed. When the queen saw her maidens, she felt a desire towards this marvellous stranger, whose hair and skin breathed ambrosial odors, and sent for her. Isis soon became her friend and was appointed nurse to the queen's little child . . . Isis nourished it, by putting her finger into its mouth instead of the breast . . . she herself took the form of a swallow, and flew round the supporting pillar uttering plaintive cries . . . Finally she reveals herself as the goddess and asks for the pillar, draws it lightly away from under the roof, peels the Erica covering from the coffin of Osiris, and anoints him with bitter tears.

<sup>167</sup> In 26 pieces, according to Diodorus, (I. 21.) which Typhon distributes among the same number of his companions. Plut. (*Is. and Os.* 18.) agrees with the monuments in stating the number as fourteen. \*These are separately specified on the latter.

to these flames, while Horus led the youths to battle against Typhon on the opposite shore.

"My eyes and ears hardly sufficed for all I had to see and hear. On the one shore a fearful and interesting struggle, peals of thunder and the braying of trumpets; on the other the sweet voices of the women, singing the most captivating songs to the most enchanting dances, for Isis had found a portion of her husband's body at every fire and was rejoicing.

"That was something for you, Zopyrus! I know of no words to describe the grace of those girls' movements, or how beautiful it was to see them first mingling in intricate confusion, then suddenly standing in faultless, unbroken lines, falling again into the same lovely tumult and passing once more into order, and all this with the greatest swiftness. Bright rays of light flashed from their whirling ranks all the time, for each dancer had a mirror<sup>168</sup> fastened between her shoulders, which flashed while she was in motion, and reflected the scene when she was still.

"Just as Isis had found the last limb but one<sup>169</sup> of the murdered Osiris, loud songs of triumph and the flourish of trumpets resounded from the opposite shore.

"Horus had conquered Typhon, and was forcing his way into the nether regions to free his father. The gate to this lower world opened on the west side of the

168. Dupuis, *Origine des Cultes*. This mirror-dance is most charmingly described by Th. Moore in his *Epicurean*. Nothing determinate can be said about it.

169. Isis sought the last limb in vain. Typhon (Set) had thrown it into the Nile. The goddess made an artificial limb, and from thence arose a worship, which seems to us to have been imported into Egypt from Phœnicia. Diod. I. 22. Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris* 18.

lake and was guarded by a fierce female hippopotamus.<sup>170</sup>

"And now a lovely music of flutes and harps came nearer and nearer, heavenly perfumes rose into the air, a rosy light spread over the sacred grove, growing brighter every minute, and Osiris came up from the lower world, led by his victorious son. Isis hastened to embrace her risen and delivered husband, gave the beautiful Horus his lotus-flower again instead of the sword, and scattered fruits and flowers over the earth, while Osiris seated himself under a canopy wreathed with ivy, and received the homage of all the spirits of the earth and of the Amenti."<sup>\*</sup>

Darius was silent. Rhodopis began:

"We thank you for your charming account; but this strange spectacle must have a higher meaning, and we should thank you doubly if you would explain that to us."

"Your idea is quite right," answered Darius, "but what I know I dare not tell. I was obliged to promise Neithotep with an oath, not to tell tales out of school."<sup>171</sup>

"Shall I tell you," asked Rhodopis, "what conclu-

170. Lepsius considers the animal that kept guard over the lower world, and was generally represented sitting in front of Osiris, to have been a female hippopotamus. Sometimes, however, it is represented as a female dog, and generally of a mongrel form bearing some resemblance to a hippopotamus. Whatever it be, Cerberus certainly owes his origin to this "voracious beast of the Amenthes."

171. Herodotus, in speaking of the Osiris of the mysteries, says (II. 170.) "This sanctuary is holy to him, whose name I hold it sin to mention here;" and (171.) "Though I know much about the mysteries, I am silent in deep reverence."

\* The lower world, in Egyptian *Amenti*, properly speaking, the West or kingdom of death, to which the soul returns at the death of the body, as the sun at his setting. In a hieroglyphic inscription of the time of the Ptolemies the Amenti is called Hades.

sions various hints from Pythagoras and Onuphis have led me to draw, as to the meaning of this drama? Isis seems to me to represent the bountiful earth; Osiris, humidity or the Nile, which makes the earth fruitful; Horus, the young spring; Typhon, the scorching drought. The bounteous earth, robbed of her productive power, seeks this beloved husband with lamentations in the cooler regions of the north, where the Nile discharges his waters. At last Horus, the young springing power of nature, is grown up and conquers Typhon, or the scorching drought. Osiris, as is the case with the fruitful principle of nature, was only apparently dead, rises from the nether regions and once more rules the blessed valley of the Nile, in concert with his wife, the bounteous earth."

