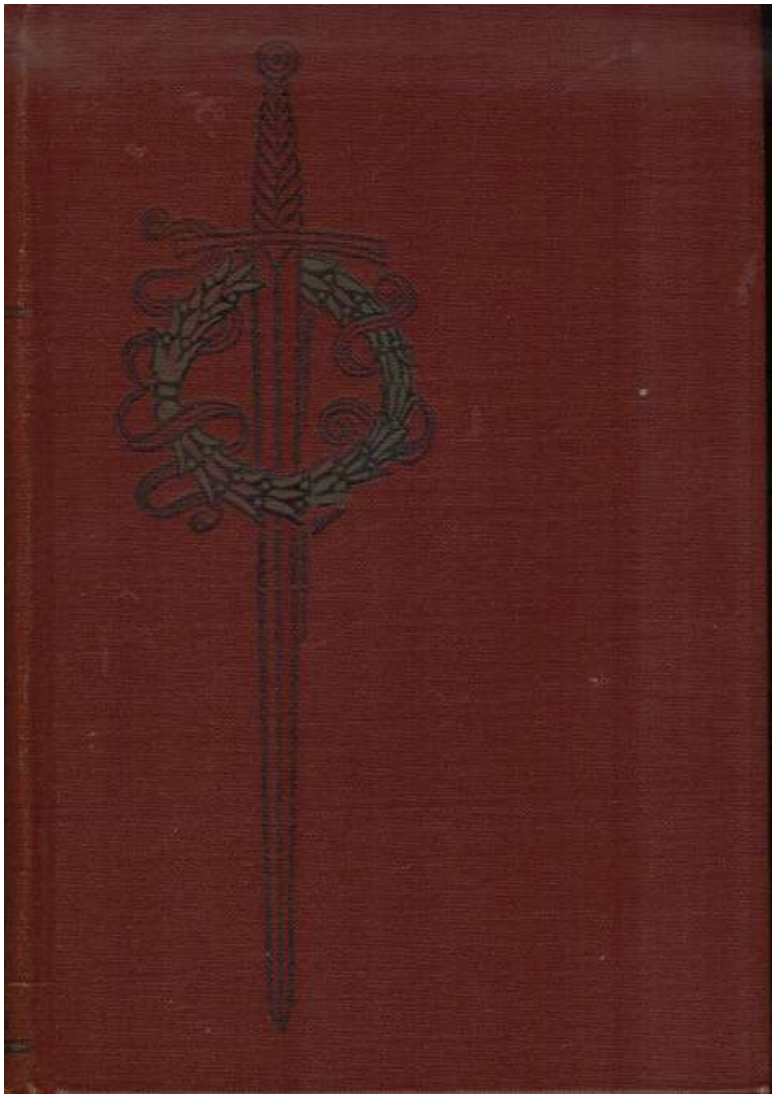

Makers of History

Cyrus the Great

BY

JACOB ABBOTT

WITH ENGRAVINGS

NEW YORK AND LONDON
HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
1902

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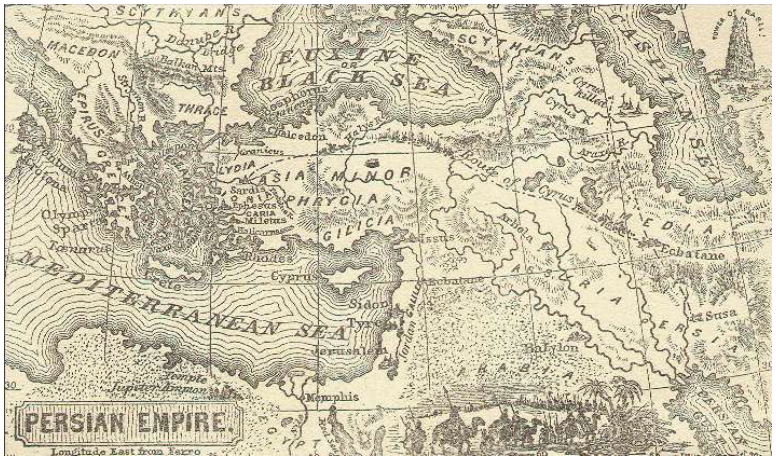
PREFACE

One special object which the author of this series has had in view, in the plan and method which he has followed in the preparation of the successive volumes, has been to adapt them to the purposes of text-books in schools. The study of a *general compend* of history, such as is frequently used as a text-book, is highly useful, if it comes in at the right stage of education, when the mind is sufficiently matured, and has acquired sufficient preliminary knowledge to understand and appreciate so condensed a generalization as a summary of the whole history of a nation contained in an ordinary volume must necessarily be. Without this degree of maturity of mind, and this preparation, the study of such a work will be, as it too frequently is, a mere mechanical committing to memory of names, and dates, and phrases, which awaken no interest, communicate no ideas, and impart no useful knowledge to the mind.

A class of ordinary pupils, who have not yet become much acquainted with history, would, accordingly, be more benefited by having their attention concentrated, at first, on detached and separate topics, such as those which form the subjects, respectively, of these volumes. By studying thus fully the history of individual monarchs, or the narratives of single events, they can go more fully into detail; they conceive of the transactions described as realities; their reflecting and reasoning powers are occupied on what they read; they take notice of the motives of conduct, of the gradual development of character, the good or ill desert of actions, and of the connection of causes and consequences, both in respect to the influence of wisdom and virtue on the one hand, and, on the other, of folly and crime. In a word, their *minds* and *hearts* are occupied instead of merely their memories. They reason, they sympathize, they pity, they approve, and they condemn. They enjoy the real and true pleasure which constitutes the charm of historical study for minds that are mature; and they acquire a taste for truth instead of fiction, which will tend to direct their reading into proper channels in all future years.

The use of these works, therefore, as text-books in classes, has been kept continually in mind in the preparation of them. The running index on the tops of the pages is intended to serve instead of questions. These captions can be used in their present form as *topics*, in respect to which, when announced in the class, the pupils are to repeat substantially what is said on the page; or, on the other hand, questions in form, if that mode is preferred, can be readily framed from them by the teacher. In all the volumes, a very regular system of division is observed, which will greatly facilitate the assignment of lessons.



CHAPTER I

HERODOTUS AND XENOPHON

Cyrus was the founder of the ancient Persian empire—a monarchy, perhaps, the most wealthy and magnificent which the world has ever seen. Of that strange and incomprehensible principle of human nature, under the influence of which vast masses of men, notwithstanding the universal instinct of aversion to control, combine, under certain circumstances, by millions and millions, to maintain, for many successive centuries, the representatives of some one great family in a condition of exalted, and absolute, and utterly irresponsible ascendency over themselves, while they toil for them, watch over them, submit to endless and most humiliating privations in their behalf, and commit, if commanded to do so, the most inexcusable and atrocious crimes to sustain the demigods they have thus made in their lofty estate, we have, in the case of this Persian monarchy, one of the most extraordinary exhibitions.

The Persian monarchy appears, in fact, even as we look back upon it from this remote distance both of space and of time, as a very vast wave of human power and grandeur. It swelled up among the populations of Asia, between the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea, about five hundred years before Christ, and rolled on in undiminished magnitude and glory for many centuries. It bore upon its crest the royal line of Astyages and his successors. Cyrus was, however, the first of the princes whom it held up conspicuously to the admiration of the world and he rode so gracefully and gallantly on the lofty crest that mankind have given him the credit of raising and sustaining the magnificent billow on which he was borne. How far we are to consider him as founding the monarchy, or the monarchy as raising and illustrating him, will appear more fully in the course of this narrative.

Cotemporaneous with this Persian monarchy in the East, there flourished in the West the small but very efficient and vigorous republics of Greece. The Greeks had a written character for their language which could be easily and rapidly executed, while the ordinary language of the Persians was scarcely written at all There was, it is true, in this latter nation, a certain learned character, which was used by the priests for their mystic records, and also for certain sacred books which constituted the only national archives. It was, however, only slowly and with difficulty that this character could be penned, and, when penned, it was unintelligible to the great mass of the population. For this reason, among others, the Greeks wrote narratives of the great events which occurred in their day, which narratives they so embellished and adorned by the picturesque lights and shades in which their genius enabled them to present the scenes and characters described as to make them universally admired, while the surrounding nations produced nothing but formal governmental records, not worth to the community at large the toil and labor necessary to decipher them and make them intelligible. Thus the Greek writers became the historians, not only of their own republics, but also of all the nations around them; and with such admirable genius and power did they fulfill this function, that, while the records of all other nations cotemporary with them have been almost entirely neglected and forgotten, the language of the Greeks has been preserved among mankind, with infinite labor and toil, by successive generations of scholars, in every civilized nation, for two thousand years, solely in order that men may continue to read these tales.

Two Greek historians have given us a narrative of the events connected with the life of Cyrus—Herodotus and Xenophon. These writers disagree very materially in the statements which they make, and modern readers are divided in opinion on the question which to believe. In order to present this question fairly to the minds of our readers, we must commence this volume with some account of these two

authorities, whose guidance, conflicting as it is, furnishes all the light which we have to follow.

Herodotus was a philosopher and scholar. Xenophon was a great general. The one spent his life in solitary study, or in visiting various countries in the pursuit of knowledge; the other distinguished himself in the command of armies, and in distant military expeditions, which he conducted with great energy and skill. They were both, by birth, men of wealth and high station, so that they occupied, from the beginning, conspicuous positions in society; and as they were both energetic and enterprising in character, they were led, each, to a very romantic and adventurous career, the one in his travels, the other in his campaigns, so that their personal history and their exploits attracted great attention even while they lived.

Herodotus was born in the year 484 before Christ, which was about fifty years after the death of the Cyrus whose history forms the subject of this volume. He was born in the Grecian state of Caria, in Asia Minor, and in the city of Halicarnassus. Caria, as may be seen from the map at the commencement of this volume, was in the southwestern part of Asia Minor, near the shores of the Aegean Sea. Herodotus became a student at a very early age. It was the custom in Greece, at that time, to give to young men of his rank a good intellectual education. In other nations, the training of the young men, in wealthy and powerful families, was confined almost exclusively to the use of arms, to horsemanship, to athletic feats, and other such accomplishments as would give them a manly and graceful personal bearing, and enable them to excel in the various friendly contests of the public games, as well as prepare them to maintain their ground against their enemies in personal combats on the field of battle. The Greeks, without neglecting these things, taught their young men also to read and to write, explained to them the structure and the philosophy of language, and trained them to the study of the poets, the orators, and the historians which their country had produced. Thus a general taste for intellectual pursuits and pleasures was diffused throughout the community. Public affairs were discussed, before large audiences assembled for the purpose, by orators who felt a great pride and pleasure in the exercise of the power which they had acquired of persuading, convincing, or exciting the mighty masses that listened to them; and at the great public celebrations which were customary in those days, in addition to the wrestlings, the races, the games, and the military spectacles, there were certain literary entertainments provided, which constituted an essential part of the public pleasures. Tragedies were acted, poems recited, odes and lyrics sung, and narratives of martial enterprises and exploits, and geographical and historical descriptions of neighboring nations, were read to vast throngs of listeners, who, having been accustomed from infancy to witness such performances, and to hear them applauded, had learned to appreciate and enjoy them. Of course, these literary exhibitions would make impressions, more or less strong, on different minds, as the mental temperaments and characters of individuals varied. They seem to have exerted a very powerful influence on the mind of Herodotus in his early years. He was inspired, when very young, with a great zeal and ardor for the attainment of knowledge; and as he advanced toward maturity, he began to be ambitious of making new discoveries, with a view of communicating to his countrymen, in these great public assemblies, what he should thus acquire. Accordingly, as soon as he arrived at a suitable age, he resolved to set out upon a tour into foreign countries, and to bring back a report of what he should see and hear.

The intercourse of nations was, in those days, mainly carried on over the waters of the Mediterranean Sea; and in times of peace, almost the only mode of communication was by the ships and the caravans of the merchants who traded from country to country, both by sea and on the land. In fact, the knowledge which was one country possessed of the geography and the manners and customs of another, was almost wholly confined to the reports which these merchants circulated. When military expeditions invaded a territory, the

commanders, or the writers who accompanied them, often wrote descriptions of the scenes which they witnessed in their campaigns, and described briefly the countries through which they passed. These cases were, however, comparatively rare; and yet, when they occurred, they furnished accounts better authenticated, and more to be relied upon, and expressed, moreover, in a more systematic and regular form, than the reports of the merchants, though the information which was derived from both these sources combined was very insufficient, and tended to excite more curiosity than it gratified. Herodotus, therefore, conceived that, in thoroughly exploring the countries on the shores of the Mediterranean and in the interior of Asia, examining their geographical position, inquiring into their history, their institutions, their manners, customs, and laws, and writing the results for the entertainment and instruction of his countrymen, he had an ample field before him for the exercise of all his powers.

He went first to Egypt. Egypt had been until that time, closely shut up from the rest of mankind by the jealousy and watchfulness of the government. But now, on account of some recent political changes, which will be hereafter more particularly alluded to, the way was opened for travelers from other countries to come in. Herodotus was the first to avail himself of this opportunity. He spent some time in the country, and made himself minutely acquainted with its history, its antiquities, its political and social condition at the time of his visit, and with all the other points in respect to which he supposed that his countrymen would wish to be informed. He took copious notes of all that he saw. From Egypt he went westward into Libya, and thence he traveled slowly along the whole southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea as far as to the Straits of Gibraltar, noting, with great care, every thing which presented itself to his own personal observation, and availing himself of every possible source of information in respect to all other points of importance for the object which he had in view.

The Straits of Gibraltar were the ends of the earth toward the westward in those ancient days, and our traveler accordingly, after reaching them, returned again to the eastward. He visited Tyre, and the cities of Phœnicia, on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and thence went still further eastward to Assyria and Babylon. It was here that he obtained the materials for what he has written in respect to the Medes and Persians, and to the history of Cyrus. After spending some time in these countries, he went on by land still further to the eastward, into the heart of Asia. The country of Scythia was considered as at "the end of the earth" in this direction. Herodotus penetrated for some distance into the almost trackless wilds of this remote land, until he found that he had gone as far from the great center of light and power on the shores of the Aegean Sea as he could expect the curiosity of his countrymen to follow him. He passed thence round toward the north, and came down through the countries north of the Danube into Greece, by way of the Epirus and Macedon. To make such a journey as this was, in fact, in those days, almost to explore the whole known world.

It ought, however, here to be stated, that many modern scholars, who have examined, with great care, the accounts which Herodotus has given of what he saw and heard in his wanderings, doubt very seriously whether his journeys were really as extended as he pretends. As his object was to read what he was intending to write at great public assemblies in Greece, he was, of course, under every possible inducement to make his narrative as interesting as possible, and not to detract at all from whatever there might be extraordinary either in the extent of his wanderings or in the wonderfulness of the objects and scenes which he saw, or in the romantic nature of the adventures which he met with in his protracted tour. Cicero, in lauding him as a writer, says that he was the first who evinced the power to *adorn* a historical narrative. Between adorning and *embellishing*, the line is not to be very distinctly marked; and Herodotus has often been accused of having drawn more from his fancy than from any other source, in respect to a large

portion of what he relates and describes. Some do not believe that he ever even entered half the countries which he professes to have thoroughly explored, while others find, in the minuteness of his specifications, something like conclusive proof that he related only what he actually saw. In a word, the question of his credibility has been discussed by successive generations of scholars ever since his day, and strong parties have been formed who have gone to extremes in the opinions they have taken; so that, while some confer upon him the title of the father of *history*, others say it would be more in accordance with his merits to call him the father of *lies*. In controversies like this, and, in fact, in all controversies, it is more agreeable to the mass of mankind to take sides strongly with one party or the other, and either to believe or disbelieve one or the other fully and cordially. There is a class of minds, however, more calm and better balanced than the rest, who can deny themselves this pleasure, and who see that often, in the most bitter and decided controversies, the truth lies between. By this class of minds it has been generally supposed that the narratives of Herodotus are substantially true, though in many cases highly colored and embellished, or, as Cicero called it, adorned, as, in fact, they inevitably must have been under the circumstances in which they were written.

We can not follow minutely the circumstances of the subsequent life of Herodotus. He became involved in some political disturbances and difficulties in his native state after his return, in consequence of which he retired, partly a fugitive and partly an exile, to the island of Samos, which is at a little distance from Caria, and not far from the shore. Here he lived for some time in seclusion, occupied in writing out his history. He divided it into nine books, to which, respectively, the names of the nine Muses were afterward given, to designate them. The island of Samos, where this great literary work was performed, is very near to Patmos, where, a few hundred years later, the Evangelist John, in a similar retirement, and in the use of the same language and character, wrote the Book of Revelation.

When a few of the first books of his history were completed, Herodotus went with the manuscript to Olympia, at the great celebration of the 81st Olympiad. The Olympiads were periods recurring at intervals of about four years. By means of them the Greeks reckoned their time. The Olympiads were celebrated as they occurred, with games, shows, spectacles, and parades, which were conducted on so magnificent a scale that vast crowds were accustomed to assemble from every part of Greece to witness and join in them. They were held at Olympia, a city on the western side of Greece. Nothing now remains to mark the spot but some acres of confused and unintelligible ruins.

The personal fame of Herodotus and of his travels had preceded him, and when he arrived at Olympia he found the curiosity and eagerness of the people to listen to his narratives extreme. He read copious extracts from his accounts, so far as he had written them, to the vast assemblies which convened to hear him, and they were received with unbounded applause; and inasmuch as these assemblies comprised nearly all the statesmen, the generals, the philosophers, and the scholars of Greece, applause expressed by them became at once universal renown. Herodotus was greatly gratified at the interest which his countrymen took in his narratives, and he determined thenceforth to devote his time assiduously to the continuation and completion of his work.

