BEN HUR: THE DAYS OF THE MESSIAH

BOOK FOURTH.

CHAPTER XVII.—CONTINUED. There was a shadow upon him deeper than that of the cluster of palms—the shadow of a great uncertainty, which—ake note. O reader! which pertained more to the kingdom than the king.

"What of this kingdom? And what is to be?" Ben Hur asked himself in thought.

Thus early arose the questions which were to follow the Child to His end, and survive Him on earth—incomprehensible in His day, a dispute in this—an enigma to all who do not or cannot understand that every man is two in one—a deathless Soul and a mortal body.

"What is it to be?" he asked.

For us, O reader, the Child Himself has answered; but for Ben-Hur there were only the words of Balthaar: "On the earth, yet not of it—not for men, but for their souls—a dominion, nevertheless, of unlenginable glory."
What wonder the hapless youth found the phrases but the darkening of a riddle?

what what was appears youth found the phrases but the darkening of a rid-dle?

"The hand of man is not in it," he said despairingly. "Nor has the King of such a kingdom use for men; neither toilers, nor councillors, nor soldiers. The earth must die or be made anew, and for government new principles must be discovered—something besides armed hands—something in place of Force. But what?" Again, O reader!

That which we will not see, he could not. The power there is in Love had not yet occurred to any man; much less had one come saying directly that for government and its objects—peace and order—Love is better and mightier than Force.

In the midst of his reverie a hand was laid upon his shoulder.

"I have a word to say, O son of Arriua," eaid Ilderim, stopping by his side—"A werd, and then I must return, for the night is going."

"I give you welcome, sheik."

"As to the things you have heard but now," said Ilderim almost without pause, "take in belief all save that relating to the kind of kingdom the Child will set up when he comes; as to so much keep virgin mid nuit you hear Simonides the mer-

the kind of kingdom the Child will set up when he comes; as to so much keep virgin mind until you hear Simonides the merchant—a good man here in Antioch, to whom I will make you known. The Egyptian gives you coinage of his dreams which are too good for the earth; Simonides is wiser; he will ring you the saying, of your prophets, giving book and page so you cannot deny that the Child will be King of the Jews in fact—ay, by the splendour of God! a King as Herod was only better and far more magnificent. And then, see you, we will faste the sweatness of vengeance. I have said. Peace to you!" Aud aweetness of very Peace to you!"

Peace to you!"

If Ilderim heard his call he did not

If Ilderim heard his call he did not stay.

"Simonides again" said Ben Hur bitterly. "Simonides here, Simonides there; from this one now, then from that! I am like to be well ridden by my father's servant, who knows at least to hold fast that which is mine; wherefore he is richer, if indeed he be not wiser, than the Egyptian. By the covenant! it is not to the faithless a man should go to find a faith to keep—and I will not. But, hark! singing—and the voice a woman's—or an angel's! It comes this way."

Down the lake towards the dowar came a woman singing. Her voice floated along the hushed water melodious as a flute, and louder growing each instant. Directly the dipping of oars was heard in alow measure; a little later the words were distinguishable—words in purest Greek,

distinguishable—words in purest Greek, best fitted of all the tongues of the day for the expression of passionate grief.

THE LAMENT. (Egyptian)

I sigh as I sing for the story land
Across the Syrian sea.
The odorous winds from the musky sand
Were breaths of life to me.
They play with the plumes of the whispering palm
For me, alas! no more;
Nor more does the Nile in the moonlit calm
Moan past the Memphian shore.

O Nius! thou gol of my fainting soul!
In dreams thou comest to me;
And, dreaming, I play with the lotus-bowl,
And sing old soags to thee,
And sear from afar the Memnonian strain,
And calls from dear Simbel;
And wake to a passion of grief and pain
That e'er I said—Farewell!

At the conclusion of the song th

ainger was past the cluster of paims. The last word—farewell—floated past Ben-Hur weighted with all, the sweet sorrow of parting. The passing of the boat was as the passing of a deeper shadow into the deeper night. deeper night.

Ben-Hur drew a long breath hardly

Ben-Hur drew a long breath hardly distinguishable from a sigh.

"I know her by the song—the daughter of Balthasar. How beautiful it was! And how beautiful is she!"

He recalled her large eyes curtained alightly by the drooping lids, the cheeks oval and rosy rich, the lips full and deep with dimpling in the corners, and all the grace of the tall lithe figure.

"How beautiful she is!" he repeated.
And his heart made answer by a quick-

And his heart made answer by a quickening of its movement.

Then, almost the same instant, another

Then, almost the same instant, another face, younger and quite as beautiful—more childlike and tender, if not so passionate—appeared as fi held up to him out of the lake.

"Eather!" he said, smiling. "As I wished, a star has been sent to me."