"And as the murdered god behaved properly in the lower regions," said Zopyrus, laughing, "he is allowed, at the end of this odd story, to receive homage from the inhabitants of Hamestegan, Duzakh and Gorothman,<sup>172</sup> or whatever they call these abodes for the Egyptian spirit-host."

"They are called Amenti," said Darius, falling into his friend's merry mood; but you must know that the history of this divine pair represents not only the life of nature, but also that of the human soul, which, like the murdered Osiris, lives an eternal life, even when the body is dead."

"Thank you," said the other; "I'll try to remember

<sup>172.</sup> *Hamestegan*—the abode of those whose good and bad deeds were equal; *Duzakh*—Hell; *Gorothman*—the Paradise of the Persians. Spiegel, *Avesta* I. p. 23. *Ulmai Islam*. Vullers, *Fragments*. The "contemplation from the seven heavens," seems to have belonged to a later period. (*The Ardai-Viraf nameh*, &c. Translated from the Persian by J. A. Pope.) Spiegel, *Avesta*, Farg. XIX. note to §. 121.

that if I should chance to die in Egypt. But really, cost what it may, I must see this wonderful sight soon."

"Just my own wish," said Rhodopis. "Age is inquisitive."

"You will never be old," interrupted Darius. "Your conversation and your features have remained alike beautiful, and your mind is as clear and bright as your eyes."

"Forgive me for interrupting you," said Rhodopis, as if she had not heard his flattering words, "but the word 'eyes' reminds me of the oculist Nebenchari, and my memory fails me so often, that I must ask you what has become of him, before I forget. I hear nothing now of this skilful operator to whom the noble Kassandane owes her sight."

"He is much to be pitied," replied Darius. "Even before we reached Pelusium he had begun to avoid society, and scorned even to speak with his countryman Onuphis. His gaunt old servant was the only being allowed to wait on or be with him. But after the battle his whole behavior changed. He went to the king with a radiant countenance, and asked permission to accompany him to Sais, and to choose two citizens of that town to be his slaves. Cambyses thought he could not refuse anything to the man, who had been such a benefactor to his mother, and granted him full power to do what he wished. On arriving at Amasis' capital, he went at once to the temple of Neith, caused the high-priest (who had moreover placed himself at the head of the citizens hostile to Persia), to be arrested, and with him a certain oculist named Petamon. He then informed them that, as punishment for

the burning of certain papers, they would be condemned to serve a Persian to whom he should sell them, for the term of their natural lives, and to perform the most menial services of slaves in a foreign country. I was present at this scene, and I assure you I trembled before the Egyptian as he said these words to his enemies. Neithotep, however, listened quietly, and when Nebenchari had finished, answered him thus: 'If thou, foolish son, hast betrayed thy country for the sake of thy burnt manuscripts, the deed has been neither just nor wise. I preserved thy valuable works with the greatest care, laid them up in our temple, and sent a complete copy to the library at Thebes.\* Nothing was burnt but the letters from Amasis to thy father, and a worthless old chest. Psamtik and Petammon were present, and it was then and there resolved that a new family tomb in the city of the dead should be built for thee as a compensation for the loss of papers, which, in order to save Egypt, we were unfortunately forced to destroy. On its walls thou canst behold pleasing paintings of the gods to whom thou hast devoted thy life, the most sacred chapters from the book of the dead, and many other beautiful pictures touching thine own life and character.'<sup>173</sup>

173. Descriptions and drawings of such ancient Egyptian tombs are to be found in all the modern works on the land of the Pharaohs. Among them Ebers, *Aegypten in Bild und Wort*. Where there were mountains, the tombs were hewn in the rock; on the level Delta sepulchres were erected. Both were well supplied with inscriptions. For the uninitiated in such matters, the minute particulars given by Brugsch in his description of the tomb of Ti will be instructive. The following inscription on a tomb-stela in the Egyptian Museum at Boolak (Cairo) is particularly interesting. (Mariette's Catalogue p. 76. N. 51.) "O ye great ones, ye prophets, priests, orators and all ye that shall come after me in the millions of years; if any one shall set my name at the end, and set his own name in its place (on the Stele), God

\* See note 51.