It was twelve years, however, before his plan was finally accomplished. He then repaired to Athens, at the time of a grand festive celebration which was held in that city, and there he appeared in public again, and read extended portions of the additional books that he had written. The admiration and applause which his work now elicited was even greater than before. In deciding upon the passages to be read, Herodotus selected such as would be most likely to excite the interest of his Grecian hearers, and many of them were glowing accounts of Grecian exploits in former wars which had been waged in the countries which he had visited. To expect that, under such

circumstances, Herodotus should have made his history wholly impartial, would be to suppose the historian not human.

The Athenians were greatly pleased with the narratives which Herodotus thus read to them of their own and of their ancestors' exploits. They considered him a national benefactor for having made such a record of their deeds, and, in addition to the unbounded applause which they bestowed upon him, they made him a public grant of a large sum of money. During the remainder of his life Herodotus continued to enjoy the high degree of literary renown which his writings had acquired for him—a renown which has since been extended and increased, rather than diminished, by the lapse of time.

As for Xenophon, the other great historian of Cyrus, it has already been said that he was a military commander, and his life was accordingly spent in a very different manner from that of his great competitor for historic fame. He was born at Athens, about thirty years after the birth of Herodotus, so that he was but a child while Herodotus was in the midst of his career. When he was about twenty-two years of age, he joined a celebrated military expedition which was formed in Greece, for the purpose of proceeding to Asia Minor to enter into the service of the governor of that country. The name of this governor was Cyrus; and to distinguish him from Cyrus the Great, whose history is to form the subject of this volume, and who lived about one hundred and fifty years before him, he is commonly called Cyrus the Younger.

This expedition was headed by a Grecian general named Clearchus. The soldiers and the subordinate officers of the expedition did not know for what special service it was designed, as Cyrus had a treasonable and guilty object in view, and he kept it accordingly concealed, even from the agents who were to aid him in the execution of it. His plan was to make war upon and dethrone his brother Artaxerxes, then king of Persia, and consequently his sovereign. Cyrus was a very young man, but he was a man of a very energetic and accomplished character, and of unbounded ambition. When his father died, it was arranged that Artaxerxes, the older son, should succeed him. Cyrus was extremely unwilling to submit to this supremacy of his brother. His mother was an artful and unprincipled woman, and Cyrus, being the youngest of her children, was her favorite. She encouraged him in his ambitious designs; and so desperate was Cyrus himself in his determination to accomplish them, that it is said he attempted to assassinate his brother on the day of his coronation. His attempt was discovered, and it failed. His brother, however, instead of punishing him for the treason, had the generosity to pardon him, and sent him to his government in Asia Minor. Cyrus immediately turned all his thoughts to the plan of raising an army and making war upon his brother, in order to gain forcible possession of his throne. That he might have a plausible pretext for making the necessary military preparations, he pretended to have a quarrel with one of his neighbors, and wrote, hypocritically, many letters to the king, affecting solicitude for his safety, and asking aid. The king was thus deceived, and made no preparations to resist the force which Cyrus was assembling, not having the remotest suspicion that its destiny was Babylon.

The auxiliary army which came from Greece, to enter into Cyrus's service under these circumstances, consisted of about thirteen thousand men. He had, it was said, a hundred thousand men besides; but so celebrated were the Greeks in those days for their courage, their discipline, their powers of endurance, and their indomitable tenacity and energy, that Cyrus very properly considered this corps as the flower of his army. Xenophon was one of the younger Grecian generals. The army crossed the Hellespont, and entered Asia Minor, and, passing across the country, reached at last the famous pass of Cilicia, in the southwestern part of the country—a narrow defile between the mountains and the sea, which opens the only passage in that quarter toward the Persian regions beyond. Here the suspicions which the Greeks had been for some time inclined to feel, that they were going to make war

upon the Persian monarch himself, were confirmed, and they refused to proceed. Their unwillingness, however, did not arise from any compunctions of conscience about the guilt of treason, or the wickedness of helping an ungrateful and unprincipled wretch, whose forfeited life had once been given to him by his brother, in making war upon and destroying his benefactor. Soldiers have never, in any age of the world, any thing to do with compunctions of conscience in respect to the work which their commanders give them to perform. The Greeks were perfectly willing to serve in this or in any other undertaking; but, since it was rebellion and treason that was asked of them, they considered it as specially hazardous, and so they concluded that they were entitled to extra pay. Cyrus made no objection to this demand; an arrangement was made accordingly, and the army went on.

Artaxerxes assembled suddenly the whole force of his empire on the plains of Babylon—an immense army, consisting, it is said, of over a million of men. Such vast forces occupy, necessarily, a wide extent of country, even when drawn up in battle array. So great, in fact, was the extent occupied in this case, that the Greeks, who conquered all that part of the king's forces which was directly opposed to them, supposed, when night came, at the close of the day of battle, that Cyrus had been every where victorious; and they were only undeceived when, the next day, messengers came from the Persian camp to inform them that Cyrus's whole force, excepting themselves, was defeated and dispersed, and that Cyrus himself was slain, and to summon them to surrender at once and unconditionally to the conquerors.

The Greeks refused to surrender. They formed themselves immediately into a compact and solid body, fortified themselves as well as they could in their position, and prepared for a desperate defense. There were about ten thousand of them left, and the Persians seem to have considered them too formidable to be attacked. The Persians entered into negotiations with them, offering them certain terms on which they would be allowed to return peaceably into Greece. These negotiations were protracted from day to day for two or three weeks, the Persians treacherously using toward them a friendly tone, and evincing a disposition to treat them in a liberal and generous manner. This threw the Greeks off their guard, and finally the Persians contrived to get Clearchus and the leading Greek generals into their power at a feast, and then they seized and murdered them, or, as they would perhaps term it, *executed* them as rebels and traitors. When this was reported in the Grecian camp, the whole army was thrown at first into the utmost consternation. They found themselves two thousand miles from home, in the heart of a hostile country, with an enemy nearly a hundred times their own number close upon them, while they themselves were without provisions, without horses, without money; and there were deep rivers, and rugged mountains, and every other possible physical obstacle to be surmounted, before they could reach their own frontiers. If they surrendered to their enemies, a hopeless and most miserable slavery was their inevitable doom.

Under these circumstances, Xenophon, according to his own story, called together the surviving officers in the camp, urged them not to despair, and recommended that immediate measures should be taken for commencing a march toward Greece. He proposed that they should elect commanders to take the places of those who had been killed, and that, under their new organization, they should immediately set out on their return. These plans were adopted. He himself was chosen as the commanding general, and under his guidance the whole force was conducted safely through the countless difficulties and dangers which beset their way, though they had to defend themselves, at every step of their progress, from an enemy so vastly more numerous than they, and which was hanging on their flanks and on their rear, and making the most incessant efforts to surround and capture them. This retreat occupied two hundred and fifteen days. It has always been considered as one of the greatest military

achievements that has ever been performed. It is called in history the Retreat of the Ten Thousand. Xenophon acquired by it a double immortality. He led the army, and thus attained to a military renown which will never fade; and he afterward wrote a narrative of the exploit, which has given him an equally extended and permanent literary fame.

Some time after this, Xenophon returned again to Asia as a military commander, and distinguished himself in other campaigns. He acquired a large fortune, too, in these wars, and at length retired to a villa, which he built and adorned magnificently, in the neighborhood of Olympia, where Herodotus had acquired so extended a fame by reading his histories. It was probably, in some degree, through the influence of the success which had attended the labor of Herodotus in this field, that Xenophon was induced to enter it. He devoted the later years of his life to writing various historical memoirs, the two most important of which that have come down to modern times are, first, the narrative of his own expedition, under Cyrus the Younger, and, secondly, a sort of romance or tale founded on the history of Cyrus the Great. This last is called the Cyropaedia; and it is from this work, and from the history written by Herodotus, that nearly all our knowledge of the great Persian monarch is derived.

The question how far the stories which Herodotus and Xenophon have told us in relating the history of the great Persian king are true, is of less importance than one would at first imagine; for the case is one of those numerous instances in which the narrative itself, which genius has written, has had far greater influence on mankind than the events themselves exerted which the narrative professes to record. It is now far more important for us to know what the story is which has for eighteen hundred years been read and listened to by every generation of men, than what the actual events were in which the tale thus told had its origin. This consideration applies very extensively to history, and especially to ancient history. The events themselves have long since ceased to be of any great interest or importance to readers of the present day; but the *accounts*, whether they are fictitious or real, partial or impartial, honestly true or embellished and colored, since they have been so widely circulated in every age and in every nation, and have impressed themselves so universally and so permanently in the mind and memory of the whole human race, and have penetrated into and colored the literature of every civilized people, it becomes now necessary that every well-informed man should understand. In a word, the real Cyrus is now a far less important personage to mankind than the Cyrus of Herodotus and Xenophon, and it is, accordingly, their story which the author proposes to relate in this volume. The reader will understand, therefore, that the end and aim of the work is not to guarantee an exact and certain account of Cyrus as he actually lived and acted, but only to give a true and faithful summary of the story which for the last two thousand years has been in circulation respecting him among mankind.

CHAPTER II

THE BIRTH OF CYRUS

There are records coming down to us from the very earliest times of three several kingdoms situated in the heart of Asia—Assyria, Media, and Persia, the two latter of which, at the period when they first emerge indistinctly into view, were more or less connected with and dependent upon the former. Astyages was the King of Media; Cambyses was the name of the ruling prince or magistrate of Persia. Cambyses married Mandane, the daughter of Astyages, and Cyrus was their son. In recounting the circumstances of his birth, Herodotus relates, with all seriousness, the following very extraordinary story:

While Mandane was a maiden, living at her father's palace and home in Media, Astyages awoke one morning terrified by a dream. He had dreamed of a great inundation, which overwhelmed and destroyed his capital, and submerged a large part of his kingdom. The great rivers of that country were liable to very destructive floods, and there would have been nothing extraordinary or alarming in the king's imagination being haunted, during his sleep, by the image of such a calamity, were it not that, in this case, the deluge of water which produced such disastrous results seemed to be, in some mysterious way, connected with his daughter, so that the dream appeared to portend some great calamity which was to originate in her. He thought it perhaps indicated that after her marriage she should have a son who would rebel against him and seize the supreme power, thus overwhelming his kingdom as the inundation had done which he had seen in his dream.

To guard against this imagined danger, Astyages determined that his daughter should not be married in Media, but that she should be provided with a husband in some foreign land, so as to be taken away from Media altogether. He finally selected Cambyses, the king of Persia, for her husband. Persia was at that time a comparatively small and circumscribed dominion, and Cambyses, though he seems to have been the supreme ruler of it, was very far beneath Astyages in rank and power. The distance between the two countries was considerable, and the institutions and customs of the people of Persia were simple and rude, little likely to awaken or encourage in the minds of their princes any treasonable or ambitious designs. Astyages thought, therefore, that in sending Mandane there to be the wife of the king, he had taken effectual precautions to guard against the danger portended by his dream.

Mandane was accordingly married, and conducted by her husband to her new home. About a year afterward her father had another dream. He dreamed that a vine proceeded from his daughter, and, growing rapidly and luxuriantly while he was regarding it, extended itself over the whole land. Now the vine being a symbol of beneficence and plenty, Astyages might have considered this vision as an omen of good; still, as it was good which was to be derived in some way from his daughter, it naturally awakened his fears anew that he was doomed to find a rival and competitor for the possession of his kingdom in Mandane's son and heir. He called together his soothsayers, related his dream to them, and asked for their interpretation. They decided that it meant that Mandane would have a son who would one day become a king.

Astyages was now seriously alarmed, and he sent for Mandane to come home, ostensibly because he wished her to pay a visit to her father and to her native land, but really for the purpose of having her in his power, that he might destroy her child so soon as one should be born.

Mandane came to Media, and was established by her father in a residence near his palace, and such officers and domestics were put in charge of her household as Astyages could rely upon to do whatever he should command. Things being thus arranged, a few months passed away, and then Mandane's child was born.

Immediately on hearing of the event, Astyages sent for a certain officer of his court, an unscrupulous and hardened man, who possessed, as he supposed, enough of depraved and reckless resolution for the commission of any crime, and addressed him as follows:

"I have sent for you, Harpagus, to commit to your charge a business of very great importance. I confide fully in your principles of obedience and fidelity, and depend upon your doing, yourself, with your own hands, the work that I require. If you fail to do it, or if you attempt to evade it by putting it off upon others, you will suffer severely. I wish you to take Mandane's child to your own house and put him to death. You may accomplish the object in any mode you please, and you may arrange the circumstances of the burial of the body, or the disposal of it in any other way, as you think best; the essential thing is, that you see to it, yourself, that the child is killed."

Harpagus replied that whatever the king might command it was his duty to do, and that, as his master had never hitherto had occasion to censure his conduct, he should not find him wanting now. Harpagus then went to receive the infant. The attendants of Mandane had been ordered to deliver it to him. Not at all suspecting the object for which the child was thus taken away, but naturally supposing, on the other hand, that it was for the purpose of some visit, they arrayed their unconscious charge in the most highly-wrought and costly of the robes which Mandane, his mother, had for many months been interested in preparing for him, and then gave him up to the custody of Harpagus, expecting, doubtless, that he would be very speedily returned to their care.

Although Harpagus had expressed a ready willingness to obey the cruel behest of the king at the time of receiving it, he manifested, as soon as he received the child, an extreme degree of anxiety and distress. He immediately sent for a herdsman named Mitridates to come to him. In the mean time, he took the child home to his house, and in a very excited and agitated manner related to his wife what had passed. He laid the child down in the apartment, leaving it neglected and alone, while he conversed with his wife in a hurried and anxious manner in respect to the dreadful situation in which he found himself placed. She asked him what he intended to do. He replied that he certainly should not, himself, destroy the child. "It is the son of Mandane," said he. "She is the king's daughter. If the king should die, Mandane would succeed him, and then what terrible danger would impend over me if she should know me to have been the slayer of her son!" Harpagus said, moreover, that he did not dare absolutely to disobey the orders of the king so far as to save the child's life, and that he had sent for a herdsman, whose pastures extended to wild and desolate forests and mountains—the gloomy haunts of wild beasts and birds of prey—intending to give the child to him, with orders to carry it into those solitudes and abandon it there. His name was Mitridates.

While they were speaking this herdsman came in. He found Harpagus and his wife talking thus together, with countenances expressive of anxiety and distress, while the child, uneasy under the confinement and inconveniences of its splendid dress, and terrified at the strangeness of the scene and the circumstances around it, and perhaps, moreover, experiencing some dawning and embryo emotions of resentment at being laid down in neglect, cried aloud and incessantly. Harpagus gave the astonished herdsman his charge. He, afraid, as Harpagus had been in the presence of Astyages, to evince any hesitation in respect to obeying the orders of his superior, whatever they might be, took up the child and bore it away.

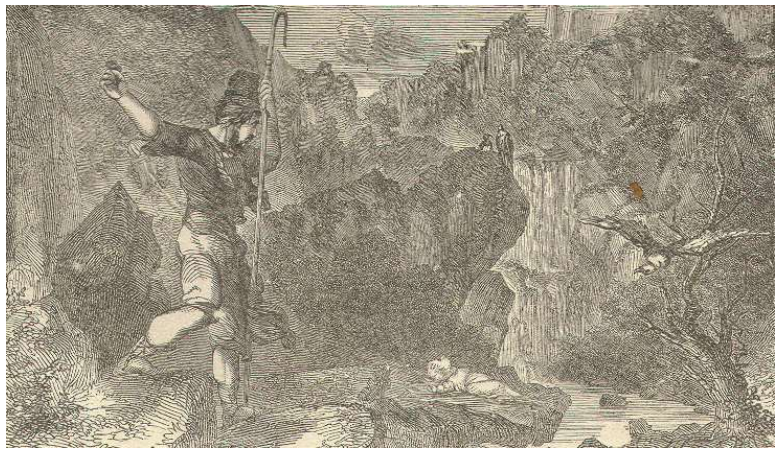
He carried it to his hut. It so happened that his wife, whose name was Spaco, had at that very time a new-born child, but it was dead. Her dead son had, in fact, been born during the absence of Mitridates. He had been extremely unwilling to leave his home at such a time, but the summons of Harpagus must, he knew, be obeyed. His wife, too, not

knowing what could have occasioned so sudden and urgent a call, had to bear, all the day, a burden of anxiety and solicitude in respect to her husband, in addition to her disappointment and grief at the loss of her child. Her anxiety and grief were changed for a little time into astonishment and curiosity at seeing the beautiful babe, so magnificently dressed, which her husband brought to her, and at hearing his extraordinary story.

He said that when he first entered the house of Harpagus and saw the child lying there, and heard the directions which Harpagus gave him to carry it into the mountains and leave it to die, he supposed that the babe belonged to some of the domestics of the household, and that Harpagus wished to have it destroyed in order to be relieved of a burden. The richness, however, of the infant's dress, and the deep anxiety and sorrow which was indicated by the countenances and by the conversation of Harpagus and his wife, and which seemed altogether too earnest to be excited by the concern which they would probably feel for any servant's offspring, appeared at the time, he said, inconsistent with that supposition, and perplexed and bewildered him. He said, moreover, that in the end, Harpagus had sent a man with him a part of the way when he left the house, and that this man had given him a full explanation of the case. The child was the son of Mandane, the daughter of the king, and he was to be destroyed by the orders of Astyages himself, for fear that at some future period he might attempt to usurp the throne.

They who know any thing of the feelings of a mother under the circumstances in which Spaco was placed, can imagine with what emotions she received the little sufferer, now nearly exhausted by abstinence, fatigue, and fear, from her husband's hands, and the heartfelt pleasure with which she drew him to her bosom, to comfort and relieve him. In an hour she was, as it were, herself his mother, and she began to plead hard with her husband for his life.

