

SEPARATION.

The sky is one cloud, ash-grey and vast,
High-domed and wide;
After the long bleak day at last
Comes eventide.

I stand and bear on wishful lips,
One sweetest name,
And vain the cold horizon scan
For sunset flame.

Low down, in the distant west,
At last I see
A narrow and crimson flush, imprest
"Twixt sky and lea.

Both Gloom and Night that love-tint threat
In hateful strife.
Ah! what am I, if that flame should fade
From out my life!

BOHEMIEN.

AN ANCIENT UNIVERSITY.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

We are glad to be privileged to announce to the world a discovery. Among the Canadian boatmen on the Nile is one who was formerly a responsible functionary of University College: we believe, indeed, that he was under-porter of the Residence. This gentleman—to quote from a letter with which he has honored us—"conceived in the discharge of my official duties such an enthusiasm for classical literature that on reaching Egypt—the scholar's El Dorado—I determined to prosecute a course of independent research, such as is prescribed for the new fellows of University College. While exploring the ruins of a temple of the goddess Neith in the city of Sais, I had the good fortune to discover in the stomach of an embalmed cat several well-preserved rolls of Egyptian papyrus. These on perusal turn out to be a fragment of the tenth book of Herodotus, describing a visit of the historian to the island of Atlantis. I should have liked to publish my discovery in the original language, but as I am anxious to bring it within the range of the resident students of my *alma mater* I append a translation, and hold over the original for the present. I have only to add that I have shown the papyrus to a classical B.A. of Toronto University, who has kindly written a preface and appended short critical and historical notes. He has promised me also an excursus on Atlantis. A dissertation after the manner of Valckenar on the embalmed cat will be presented shortly to the Senate as his thesis for the degree of A. M. Finally, he has pointed out a few errors in my translation, arising from my imperfect acquaintance with Hellenic idiom."

PREFACE.

It is one of the vexed questions of classical antiquity, where was the island of Atlantis. One school of critics has pronounced in favour of America. Space forbids the discussion of that problem here, suffice it to say that the manuscript here translated affords strong internal evidence of the correctness of that hypothesis.

POST-SCRIPTUM.

The discovery of this MS. at Sais is not really surprising; rather it is surprising that it has been so long delayed. We know that Herodotus visited Sais (bk. 2, chap. 28); we know (chap. 175) that he visited the temple of Athena—that is, Neith, (vide Larcher's note on chap. 59); we know that he talked to its bursar (2: 28). What more is wanted to prove the genuineness of the newly-discovered MS. is amply supplied by the naive simplicity, by the truly Herodotean spirit of the document itself. With respect to the depositary of this precious heirloom, the cat, we must remember that the Egyptian entertained for this animal a religious veneration. What more likely, then, than that the bursar of Sais on some supreme crisis offered this manuscript—his most priceless treasure—to appease the displeasure or, it may be, the hunger of a feline god? Or perhaps the cat helped herself. Religious awe would protect her from interference during the meal and afterwards, and finally from a post-mortem. On such accidents does the history of literature hinge! Compare Sir Isaac Newton and his dog. The only conjecture involved in this theory—viz., that

the bursar had a cat or that his premises were on one occasion at least temporarily visited by a cat, is surely permissible; nay plausible: I had almost said certain. Without further explanation, I beg to lay before the universe the translation—too literal, but correct in the main—of this choice monument of Hellenic civilisation.

B. A.

CHAPTER I.

The declaration made by Herodotus of Halicarnassus as follows: (1) Having travelled in many lands and having heard and reported many and other marvellous stories, not the least marvellous appeared to him to be the story (2) of the bursar of Sais about the river Nile, how it rises from between Mount Crophy and Mount Mophy. To this bursar, therefore, he delivers the most marvellous of his own stories, that about Atlantis, both as to one more learned than himself in relating divine marvels, and especially (to see) if by any chance I could so borrow from the bursar five obols (3) to purchase a bottle of Egyptian barley-beer (4), for I chanced to thirst, it is heavenly how much (5).

[There is a lacuna here in the MS., several chapters having been too thoroughly digested by the cat.]

CHAPTER 34.

And among other institutions in Atlantis I visited the Lyceum where the young men attend upon the instructions of the there sophists. Now, these youths differ in this respect from the youths of the Britanni, of whom Atlantis is a colony. For among the Britanni the young men who study wisdom call themselves "men," as being then men more than at any other time; but here, "boys," as being then boys more than at any other time. As indeed was clear to me at least being so; and here is a sign; for they applaud their sophists with great clamour and uproar of their feet and mouths, so that I seemed to myself to have escaped my own notice (6) being again in the Athenian law-courts. Moreover, in this respect also their customs are different to those of the rest of the world, for in Hellas at least we praise those indeed who arrive early to their work, but those who are late we chastise. But in Atlantis the hearers applaud those of their fellow-learners who come too late to hear all the wisdom of the sophist from time to time (*ὁ δὲ ἀεὶ σοφίζόμενος*).

CHAPTER 35.

And they differ also in this. For whilst the many count that man most honourable, who has the fairest clothes, these youths honour him most whose ephebic (7) himation is most torn. Again, in other lands they wear a cap suitable to this gown, but here not; but rather any covering of the head as chance leads them, so as to seem more like anything rather than men (8); much less learners of wisdom. And looking at their ragged himatia I seemed to myself to be witnessing a tragedy of Euripides (9) and I wept (10).

CHAPTER 36.

They are divided into two factions, of which one faction resides around the Lyceum itself, and is called "residers." About whom it is reported in two ways; for some, indeed, say that this faction worships Bacchus, but others that they offer sacrifice to no god at all; to me, indeed, saying what is not credible. But the second faction dwell at a distance of about two stadia, in a large heroum, of which the hero eponymous is a sophist of those of old and he has long been dead. And "the residers" say that he was an austere sort of man (*σκληρῶς τις*), and that he talked to a queen of the Keltæ about virtue till she got ahead of him by falling to sleep (*ἐφθασε καταρθόουσα*). I am not obliged to believe what I am told, but I am obliged to report it (11).

CHAPTER 37.

And of the residers many other marvels are reported, and especially this first, that every year in the winter, before they have passed the *ἀπόδειξις* (examination), which the sophists exact, a divine plague is wont to seize some of them, so that they return suddenly to their own cities and kinsmen, unwilling to them unwilling (12) (*ἄκοντες οὐχ ἐκούσιν*). But having returned the wrath of the god or goddess is straightway appeased, and they become stronger than themselves, (13) and feast upon many banquets. Next, that in the spring there is a sacred day on which it is their custom to breakfast on the eggs of hens, for a reason which it is not holy for me to mention; and that once upon a time two of the learners ate twenty eggs apiece, so to speak (14). I know their names, but willingly forget them (15).