

How this artisan had laid hold of a chopper or that housewife had clutched an axe, they themselves scarcely knew. They rushed on to kill and destroy, and they had not sought the weapons they needed; they had found them ready to their hand.

The first they hoped to fall upon in their mad fury was Nun, a venerable Hebrew, respected and beloved by many—a man rich in herds, who had done much kindness to the Egyptians; but where hatred and revenge make themselves heard, gratitude stands shy and speechless in the background.

His large estates lay, like the houses and huts of the men of his race, in the strangers' quarter, to the west of Tanis, and were the nearest of them all to the streets inhabited by the Egyptians themselves.

At this morning hour Nun's flocks and herds were wont to be taken, first to water, and then to the pasture; so the large yard in front of his house would be full of cattle, farm men and women, carts and field implements. The owner himself commonly ordered the going of his beasts, and he and his were to be the first victims of the popular rage.

The swiftest runners had already reached his spacious farm, and among them Hornecht, the captain of the archers. There lay the house and buildings in the first bright beams of the morning sun, and a brawny smith kicked violently at the closed door; but there was no bolt, and it flew open so readily that he had to clutch at the door post to save himself from falling. Others pushed by him into the courtyard, among them the archer chief.

But what was the meaning of this?

Had some new charm been wrought to show the power of Mesu, who had brought such terrible plagues already on the land, and display the might of his god?

The yard was empty, absolutely empty; only in their stalls lay a few cattle and sheep, slain because they had suffered from injury, while a lame lamb hobbled away at the sight of the intruders. Even the carts and barrows had vanished. The groaning and bleating crowd, which the star-gazer had taken to be the spirits of the damned, was the host of the Hebrews, who had fled by night with all their herds, under the guidance of Moses.

The leader dropped his sword, and it might have been thought that the scene before him was to him an agreeable