Mitridates said that the child could not possibly be saved. Harpagus had been most earnest and positive in his orders, and he was coming himself to see that they had been executed. He would demand, undoubtedly, to see the body of the child, to assure himself that it was actually dead. Spaco, instead of being convinced by her husband's reasoning, only became more and more earnest in her desires that the child might be saved. She rose from her couch and clasped her husband's knees, and begged him with the most earnest entreaties and with many tears to grant her request. Her husband was, however, inexorable. He said that if he were to yield, and attempt to save the child from its doom, Harpagus would most certainly know that his orders had been disobeyed, and then their own lives would be forfeited, and the child itself sacrificed after all, in the end.



THE EXPOSURE OF THE INFANT.

The thought then occurred to Spaco that her own dead child might be substituted for the living one, and be exposed in the mountains in its stead. She proposed this plan, and, after much anxious doubt and hesitation, the herdsman consented to adopt it. They took off the splendid robes which adorned the living child, and put them on the corpse, each equally unconscious of the change. The little limbs of the son of Mandane were then more simply clothed in the coarse and scanty covering which belonged to the new character which he

was now to assume, and then the babe was restored to its place in Spaco's bosom. Mitridates placed his own dead child, completely disguised as it was by the royal robes it wore, in the little basket or cradle in which the other had been brought, and, accompanied by an attendant, whom he was to leave in the forest to keep watch over the body, he went away to seek some wild and desolate solitude in which to leave it exposed.

Three days passed away, during which the attendant whom the herdsman had left in the forest watched near the body to prevent its being devoured by wild beasts or birds of prey, and at the end of that time he brought it home. The herdsman then went to Harpagus to inform him that the child was dead, and, in proof that it was really so, he said that if Harpagus would come to his hut he could see the body. Harpagus sent some messenger in whom he could confide to make the observation. The herdsman exhibited the dead child to him, and he was satisfied. He reported the result of his mission to Harpagus, and Harpagus then ordered the body to be buried. The child of Mandane, whom we may call Cyrus, since that was the name which he subsequently received, was brought up in the herdsman's hut, and passed every where for Spaco's child.

Harpagus, after receiving the report of his messenger, then informed Astyages that his orders had been executed, and that the child was dead. A trusty messenger, he said, whom he had sent for the purpose, had seen the body. Although the king had been so earnest to have the deed performed, he found that, after all, the knowledge that his orders had been obeyed gave him very little satisfaction. The fears, prompted by his selfishness and ambition, which had led him to commit the crime, gave place, when it had been perpetrated, to remorse for his unnatural cruelty. Mandane mourned incessantly the death of her innocent babe, and loaded her father with reproaches for having destroyed it, which he found it very hard to bear. In the end, he repented bitterly of what he had done.

The secret of the child's preservation remained concealed for about ten years. It was then discovered in the following manner:

Cyrus, like Alexander, Caesar, William the Conqueror, Napoleon, and other commanding minds, who obtained a great ascendency over masses of men in their maturer years, evinced his dawning superiority at a very early period of his boyhood. He took the lead of his playmates in their sports, and made them submit to his regulations and decisions. Not only did the peasants' boys in the little hamlet where his reputed father lived thus yield the precedence to him, but sometimes, when the sons of men of rank and station came out from the city to join them in their plays, even then Cyrus was the acknowledged head. One day the son of an officer of King Astyages's court—his father's name was Artembaris—came out, with other boys from the city, to join these village boys in their sports. They were playing *king*. Cyrus was the king. Herodotus says that the other boys *chose* him as such. It was, however, probably such a sort of choice as that by which kings and emperors are made among men, a yielding more or less voluntary on the part of the subjects to the resolute and determined energy with which the aspirant places himself upon the throne.

During the progress of the play, a quarrel arose between Cyrus and the son of Artembaris. The latter would not obey, and Cyrus beat him. He went home and complained bitterly to his father. The father went to Astyages to protest against such an indignity offered to his son by a peasant boy, and demanded that the little tyrant should be punished. Probably far the larger portion of intelligent readers of history consider the whole story as a romance; bat if we look upon it as in any respect true, we must conclude that the Median monarchy must have been, at that time, in a very rude and simple condition indeed, to allow of the submission of such a question as this to the personal adjudication of the reigning king.

However this may be, Herodotus states that Artembaris went to the palace of Astyages, taking his son with him, to offer proofs of the violence of which the herdsman's son had been guilty, by showing the contusions and bruises that had been produced by the blows. "Is this the treatment," he asked, indignantly, of the king, when he had completed his statement, "that my boy is to receive from the son of one of your slaves?"

Astyages seemed to be convinced that Artembaris had just cause to complain, and he sent for Mitridates and his son to come to him in the city. When they arrived, Cyrus advanced into the presence of the king with that courageous and manly bearing which romance writers are so fond of ascribing to boys of noble birth, whatever may have been the circumstances of their early training. Astyages was much struck, with his appearance and air. He, however, sternly laid to his charge the accusation which Artembaris had brought against him. Pointing to Artembaris's son, all bruised and swollen as he was, he asked, "Is that the way that you, a mere herdsman's boy, dare to treat the son of one of my nobles?"

The little prince looked up into his stern judge's face with an undaunted expression of countenance, which, considering the circumstances of the case, and the smallness of the scale on which this embryo heroism was represented, was partly ludicrous and partly sublime. "My lord," said he, "what I have done I am able to justify. I did punish this boy, and I had a right to do so. I was king, and he was my subject, and he would not obey me. If you think that for this I deserve punishment myself, here I am; I am ready to suffer it."

If Astyages had been struck with the appearance and manner of Cyrus at the commencement of the interview, his admiration was awakened far more strongly now, at hearing such words, uttered, too, in so exalted a tone, from such a child. He remained a long time silent. At last he told Artembaris and his son that they might retire. He would take the affair, he said, into his own hands, and dispose of it in a just and proper manner. Astyages then took the herdsman aside, and asked him, in an earnest tone, whose boy that was, and where he had obtained him.

Mitridates was terrified. He replied, however, that the boy was his own son, and that his mother was still living at home, in the hut where they all resided. There seems to have been something, however, in his appearance and manner, while making these assertions, which led Astyages not to believe what he said. He was convinced that there was some unexplained mystery in respect to the origin of the boy, which the herdsman was willfully withholding. He assumed a displeased and threatening air, and ordered in his guards to take Mitridates into custody. The terrified herdsman then said that he would explain all, and he accordingly related honestly the whole story.

Astyages was greatly rejoiced to find that the child was alive. One would suppose it to be almost inconsistent with this feeling that he should be angry with Harpagus for not having destroyed it. It would seem, in fact, that Harpagus was not amenable to serious censure, in any view of the subject, for he had taken what he had a right to consider very effectual measures for carrying the orders of the king into faithful execution. But Astyages seems to have been one of those inhuman monsters which the possession and long-continued exercise of despotic power have so often made, who take a calm, quiet, and deliberate satisfaction in torturing to death any wretched victim whom they can have any pretext for destroying, especially if they can invent some new means of torment to give a fresh piquancy to their pleasure. These monsters do not act from passion. Men are sometimes inclined to palliate great cruelties and crimes which are perpetrated under the influence of sudden anger, or from the terrible impulse of those impetuous and uncontrollable emotions of the human soul which, when once excited, seem to make men insane; but the crimes of a tyrant are not of this kind. They are the calm, deliberate, and sometimes carefully economized gratifications of a nature essentially malign.

When, therefore, Astyages learned that Harpagus had failed of literally obeying his command to destroy, with his own hand, the infant which had been given him, although he was pleased with the consequences which had resulted from it, he immediately perceived that there was another pleasure besides that he was to derive from the transaction, namely, that of gratifying his own imperious and ungovernable will by taking vengeance on him who had failed, even in so slight a degree, of fulfilling its dictates. In a word, he was glad that the child was saved, but he did not consider that that was any reason why he should not have the pleasure of punishing the man who saved him.

Thus, far from being transported by any sudden and violent feeling of resentment to an inconsiderate act of revenge, Astyages began, calmly and coolly, and with a deliberate malignity more worthy of a demon than of a man, to consider how he could best accomplish the purpose he had in view. When, at length, his plan was formed, he sent for Harpagus to come to him. Harpagus came. The king began the conversation by asking Harpagus what method he had employed for destroying the child of Mandane, which he, the king, had delivered to him some years before. Harpagus replied by stating the exact truth. He said that, as soon as he had received the infant, he began immediately to consider by what means he could effect its destruction without involving himself in the guilt of murder; that, finally, he had determined upon employing the herdsman Mitridates to expose it in the forest till it should perish of hunger and cold; and, in order to be sure that the king's behest was fully obeyed, he charged the herdsman, he said, to keep strict watch near the child till it was dead, and then to bring home the body. He had then sent a confidential messenger from his own household to see the body and provide for its interment. He solemnly assured the king, in conclusion, that this was the real truth, and that the child was actually destroyed in the manner he had described.

The king then, with an appearance of great satisfaction and pleasure, informed Harpagus that the child had not been destroyed after all, and he related to him the circumstances of its having been exchanged for the dead child of Spaco, and brought up in the herdsman's hut. He informed him, too, of the singular manner in which the fact that the infant had been preserved, and was still alive, had been discovered. He told Harpagus, moreover, that he was greatly rejoiced at this discovery. "After he was dead, as I supposed," said he, "I bitterly repented of having given orders to destroy him. I could not bear my daughter's grief, or the reproaches which she incessantly uttered against me. But the child is alive, and all is well; and I am going to give a grand entertainment as a festival of rejoicing on the occasion."

Astyages then requested Harpagus to send his son, who was about thirteen years of age, to the palace, to be a companion to Cyrus, and, inviting him very specially to come to the entertainment, he dismissed him with many marks of attention and honor. Harpagus went home, trembling at the thought of the imminent danger which he had incurred, and of the narrow escape by which he had been saved from it. He called his son, directed him to prepare himself to go to the king, and dismissed him with many charges in respect to his behavior, both toward the king and toward Cyrus. He related to his wife the conversation which had taken place between himself and Astyages, and she rejoiced with him in the apparently happy issue of an affair which might well have been expected to have been their ruin.

The sequel of the story is too horrible to be told, and yet too essential to a right understanding of the influences and effects produced on human nature by the possession and exercise of despotic and irresponsible power to be omitted. Harpagus came to the festival. It was a grand entertainment. Harpagus was placed in a conspicuous position at the table. A great variety of dishes were brought in and set before the different guests, and were eaten without question. Toward the

close of the feast, Astyages asked Harpagus what he thought of his fare. Harpagus, half terrified with some mysterious presentiment of danger, expressed himself well pleased with it. Astyages then told him there was plenty more of the same kind, and ordered the attendants to bring the basket in. They came accordingly, and uncovered a basket before the wretched guest, which contained, as he saw when he looked into it, the head, and hands, and feet of his son. Astyages asked him to help himself to whatever part he liked!

The most astonishing part of the story is yet to be told. It relates to the action of Harpagus in such an emergency. He looked as composed and placid as if nothing unusual had occurred. The king asked him if he knew what he had been eating. He said that he did; and that whatever was agreeable to the will of the king was always pleasing to him!!

It is hard to say whether despotic power exerts its worst and most direful influences on those who wield it, or on those who have it to bear; on its masters, or on its slaves.

After the first feelings of pleasure which Astyages experienced in being relieved from the sense of guilt which oppressed his mind so long as he supposed that his orders for the murder of his infant grandchild had been obeyed, his former uneasiness lest the child should in future years become his rival and competitor for the possession of the Median throne, which had been the motive originally instigating him to the commission of the crime, returned in some measure again, and he began to consider whether it was not incumbent on him to take some measures to guard against such a result. The end of his deliberations was, that he concluded to send for the magi, or soothsayers, as he had done in the case of his dream, and obtain their judgment on the affair in the new aspect which it had now assumed.

When the magi had heard the king's narrative of the circumstances under which the discovery of the child's preservation had been made, through complaints which had been preferred against him on account of the manner in which he had exercised the prerogatives of a king among his playmates, they decided at once that Astyages had no cause for any further apprehensions in respect to the dreams which had disturbed him previous to his grandchild's birth.

"He has been a king," they said, "and the danger is over. It is true that he has been a monarch only in play, but that is enough to satisfy and fulfill the presages of the vision. Occurrences very slight and trifling in themselves are often found to accomplish what seemed of very serious magnitude and moment, as portended. Your grandchild has been a king, and he will never reign again. You have, therefore, no further cause to fear, and may send him to his parents in Persia with perfect safety."

The king determined to adopt this advice. He ordered the soothsayers, however, not to remit their assiduity and vigilance, and if any signs or omens should appear to indicate approaching danger, he charged them to give him immediate warning. This they faithfully promised to do. They felt, they said, a personal interest in doing it; for Cyrus being a Persian prince, his accession to the Median throne would involve the subjection of the Medes to the Persian dominion, a result which they wished on every account to avoid. So, promising to watch vigilantly for every indication of danger, they left the presence of the king." The king then sent for Cyrus.

It seems that Cyrus, though astonished at the great and mysterious changes which had taken place in his condition, was still ignorant of his true history. Astyages now told him that he was to go into Persia. "You will rejoin there," said he, "your true parents, who, you will find, are of very different rank in life from the herdsman whom you have lived with thus far. You will make the journey under the charge and escort of persons that I have appointed for the purpose. They will explain to you, on the way, the mystery in which your parentage and birth seems to you at present enveloped. You will find that I was induced many years ago, by the influence of an untoward dream, to treat you injuriously. But all has

ended well, and you can now go in peace to your proper home."

As soon as the preparations for the journey could be made, Cyrus set out, under the care of the party appointed to conduct him, and went to Persia. His parents were at first dumb with astonishment, and were then overwhelmed with gladness and joy at seeing their much-loved and long-lost babe reappear, as if from the dead, in the form of this tall and handsome boy, with health, intelligence, and happiness beaming in his countenance. They overwhelmed him with caresses, and the heart of Mandane, especially, was filled with pride and pleasure.

As soon as Cyrus became somewhat settled in his new home, his parents began to make arrangements for giving him as complete an education as the means and opportunities of those days afforded.

Xenophon, in his narrative of the early life of Cyrus, gives a minute, and, in some respects, quite an extraordinary account of the mode of life led in Cambyses's court. The sons of all the nobles and officers of the court were educated together, within the precincts of the royal palaces, or, rather, they spent their time together there, occupied in various pursuits and avocations, which were intended to train them for the duties of future life, though there was very little of what would be considered, in modern times, as education. They were not generally taught to read, nor could they, in fact, since there were no books, have used that art if they had acquired it. The only intellectual instruction which they seem to have received was what was called learning justice. The boys had certain teachers, who explained to them, more or less formally, the general principles of right and wrong, the injunctions and prohibitions of the laws, and the obligations resulting from them, and the rules by which controversies between man and man, arising in the various relations of life, should be settled. The boys were also trained to apply these principles and rules to the cases which occurred among themselves, each acting as judge in turn, to discuss and decide the questions that arose from time to time, either from real transactions as they occurred, or from hypothetical cases invented to put their powers to the test. To stimulate the exercise of their powers, they were rewarded when they decided right, and punished when they decided wrong. Cyrus himself was punished on one occasion for a wrong decision, under the following circumstances:

A bigger boy took away the coat of a smaller boy than himself, because it was larger than his own, and gave him his own smaller coat instead. The smaller boy complained of the wrong, and the case was referred to Cyrus for his adjudication. After hearing the case, Cyrus decided that each boy should keep the coat that fitted him. The teacher condemned this as a very unjust decision. "When you are called upon," said he, "to consider a question of what fits best, then you should determine as you have done in this case; but when you are appointed to decide whose each coat is, and to adjudge it to the proper owner, then you are to consider what constitutes right possession, and whether he who takes a thing by force from one who is weaker than himself, should have it, or whether he who made it or purchased it should be protected in his property. You have decided against law, and in favor of violence and wrong." Cyrus's sentence was thus condemned, and he was punished for not reasoning more soundly.

The boys at this Persian court were trained to many manly exercises. They were taught to wrestle and to run. They were instructed in the use of such arms as were employed in those times, and rendered dexterous in the use of them by daily exercises. They were taught to put their skill in practice, too, in hunting excursions, which they took, by turns, with the king, in the neighboring forest and mountains. On these occasions, they were armed with a bow, and a quiver of arrows, a shield, a small sword or dagger which was worn at the side in a sort of scabbard, and two javelins. One of these was intended to be thrown, the other to be retained in the hand,

for use in close combat, in case the wild beast, in his desperation, should advance to a personal encounter. These hunting expeditions were considered extremely important as a part of the system of youthful training. They were often long and fatiguing. The young men became inured, by means of them, to toil, and privation, and exposure. They had to make long marches, to encounter great dangers, to engage in desperate conflicts, and to submit sometimes to the inconveniences of hunger and thirst, as well as exposure to the extremes of heat and cold, and to the violence of storms. All this was considered as precisely the right sort of discipline to make them good soldiers in their future martial campaigns.

Cyrus was not, himself, at this time, old enough to take a very active part in these severer services, as they belonged to a somewhat advanced stage of Persian education, and he was yet not quite twelve years old. He was a very beautiful boy, tall and graceful in form and his countenance was striking and expressive. He was very frank and open in his disposition and character, speaking honestly, and without fear, the sentiments of his heart, in any presence and on all occasions. He was extremely kind hearted, and amiable, too, in his disposition, averse to saying or doing any thing which could give pain to those around him. In fact, the openness and cordiality of his address and manners, and the unaffected ingenuousness. and sincerity which characterized his disposition, made him a universal favorite. His frankness, his childish simplicity, his vivacity, his personal grace and beauty, and his generous and self-sacrificing spirit, rendered him the object of general admiration throughout the court, and filled Mandane's heart with maternal gladness and pride.