He turned, and passed slowly back to the tent."

His life had been crowded with griefs

and with vengeful preparations—too much crowded for love. Was this the beginning of a happy change? And if the influence went with him into the tent, whose was it?
Esther had given him a cup.

So had the Egyptian.

And both had come to him at the same time under the palms.

BOOK FIFTH.

"Only the actions of the just Smell sweet and blossom in the dust." SHIRLEY.

"And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law."
In calmness made, and sees what he fore-saw."
WORDSWORTH.

CHAPTER I.

The morning after the bacchanalia in the saloon of the palace, the divan was covered with young patricans. Maxentius might come, and the city throng to receive him; the legion might descend from Mount Sulpius in glory of arms and armour; from Nymphæum to Omphalus there might be ceremonial splendours to shame the most notable ever before seen or heard of in the gorgeous East; yet would the many continue to alsep ignominously on the divan where they had fallen or been careleasly tumbled by the indifferent slaves; that they would be able to take part in the reception that day was about as possible as for the lay-figures in the studio of a modern artist to rise and go bonneted and plumed through the one, two, three, or a walts.

Not all, however, who participated in GRATUS WARNED

go bonneted and plumed through the one, two, three, or a waltz.

Not all, however, who participated in the orgy were in the shameful condition. When dawn began to peer through the skylights of the salcon, Messala arcse, and took the chaplet from his head, in sign that the revel was at an end; then he gathered his robe about him, gave a last look at the scene, and, without a word, departed for his quarters. Cleero could not have retired with more gravity from a night-long senatorial debate.

Three hours afterwards two couriers entered his room, and from his own hand received each a despatch, sealed and in duplicate, and consisting chiefly of a letter to Valerius Gratus, the procurator, still resident in Cæsares. The importance attached to the speedy and certain delivery of the paper may be inferred. One courier was to proceed overland, the other by sea; both were to make the utmost haste. It is of great concern now that the reader should be fully informed of the contents of the letter thus forwarded, and it is accordingly given:

"Antioch, XII. Kal. Jul.

"Messala to Gratus.

"Messala to Gratus.

"O my Midas!

"I pray thou take no offence at the address, seeing it is one of love and gratitude, and an admission that thou art most fortunate among men; seeing, also, that thy ears are as they were derived from the mother, only proportionate to the thy mother, only proportionate to thy matured condition.

matured condition.
"O my Midas!
"I have to relate to thee an astonishing event, which, though as yet somewhat in the field of conjecture, will, I doubt not, justify thy instant consideration.
"Allow me first to revive thy recollection.

"Allow me first to revive thy recollec-tion. Remember, a good many years ago, a family of a prince of Jerusalem, incredibly ancient and vastly rich—by name Ben-Hur. If thy memory have a limp or aliment of any kind, there is, if I mistake not, a wound on thy head which may help thee to a revival of the circum-

may help thee to a revival of the circumstance.

"Next to arouse thy interest. In punishment of the attempt upon thy life—for dear repose of conscience, may all the gods forbid it should ever prove to have been an accident!—the family were seized and summarily disposed of, and their property confiscated. And inasmuch, O my Midas! as the action had the approval of our Cæsar, who was as just as he was wise—be there flowers upon his altars for ever!—there should be no sname in referring to the sums which were realized to us respectively from that source, for which it is not possible I can ever cease to be grateful to thee, certainly not while I continue, as at present, in the uninterrupted enjoyment of the part which fell to me.

"In vindication of thy wisdom—a quality for which, as I am now alvised, the son of Gordius, to whom I have boldly likenald thee."

quality for which, as I am now alvised, the son of Gordius, to whom I have boldly likened thee, was never distinguished among men or gods—I recall further that thou didst make disposition of the family of Hur, both of us at the time supposing the plan hit upon to be the most effective possible for the purposes in view, which were silence and delivery over to inevitable but natural death. Thou wilt remember what thou didst with the mother and sister of the malefactor; yet, if now I yield to a desire to learn whether they be living or dead, I know, from knowing the

living or dead, I know, from knowing the amiability of thy nature, O my Gratue, that thou wilt pardon me as one scarcely less amiable than thyself.

"As more immediately essential to the present business, however, I take the liberty of inviting to thy remembrance that the actual criminal was sent to the galleys a slave for life—so the present was early if as slave for life—so the precept ran; and it may serve to make the event which I am about to relate the more astonishing by saying here that I saw and read the receipt for his body delivered in course to the

tribune commanding a galley.

