

surprise ; but his companion, a scribe from the king's treasury, looked round the deserted courtyard with the disappointed air of a man who has been cheated.

The tide of passions and schemes which had risen high during the night, ebbed under the broad light of day. Even the soldier's easily-stirred ire had subsided to comparative calm. The mob might have done their worst to the other Hebrews, but not to Nun, whose son Hosea (Joshua) had been his comrade in battle, one of the most esteemed captains in the field, and a private friend of his own. If Hornecht had foreseen that Nun's farmstead would be the first spot to be attacked, he would never have led the mob to their revenge, and once more in his life he bitterly rued that he had been carried away by sudden wrath to forget the calm demeanor which be seemed his years. And now, while some of the crowd proceeded to rifle and pull down Nun's deserted dwellings, men and women came running in to say that no living soul was to be found in any of the other houses near. Some had to tell of yelling cats squatting on vacant hearths, of beasts past service found slaughtered, and broken household gear, till at last the angry crowd dragged forward a Hebrew with his family, and a grey-haired, half-witted woman whom they had hunted out among some straw. The old woman laughed foolishly and said that her people had called her till they were hoarse, but Mehela knew better ; and as for walking, walking forever, as her people meant to do, that she could not ; her feet were too tender, and she had not even a pair of sandals.

The man, a hideous Jew, whom few even of his own race would have regarded with pity, declared, first with humility, bordering on servility, and then with the insolent daring that was natural to him, that he had nothing to do with the god of lies in whose name the impostor Moses had tempted away his people, but that he and his wife and child had always been friends with the Egyptians. As a matter of fact he was known to many, being an usurer, and when the rest of his tribe had taken up their staves he had hidden himself, hoping to pursue his dishonest dealings and come to no loss.

But some of his debtors were among the furious mob ; and even without them he had not a chance for his life, for he was the first object on which the excited multitude