CHAPTER III

THE VISIT TO MEDIA

When Cyrus was about twelve years old, if the narrative which Xenophon gives of his history is true, he was invited by his grandfather Astyages to make a visit to Media. As he was about ten years of age, according to Herodotus, when he was restored to his parents, he could have been residing only two years in Persia when he received this invitation. During this period, Astyages had received, through Mandane and others, very glowing descriptions of the intelligence and vivacity of the young prince, and he naturally felt a desire to see him once more. In fact, Cyrus's personal attractiveness and beauty, joined to a certain frank and noble generosity of spirit which he seems to have manifested in his earliest years, made him a universal favorite at home, and the reports of these qualities, and of the various sayings and doings on Cyrus's part, by which his disposition and character were revealed, awakened strongly in the mind of Astyages that kind of interest which a grandfather is always very prone to feel in a handsome and precocious grandchild.

As Cyrus had been sent to Persia as soon as his true rank had been discovered, he had had no opportunities of seeing the splendor of royal life in Media, and the manners and habits of the Persians were very plain and simple. Cyrus was accordingly very much impressed with the magnificence of the scenes to which he was introduced when he arrived in Media, and with the gayeties and luxuries, the pomp and display, and the spectacles and parades in which the Median court abounded. Astyages himself took great pleasure in witnessing and increasing his little grandson's admiration for these wonders. It is one of the most extraordinary and beautiful of the provisions which God has made for securing the continuance of human happiness to the very end of life,

that we can renew, through sympathy with children, the pleasures which, for ourselves alone, had long since, through repetition and satiety, lost their charm. The rides, the walks, the flowers gathered by the roadside, the rambles among pebbles on the beach, the songs, the games, and even the little picture-book of childish tales which have utterly and entirely lost their power to affect the mind even of middle life, directly and alone, regain their magic influence, and call up vividly all the old emotions, even to the heart of decrepit age, when it seeks these enjoyments in companionship and sympathy with children or grandchildren beloved. By giving to us this capacity for renewing our own sensitiveness to the impressions of pleasure through sympathy with childhood, God has provided a true and effectual remedy for the satiety and insensibility of age. Let any one who is in the decline of years, whose time passes but heavily away, and who supposes that nothing can awaken interest in his mind or give him pleasure, make the experiment of taking children to a ride or to a concert, or to see a menagerie or a museum, and he will find that there is a way by which he can again enjoy very highly the pleasures which he had supposed were for him forever exhausted and gone.

This was the result, at all events, in the case of Astyages and Cyrus. The monarch took a new pleasure in the luxuries and splendors which had long since lost their charm for him, in observing their influence and effect upon the mind of his little grandson. Cyrus, as we have already said, was very frank and open in his disposition, and spoke with the utmost freedom of every thing that he saw. He was, of course, a privileged person, and could always say what the feeling of the moment and his own childish conceptions prompted, without danger. He had, however, according to the account which Xenophon gives, a great deal of good sense, as well as of sprightliness and brilliancy; so that, while his remarks, through their originality and point, attracted every one's attention, there was a native politeness and sense of propriety which restrained him from saying any thing to give pain. Even when he disapproved of and condemned what he saw in the arrangements of his grandfather's court or household, he did it in such a manner—so ingenuous, good-natured, and unassuming, that it amused all and offended none.

In fact, on the very first interview which Astyages had with Cyrus, an instance of the boy's readiness and tact occurred, which impressed his grandfather very much in his favor. The Persians, as has been already remarked, were accustomed to dress very plainly, while, on the other hand, at the Median court the superior officers, and especially the king, were always very splendidly adorned. Accordingly, when Cyrus was introduced into his grandfather's presence, he was quite dazzled with the display. The king wore a purple robe, very richly adorned, with a belt and collars, which were embroidered highly, and set with precious stones. He had bracelets, too, upon his wrists, of the most costly character. He wore flowing locks of artificial hair, and his face was painted, after the Median manner. Cyrus gazed upon this gay spectacle for a few moments in silence, and then exclaimed, "Why, mother! what a handsome man my grandfather is!"

Such an exclamation, of course, made great amusement both for the king himself and for the others who were present; and at length Mandane, somewhat indiscreetly, it must be confessed, asked Cyrus which of the two he thought the handsomest, his father or his grandfather. Cyrus escaped from the danger of deciding such a formidable question by saying that his father was the handsomest man in Persia, but his grandfather was the handsomest of all the Medes he had ever seen. Astyages was even more pleased by this proof of his grandson's adroitness and good sense than he had been with the compliment which the boy had paid to him; and thenceforward Cyrus became an established favorite, and did and said, in his grandfather's presence, almost whatever he pleased.

When the first childish feelings of excitement and curiosity had subsided, Cyrus seemed to attach very little

value to the fine clothes and gay trappings with which his grandfather was disposed to adorn him, and to all the other external marks of parade and display, which were generally so much prized among the Medes. He was much more inclined to continue in his former habits of plain dress and frugal means than to imitate Median ostentation and luxury. There was one pleasure, however, to be found in Media, which in Persia he had never enjoyed, that he prized very highly. That was the pleasure of learning to ride on horseback. The Persians, it seems, either because their country was a rough and mountainous region, or for some other cause, were very little accustomed to ride. They had very few horses, and there were no bodies of cavalry in their armies. The young men, therefore, were not trained to the art of horsemanship. Even in their hunting excursions they went always on foot, and were accustomed to make long marches through the forests and among the mountains in this manner, loaded heavily, too, all the time, with the burden of arms and provisions which they were obliged to carry. It was, therefore, a new pleasure to Cyrus to mount a horse. Horsemanship was a great art among the Medes. Their horses were beautiful and fleet, and splendidly caparisoned. Astyages provided for Cyrus the best animals which could be procured, and the boy was very proud and happy in exercising himself in the new accomplishment which he thus had the opportunity to acquire. To ride is always a great source of pleasure to boys; but in that period of the world, when physical strength was so much more important and more highly valued than at present, horsemanship was a vastly greater source of gratification than it is now. Cyrus felt that he had, at a single leap, quadrupled his power, and thus risen at once to a far higher rank in the scale of being than he had occupied before; for, as soon as he had once learned to be at home in the saddle, and to subject the spirit and the power of his horse to his own will, the courage, the strength, and the speed of the animal became, in fact, almost personal acquisitions of his own. He felt, accordingly, when he was galloping over the plains, or pursuing deer in the park, or running over the race-course with his companions, as if it was some newly-acquired strength and speed of his own that he was exercising, and which, by some magic power, was attended by no toilsome exertion, and followed by no fatigue.

The various officers and servants in Astyages's household, as well as Astyages himself, soon began to feel a strong interest in the young prince. Each took a pleasure in explaining to him what pertained to their several departments, and in teaching him whatever he desired to learn. The attendant highest in rank in such a household was the cup-bearer. He had the charge of the tables and the wine, and all the general arrangements of the palace seem to have been under his direction. The cup-bearer in Astyages's court was a Sacian. He was, however, less a friend to Cyrus than the rest. There was nothing within the range of his official duties that he could teach the boy; and Cyrus did not like his wine. Besides, when Astyages was engaged, it was the cup-bearer's duty to guard him from interruption, and at such times he often had occasion to restrain the young prince from the liberty of entering his grandfather's apartments as often as he pleased.

At one of the entertainments which Astyages gave in his palace, Cyrus and Mandane were invited; and Astyages, in order to gratify the young prince as highly as possible, set before him a great variety of dishes—meats, and sauces, and delicacies of every kind—all served in costly vessels, and with great parade and ceremony. He supposed that Cyrus would have been enraptured with the luxury and splendor of the entertainment. He did not, however, seem much pleased. Astyages asked him the reason, and whether the feast which he saw before him was not a much finer one than he had been accustomed to see in Persia. Cyrus said, in reply, that it seemed to him to be very troublesome to have to eat a little of so many separate things. In Persia they managed, he thought, a great deal better. "And how do you manage in Persia?" asked Astyages. "Why, in Persia," replied Cyrus, "we have plain bread and meat, and eat it when we are hungry; so we get

health and strength, and have very little trouble." Astyages laughed at this simplicity, and told Cyrus that he might, if he preferred it, live on plain bread and meat while he remained in Media, and then he would return to Persia in as good health as he came.

Cyrus was satisfied; he, however, asked his grandfather if he would give him all those things which had been set before him, to dispose of as he thought proper; and on his grandfather's assenting, he began to call the various attendants up to the table, and to distribute the costly dishes to them, in return, as he said, for their various kindnesses to him. "This," said he to one, "is for you, because you take pains to teach me to ride; this," to another, "for you, because you gave me a javelin; this to you, because you serve my grandfather well and faithfully; and this to you, because you honor my mother." Thus he went on until he had distributed all that he had received, though he omitted, as it seemed designedly, to give any thing to the Sacian cup-bearer. This Sacian being an officer of high rank, of tall and handsome figure, and beautifully dressed, was the most conspicuous attendant at the feast, and could not, therefore, have been accidentally passed by. Astyages accordingly asked Cyrus why he had not given any thing to the Sacian—the servant whom, as he said, he liked better than all the others.

"And what is the reason," asked Cyrus, in reply, "that this Sacian is such a favorite with you?"

"Have you not observed," replied Astyages, "how gracefully and elegantly he pours out the wine for me, and then hands me the cup?"

The Sacian was, in fact, uncommonly accomplished in respect to the personal grace and dexterity for which cup-bearers in those days were most highly valued, and which constitute, in fact, so essential a part of the qualifications of a master of ceremonies at a royal court in every age. Cyrus, however, instead of yielding to this argument, said, in reply, that he could come into the room and pour out the wine as well as the Sacian could do it, and he asked his grandfather to allow him to try. Astyages consented. Cyrus then took the goblet of wine, and went out. In a moment he came in again, stepping grandly, as he entered, in mimicry of the Sacian, and with a countenance of assumed gravity and self-importance, which imitated so well the air and manner of the cup-bearer as greatly to amuse the whole company assembled. Cyrus advanced thus toward the king, and presented him with the cup, imitating, with the grace and dexterity natural to childhood, all the ceremonies which he had seen the cup-bearer himself perform, except that of tasting the wine. The king and Mandane laughed heartily. Cyrus then, throwing off his assumed character, jumped up into his grandfather's lap and kissed him, and turning to the cup-bearer, he said, "Now, Sacian, you are ruined. I shall get my grandfather to appoint me in your place. I can hand the wine as well as you, and without tasting it myself at all."

"But why did you not taste it?" asked Astyages; "you should have performed that part of the duty as well as the rest."

It was, in fact, a very essential part of the duty of a cup-bearer to taste the wine that he offered before presenting it to the king. He did this, however, not by putting the cup to his lips, but by pouring out a little of it into the palm of his hand. This custom was adopted by these ancient despots to guard against the danger of being poisoned; for such a danger would of course be very much diminished by requiring the officer who had the custody of the wine, and without whose knowledge no foreign substance could well be introduced into it, always to drink a portion of it himself immediately before tendering it to the king.

To Astyages's question why he had not tasted the wine, Cyrus replied that he was afraid it was poisoned. "What led you to imagine that it was poisoned?" asked his grandfather. "Because," said Cyrus, "it was poisoned the other day, when you made a feast for your friends, on your birth-day. I knew

by the effects. It made you all crazy. The things that you do not allow us boys to do, you did yourselves, for you were very rude and noisy; you all bawled together, so that nobody could hear or understand what any other person said. Presently you went to singing in a very ridiculous manner, and when a singer ended his song, you applauded him, and declared that he had sung admirably, though nobody had paid attention. You went to telling stories, too, each one of his own accord, without succeeding in making any body listen to him. Finally, you got up and began to dance, but it was out of all rule and measure; you could not even stand erect and steadily. Then, you all seemed to forget who and what you were. The guests paid no regard to you as their king, but treated you in a very familiar and disrespectful manner, and you treated them in the same way; so I thought that the wine that produced these effects must have been poisoned."

Of course, Cyrus did not seriously mean that he thought the wine had been actually poisoned. He was old enough to understand its nature and effects. He undoubtedly intended his reply as a playful satire upon the intemperate excesses of his grandfather's court.

"But have not you ever seen such things before?" asked Astyages. "Does not your father ever drink wine until it makes him merry?"

"No," replied Cyrus, "indeed he does not. He drinks only when he is thirsty, and then only enough for his thirst, and so he is not harmed." He then added, in a contemptuous tone, "He has no Sacian cup-bearer, you may depend, about *him."*

"What is the reason, my son," here asked Mandane, "why you dislike this Sacian so much?"

"Why, every time that I want to come, and see my grandfather," replied Cyrus, "this teazing man always stops me, and will not let me come in. I wish, grandfather, you would let me have the rule over him just for three days."

"Why, what would you do to him?" asked Astyages.

"I would treat him as he treats me now," replied Cyrus. "I would stand at the door, as he does when I want to come in, and when he was coming for his dinner, I would stop him and say, 'You can not come in now; he is busy with some men.' "

In saying this, Cyrus imitated, in a very ludicrous manner, the gravity and dignity of the Sacian's air and manner.

"Then," he continued, "when he came to supper, I would say, 'He is bathing now; you must come some other time;' or else, 'He is going to sleep, and you will disturb him.' So I would torment him all the time, as he now torments me, in keeping me out when I want to come and see you."

Such conversation as this, half playful, half earnest, of course amused Astyages and Mandane very much, as well as all the other listeners. There is a certain charm in the simplicity and confiding frankness of childhood, when it is honest and sincere, which in Cyrus's case was heightened by his personal grace and beauty. He became, in fact, more and more a favorite the longer he remained. At length, the indulgence and the attentions which he received began to produce, in some degree, their usual injurious effects. Cyrus became too talkative, and sometimes he appeared a little vain. Still, there was so much true kindness of heart, such consideration for the feelings of others, and so respectful a regard for his grandfather, his mother, and his uncle, that his faults were overlooked, and he was the life and soul of the company in all the social gatherings which took place in the palaces of the king.

At length the time arrived for Mandane to return to Persia. Astyages proposed that she should leave Cyrus in Media, to be educated there under his grandfather's charge. Mandane replied that she was willing to gratify her father in every thing, but she thought it would be very hard to leave Cyrus behind, unless he was willing, of his own accord, to stay. Astyages then proposed the subject to Cyrus himself. "If

you will stay," said he, "the Sacian shall no longer have power to keep you from coming in to see me; you shall come whenever you choose. Then, besides, you shall have the use of all my horses, and of as many more as you please, and when you go home at last you shall take as many as you wish with you. Then you may have all the animals in the park to hunt. You can pursue them on horseback, and shoot them with bows and arrows, or kill them with javelins, as men do with wild beasts in the woods. I will provide boys of your own age to play with you, and to ride and hunt with you, and will have all sorts of arms made of suitable size for you to use; and if there is any thing else that you should want at any time, you will only have to ask me for it, and I will immediately provide it."

The pleasure of riding and of hunting in the park was very captivating to Cyrus's mind, and he consented to stay. He represented to his mother that it would be of great advantage to him, on his final return to Persia, to be a skillful and powerful horseman, as that would at once give him the superiority over all the Persian youths, for they were very little accustomed to ride. His mother had some fears lest, by too long a residence in the Median court, her son should acquire the luxurious habits, and proud and haughty manners, which would be constantly before him in his grandfather's example; but Cyrus said that his grandfather, being imperious himself, required all around him to be submissive, and that Mandane need not fear but that he would return at last as dutiful and docile as ever. It was decided, therefore, that Cyrus should stay, while his mother, bidding her child and her father farewell, went back to Persia.

After his mother was gone, Cyrus endeared himself very strongly to all persons at his grandfather's court by the nobleness and generosity of character which he evinced, more and more, as his mind was gradually developed. He applied himself with great diligence to acquiring the various accomplishments and arts then most highly prized, such as leaping, vaulting, racing, riding, throwing the javelin, and drawing the bow. In the friendly contests which took place among the boys, to test their comparative excellence in these exercises, Cyrus would challenge those whom he knew to be superior to himself, and allow them to enjoy the pleasure of victory, while he was satisfied, himself, with the superior stimulus to exertion which he derived from coming thus into comparison with attainments higher than his own. He pressed forward boldly and ardently, undertaking every thing which promised to be, by any possibility, within his power; and, far from being disconcerted and discouraged at his mistakes and failures, he always joined merrily in the laugh which they occasioned, and renewed his attempts with as much ardor and alacrity as before. Thus he made great and rapid progress, and learned first to equal and then to surpass one after another of his companions, and all without exciting any jealousy or envy.

It was a great amusement both to him and to the other boys, his playmates, to hunt the animals in the park, especially the deer. The park was a somewhat extensive domain, but the animals were soon very much diminished by the slaughter which the boys made among them. Astyages endeavored to supply their places by procuring more. At length, however, all the sources of supply that were conveniently at hand were exhausted; and Cyrus, then finding that his grandfather was put to no little trouble to obtain tame animals for his park, proposed, one day, that he should be allowed to go out into the forests, to hunt the wild beasts with the men. "There are animals enough there, grandfather," said Cyrus, "and I shall consider them all just as if you had procured them expressly for me."

In fact, by this time Cyrus had grown up to be a tall and handsome young man, with strength and vigor sufficient, under favorable circumstances, to endure the fatigues and exposures of real hunting. As his person had become developed, his mind and manners, too, had undergone a change. The gayety, the thoughtfulness, the self-confidence, and talkative vivacity of his childhood had disappeared, and he

was fast becoming reserved, sedate, deliberate, and cautious. He no longer entertained his grandfather's company by his mimicry, his repartees, and his childish wit. He was silent; he observed, he listened, he shrank from publicity, and spoke, when he spoke at all, in subdued and gentle tones. Instead of crowding forward eagerly into his grandfather's presence on all occasions, seasonable and unseasonable, as he had done before, he now became, of his own accord, very much afraid of occasioning trouble or interruption. He did not any longer need a Sacian to restrain him, but became, as Xenophon expresses it, a Sacian to himself, taking great care not to go into his grandfather's apartments without previously ascertaining that the king was disengaged; so that he and the Sacian now became great friends.