"Thou mayst begin now to give me more especial heed, O my most excellent Phry-

"Referring to the limit of life at the "Referring to the limit of life at the oar, the outlaw thus justly disposed of should be dead, or better speaking, some one of the three thousand Oceanides should have taken him to husband at least five years ago. And if thou wilt excuse a momentary weakness, O most virtuous and tender of men! inasmuch as I loved him in childhood, and also because he was very handsome—I used in much admiration to call him my Ganymede—he ought in right to have fallen into the arms of the most beautiful daughter of the family. Of opinion, however, that he was certainly dead, I have lived quite five years in calm and innocent enjoyment of the fortune for which I am in a degree indebted to him. I make the admission of indebtedness without intending it to diminish my obligation to thee.

chim. I make the admission of indebtedness without intending it to diminish my obligation to thee.

"Now I am at the very point of interest.
"Last night, while acting as master of the feast for a party just from Rome—their extreme youth and inexperience appealed to my compassion—I heard a singular story. Maxanting, the conaul, as you know, comes to day to conduct a campaign against the Parthians. Of the ambitious who are to accompany him there is one, a son of the late duumvir, Quintus Arrius. I had occasion to inquire about him particularly. When Arrius set out in pursuit of the pirates, whose defeat gained him his final honors, he had no family; when he returned from the expedition, he brought back with him an heir. Now be thou composed as becomes the owner of so many talents in ready settia! The son and heir of whom I speak is he whom thou didst send to the galleys—the very Ben-Hur who should have died at his oar five years ago—returned now with fortune and rank, and possibly as a Roman citizen, to— Well, thou art too firmly seated to be alarmed. possibly as a Roman citizen, to— Well, thou art too firmly seated to be alarmed,

know, if thou doet not?

"Hayest thou to all this, tut tut?

"When Arrius, the father, by adoption, of this apparition from the arms of the most beautiful of the oceanide (see above my opinion of what she should be) joined battle with the pirates, his vessel was sunk, and but two of all her crew escaped drowning—Arrius himself and this one, his heir.

"The officers who took them from the plank on which they were fliating say the associate of the fortunate tribune was a young man who, when lifted to the deck, was in the dress of a galley slave.

"This should be convincing, to say least; but lest thou say tut-tut again, I tell thee, O my Midas! that yesterday, by good chance—I have a vew to Fortune in consequence—I met the mysterious son of Arrius face te face; and I declare now that, though I did not then recognize him, he is the very Ben-Hur who, if he be a man, though of the commonest grade, must this very moment of my writing be thinking of vengeance—for so would I were I he—vengeance not to be satisfied short of life; vengeance for country, mother, sister, self, and—I say it last, though thou may est think it should be first—for fortune lost.

"By this time, O good my benefactor and friend! my Gratus! in consideration of thy sesteria in peril, their loss being the worst which could befall one of thy high estate—I quit calling thee after the foolish old King of Phrygla—by this time, I say (meaning after having read me so far), I have faith to believe thou hast ceased saying tut-tut, and art ready to think what ought to be done in such emergency.

"It were vulgar to sak thee now what shall be done. Rather let me say I am thy client; or, better yet, thou art my Ulysses whose part it is to give me sound direction.

"And I please myself thinking I see the wheat when the letter is not into the head."

thy client; or, better yet, thou art my Ulyses whose part it is to give me sound direction.

"And I please myself thinking I see thee when this letter is put into thy hand. I see the read it once, thy countenance all gravity, and then again with a smile; then hesitation ended, and thy judgment formed, it is this, or it is that; wisdom like Mercury's, promptitude like Casar's.

"The sun is now fairly risen. An hour hence two messengers will depart from my door, each with a sealed copy hereof; one of them will go by land, the other by sea, so important do I regard it that thou shouldst be early and particularly informed of the appearance of our enemy in this part of our Roman world.

"I will await thy answer here.

"Ben Hur's going and coming will of course be regulated by his master, the consul, who, though he exert himself without rest day and night, cannot get away under a month. Thou knowest what work it is to assemble and provide for an army destined to operate in a desolate, townless country.

"I saw the Jew yesterday in the Grove of Daphne; and if he be not there now, he is certainly in the neighbourhood, making it easy for me to keep him in eye. In deed, wert thou to ask me where he is now, I should say, with the most positive assurance, he is to be found at the old Orchard of Palms, under the tent of the traitor Sheik Ilderim, who cannot long escape our strong hand. Be not surprised if Maxentius, as his first measure, places the Arab on ship for forwarding to Rome.

"I am so particular about the whereabouts of the Jew because it will be im portant to thee, O illustrious! when thou comest to consider what is to be done; for already I know, and by the knowledge I flatter myself I am growing in wisdom, that in every scheme involving human action there are three elements always to be taken into account—time, place, and segncy.

"If thou sayest this is the place, have thou then no hesitancy in trusting the

egency.
"If thou sayest this is the place, have "If thou sayest this is the place, nave thou then no hesitancy in trusting the business to thy most loving friend, who would be thy aptest scholar as well. "MESSALA."