"The physician turned very pale—asked first to see his books, and then his new and beautifully-fitted-up tomb. He then gave his slaves their freedom, (notwithstanding which they were still taken to Memphis as prisoners of war), and went home, often passing his hand across his forehead on the way, and with the uncertain step of one intoxicated. On reaching his house he made a will, bequeathing all he possessed to the grandson of his old servant Hib, and, alleging that he was ill, went to bed. The next morning he was found dead. He had poisoned himself with the fearful strychnos-juice."\*

"Miserable man" said Cræsus. "The gods had blinded him, and he reaped despair instead of revenge, as a reward for his treachery."

"I pity him," murmured Rhodopis. "But look, the rowers are taking in their oars. We are at the end of our journey; there are your litters and carriages waiting for you. It was a beautiful trip. Farewell, my dear ones; come to Naukratis soon. I shall return at once with Theopompus and Syloson. Give little Parmys a thousand kisses from me, and tell Melitta never to take her out at noon. It is dangerous for the eyes.\*\* Good-night, Cræsus; good-night, friends, farewell my dear son."

will requite him with the destruction of his likeness upon earth; if he erase my name upon this, so will God do also unto him." At the time in which Nebenchari lived, (during the 26th dynasty), it was customary to have chapters from the Ritual of the Dead painted on the inner walls of the tombs. Lepsius, *Älteste Texte des Totenbuchs* p. 14. A. 1. One of the largest and most richly-ornamented tombs in the Theban Necropolis belongs to a noble of Psamtik's reign. Many chapters from the Ritual of the Dead are found on the walls of the chamber containing the sarcophagus of Amen em ha of the 18th dynasty at Abd el Qurnah, in the western part of Thebes.

\* See note 7.

\*\* See vol. I. note 290.

The Persians left the vessel with many a nod and farewell word, and Bartja, looking round once more, missed his footing and fell on the landing-pier.

He sprang up in a moment without Zopyrus' help, who came running back, calling out, "Take care, Bartja! It's unlucky to fall in stepping ashore. I did the very same thing, when we left the ship that time at Naukratis."

#### CHAPTER XIV.

WHILE our friends were enjoying their row on the Nile, Cambyses' envoy, Prexaspes, had returned from a mission to the long-lived Ethiopians.<sup>174</sup> He praised their strength and stature, described the way to their country as almost inaccessible to a large army, and had plenty of marvellous tales to tell. How, for instance, they always chose the strongest and handsomest man in their nation for their king, and obeyed him unconditionally: how many of them reached the age of 120 years, and some even passed it: how they ate nothing but boiled flesh, drank new milk and washed in a spring the waters of which had the scent of violets, gave a remarkable lustre to their skins, and were so light that wood could not swim in them: how their captives wore golden fetters, because other metals were rare and dear in their country; and lastly, how they covered the bodies of the dead with plaster or stucco, over which a coating of some glass-like material was poured, and kept the pillars thus formed one year in

<sup>174</sup> Herod. II. 20-25.

their houses, during which time sacrifices were offered to them, and at the year's end they were placed in rows around the town.

The king of this strange people had accepted Cambyses' presents, saying, in a scornful tone, that he knew well his friendship was of no importance to the Persians, and Prexaspes had only been sent to spy out the land. If the prince of Asia were a just man, he would be contented with his own immense empire and not try to subjugate a people who had done him no wrong. "Take your king this bow," he said, "and advise him not to begin the war with us, until the Persians are able to bend such weapons as easily as we do. Cambyses may thank the gods, that the Ethiopians have never taken it into their heads to conquer countries which do not belong to them."

He then unbent his mighty bow of ebony, and gave it to Prexaspes to take to his lord.

Cambyses laughed at the bragging African, invited his nobles to a trial of the bow the next morning, and rewarded Prexaspes for the clever way in which he had overcome the difficulties of his journey and acquitted himself of his mission. He then went to rest, as usual intoxicated, and fell into a disturbed sleep, in which he dreamed that Bartja was seated on the throne of Persia, and that the crown of his head touched the heavens.<sup>175</sup>

This was a dream, which he could interpret without the aid of soothsayer or Chaldean. It roused his anger first, and then made him thoughtful.

He could not sleep, and such questions as the following came into his mind: "Haven't you given

<sup>175</sup> Herod. III. 30.