This being the state of the case, Astyages consented that Cyrus should go out with his son Cyaxares into the forests to hunt at the next opportunity. The party set out, when the time arrived, on horseback, the hearts of Cyrus and his companions bounding, when they mounted their steeds, with feelings of elation and pride. There were certain attendants and guards appointed to keep near to Cyrus, and to help him in the rough and rocky parts of the country, and to protect him from the dangers to which, if left alone, he would doubtless have been exposed. Cyrus talked with these attendants, as they rode along, of the mode of hunting, of the difficulties of hunting, the characters and the habits of the various wild beasts, and of the dangers to be shunned. His attendants told him that the dangerous beasts were bears, lions, tigers, boars, and leopards; that such animals as these often attacked and killed men, and that he must avoid them; but that stags, wild goats, wild sheep, and wild asses were harmless, and that he could hunt such animals as they as much as he pleased. They told him, moreover, that steep, rocky, and broken ground was more dangerous to the huntsman than any beasts, however ferocious; for riders, off their guard, driving impetuously over such ways, were often thrown from their horses, or fell with them over precipices or into chasms, and were killed.

CYRUS'S HUNTING.

Cyrus listened very attentively to these instructions, with every disposition to give heed to them; but when he came to the trial, he found that the ardor and impetuosity of the chase drove all considerations of prudence wholly from his mind. When the men got into the forest, those that were with Cyrus roused a stag, and all set off eagerly in pursuit, Cyrus at the head. Away went the stag over rough and dangerous ground. The rest of the party turned aside, or followed cautiously, while Cyrus urged his horse forward in the wildest excitement, thinking of nothing, and seeing nothing but the stag bounding before him. The horse came to a chasm which he was obliged to leap. But the distance was too great; he came down upon his knees, threw Cyrus violently forward almost over his head, and then, with a bound and a scramble, recovered his feet and went on. Cyrus clung tenaciously to the horse's mane, and at length succeeded in getting back to the saddle, though, for a moment his life was in the most imminent danger. His attendants were extremely terrified, though he himself seemed to experience no feeling but the pleasurable excitement of the chase; for, as soon as the obstacle was cleared, he pressed on with new impetuosity after

the stag, overtook him, and killed him with his javelin. Then, alighting from his horse, he stood by the side of his victim, to wait the coming up of the party, his countenance beaming with an expression of triumph and delight.

His attendants, however, on their arrival, instead of applauding his exploit, or seeming to share his pleasure, sharply reproved him for his recklessness and daring. He had entirely disregarded their instructions, and they threatened to report him to his grandfather. Cyrus looked perplexed and uneasy. The excitement and the pleasure of victory and success were struggling in his mind against his dread of his grandfather's displeasure. Just at this instant he heard a new halloo. Another party in the neighborhood had roused fresh game. All Cyrus's returning sense of duty was blown at once to the winds. He sprang to his horse with a shout of wild enthusiasm, and rode off toward the scene of action. The game which had been started, a furious wild boar, just then issued from a thicket directly before him. Cyrus, instead of shunning the danger, as he ought to have done, in obedience to the orders of those to whom his grandfather had intrusted him, dashed on to meet the boar at full speed, and aimed so true a thrust with his javelin against the beast as to transfix him in the forehead. The boar fell, and lay upon the ground in dying struggles, while Cyrus's heart was filled with joy and triumph even greater than before.

When Cyaxares came up, he reproved Cyrus anew for running such risks. Cyrus received the reproaches meekly, and then asked Cyaxares to give him the two animals that he had killed; he wanted to carry them home to his grandfather.

"By no means," said Cyaxares; "your grandfather would be very much displeased to know what you had done. He would not only condemn you for acting thus, but he would reprove us too, severely, for allowing you to do so."

"Let him punish me," said Cyrus, "if he wishes, after I have shown him the stag and the boar, and you may punish me too, if you think best; but do let me show them to him."

Cyaxares consented, and Cyrus made arrangements to have the bodies of the beasts and the bloody javelins carried home. Cyrus then presented the carcasses to his grandfather, saying that it was some game which he had taken for him. The javelins he did not exhibit directly, but he laid them down in a place where his grandfather would see them. Astyages thanked him for his presents, but he said he had no such need of presents of game as to wish his grandson to expose himself to such imminent dangers to take it.

"Well, grandfather," said Cyrus, "if you do not want the meat, give it to me, and I will divide it among my friends." Astyages agreed to this, and Cyrus divided his booty among his companions, the boys, who had before hunted with him in the park. They, of course, took their several portions home, each one carrying with his share of the gift a glowing account of the valor and prowess of the giver. It was not generosity which led Cyrus thus to give away the fruits of his toil, but a desire to widen and extend his fame.

When Cyrus was about fifteen or sixteen years old, his uncle Cyaxares was married, and in celebrating his nuptials, he formed a great hunting party, to go to the frontiers between Media and Assyria to hunt there, where it was said that game of all kinds was very plentiful, as it usually was, in fact, in those days, in the neighborhood of disturbed and unsettled frontiers. The very causes which made such a region as this a safe and frequented haunt for wild beasts, made it unsafe for men, and Cyaxares did not consider it prudent to venture on his excursion without a considerable force to attend him. His hunting party formed, therefore, quite a little army. They set out from home with great pomp and ceremony, and proceeded to the frontiers in regular organization and order, like a body of troops on a march. There was a squadron of horsemen, who were to hunt the beasts in the open parts of the forest, and a considerable detachment of light-armed footmen also, who were to rouse the game, and drive them out of their lurking

places in the glens and thickets. Cyrus accompanied this expedition.

When Cyaxares reached the frontiers, he concluded, instead of contenting himself and his party with hunting wild beasts, to make an incursion for plunder into the Assyrian territory, that being, as Xenophon expresses it, a more noble enterprise than the other. The nobleness, it seems, consisted in the greater imminence of the danger, in having to contend with armed men instead of ferocious brutes, and in the higher value of the prizes which they would obtain in case of success. The idea of there being any injustice or wrong in this wanton and unprovoked aggression upon the territories of a neighboring nation seems not to have entered the mind either of the royal robber himself or of his historian.

Cyrus distinguished himself very conspicuously in this expedition, as he had done in the hunting excursion before; and when, at length, this nuptial party returned home, loaded with booty, the tidings of Cyrus's exploits went to Persia. Cambyses thought that if his son was beginning to take part, as a soldier, in military campaigns, it was time for him to be recalled. He accordingly sent for him, and Cyrus began to make preparations for his return.

The day of his departure was a day of great sadness and sorrow among all his companions in Media, and, in fact, among all the members of his grandfather's household. They accompanied him for some distance on his way, and took leave of him, at last, with much regret and many tears. Cyrus distributed among them, as they left him, the various articles of value which he possessed, such as his arms, and ornaments of various kinds, and costly articles of dress. He gave his Median robe, at last, to a certain youth whom he said he loved the best of all. The name of this special favorite was Araspes. As these his friends parted from him, Cyrus took his leave of them, one by one, as they returned, with many proofs of his affection for them, and with a very sad and heavy heart.

The boys and young men who had received these presents took them home, but they were so valuable, that they or their parents, supposing that they were given under a momentary impulse of feeling, and that they ought to be returned, sent them all to Astyages. Astyages sent them to Persia, to be restored to Cyrus. Cyrus sent them all back again to his grandfather, with a request that he would distribute them again to those to whom Cyrus had originally given them, "which," said he, "grandfather, you must do, if you wish me ever to come to Media again with pleasure and not with shame."

Such is the story which Xenophon gives of Cyrus's visit to Media, and in its romantic and incredible details it is a specimen of the whole narrative which this author has given of his hero's life. It is not, at the present day, supposed that these, and the many similar stories with which Xenophon's books are filled, are true history. It is not even thought that Xenophon really intended to offer his narrative as history, but rather as an historical romance—a fiction founded on fact, written to amuse the warriors of his times, and to serve as a vehicle for inculcating such principles of philosophy, of morals, and of military science as seemed to him worthy of the attention of his countrymen. The story has no air of reality about it from beginning to end, but only a sort of poetical fitness of one part to another, much more like the contrived coincidences of a romance writer than like the real events and transactions of actual life. A very large portion of the work consists of long discourses on military, moral, and often metaphysical philosophy, made by generals in council, or commanders in conversation with each other when going into battle. The occurrences and incidents out of which these conversations arise always take place just as they are wanted and arrange themselves in a manner to produce the highest dramatic effect; like the stag, the broken ground, and the wild boar in Cyrus's hunting, which came, one after another, to furnish the hero with poetical occasions for displaying his juvenile bravery, and to produce the most picturesque and poetical grouping of

incidents and events. Xenophon too, like other writers of romances, makes his hero a model of military virtue and magnanimity, according to the ideas of the times. He displays superhuman sagacity in circumventing his foes, he performs prodigies of valor, he forms the most sentimental attachments, and receives with a romantic confidence the adhesions of men who come over to his side from the enemy, and who, being traitors to old friends, would seem to be only worthy of suspicion and distrust in being received by new ones. Every thing, however, results well; all whom he confides in prove worthy; all whom he distrusts prove base. All his friends are generous and noble, and, all his enemies treacherous and cruel. Every prediction which he makes is verified, and all his enterprises succeed; or if, in any respect, there occurs a partial failure, the incident is always of such a character as to heighten the impression which is made by the final and triumphant success.

Such being the character of Xenophon's tale, or rather drama, we shall content ourselves, after giving this specimen of it, with adding, in some subsequent chapters, a few other scenes and incidents drawn from his narrative. In the mean time, in relating the great leading events of Cyrus's life, we shall take Herodotus for our guide, by following his more sober, and, probably, more trustworthy record.

CHAPTER IV

CROESUS

The scene of our narrative must now be changed, for a time, from Persia and Media, in the East, to Asia Minor, in the West, where the great Crœsus, originally King of Lydia, was at this time gradually extending his empire along the shores of the Aegean Sea. The name of Crœsus is associated in the minds of men with the idea of boundless wealth, the phrase "as rich as Crœsus" having been a common proverb in all the modern languages of Europe for many centuries. It was to this Crœsus, king of Lydia, whose story we are about to relate, that the proverb alludes.

The country of Lydia, over which this famous sovereign originally ruled, was in the western part of Asia Minor, bordering on the Aegean Sea. Crœsus himself belonged to a dynasty, or race of kings, called the Mermnadae. The founder of this line was Gyges, who displaced the dynasty which preceded him and established his own by a revolution effected in a very remarkable manner. The circumstances were as follows:

The name of the last monarch of the old dynasty—the one, namely, whom Gyges displaced—was Candaules. Gyges was a household servant in Candaules's family—a sort of slave, in fact, and yet, as such slaves often were in those rude days, a personal favorite and boon companion of his master. Candaules was a dissolute and unprincipled tyrant. He had, however, a very beautiful and modest wife, whose name was Nyssia. Candaules was very proud of the beauty of his queen, and was always extolling it, though, as the event proved, he could not have felt for her any true and honest affection. In some of his revels with Gyges, when he was boasting of Nyssia's charms, he said that the beauty of her form and figure, when unrobed, was even more exquisite than that of her

features; and, finally, the monster, growing more and more excited, and having rendered himself still more of a brute than he was by nature by the influence of wine, declared that Gyges should see for himself. He would conceal him, he said, in the queen's bed-chamber, while she was undressing for the night. Gyges remonstrated very earnestly against this proposal. It would be doing the innocent queen, he said, a great wrong. He assured the king, too, that he believed fully all that he said about Nyssia's beauty, without applying such a test, and he begged him not to insist upon a proposal with which it would be criminal to comply.

The king, however, did insist upon it, and Gyges was compelled to yield. Whatever is offered as a favor by a half-intoxicated despot to an humble inferior, it would be death to refuse. Gyges allowed himself to be placed behind a half-opened door of the king's apartment, when the king retired to it for the night. There he was to remain while the queen began to unrobe herself for retiring, with a strict injunction to withdraw at a certain time which the king designated, and with the utmost caution, so as to prevent being observed by the queen. Gyges did as he was ordered. The beautiful queen laid aside her garments and made her toilet for the night with all the quiet composure and confidence which a woman might be expected to feel while in so sacred and inviolable a sanctuary, and in the presence and under the guardianship of her husband. Just as she was about to retire to rest, some movement alarmed her. It was Gyges going away. She saw him. She instantly understood the case. She was overwhelmed with indignation and shame. She, however, suppressed and concealed her emotions; she spoke to Candaules in her usual tone of voice, and he, on his part, secretly rejoiced in the adroit and successful manner in which his little contrivance had been carried into execution.

The next morning Nyssia sent, by some of her confidential messengers, for Gyges to come to her. He came, with some forebodings, perhaps, but without any direct reason for believing that what he had done had been discovered. Nyssia, however, informed him that she knew all, and that either he or her husband must die. Gyges earnestly remonstrated against this decision, and supplicated forgiveness. He explained the circumstances under which the act had been performed, which seemed, at least so far as he was concerned, to palliate the deed. The queen was, however, fixed and decided. It was wholly inconsistent with her ideas of womanly delicacy that there should be two living men who had both been admitted to her bedchamber. "The king," she said, "by what he has done, has forfeited his claims to me and resigned me to you. If you will kill him, seize his kingdom, and make me your wife, all shall be well; otherwise you must prepare to die."

From this hard alternative, Gyges chose to assassinate the king, and to make the lovely object before him his own. The excitement of indignation and resentment which glowed upon her cheek, and with which her bosom was heaving, made her more beautiful than ever. "How shall our purpose be accomplished?" asked Gyges. "The deed," she replied, "shall be perpetrated in the very place which was the scene of the dishonor done to me. I will admit you into our bedchamber in my turn, and you shall kill Candaules in his bed."

When night came, Nyssia stationed Gyges again behind the same door where the king had placed him. He had a dagger in his hand. He waited there till Candaules was asleep. Then at a signal given him by the queen, he entered, and stabbed the husband in his bed. He married Nyssia, and possessed himself of the kingdom. After this, he and his successors reigned for many years over the kingdom of Lydia, constituting the dynasty of the Mermnadae, from which, in process of time, King Crœsus descended.

The successive sovereigns of this dynasty gradually extended the Lydian power over the countries around them. The name of Crœsus's father, who was the monarch that immediately preceded him, was Alyattes. Alyattes waged war

toward the southward, into the territories of the city of Miletus. He made annual incursions into the country of the Milesians for plunder, always taking care, however, while he seized all the movable property that he could find, to leave the villages and towns, and all the hamlets of the laborers without injury. The reason for this was, that he did not wish to drive away the population, but to encourage them to remain and cultivate their lands, so that there might be new flocks and herds, and new stores of corn, and fruit, and wine, for him to plunder from in succeeding years. At last, on one of these marauding excursions, some fires which were accidentally set in a field spread into a neighboring town, and destroyed, among other buildings, a temple consecrated to Minerva. After this, Alyattes found himself quite unsuccessful in all his expeditions and campaigns. He sent to a famous oracle to ask the reason.

"You can expect no more success," replied the oracle, "until you rebuild the temple that you have destroyed."

But how could he rebuild the temple? The site was in the enemy's country. His men could not build an edifice and defend themselves, at the same time, from the attacks of their foes. He concluded to demand a truce of the Milesians until the reconstruction should be completed, and he sent embassadors to Miletus, accordingly, to make the proposal.

The proposition for a truce resulted in a permanent peace, by means of a very singular stratagem which Thrasybulus, the king of Miletus, practiced upon Alyattes. It seems that Alyattes supposed that Thrasybulus had been reduced to great distress by the loss and destruction of provisions and stores in various parts of the country, and that he would soon be forced to yield up his kingdom. This was, in fact, the case; but Thrasybulus determined to disguise his real condition, and to destroy, by an artifice, all the hopes which Alyattes had formed from the supposed scarcity in the city. When the herald whom Alyattes sent to Miletus was about to arrive, Thrasybulus collected all the corn, and grain, and other provisions which he could command, and had them heaped up in a public part of the city, where the herald was to be received, so as to present indications of the most ample abundance of food. He collected a large body of his soldiers, too, and gave them leave to feast themselves without restriction on what he had thus gathered. Accordingly, when the herald came in to deliver his message, he found the whole city given up to feasting and revelry, and he saw stores of provisions at hand, which were in process of being distributed and consumed with the most prodigal profusion. The herald reported this state of things to Alyattes. Alyattes then gave up all hopes of reducing Miletus by famine, and made a permanent peace, binding himself to its stipulations by a very solemn treaty. To celebrate the event, too, he built two temples to Minerva instead of one.

A story is related by Herodotus of a remarkable escape made by Arion at sea, which occurred during the reign of Alyattes, the father of Crœsus. We will give the story as Herodotus relates it, leaving the reader to judge for himself whether such tales were probably true, or were only introduced by Herodotus into his narrative to make his histories more entertaining to the Grecian assemblies to whom he read them. Arion was a celebrated singer. He had been making a tour in Sicily and in the southern part of Italy, where he had acquired considerable wealth, and he was now returning to Corinth. He embarked at Tarentum, which is a city in the southern part of Italy, in a Corinthian vessel, and put to sea. When the sailors found that they had him in their power, they determined to rob and murder him. They accordingly seized his gold and silver, and then told him that he might either kill himself or jump overboard into the sea. One or the other he must do. If he would kill himself on board the vessel, they would give him decent burial when they reached the shore.