CHAPTER II. PREPARATION.

About the time the couriers departed from Messala's door with the despatch as (it being yet the early morning hour), Ben-Hur entered Ilderim's tent. He had

Ben-Hur entered Ilderim's tent. He had taken a plunge into the lake, and break fasted, and appeared now in an undertunic, sleeveless, and with skirt scarcely reaching to the knee.

The sheik saluted him from the divan. "I give thee peace, son of Arrius," he said with admiration, for, in truth, he had never seen a more perfect illustration of glowing, powerful, confident manhood. "I give thee peace and good-will. The horses are ready. I am ready. And thou?" "I give thee peace and good-will. The horses are ready, I am ready. And thou!"

"The peace thou givest me, good shiek, I give thee in return. I thank thee for so much good-will. I am ready."

Ilderim clapped his hands.

"I will have the horses brought. Be seated."

"Are they yoked?"

"No."
"Then suffer me to serve myself," said Ben Hur. "It is needful that I make the acquaintance of thy Arsbs. I must know them by name, O shelk, that I may speak to them singly; nor less must I know their temper, for they are like men; if bold, the better of scolding; if timid, the better of praise and flattery. Let the servants bring me the harness."
"And the charlot?" saked the shelk.
"I will let the charlot alone to-day. In its place, let them bring me a fifth horse, if thou hast it; he should be barebacked, and fleet as the others."

and fleet as the others."

Ilderim's wonder was aroused, and he summoned a servant immediately.

"Bid them bring the harness for the four," he said; "the harness for the four, and the bridle for Sirius."

four, and the bridle for Sirius."

Ilderim then arose.

"Sirius is my love, and I am his, O son of Arrius. We have been comrades for twenty years—in tent, in battle, in all stages of the desert we have been comrades. I will show him to you."

Going to the division curtain, he held it, while Ben-Hur passed under. The horses came to him in a body. One with a small head, luminous eyes, neck like the segment of a bended bow, and mighty chest, curtained thickly by a profusion of mane soft and wavy as a damsel's lock, nickered low and gladly at sight of him.

"Good horse," said the shelk, patting the dark-brown cheek. "Good horse, good-morning." Turning then to Ben-Hur, he added, "This is Sirius, father of good-morning." Turning then to Ben-Hur, he added, "This is Sirius, father of the four here. Mira, the mother awaits "R:member me to thy other guest. He,

but I, O, my Midas! I am in danger—no need to tall thee of what. Who should know, if thou dost not?

"Sayest thou to all this, tut tut?

"When Arrine, the father, by adoption, of this apparition from the arms of the most beautiful of the oceanides (see above my opinion of what she should be joined battle with the pirates, his vessel was sunk, and but two of all her crew escaped drowning—Arrius himself and this one, his heir.

"The officers who took them from the plank on which they were flating say the associate of the fortunate tribune was a young man who, when lifted to the deck,"

"And why not?" replied Ilderim.
"Wert thou ever abroad on the desert at night?"

"No."

"Then thou canst not know how much we Arabe depend upon the stars. We borrow their names in gratitude, and give them in love. My fathers all had their Miras, as I have mine; and these children are stars no less. There, see thou, is Rigel, and there Antares; that one is Atair, and he whom thou goest to now is Aldebaran, the youngest of the brood, but none the worse of that—no, not he! Against the wind he will carry thee till it roar in thy ears like Akaba; and he will go where thou sayest, son of Arrius—ay, by the glory of Solomon! he will take thee to the lion's jaws, if thou darest so much."

much."

The harness was brought. With his own The harness was brought. With his own hands Ben Hur equipped the horses; with his own hands he led them out of the tent, and there attached the reins.

"Bring me Sirius," he said.

An Arab could not have better sprung to seat on the courser's back.

"And now the reins."

They were given him, and carefully separated.

"Good shelk," he said, "I am ready. Let a guide go before me to the field, and

"Good sheik," he said, "I am ready. Let a guide go before me to the field, and send some of thy men with water."

There was no trouble at starting. The horses were not afraid. Already there seemed a tacit understanding between them and the new driver, who had performed his part calmly, and with the confidence which always begets confidence. The order of going was precisely that of driving, except that Ben-Hur sat upon Sirius instead of standing in the chariot. Ilderim's spirit arose. He combed his beard, and smiled with satisfaction as he muttered, "He is not a Roman, no, by the

Ilderim's apirit arose. He combed his beard, and smiled with satisfaction as he muttered, "He is not a Roman, no, by the splendour of God?" He followed on foot, the entire tenantry of the down-men, women, and children—pouring after him, participants all in his solicitude, if not in his confidence.

