

presents for the Gaulish chiefs. These also were furnished from the abundant spoils which had fallen into the hands of the Carthaginians.

Hannibal directed Malchus that, in the event of his failing in his mission, he was not to trouble to send these things back, but was to retain them to win the friendship and goodwill of the chiefs of the country to which he proposed to journey. The next morning Malchus took an affectionate farewell of the general and his old comrades, and then, with Clotilde riding by his side—for the women of the Gauls were as well skilled as the men in the management of horses—he started at the head of his party. He followed the route marked out for him without any adventure of importance. He had one or two skirmishes with parties of tribesmen allied with Rome, but his movements were too rapid for any force sufficient to oppose his passage being collected.

After ascending the sea-coast the troop skirted the northern slopes of the Apennines, passing close to the battle-field of Trebia, and crossing the Po by a ford, ascended the banks of the Oreus, and reached Clotilde's native village. A few ruins alone marked where it had stood. Malchus halted there and despatched scouts far up the valley. These succeeded in finding a native, who informed them that Brunilda with the remains of the tribe were living in the forests far up on the slopes. The scouts delivered to them the message with which they were charged: that Clotilde and Malchus, with a Carthaginian force, were at Orca. The following evening Brunilda and her followers came into camp.

Deep was the joy of the mother and daughter. The former had long since given up all hope of ever hearing of Clotilde again, and had devoted her life to vengeance on the Romans. From her fastness in the mountain she had from time to time led her followers down, and carried fire and sword over