Arion seemed at first at a loss how to decide in so hard an alternative. At length he told the sailors that he would

throw himself into the sea, but he asked permission to sing them one of his songs before he took the fatal plunge. They consented. He accordingly went into the cabin, and spent some time in dressing himself magnificently in the splendid and richly-ornamented robes in which he had been accustomed to appear upon the stage. At length he reappeared, and took his position on the side of the ship, with his harp in his hand. He sang his song, accompanying himself upon the harp, and then, when he had finished his performance, he leaped into the sea. The seamen divided their plunder and pursued their voyage.

Arion, however, instead of being drowned, was taken up by a dolphin that had been charmed by his song, and was borne by him to Taenarus, which is the promontory formed by the southern extremity of the Peloponnesus. There Arion landed in safety. From Taenarus he proceeded to Corinth, wearing the same dress in which he had plunged into the sea. On his arrival, he complained to the king of the crime which the sailors had committed, and narrated his wonderful escape. The king did not believe him, but put him in prison to wait until the ship should arrive. When at last the vessel came, the king summoned the sailors into his presence, and asked them if they knew any thing of Arion. Arion himself had been previously placed in an adjoining room, ready to be called in as soon as his presence was required. The mariners answered to the question which the king put to them, that they had seen Arion in Tarentum, and that they had left him there. Arion was then himself called in. His sudden appearance, clothed as he was in the same dress in which the mariners had seen him leap into the sea, so terrified the conscience-stricken criminals, that they confessed their guilt, and were all punished by the king. A marble statue, representing a man seated upon a dolphin, was erected at Taenarus to commemorate this event, where it remained for centuries afterward, a monument of the wonder which Arion had achieved.

At length Alyattes died and Crœsus succeeded him. Crœsus extended still further the power and fame of the Lydian empire, and was for a time very successful in all his military schemes. By looking upon the map, the reader will see that the Aegean Sea, along the coasts of Asia Minor, is studded with islands. These islands were in those days very fertile and beautiful, and were densely inhabited by a commercial and maritime people, who possessed a multitude of ships, and were very powerful in all the adjacent seas. Of course their land forces were very few, whether of horse or of foot, as the habits and manners of such a sea-going people were all foreign to modes of warfare required in land campaigns. On the sea, however, these islanders were supreme.

Crœsus formed a scheme for attacking these islands and bringing them under his sway, and he began to make preparations for building and equipping a fleet for this purpose, though, of course, his subjects were as unused to the sea as the nautical islanders were to military operations on the land. While he was making these preparations, a certain philosopher was visiting at his court: he was one of the seven wise men of Greece, who had recently come from the Peloponnesus. Crœsus asked him if there was any news from that country. "I heard," said the philosopher, "that the inhabitants of the islands were preparing to invade your dominions with a squadron of ten thousand horse. Crœsus, who supposed that the philosopher was serious, appeared greatly pleased and elated at the prospect of his sea-faring enemies attempting to meet him as a body of cavalry. "No doubt," said the philosopher, after a little pause, "you would be pleased to have those sailors attempt to contend with you on horseback; but do you not suppose that they will be equally pleased at the prospect of encountering Lydian landsmen on the ocean?"

Crœsus perceived the absurdity of his plan, and abandoned the attempt to execute it.

Crœsus acquired the enormous wealth for which he was so celebrated from the golden sands of the River Pactolus,

which flowed through his kingdom. The river brought the particles of gold, in grains, and globules, and flakes, from the mountains above, and the servants and slaves of Crœsus washed the sands, and thus separated the heavier deposit of the metal. In respect to the origin of the gold, however, the people who lived upon the banks of the river had a different explanation from the simple one that the waters brought down the treasure from the mountain ravines. They had a story that, ages before, a certain king, named Midas, rendered some service to a god, who, in turn, offered to grant him any favor that he might ask. Midas asked that the power might be granted him to turn whatever he touched into gold. The power was bestowed, and Midas, after changing various objects around him into gold until he was satisfied, began to find his new acquisition a source of great inconvenience and danger. His clothes, his food, and even his drink, were changed to gold when he touched them. He found that he was about to starve in the midst of a world of treasure, and he implored the god to take back the fatal gift. The god directed him to go and bathe in the Pactolus, and he should be restored to his former condition. Midas did so, and was saved, but not without transforming a great portion of the sands of the stream into gold during the process of his restoration.

Crœsus thus attained quite speedily to a very high degree of wealth, prosperity, and renown. His dominions were widely extended; his palaces were full of treasures; his court was a scene of unexampled magnificence and splendor. While in the enjoyment of all this grandeur, he was visited by Solon, the celebrated Grecian law-giver, who was traveling in that part of the world to observe the institutions and customs of different states. Crœsus received Solon with great distinction, and showed him all his treasures. At last he one day said to him, "You have traveled, Solon, over many countries, and have studied, with a great deal of attention and care, all that you have seen. I have heard great commendations of your wisdom, and I should like very much to know who, of all the persons you have ever known, has seemed to you most fortunate and happy."

The king had no doubt that the answer would be that he himself was the one.

"I think," replied Solon, after a pause, "that Tellus, an Athenian citizen, was the most fortunate and happy man I have ever known."

"Tellus, an Athenian!" repeated Crœsus, surprised. "What was there in his case which you consider so remarkable?"

"He was a peaceful and quiet citizen of Athens," said Solon. "He lived happily with his family, under a most excellent government, enjoying for many years all the pleasures of domestic life. He had several amiable and virtuous children, who all grew up to maturity, and loved and honored their parents as long as they lived. At length, when his life was drawing toward its natural termination, a war broke out with a neighboring nation, and Tellus went with the army to defend his country. He aided very essentially in the defeat of the enemy, but fell, at last, on the field of battle. His countrymen greatly lamented his death. They buried him publicly where he fell, with every circumstance of honor."

Solon was proceeding to recount the domestic and social virtues of Tellus, and the peaceful happiness which he enjoyed as the result of them, when Crœsus interrupted him to ask who, next to Tellus, he considered the most fortunate and happy man.

Solon, after a little farther reflection, mentioned two brothers, Cleobis and Bito, private persons among the Greeks, who were celebrated for their great personal strength, and also for their devoted attachment to their mother. He related to Crœsus a story of a feat they performed on one occasion, when their mother, at the celebration of some public festival, was going some miles to a temple, in a car to be drawn by oxen. There happened to be some delay in bringing the oxen, while

the mother was waiting in the car. As the oxen did not come, the young men took hold of the pole of the car themselves, and walked off at their ease with the load, amid the acclamations of the spectators, while their mother's heart was filled with exultation and pride.

Crœsus here interrupted the philosopher again, and expressed his surprise that he should place private men, like those whom he had named, who possessed no wealth, or prominence, or power, before a monarch like him, occupying a station of such high authority and renown, and possessing such boundless treasures.

"Crœsus," replied Solon, "I see you now, indeed, at the height of human power and grandeur. You reign supreme over many nations, and you are in the enjoyment of unbounded affluence, and every species of luxury and splendor. I can not, however, decide whether I am to consider you a fortunate and happy man, until I know how all this is to end. If we consider seventy years as the allotted period of life, you have a large portion of your existence yet to come, and we can not with certainty pronounce any man happy till his life is ended."

This conversation with Solon made a deep impression upon Crœsus's mind, as was afterward proved in a remarkable manner; but the impression was not a pleasant or a salutary one. The king, however, suppressed for the time the resentment which the presentation of these unwelcome truths awakened within him, though he treated Solon afterward with indifference and neglect, so that the philosopher soon found it best to withdraw.

Crœsus had two sons. One was deaf and dumb. The other was a young man of uncommon promise, and, of course, as he only could succeed his father in the government of the kingdom, he was naturally an object of the king's particular attention and care. His name was Atys. He was unmarried. He was, however, old enough to have the command of a considerable body of troops, and he had often distinguished himself in the Lydian campaigns. One night the king had a dream about Atys which greatly alarmed him. He dreamed that his son was destined to die of a wound received from the point of an iron spear. The king was made very uneasy by this ominous dream. He determined at once to take every precaution in his power to avert the threatened danger. He immediately detached Atys from his command in the army, and made provision for his marriage. He then very carefully collected all the darts, javelins, and every other iron-pointed weapon that he could find about the palace, and caused them to be deposited carefully in a secure place, where there could be no danger even of an accidental injury from them.

About that time there appeared at the court of Crœsus a stranger from Phrygia, a neighboring state, who presented himself at the palace and asked for protection. He was a prince of the royal family of Phrygia, and his name was Adrastus. He had had the misfortune, by some unhappy accident, to kill his brother; his father, in consequence of it, had banished him from his native land, and he was now homeless, friendless, and destitute.

Crœsus received him kindly. "Your family have always been my friends," said he, "and I am glad of the opportunity to make some return by extending my protection to any member of it suffering misfortune. You shall reside in my palace, and all your wants shall be supplied. Come in, and forget the calamity which has befallen you, instead of distressing yourself with it as if it had been a crime."

Thus Crœsus received the unfortunate Adrastus into his household. After the prince had been domiciliated in his new home for some time, messengers came from Mysia, a neighboring state, saying that a wild boar of enormous size and unusual ferocity had come down from the mountains, and was lurking in the cultivated country, in thickets and glens, from which, at night, he made great havoc among the flocks and herds, and asking that Crœsus would send his son, with a band of hunters and a pack of dogs, to help them destroy the common enemy. Crœsus consented immediately to send the

dogs and the men, but he said that he could not send his son. "My son," he added, "has been lately married, and his time and attention are employed about other things."

When, however, Atys himself heard of this reply, he remonstrated very earnestly against it, and begged his father to allow him to go. "What will the world think of me," said he, "if I shut myself up to these effeminate pursuits and enjoyments, and shun those dangers and toils which other men consider it their highest honor to share? What will my fellow citizens think of me, and how shall I appear in the eyes of my wife? She will despise me."

Crœsus then explained to his son the reason why he had been so careful to avoid exposing him to danger. He related to him the dream which had alarmed him. "It is on that account," said he, "that I am so anxious about you. You are, in fact, my only son, for your speechless brother can never be my heir."

Atys said, in reply, that he was not surprised, under those circumstances, at his father's anxiety; but he maintained that this was a case to which his caution could not properly apply. "You dreamed," he said, "that I should be killed by a weapon pointed with iron; but a boar has no such weapon. If the dream had portended that I was to perish by a tusk or a tooth, you might reasonably have restrained me from going to hunt a wild beast; but iron-pointed instruments are weapons of men, and we are not going, in this expedition, to contend with men."

The king, partly convinced, perhaps, by the arguments which Atys offered, and partly overborne by the urgency of his request, finally consented to his request and allowed him to go. He consigned him, however, to the special care of Adrastus, who was likewise to accompany the expedition, charging Adrastus to keep constantly by his side, and to watch over him with the utmost vigilance and fidelity.

The band of huntsmen was organized, the dogs prepared, and the train departed. Very soon afterward, a messenger came back from the hunting ground, breathless, and with a countenance of extreme concern and terror, bringing the dreadful tidings that Atys was dead. Adrastus himself had killed him. In the ardor of the chase, while the huntsmen had surrounded the boar, and were each intent on his own personal danger while in close combat with such a monster, and all were hurling darts and javelins at their ferocious foe, the spear of Adrastus missed its aim, and entered the body of the unhappy prince. He bled to death on the spot.

Soon after the messenger had made known these terrible tidings, the hunting train, transformed now into a funeral procession, appeared, bearing the dead body of the king's son, and followed by the wretched Adrastus himself, who was wringing his hands, and crying out incessantly in accents and exclamations of despair. He begged the king to kill him at once, over the body of his son, and thus put an end to the unutterable agony that he endured. This second calamity was more, he said, than he could bear. He had killed before his own brother, and now he had murdered the son of his greatest benefactor and friend.

Crœsus, though overwhelmed with anguish, was disarmed of all resentment at witnessing Adrastus's suffering. He endeavored to soothe and quiet the agitation which the unhappy man endured, but it was in vain. Adrastus could not be calmed. Crœsus then ordered the body of his son to be buried with proper honors. The funeral services were performed with great and solemn ceremonies, and when the body was interred, the household of Crœsus returned to the palace, which was now, in spite of all its splendor, shrouded in gloom. That night—at midnight—Adrastus, finding his mental anguish insupportable, retired from his apartment to the place where Atys had been buried, and killed himself over the grave.

Solon was wise in saying that he could not toll whether wealth and grandeur were to be accounted as happiness till he saw how they would end. Crœsus was plunged into inconsolable grief, and into extreme dejection and misery for a period of two years, in consequence of this calamity, and yet this calamity was only the beginning of the end.

CHAPTER V

ACCESSION OF CYRUS TO THE THRONE

While Crœsus had thus, on his side of the River Halys—which was the stream that marked the boundary between the Lydian empire on the west and the Persian and Assyrian dominions on the east—been employed in building up his grand structure of outward magnificence and splendor, and in contending, within, against an overwhelming tide of domestic misery and woe, great changes had taken place in the situation and prospects of Cyrus. From being an artless and generous-minded child, he had become a calculating, ambitious, and aspiring man, and he was preparing to take his part in the great public contests and struggles of the day, with the same eagerness for self-aggrandizement, and the same unconcern for the welfare and happiness of others, which always characterizes the spirit of ambition and love of power.

Though it is by no means certain that what Xenophon relates of his visit to his grandfather Astyages is meant for a true narrative of facts, it is not at all improbable that such a visit might have been made, and that occurrences, somewhat similar, at least, to those which his narrative records, may have taken place. It may seem strange to the reader that a man who should, at one time, wish to put his grandchild to death, should, at another, be disposed to treat him with such a profusion of kindness and attention. There is nothing, however, really extraordinary in this. Nothing is more fluctuating than the caprice of a despot. Man, accustomed from infancy to govern those around him by his own impetuous will, never learns self-control. He gives himself up to the dominion of the passing animal emotions of the hour. It may be jealousy, it may be revenge, it may be parental fondness, it may be hate, it may be love—whatever the feeling is that the various incidents of life, as they occur, or the

influences, irritating or exhilarating, which are produced by food or wine, awaken in his mind, he follows its impulse blindly and without reserve. He loads a favorite with kindness and caresses at one hour, and directs his assassination the next. He imagines that his infant grandchild is to become his rival, and he deliberately orders him to be left in a gloomy forest alone, to die of cold and hunger. When the imaginary danger has passed away, he seeks amusement in making the same grandchild his plaything, and overwhelms him with favors bestowed solely for the gratification of the giver, under the influence of an affection almost as purely animal as that of a lioness for her young.

Favors of such a sort can awaken no permanent gratitude in any heart, and thus it is quite possible that Cyrus might have evinced, during the simple and guileless days of his childhood, a deep veneration and affection for his grandfather, and yet, in subsequent years, when he had arrived at full maturity, have learned to regard him simply in the light of a great political potentate, as likely as any other potentate around him to become his rival or his enemy.

This was, at all events, the result. Cyrus, on his return to Persia, grew rapidly in strength and stature, and soon became highly distinguished for his personal grace, his winning manners, and for the various martial accomplishments which he had acquired in Media and in which he excelled almost all his companions. He gained, as such princes always do, a vast ascendency over the minds of all around him. As he advanced toward maturity, his mind passed from its interest in games, and hunting, and athletic sports, to plans of war, of conquest, and of extended dominion.

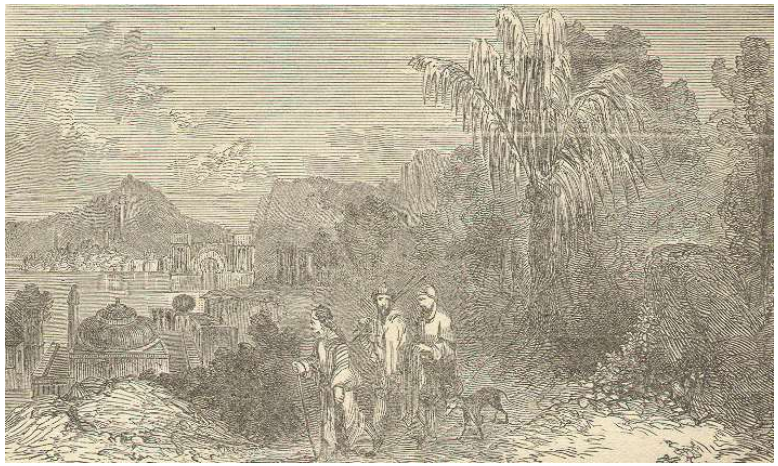
In the mean time, Harpagus, though he had, at the time when he endured the horrid punishment which Astyages inflicted upon him, expressed no resentment, still he had secretly felt an extreme indignation and anger, and he had now, for fifteen years, been nourishing covert schemes and plans for revenge. He remained all this time in the court of Astyages, and was apparently his friend. He was, however, in heart a most bitter and implacable enemy. He was looking continually for a plan or prospect which should promise some hope of affording him his long-desired revenge. His eyes were naturally turned toward Cyrus. He kept up a communication with him so far as it was possible, for Astyages watched very closely what passed between the two countries, being always suspicious of plots against his government and crown. Harpagus, however, contrived to evade this vigilance in some degree. He made continual reports to Cyrus of the tyranny and misgovernment of Astyages, and of the defenselessness of the realm of Media, and he endeavored to stimulate his rising ambition to the desire of one day possessing for himself both the Median and Persian throne.

In fact, Persia was not then independent of Media. It was more or less connected with the government of Astyages, so that Cambyses, the chief ruler of Persia, Cyrus's father, is called sometimes a king and sometimes a *satrap*, which last title is equivalent to that of viceroy or governor general. Whatever his true and proper title may have been, Persia was a Median dependency, and Cyrus, therefore, in forming plans for gaining possession of the Median throne, would consider himself as rather endeavoring to rise to the supreme command in his own native country, than as projecting any scheme for foreign conquest.