The field, when reached, proved ample and well fitted for the training, which Ben Hur began immediately by driving the four at first slowly, and in perpendicular lines, and then in wide circles. Advancing a step in the course, he put them next into a trot; again progressing, he pushed into a gallop; at length he contracted the circles, and yet later drove eccentrically here and there, right, left, forward, and without a break. An hour was thus occupied. Slowing the gait to a walk, he drove up to Ilderim.

"The work is done, nothing now but practice," he said. "I give you joy, Sheik Ilderim, that you have such servants as these. See," he continued, dismounting and going to the horses, "see, the gloss of their red coats is without spot; they breathe lightly as when I began. I give thee great joy, and it will go hard if"—he turned his disching eyes upon the old man's face—"if we have not the victory and our"—

He stopped, coloured, bowed. At the sheik's side he observed, for the first time, Balthaear, leaning upon his staff, and two women closely veiled. At one of the latter he looked a second time, saying to himself, with a flutter about his heart, "Tis the—"Tis the Egyptian!" Ilderim picked up his broken sentence—

"The victory, and our revenge!" Then

"The victory, and our revenge!" Then he said aloud, "I am not afraid; I am glad. Son of Arrius, thou art the man. Be the end like the beginning, and thou shalt see of what stuff is the lining of the hand of an Arab who is able to give."

"I thank thee, good sheik," Ben Hur returned modestly. "Let the servants bring drink for the horses."

With his own bands he cave the man. I would like to know the colours I am to wear, and particularly the number of the crypt I am to occupy at the starting; if it be next Messala's on the right or left, it is well; if not, and you can bave it changed so as to bring me next the Roman, do so. Have you good memory, Malluch?"

"I was afraid," he said, as he vacant seat before her. "Of sinking the boat," he seid, as he vacant seat before her. "Of what?"

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returned modestly. "Let the servants bring drink for the horses."

With his own hands he gave the water. Remounting Strins, he renewed the training, going as before from walk to trot, from trot to gallop; finally, he pushed the steady racers into the run, gradually quickening it to full speed. The performance then became exciting; and there were applause for the dainty handling of the reins, and admiration for the four, which were the same, whether they flew forward or wheeled in varying curvature. In their action there were unity, power, grace, pleasure, all without effort or sign of labour. The admiration was unmixed with pity or reproach, which would have been as well bestowed upon swallows in their evening flight.

In the midst of the exercises, and the attention they received from all the bystanders, Mailuch came upon the ground, seeking the shelk.

"I have a message for you, O sheik," he said availing himself.

"I have a message for you, O sheik," he said, availing himself of a moment he supposed favourable for the speech—"a message from Simonides the merchant."
"Simonides!" ejaculated the Arab. "Ah!

"Simonides!" ejaculated the Arab. "Ah!
'tis well. May Abaddon take all his
enemies!"

"He bade me give thee first the holy
peace of God," Malluch continued; "and
then this despatch, with prayer that thou
read it the instant of receipt."

Ilderim, standing in his place, broke the
sealing of the package delivered to him,
and from a wrapping of fine linen took
two letters, which he proceeded to read.

[No. I.]

[No. I.]
"Simonides to Sheik Ilderim. "O friend! "Assure thyself first of a ple inner heart.

"Then_ "There is in thy dowar a youth of fair

"There is in thy dowar a youth of fair presence, calling himself the son of Arrius; and such he is by adoption.

"He is very dear to me.

"He hath a wonderful history, which I will tell thee, come thou to day or tomorrow, that I may tell thee the history, and have thy counsel.

"Meantime, favour all his requests, so they he not against honor. Should there they be not against honor. Should there be need of reparation, I am bound to thee

for it.

his daughter, thyself, and all whom thou mayst choose to be of thy company, must depend upon me at the Circus the day of the games. I have seats already engaged. "To thee and all thine, peace.
"What should I be, O my friend, but thy friend?"

"SIMONIDES." [No. 2.] "Simonides to Eheik Ilderim

"Of friend!
"Out of the abundance of my experience, I send you a word.
"There is a sign which all persons not Romans, and who have moneys or goods subject to despoilment, accept as warning—that is, the arrival at a seat of power of some high Roman official charged with authorities."

ome night moment official charged with uthority.

"To day comes the Consul Maxentius.

"Be thou warned!

"Another word of advice.

parties; thou hast great properties in their dominions. "Wherefore keep thou watch.

"Send this morning to thy trusty keepers of the roads leading south from Antioch, and bid them search every courier going and coming; if they find private despatches relating to thee or thy effairs, thou shouldst "You should have received this yester-day, though it is not too late, if you act

promptly.
"If couriers left Anticch this morning, your messengers know the byways, and can get before them with your orders.
"Do not hesitate.

"Burn this after reading,
"O my friend! thy friend.