Harpagus, too, looked upon the subject in the same light. Accordingly, in pushing forward his plots toward their execution, he operated in Media as well as Persia. He ascertained, by diligent and sagacious, but by very covert inquiries, who were discontented and ill at ease under the dominion of Astyages, and by sympathizing with and encouraging them, he increased their discontent and insubmission. Whenever Astyages, in the exercise of his tyranny, inflicted an injury upon a powerful subject, Harpagus espoused the cause of the injured man, condemned, with him, the intolerable oppression of the king, and thus fixed and

perpetuated his enmity. At the same time, he took pains to collect and to disseminate among the Medes all the information which he could obtain favorable to Cyrus, in respect to his talents, his character, and his just and generous spirit, so that, at length, the ascendency of Astyages, through the instrumentality of these measures, was very extensively undermined, and the way was rapidly becoming prepared for Cyrus's accession to power.

During all this time, moreover, Harpagus was personally very deferential and obsequious to Astyages, and professed an unbounded devotedness to his interests. He maintained a high rank at court and in the army, and Astyages relied upon him as one of the most obedient and submissive of his servants, without entertaining any suspicion whatever of his true designs.



THE SECRET CORRESPONDENCE.

At length a favorable occasion arose, as Harpagus thought, for the execution of his plan. It was at a time when Astyages had been guilty of some unusual acts of tyranny and oppression, by which he had produced extensive dissatisfaction among his people. Harpagus communicated, very cautiously, to the principal men around him, the designs that he had long been forming for deposing Astyages and elevating Cyrus in his place. He found them favorably inclined to the plan. The way being thus prepared, the next thing was to contrive some secret way of communicating with Cyrus. As the proposal which he was going to make was that Cyrus should come into Media with as great a force as he could command, and head an insurrection against the government of Astyages, it would, of course, be death to him to have it discovered. He did not dare to trust the message to any living messenger, for fear of betrayal; nor was it safe to send a letter by any ordinary mode of transmission, lest the letter should be intercepted by some of Astyages's spies, and thus the whole plot be discovered. He finally adopted the following very extraordinary plan:

He wrote a letter to Cyrus, and then taking a hare, which some of his huntsmen had caught for him, he opened the body and concealed the letter within. He then sewed up the skin again in the most careful manner, so that no signs of the incision should remain. He delivered this hare, together with some nets and other hunting apparatus, to certain trustworthy servants, on whom he thought he could rely, charging them to deliver the hare into Cyrus's own hands, and to say that it came from Harpagus, and that it was the request of Harpagus that Cyrus should open it himself and alone. Harpagus concluded that this mode of making the communication was safe; for, in case the persons to whom the hare was intrusted were to be seen by any of the spies or other persons employed by Astyages on the frontiers, they would consider them as hunters returning from the chase with their game, and would never think of examining the body of a hare, in the hands of such a party, in search after a clandestine correspondence.

The plan was perfectly successful. The men passed into Persia without any suspicion. They delivered the hare to Cyrus, with their message. He opened the hare, and found the letter. It was in substance as follows:

"It is plain, Cyrus, that you are a favorite of Heaven, and that you are destined to a great and glorious career. You could not otherwise have escaped, in so miraculous a manner, the snares set for you in your infancy. Astyages meditated your death, and he took such measures to effect it as would seem to have made your destruction sure. You were saved by the special interposition of Heaven. You are aware by what extraordinary incidents you were preserved and discovered, and what great and unusual prosperity has since attended you. You know, too, what cruel punishments Astyages inflicted upon me, for my humanity in saving you. The time has now come for retribution. From this time the authority and the dominions of Astyages may be yours. Persuade the Persians to revolt. Put yourself at the head of an army, and march into Media. I shall probably myself be appointed to command the army sent out to oppose you. If so, we will join our forces when we meet, and I will enter your service. I have conferred with the leading nobles in Media, and they are all ready to espouse your cause. You may rely upon finding every thing thus prepared for you here; come, therefore, without any delay."

Cyrus was thrown into a fever of excitement and agitation on reading this letter. He determined to accede to Harpagus's proposal. He revolved in his mind for some time the measures by which he could raise the necessary force. Of course he could not openly announce his plan and enlist an army to effect it, for any avowed and public movement of that kind would be immediately made known to Astyages, who, by being thus forewarned of his enemies' designs, might take effectual measures to circumvent them. He determined to resort to deceit, or, as he called it, stratagem; nor did he probably have any distinct perception of the wrongfulness of such a mode of proceeding. The demon of war upholds and justifies falsehood and treachery, in all its forms, on the part of his votaries. He always applauds a forgery, a false pretense, or a lie: he calls it a stratagem.

Cyrus had a letter prepared, in the form of a commission from Astyages, appointing him commander of a body of Persian forces to be raised for the service of the king. Cyrus read the fabricated document in the public assembly of the Persians, and called upon all the warriors to join him. When they were organized, he ordered them to assemble on a certain day, at a place that he named, each one provided with a woodman's ax. When they were thus mustered, he marched them into a forest, and set them at work to clear a piece of ground. The army toiled all day, felling the trees, and piling them up to be burned. They cleared in this way, as Herodotus states, a piece of ground eighteen or twenty furlongs in extent. Cyrus kept them thus engaged in severe and incessant toil all the day, giving them, too, only coarse food and little rest. At night he dismissed them, commanding them to assemble again the second day.

On the second day, when they came together, they found a great banquet prepared for them, and Cyrus directed them to devote the day to feasting and making merry. There was an abundance of meats of all kinds, and rich wines in great profusion. The soldiers gave themselves up for the whole day to merriment and revelry. The toils and the hard fare of the day before had prepared them very effectually to enjoy the rest and the luxuries of this festival. They spent the hours in feasting about their camp-fires and reclining on the grass, where they amused themselves and one another by relating tales, or joining in merry songs and dances. At last, in the evening, Cyrus called them together, and asked them which day they had liked the best. They replied that there was nothing at all to like in the one, and nothing to be disliked in the other. They had had, on the first day, hard work and bad fare, and on the second, uninterrupted ease and the most luxurious pleasures.

"It is indeed so," said Cyrus, "and you have your destiny in your own hands to make your lives pass like either of these days, just as you choose. If you will follow me, you

will enjoy ease, abundance, and luxury. If you refuse, you must remain as you are, and toil on as you do now, and endure your present privations and hardships to the end of your days." He then explained to them his designs. He told them that although Media was a great and powerful kingdom, still that they were as good soldiers as the Medes, and with the arrangements and preparations which he had made, they were sure of victory.

The soldiers received this proposal with great enthusiasm and joy. They declared themselves ready to follow Cyrus wherever he should lead them, and the whole body immediately commenced making preparations for the expedition. Astyages was, of course, soon informed of these proceedings. He sent an order to Cyrus, summoning him immediately into his presence. Cyrus sent back word, in reply, that Astyages would probably see him sooner than he wished, and went on vigorously with his preparations. When all was ready, the army marched, and, crossing the frontiers, they entered into Media.

In the mean time, Astyages had collected a large force, and, as had been anticipated by the conspirators, he put it under the command of Harpagus. Harpagus made known his design of going over to Cyrus as soon as he should meet him, to as large a portion of the army as he thought it prudent to admit to his confidence; the rest knew nothing of the plan; and thus the Median army advanced to meet the invaders, a part of the troops with minds intent on resolutely meeting and repelling their enemies, while the rest were secretly preparing to go over at once to their side.

When the battle was joined, the honest part of the Median army fought valiantly at first, but soon, thunderstruck and utterly confounded at seeing themselves abandoned and betrayed by a large body of their comrades, they were easily overpowered by the triumphant Persians. Some were taken prisoners; some fled back to Astyages; and others, following the example of the deserters, went over to Cyrus's camp and swelled the numbers of his train. Cyrus, thus re-enforced by the accessions he had received, and encouraged by the flight or dispersion of all who still wished to oppose him, began to advance toward the capital.

Astyages, when he heard of the defection of Harpagus and of the discomfiture of his army, was thrown into a perfect phrensy of rage and hate. The long-dreaded prediction of his dream seemed now about to be fulfilled, and the magi, who had taught him that when Cyrus had once been made king of the boys in sport, there was no longer any danger of his aspiring to regal power, had proved themselves false. They had either intentionally deceived him, or they were ignorant themselves, and in that case they were worthless impostors. Although the danger from Cyrus's approach was imminent in the extreme, Astyages could not take any measures for guarding against it until he had first gratified the despotic cruelty of his nature by taking vengeance on these false pretenders. He directed to have them all seized and brought before him, and then, having upbraided them with bitter reproaches for their false predictions, he ordered them all to be crucified.

He then adopted the most decisive measures for raising an army. He ordered every man capable of bearing arms to come forward, and then, putting himself at the head of the immense force which he had thus raised, he advanced to meet his enemy. He supposed, no doubt, that he was sure of victory; but he underrated the power which the discipline, the resolution, the concentration, and the terrible energy of Cyrus's troops gave to their formidable array. He was defeated. His army was totally cut to pieces, and he himself was taken prisoner.

Harpagus was present when he was taken, and he exulted in revengeful triumph over the fallen tyrant's ruin. Astyages was filled with rage and despair. Harpagus asked him what he thought now of the supper in which he had compelled a father to feed on the flesh of his child. Astyages,

in reply, asked Harpagus whether he thought that the success of Cyrus was owing to what he had done. Harpagus replied that it was, and exultingly explained to Astyages the plots he had formed, and the preparations which he had made for Cyrus's invasion, so that Astyages might see that his destruction had been effected by Harpagus alone, in terrible retribution for the atrocious crime which he had committed so many years before, and for which the vengeance of the sufferer had slumbered, during the long interval, only to be more complete and overwhelming at last.

Astyages told Harpagus that he was a miserable wretch, the most foolish and most wicked of mankind. He was the most foolish, for having plotted to put power into another's hands which it would have been just as easy for him to have secured and retained in his own; and he was the most wicked, for having betrayed his country, and delivered it over to a foreign power, merely to gratify his own private revenge.

The result of this battle was the complete overthrow of the power and kingdom of Astyages, and the establishment of Cyrus on the throne of the united kingdom of Media and Persia. Cyrus treated his grandfather with kindness after his victory over him. He kept him confined, it is true, but it was probably that indirect and qualified sort of confinement which is all that is usually enforced in the case of princes and kings. In such cases, some extensive and often sumptuous residence is assigned to the illustrious prisoner, with grounds sufficiently extensive to afford every necessary range for recreation and exercise, and with bodies of troops for keepers, which have much more the form and appearance of military guards of honor attending on a prince, than of jailers confining a prisoner. It was probably in such an imprisonment as this that Astyages passed the remainder of his days. The people, having been wearied with his despotic tyranny, rejoiced in his downfall, and acquiesced very readily in the milder and more equitable government of Cyrus.

Astyages came to his death many years afterward, in a somewhat remarkable manner. Cyrus sent for him to come into Persia, where he was himself then residing. The officer who had Astyages in charge, conducted him, on the way, into a desolate wilderness, where he perished of fatigue, exposure, and hunger. It was supposed that this was done in obedience to secret orders from Cyrus, who perhaps found the charge of such a prisoner a burden. The officer, however, was cruelly punished for the act; but even this may have been only for appearances, to divert the minds of men from all suspicion that Cyrus could himself have been an accomplice in such a crime.

The whole revolution which has been described in this chapter, from its first inception to its final accomplishment, was effected in a very short period of time, and Cyrus thus found himself very unexpectedly and suddenly elevated to a throne.

Harpagus continued in his service, and became subsequently one of his most celebrated generals.

CHAPTER VI

THE ORACLES

As soon as Cyrus had become established on his throne as King of the Medes and Persians, his influence and power began to extend westward toward the confines of the empire of Crœsus, king of Lydia. Crœsus was aroused from the dejection and stupor into which the death of his son had plunged him, as related in a former chapter, by this threatening danger. He began to consider very earnestly what he could do to avert it.

The River Halys, a great river of Asia Minor, which flows northward into the Black Sea, was the eastern boundary of the Lydian empire. Crœsus began to entertain the design of raising an army and crossing the Halys, to invade the empire of Cyrus, thinking that that would perhaps be safer policy than to wait for Cyrus to cross the Halys, and bring the war upon him. Still, the enterprise of invading Persia was a vast undertaking, and the responsibility great of being the aggressor in the contest. After carefully considering the subject in all its aspects, Crœsus found himself still perplexed and undecided.

The Greeks had a method of looking into futurity, and of ascertaining, as they imagined, by supernatural means, the course of future events, which was peculiar to that people; at least no other nation seems ever to have practiced it in the precise form which prevailed among them. It was by means of the oracles. There were four or five localities in the Grecian countries which possessed, as the people thought, the property of inspiring persons who visited them, or of giving to some natural object certain supernatural powers by which future events could be foretold. The three most important of these oracles were situated respectively at Delphi, at Dodona, and at the Oasis of Jupiter Ammon.

Delphi was a small town built in a sort of valley, shaped like an amphitheater, on the southern side of Mount Parnassus. Mount Parnassus is north of the Peloponnesus, not very far from the shores of the Gulf of Corinth. Delphi was in a picturesque and romantic situation, with the mountain behind it, and steep, precipitous rocks descending to the level country before. These precipices answered instead of walls to defend the temple and the town. In very early times a cavern or fissure in the rocks was discovered at Delphi, from which there issued a stream of gaseous vapor, which produced strange effects on those who inhaled it. It was supposed to inspire them. People resorted to the place to obtain the benefit of these inspirations, and of the knowledge which they imagined they could obtain by means of them. Finally, a temple was built, and a priestess resided constantly in it, to inhale the vapor and give the responses. When she gave her answers to those who came to consult the oracle, she sat upon a sort of three-legged stool, which was called the sacred tripod. These stools were greatly celebrated as a very important part of the sacred apparatus of the place. This oracle became at last so renowned, that the greatest potentates, and even kings, came from great distances to consult it, and they made very rich and costly presents at the shrine when they came. These presents, it was supposed, tended to induce the god who presided over the oracle to give to those who made them favorable and auspicious replies. The deity that dictated the predictions of this oracle was Apollo.

There was another circumstance, besides the existence of the cave, which signalized the locality where this oracle was situated. The people believed that this spot was the exact center of the earth, which of course they considered as one vast plain. There was an ancient story that Jupiter, in order to determine the central point of creation, liberated two eagles at the same time, in opposite quarters of the heavens, that they might fly toward one another, and so mark the middle point by the place of their meeting. They met at Delphi.

Another of the most celebrated oracles was at Dodona. Dodona was northwest of Delphi, in the Epirus, which was a country in the western part of what is now Turkey in Europe, and on the shores of the Adriatic Sea. The origin of the oracle at Dodona was, as the priestesses there told Herodotus, as follows: In very ancient times, two black doves were set at liberty in Thebes, which was a very venerable and sacred city of Egypt. One flew toward the north and the other toward the west. The former crossed the Mediterranean, and then continued its flight over the Peloponnesus, and over all the southern provinces of Greece, until it reached Dodona. There it alighted on a beech-tree, and said, in a human voice, that that spot was divinely appointed for the seat of a sacred oracle. The other dove flew to the Oasis of Jupiter Ammon.

There were three priestesses at Dodona in the days of Herodotus. Their names were Promenea, Timarete, and Nicandre. The answers of the oracle were, for a time, obtained by the priestesses from some appearances which they observed in the sacred beech on which the dove alighted, when the tree was agitated by the wind. In later times, however, the responses were obtained in a still more singular manner. There was a brazen statue of a man, holding a whip in his hand. The whip had three lashes, which were formed of brazen chains. At the end of each chain was an *astragalus*, as it was called, which was a row of little knots or knobs, such as were commonly appended to the lashes of whips used in those days for scourging criminals.

These heavy lashes hung suspended in the hand of the statue over a great brazen caldron, in such a manner that the wind would impel them, from time to time, against its sides, causing the caldron to ring and resound like a gong. There was, however, something in this resonance supernatural and divine; for, though it was not loud, it was very long continued, when once the margin of the caldron was touched, however gently, by the lashes. In fact, it was commonly said that if touched in the morning, it would be night before the reverberations would have died entirely away. Such a belief could be very easily sustained among the common people; for a large, open-mouthed vessel like the Dodona caldron, with thin sides formed of sonorous metal, might be kept in a state of continual vibration by the wind alone.

They who wished to consult this oracle came with rich presents both for the priestesses and for the shrine, and when they had made the offerings, and performed the preliminary ceremonies required, they propounded their questions to the priestesses, who obtained the replies by interpreting, according to certain rules which they had formed, the sounds emitted by the mysterious gong.

The second black dove which took its flight from Thebes alighted, as we have already said, in the Oasis of Jupiter Ammon. This oasis was a small fertile spot in the midst of the deserts of Africa, west of Egypt, about a hundred miles from the Nile, and somewhat nearer than that to the Mediterranean Sea. It was first discovered in the following manner: A certain king was marching across the deserts, and his army, having exhausted their supplies of water, were on the point of perishing with thirst, when a ram mysteriously appeared, and took a position before them as their guide. They followed him, and at length came suddenly upon a green and fertile valley, many miles in length. The ram conducted them into this valley, and then suddenly vanished, and a copious fountain of water sprung up in the place where he had stood. The king, in gratitude for this divine interposition, consecrated the spot and built a temple upon it, which was called the temple of Jupiter Ammon. The dove alighted here, and ever afterward the oracles delivered by the priests of this temple were considered as divinely inspired.

These three were the most important oracles. There were, however, many others of subordinate consequence, each of which had its own peculiar ceremonies, all senseless and absurd. At one there was a sort of oven-shaped cave in the rocks, the spot being inclosed by an artificial wall. The cave

was about six feet wide and eight feet deep. The descent into it was by a ladder. Previously to consulting this oracle certain ceremonies were necessary, which it required several days to perform. The applicant was to offer sacrifices to many different deities, and to purify himself in various ways. He was then conducted to a stream in the neighborhood of the oracle, where he was to be anointed and washed. Then he drank a certain magical water, called the water of forgetfulness, which made him forget all previous sorrows and cares. Afterward he drank of another enchanted cup, which contained the water of remembrance; this was to make him remember all that should be communicated to him in the cave. He then descended the ladder, and received within the cave the responses of the oracle.