"SIMONIDES."

"SIMONIDES."

Ilderim real the letters a second time, and refolded them in the linen wrap, and put the package under his girdle.

The exercises in the field continued but a little longer—in all about two hours. At their conclusion, Ben-Hur brought the four to a walk, and drove to Ilderim. "With leave, O sheik," he said, "I will return thy Arabs to the tent, and bring them out again this afternoon."

Ilderim walked to him as he sat on Sirius, and said, "I give them to you, son of Arrius, to do with as you will until after the games. You have done with them in two bours what the Roman—may jackals gnaw his bones fleshless!—could not in as many weeks. We will win.—by the splendour of God, we will win?"

At the tent Ben-Bur remained with the horses while they were being cared for;

At the tent Ben-Bur remained with the horses while they were being cared for; then, after a plunge in the lake and a cup of arrack with the sheik, whose flow of spirits was royally exuberant, he dressed himself in his Jewish garb again, and walked with Malluch on into the Orchard.

walked with Malluch on into the Orchard.
There was much conversation between the two, not all of it important. One part, however, must not be overlooked. Ben. Hur was speaking.

"I will give you," he said, "an order for my property stored in the khan this side the river by the Seleucian Bridge. Bring it to me to-day, if you can. And, good Malluch...if I do not overtask you".—

Malluch protested heartily his willingness to be of service.

"Thauk you, Malluch, thank you," said Ben. Hur. "I will take you at your word, remembering that we are brethren of the old tribe, and that the enemy is a Roman. First, then—as you are a man of business, which I much fear Sheik Liderim is not".—

"Arabs seldom are," said Malluch gravely.

gravely.
"Nay, I do not impeach their shrewd. ness, Malluch. It is well, however, to look after them. To save all forfeit or hook after them. To save all forfeit or hindrauce in connection with the race, you would put me perfectly at rest by going to the office of the Circus, and see-ing that he has complied with every pre-liminary rule; and if you can get a copy of the rules, the service may be of great avail to me. I would like to know the

the starting; if it be next Messala's on the right or left, it is well; if not, and you can have it changed so as to bring me next the Roman, do so. Have you good memory, Malluch?"

"It has failed me, but never, son of Arrius, where the heart helped it as now."

"I will venture, then, to charge you with one further service. I saw yesterday that Messala was proud of his charlot, as he might be, for the best of Cæsar's scarcely surpass it. Can you not make its display an excuse which will enable you to find if it be light or heavy? I would like to have its exact weight and measurements—and, Malluch, thou you fail in all else, bring me exactly the height his axle stands above the ground. You underders and, Malluch? I do not wish him to have any actual advantage of me. I do not care for his splendour; if I beat him, it will make his fall the harder, and my triumph the more complete. If there are advantages really important. I want triumph the more complete. If there are advantages really important, I want

"I see, I see!" said Malluch. "A line dropped from the centre of the axle is what you want."

"Thou hast it; and be glad, Malluch—it is the last of my commissions. Let us return to the dowar."

At the door of the tent they found a servant replenishing the smoke stained bottles of leben freshly made, and stopped to refresh themselves. Shortly afterwards Malluch returned to the city.

During their absence, a messenger well

During their absence, a messenger well mounted had been deepstched with orders as suggested by Simonides. He was an Arab, and carried nothing written.

CHAPTER III. ON THE LAKE.

"Iras, the daughter of Balthasar, sends me with salutation and a message," said a servant to Ben-Hur, who was taking his

"Give me the message."
"Would it please you to accompany her
upon the lake?" "I will carry the answer myself. Tell

her so."
His shoes were brought him, and in His snoes were prought him, and in a few minutes Ben-Hur sallied out to find the fair Egyptian. The shadow of the mountains was creeping over the Orchard of Palms in advance of night. Afar through the trees came the tinkling of sheep bells, the lowing of cattle, and the voices of the herdsmen bringing their charges home. Life at the Orchard, it should be remem-bered, was in all respects as pastoral as life on the scantier meadows of the desert.

Sheik Ilderim had witnessed the exer-Shelk Ilderim had witnessed the exercises of the afternoon, being a repetition of those of the morning; after which he had gone to the city in answer to the invitation of Simonides; he might return in the night; but, considering the immensity of the field to be talked over with his friend, it was hardly possible. Ben-Hur, thus left alone, had seen his horses cared for; cooled and purified himself in the lake; exchanged the field garb for his customary vestments, all white, as became a Sadducean of the pure blood; supped early; and, thanks to the strength of youth, was well recovered from the violent exertion he had undergone.

from beauty as a quality. There cannot be a refined soul insensible to its influence. The story of Pygmalion and his statue is as natural as it is poetical. Beauty is of itself a power; and it was now drawing Ben-Hur.

itself a power; and it was now drawing Ben-Hur.

The Egyptian was to him a wonderfully beautiful woman—beautiful of face, beautiful of form. In his thought she always appeared to him as he saw her at the fountain; and he felt the influence of her voice, sweeter because in tearful expression of gratitude to him, and of her eyes—the large, soft, black, almond shaped eyes declarative of her race—eyes which looked more than lies in the supremest wealth of words to utter; and recurrences of the thought of her were returns just so frequent of a figure tall, slender, graceful, refined, wrapped in rich and floating drapery, wanting nothing but a fitting mind to make her, like the Shulamite, and in the same sense, terrible as an army with banners. In other words, as she returned to his fancy, the whole passionate Song of Solomon came with her, inspired by her presence. With this sentiment and that feeling, he was going to see if she actually justified them. It was not love that was taking him, but admiration and curiosity which might be the heralds of love.

The landing was a simple affair, consisting of a short stairward and carriers.

which might be the heralds of love.

The landing was a simple affair, consisting of a short stairway, and a platform garnished by some lamp-posts; yet at the top of the steps he paused, arrested by what he beheld.

There was a shallop resting upon the clear water lightly as an egg-shell. An Ethiop—the camel driver at the Castalian fount—occupied the rower's place, his blackness intensified by a livery of shining white. All the boat aft was rushioned and carpeted with stuff; brilliant with Tyrian red. On the rudder seat sat the Egyptian carpeted with stuff, brilliant with Tyrian red. On the rudder seat sat the Egyptian herself, sunk in Indian shawls and a very vapour of most delicate veils and scarfs. Her arms were bare to the shoulders; and, not merely faultless in shape, they had the effect of compelling attention to them—their pose, their action, their expression; the hands, the fingers even, seemed endowed with graces and meaning; each was an object of beauty. The shoulders and neck were protected from the evening air by an ample scarf, which yet did not hide them.

In the glance he gave her. Ben-Huy paid

In the glance he gave her, Ben-Hur paid In the glance he gave her, Ben-Hur paid no attention to these details. There was simply an impression made upon him; and, like strong light, it was a sensation, not a thing of sight or enumeration. Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet; thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate within thy locks. Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; for, lo? the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land—such was the impression she made upon him translated into words.

words.
"Come," she said, observing him stop, "come, or I shall think you a poor sailor."

The red of his cheek deepened. Did she know anything of his life upon the sea? He descended to the platform at

once.
"I was afraid," he said, as he took the vacant seat before her.
"Of what?"
"Of sinking the boat," he replied, amil-

dipped the oars, and they were off.

If love and Ben-Hur were enemies, the latter was never more at mercy. The Egyptian sat where he could not but see her; she, whom he had already engrossed in memory as his ideal of the Shulamite. With her eyes giving light to his, the stars might come out, and he not see them; and so they did. The night might fall with unrelieved darkness everywhere else; her look would make illumination for him. And then, as everybody knows, given youth and such companionahip, there is no situation in which the fancy takes such complete control as upon tranquil waters under a calm night sky, warm with summer. It is so easy at such time to glide imperceptibly out of the commonplace into the ideal.

"Give me the rudder," he said.

"No," she replied, "that were to reverse the relation. Did I not ask you to sail with me? I am indebted to you, and would begin payment. You may talk and I will listen, or I will talk and you will listen: that choice is yours; but it shall be mine to choose where we go, and the way thither."

"And where may that be?"

the way thither."

"And where may that be?"

"You are alarmed again."

"O fair Egyptian, I but asked you the first question of every carries."

"O fair Egyptian, I but asked you the first question of every captive."

"Call me Egypt."

"I would rather call you Iras."

"You may think of me by that name, but call me Egypt."

"Egypt is a country, and means many people."

"Yes, yes! And such a country!"

"I see; it is to Egypt we are going."

"Would we were! I would be so glad."

She sighed as she spoke.

"You have no care for me, then," he said.

"Ah, by that I know you were never

there."
"I never was."
"Oh, it is the land where there are no "Oh, it is the land where there are no unhappy people, the desired of all the rest of the earth, the mother of all the gods, and therefore supremely blest. There, O son of Arrius, there the happy find increase of happiness, and the wretched, going, drink once of the sweet water of the sacred river, and laugh and sing religious like shidten." and sing, rejoicing like children."
"Are not the very poor with you there

as elsewhere?" "The very poor in Egypt are the very simple in wants and ways," she replied. "They have no wish beyond enough, and how little that is, a Greek or s "But I am neither Greek nor I

"I have a garden of roses, and its bloomidst of it is a tree, and its bloomichest of all. Whence came

From Persia, the home of the

'From India, then."

"No."

"Ah! one of the isles of Gree

"I will tell you," she said; "a

ler found it perishing by the r

on the plain of Rephaim."

"Oh, in Judea!"

"I put it in the earth left barreceding Nile, and the soft sou
blew over the desert and nursed
the sun kissed it in pity; after v

could not else than grow and flour

the sun kissed it in pity; after v could not else than grow and flour stand in its shade now, and it the with much perfume. As with it so with the men of Israel. Whe they reach perfection but in Egypt "Moses was but one of millions. "Nay, there was a reader of Will you forget him?"

"The friendly Pharohs are dead. "Ah, yes! The river by whi dwelt sings to them in their tom the same sun tempers the same air same people."

"Alexandria is but a Roman to

"Alexabdria is but a Roman to "She has but exchanged sceptres took from her that of the sword its place left that of learning. One to the Brucheium, and I will she the college of nations; to the Ser and see the perfection of architect the Labrary, and read the immorthe theatre, and hear the heroics Greeks and Hindoos; to the quicount the triumphs of commerce; with me into the streets, O son of and, when the philosophers have diand taken with them the masters the arts, and all the gods have hom the arts, and all the gods have hom votaries, and nothing remains of but its pleasures, you shall hear the that have amused men from the ning, and the songs which will

> TO BE CONTINUED. SIR THOMAS MORE.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CONDEMNATION EXECUTION OF THE NOBLE MART CONFESSOR OF THE FAITH.

T. D. Sullivan, M. P., lord ms Dublin, gives the following graph count of the sufferings and execut the noble English Catholic mart; Thomas More, which we are sure perused by our readers with much est: At the time of the execution

At the time of the execution Carthusian monks the venerable Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, as Thomas More were prisoners in the We have already mentioned that ment declared them guilty of a trable offence, because that havin interviews with the Nun of Kent tinterviews with the Nun of Kent to the prisoners of the and offence, because that having interviews with the Nun of Kent the not report her incoherent ravings crown. More—who, in fact, had given any encouragement to the delusions, but had warned her them—was able to get his name drawn from the bill; the bishop taken off by paying three hundred to the crown. It was felt; perhapt the offence charged in this instance be a poor ground on which to go prosecution of two such men. The act and the new oath, however, githeir enemies a sure means of by them to account, not for mispristresson merely, but for treason its treason merely, but for treason its treason merely, but for treason its treason merely, but for treason them to account, not for mispristresson merely, but for treason its treason merely, but for the commissioners to take the oatt on their refusal, both were called the commissioners to take the oatt on their refusal, both were committed to the months periahing with cold, had nakedness, the rags which were him to wear being insufficient to cowithered and trembling body.

An incident which occurred in stelly after his imprisonment is cha

An incident which occurred im ately after his imprisonment is char istic of the time. A rush was immed made by Cromwell's agents to the of the bishop to take possession effects for the crown. A "reforment named Lee took down an inv monk named Lee took down an iny
of them. In the course of their st
a strong box was found concealed
recess of the bishop's chamber,
pulled out on the floor. The weigh
—the box being fron—caused the
sackers to think it contained an end
amount of treasure. "Gold! gold bloudie Pope!" shouted Lee,
Implements were progured to

Implements were procured to open the box. Cromwell's men about it in eager expectation. The was opened, and lo! there was for it nothing but a hair shirt and two scourges used by the bishop for chabis body! scourges used by the blahop for chabis body!
While he lay a close prisoner
Tower, the venerable bishop was a
member of the Sacred College of Ca
by the Pope. This elevation, inst
inducing Henry to treat him with
degree of tenderness and respect, of
flamed his anger against the innoce
suffering prelate. "Mother of God
he, "is the old man yet so lusty?
let the Pope send him a hat when he
Mother of God, he shall wear it
shoulders then, for I will leave him
a head to set it on."

a head to set it on. a head to set it on."

Thomas Cromwell and some of miserable conforming bishops visit old man in the Tower, and endeave induce him to yield to the wishes king. But all in vain. The good a cruel and immoral monarch was n to him; the are or the gibbet had not be the wishes to him; the are or the gibbet had not prove for him. He was a set of the provention of the set of the to him; the are or the gibbet had rear for him. He was close on years of age. Prayer and sufferi made clear the eyes of his spirit, saw, not far off, just beyond the sea better world awaiting him. He to steep his soul in shame and sin, a so refusing he was found guilty of treason and condemned to die.

The lord chenneller, Lord Andels

The lord chancellor, Lord Audely pronounced his sentence:

"John Fisher, you shall be led place from whence you came, and thence again shall be drawn throu city to the place of execution at T where your body shall be hanged neck; half alive, you shall be cut and thrown to the ground, your body before taken out of your body before being still alive, your head to be a The lord chancellor, Lord Audel