At another of these oracles, which was situated in Attica, the magic virtue was supposed to reside in a certain marble statue, carved in honor of an ancient and celebrated prophet, and placed in a temple. Whoever wished to consult this oracle must abstain from wine for three days, and from food of every kind for twenty-four hours preceding the application. He was then to offer a ram as a sacrifice; and afterward, taking the skin of the ram from the carcass, he was to spread it out before the statue and lie down upon it to sleep. The answers of the oracle came to him in his dreams.

But to return to Crœsus. He wished to ascertain, by consulting some of these oracles, what the result of his proposed invasion of the dominions of Cyrus would be, in case he should undertake it; and in order to determine which of the various oracles were most worthy of reliance, he conceived the plan of putting them all to a preliminary test. He effected this object in the following manner:

He dispatched a number of messengers from Sardis, his capital, sending one to each of the various oracles. He directed these messengers to make their several journeys with all convenient dispatch; but, in order to provide for any cases of accidental detention or delay, he allowed them all one hundred days to reach their several places of destination. On the hundredth day from the time of their leaving Sardis, they were all to make applications to the oracles, and inquire what Crœsus, king of Lydia, was doing at that time. Of course he did not tell them what he should be doing; and as the oracles themselves could not possibly know how he was employed by any human powers, their answers would seem to test the validity of their claims to powers divine.

Crœsus kept the reckoning of the days himself with great care, and at the hour appointed on the hundredth day, he employed himself in boiling the flesh of a turtle and of a lamb together in a brazen vessel. The vessel was covered with a lid, which was also of brass. He then awaited the return of the messengers. They came in due time, one after another, bringing the replies which they had severally obtained. The replies were all unsatisfactory, except that of the oracle at Delphi. This answer was in verse, as, in fact, the responses of that oracle always were. The priestess who sat upon the tripod was accustomed to give the replies in an incoherent and half-intelligible manner, as impostors are very apt to do in uttering prophecies, and then the attendant priests and secretaries wrote them out in verse.

The verse which the messenger brought back from the Delphic tripod was in Greek; but some idea of its style, and the import of it, is conveyed by the following imitation:

"I number the sands, I measure the sea,
What's hidden to others is known to me.
The lamb and the turtle are simmering slow.
With brass above them and brass below."

Of course, Crœsus decided that the Delphic oracle was the one that he must rely upon for guidance in respect to his projected campaign. And he now began to prepare to consult it in a manner corresponding with the vast importance of the subject, and with his own boundless wealth. He provided the most extraordinary and sumptuous presents. Some of these treasures were to be deposited in the temple, as sacred gifts,

for permanent preservation there. Others were to be offered as a burnt sacrifice in honor of the god. Among the latter, besides an incredible number of living victims, he caused to be prepared a great number of couches, magnificently decorated with silver and gold, and goblets and other vessels of gold, and dresses of various kinds richly embroidered, and numerous other articles, all intended to be used in the ceremonies preliminary to his application to the oracle. When the time arrived, a vast concourse of people assembled to witness the spectacle. The animals were sacrificed, and the people feasted on the flesh; and when these ceremonies were concluded, the couches, the goblets, the utensils of every kind, the dresses—every thing, in short, which had been used on the occasion, were heaped up into one great sacrificial pile, and set on fire. Every thing that was combustible was consumed, while the gold was melted, and ran into plates of great size, which were afterward taken out from the ashes. Thus it was the workmanship only of these articles which was destroyed and lost by the fire. The gold, in which the chief value consisted, was saved. It was gold from the Pactolus.

Besides these articles, there were others made, far more magnificent and costly, for the temple itself. There was a silver cistern, or tank, large enough to hold three thousand gallons of wine. This tank was to be used by the inhabitants of Delphi in their great festivals. There was also a smaller cistern, or, immense goblet, as it might, perhaps, more properly be called, which was made of gold. There were also many other smaller presents, such as basins, vases, and statues, all of silver and gold, and of the most costly workmanship. The gold, too, which had been taken from the fire, was cast again, a part of it being formed into the image of a lion, and the rest into large plates of metal for the lion to stand upon. The image was then set up upon the plates, within the precincts of the temple.

There was one piece of statuary which Crœsus presented to the oracle at Delphi, which was, in some respects, more extraordinary than any of the rest. It was called the bread-maker. It was an image representing a woman, a servant in the household of Crœsus, whose business it was to bake the bread. The reason that induced Crœsus to honor this bread-maker with a statue of gold was, that on one occasion during his childhood she had saved his life. The mother of Crœsus died when he was young, and his father married a second time. The second wife wished to have some one of *her* children, instead of Crœsus, succeed to her husband's throne. In order, therefore, to remove Crœsus out of the way, she prepared some poison and gave it to the bread-maker, instructing her to put it into the bread which Crœsus was to eat. The bread-maker received the poison and promised to obey. But, instead of doing so, she revealed the intended murder to Crœsus, and gave the poison to the queen's own children. In gratitude for this fidelity to him, Crœsus, when he came to the throne, caused this statue to be made, and now he placed it at Delphi, where he supposed it would forever remain. The memory of his faithful servant was indeed immortalized by the measure, though the statue itself, as well as all these other treasures, in process of time disappeared. In fact, statues of brass or of marble generally make far more durable monuments than statues of gold; and no structure or object of art is likely to be very permanent among mankind unless the workmanship is worth more than the material.

Crœsus did not proceed himself to Delphi with these presents, but sent them by the hands of trusty messengers, who were instructed to perform the ceremonies required, to offer the gifts, and then to make inquiries of the oracle in the following terms.

"Crœsus, the sovereign of Lydia and of various other kingdoms, in return for the wisdom which has marked your former declarations, has sent you these gifts. He now furthermore desires to know whether it is safe for him to proceed against the Persians, and if so, whether it is best for him to seek the assistance of any allies."

The answer was as follows:

"If Crœsus crosses the Halys, and prosecutes a war with Persia, a mighty empire will be overthrown. It will be best for him to form an alliance with the most powerful states of Greece."

Crœsus was extremely pleased with this response. He immediately resolved on undertaking the expedition against Cyrus; and to express his gratitude for so favorable an answer to his questions, he sent to Delphi to inquire what was the number of inhabitants in the city, and, when the answer was reported to him, he sent a present of a sum of money to every one. The Delphians, in their turn, conferred special privileges and honors upon the Lydians and upon Crœsus in respect to their oracle, giving them the precedence in all future consultations, and conferring upon them other marks of distinction and honor.

At the time when Crœsus sent his present to the inhabitants of Delphi, he took the opportunity to address another inquiry to the oracle, which was, whether his power would ever decline. The oracle replied in a couplet of Greek verse, similar in its style to the one recorded on the previous occasion.

It was as follows:

"Whene'er a mule shall mount upon the Median throne,
Then, and not till then, shall great Crœsus fear to lose his own."

This answer pleased the king quite as much as the former one had done. The allusion to the contingency of a mule's reigning in Media he very naturally regarded as only a rhetorical and mystical mode of expressing an utter impossibility. Crœsus considered himself and the continuance of his power as perfectly secure. He was fully confirmed in his determination to organize his expedition without any delay, and to proceed immediately to the proper measures for obtaining the Grecian alliance and aid which the oracle had recommended. The plans which he formed, and the events which resulted, will be described in subsequent chapters.

In respect to these Grecian oracles, it is proper here to state, that there has been much discussion among scholars on the question how they were enabled to maintain, for so long a period, so extended a credit among a people as intellectual and well informed as the Greeks. It was doubtless by means of a variety of contrivances and influences that this end was attained. There is a natural love of the marvelous among the humbler classes in all countries, which leads them to be very ready to believe in what is mystic and supernatural; and they accordingly exaggerate and color such real incidents as occur under any strange or remarkable circumstances, and invest any unusual phenomena which they witness with a miraculous or supernatural interest. The cave at Delphi might really have emitted gases which would produce quite striking effects upon those who inhaled them; and how easy it would be for those who witnessed these effects to imagine that some divine and miraculous powers must exist in the aërial current which produced them. The priests and priestesses, who inhabited the temples in which these oracles were contained, had, of course, a strong interest in keeping up the belief of their reality in the minds of the community; so were, in fact, all the inhabitants of the cities which sprung up around them. They derived their support from the visitors who frequented these places, and they contrived various ways for drawing contributions, both of money and gifts, from all who came. In one case there was a sacred stream near an oracle, where persons, on permission from the priests, were allowed to bathe. After the bathing, they were expected to throw pieces of money into the stream. What afterward, in such cases, became of the money, it is not difficult to imagine.

Nor is it necessary to suppose that all these priests and priestesses were impostors. Having been trained up from infancy to believe that the inspirations were real, they would continue to look upon them as such all their lives. Even at the

present day we shall all, if we closely scrutinize our mental habits, find ourselves continuing to take for granted, in our maturer years, what we inconsiderately imbibed or were erroneously taught in infancy, and that, often, in cases where the most obvious dictates of reason, or even the plain testimony of our senses might show us that our notions are false. The priests and priestesses, therefore, who imposed on the rest of mankind, may have been as honestly and as deep in the delusion themselves as any of their dupes.

The answers of the oracles were generally vague and indefinite, and susceptible of almost any interpretation, according to the result. Whenever the event corresponded with the prediction, or could be made to correspond with it by the ingenuity of the commentators, the story of the coincidence would, of course, be every where spread abroad, becoming more striking and more exact at each repetition. Where there was a failure, it would not be direct and absolute, on account of the vagueness and indefiniteness of the response, and there would therefore be no interest felt in hearing or in circulating the story. The cases, thus, which would tend to establish the truth of the oracle, would be universally known and remembered, while those of a contrary bearing would be speedily forgotten.

There is no doubt, however, that in many cases the responses were given in collusion with the one who consulted the oracle, for the purpose of deceiving others. For example, let us suppose that Crœsus wished to establish strongly the credibility of the Delphic oracle in the minds of his countrymen, in order to encourage them to enlist in his armies, and to engage in the enterprise which he was contemplating against Cyrus with resolution and confidence; it would have been easy for him to have let the priestess at Delphi know what he was doing on the day when he sent to inquire, and thus himself to have directed her answer. Then, when his messengers returned, he would appeal to the answer as proof of the reality of the inspiration which seemed to furnish it. Alexander the Great certainly did, in this way, act in collusion with the priests at the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

The fact that there have been so many and such successful cases of falsehood and imposture among mankind in respect to revelations from Heaven, is no indication, as some superficially suppose, that no revelation is true, but is, on the other hand, strong evidence to the contrary. The Author of human existence has given no instincts in vain; and the universal tendency of mankind to believe in the supernatural, to look into an unseen world, to seek, and to imagine that they find, revelations from Heaven, and to expect a continuance of existence after this earthly life is over, is the strongest possible natural evidence that there is an unseen world; that man may have true communications with it; that a personal deity reigns, who approves and disapproves of human conduct, and that there is a future state of being. In this point of view, the absurd oracles of Greece, and the universal credence which they obtained, constitute strong evidence that there is somewhere to be found inspiration and prophesy really divine.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONQUEST OF LYDIA

There were, in fact, three inducements which combined their influence on the mind of Crœsus, in leading him to cross the Halys, and invade the dominions of the Medes and Persians: first, he was ambitious to extend his own empire; secondly, he feared that if he did not attack Cyrus, Cyrus would himself cross the Halys and attack him; and, thirdly, he felt under some obligation to consider himself the ally of Astyages, and thus bound to espouse his cause, and to aid him in putting down, if possible, the usurpation of Cyrus, and in recovering his throne. He felt under this obligation because Astyages was his brother-in-law; for the latter had married, many years before, a daughter of Alyattes, who was the father of Crœsus. This, as Crœsus thought, gave him a just title to interfere between the dethroned king and the rebel who had dethroned him. Under the influence of all these reasons combined, and encouraged by the responses of the oracle, he determined on attempting the invasion. The first measure which he adopted was to form an alliance with the most powerful of the states of Greece, as he had been directed to do by the oracle. After much inquiry and consideration, he concluded that the Lacedaemonian state was the most powerful. Their chief city was Sparta, in the Peloponnesus. They were a warlike, stern, and indomitable race of men, capable of bearing every possible hardship, and of enduring every degree of fatigue and toil, and they desired nothing but military glory for their reward. This was a species of wages which it was very easy to pay; much more easy to furnish than coin, even for Crœsus, notwithstanding the abundant supplies of gold which he was accustomed to obtain from the sands of the Pactolus.

Crœsus sent embassadors to Sparta to inform the people of the plans which he contemplated, and to ask their aid. He had been instructed, he said, by the oracle at Delphi, to seek the alliance of the most powerful of the states of Greece, and he accordingly made application to them. They were gratified with the compliment implied in selecting them, and acceded readily to his proposal. Besides, they were already on very friendly terms with Crœsus; for, some years before, they had sent to him to procure some gold for a statue which they had occasion to erect, offering to give an equivalent for the value of it in such productions as their country afforded. Crœsus supplied them with the gold that they needed, but generously refused to receive any return.

In the mean time, Crœsus went on, energetically, at Sardis, making the preparations for his campaign. One of his counselors, whose name was Sardaris, ventured, one day, strongly to dissuade him from undertaking the expedition. "You have nothing to gain by it," said he, "if you succeed, and every thing to lose if you fail. Consider what sort of people these Persians are whom you are going to combat. They live in the most rude and simple manner, without luxuries, without pleasures, without wealth. If you conquer their country, you will find nothing in it worth bringing away. On the other hand, if they conquer you, they will come like a vast band of plunderers into Lydia, where there is every thing to tempt and reward them. I counsel you to leave them alone, and to remain on this side the Halys, thankful if Cyrus will be contented to remain on the other."

But Crœsus was not in a mood of mind to be persuaded by such reasoning.

When all things were ready, the army commenced its march and moved eastward, through one province of Asia Minor after another, until they reached the Halys. This river is a considerable stream, which rises in the interior of the country, and flows northward into the Euxine Sea. The army encamped on the banks of it, and some plan was to be formed

for crossing the stream. In accomplishing this object, Crœsus was aided by a very celebrated engineer who accompanied his army, named Thales. Thales was a native of Miletus, and is generally called in history, Thales the Milesian. He was a very able mathematician and calculator, and many accounts remain of the discoveries and performances by which he acquired his renown.

For example, in the course of his travels, he at one time visited Egypt, and while there, he contrived a very simple way of measuring the height of the pyramids. He set up a pole on the plain in an upright position, and then measured the pole and also its shadow. He also measured the length of the shadow of the pyramid. He then calculated the height of the pyramid by this proportion: as the length of shadow of the pole is to that of the pole itself, so is the length of the shadow of the pyramid to its height.

Thales was an astronomer as well as a philosopher and engineer. He learned more exactly the true length of the year than it had been known before; and he also made some calculations of eclipses, at least so far as to predict the year in which they would happen. One eclipse which he predicted happened to occur on the day of a great battle between two contending armies. It was cloudy, so that the combatants could not see the sun. This circumstance, however, which concealed the eclipse itself, only made the darkness which was caused by it the more intense. The armies were much terrified at this sudden cessation of the light of day, and supposed it to be a warning from heaven that they should desist from the combat.

Thales the Milesian was the author of several of the geometrical theorems and demonstrations now included in the Elements of Euclid. The celebrated fifth proposition of the first book, so famous among all the modern nations of Europe as the great stumbling block in the way of beginners in the study of geometry, was his. The discovery of the truth expressed in this proposition, and of the complicated demonstration which establishes it, was certainly a much greater mathematical performance than the measuring of the altitude of the pyramids by their shadow.

But to return to Crœsus. Thales undertook the work of transporting the army across the river. He examined the banks, and found, at length, a spot where the land was low and level for some distance from the stream. He caused the army to be brought up to the river at this point, and to be encamped there, as near to the bank as possible, and in as compact a form. He then employed a vast number of laborers to cut a new channel for the waters, behind the army, leading out from the river above, and re-joining it again at a little distance below. When this channel was finished, he turned the river into its new course, and then the army passed without difficulty over the former bed of the stream.

The Halys being thus passed, Crœsus moved on in the direction of Media. But he soon found that he had not far to go to find his enemy. Cyrus had heard of his plans through deserters and spies, and he had for some time been advancing to meet him. One after the other of the nations through whose dominions he had passed, he had subjected to his sway, or, at least, brought under his influence by treaties and alliances, and had received from them all re-enforcements to swell the numbers of his army. One nation only remained—the Babylonians. They were on the side of Crœsus. They were jealous of the growing power of the Medes and Persians, and had made a league with Crœsus, promising to aid him in the war. The other nations of the East were in alliance with Cyrus, and he was slowly moving on, at the head of an immense combined force, toward the Halys, at the very time when Crœsus was crossing the stream.

The scouts, therefore, that preceded the army of Crœsus on its march, soon began to fall bank into the camp, with intelligence that there was a large armed force coming on to meet them, the advancing columns filling all the roads, and threatening to overwhelm them. The scouts from the army of Cyrus carried back similar intelligence to him. The two armies

accordingly halted and began to prepare for battle. The plane of their meeting was called Pteria. It was in the province of Cappadocia, and toward the eastern part of Asia Minor.

A great battle was fought at Pteria. It was continued all day, and remained undecided when the sun went down. The combatants separated when it became dark, and each withdrew from the field. Each king found, it seems, that his antagonist was more formidable than he had imagined, and on the morning after the battle they both seemed inclined to remain in their respective encampments, without evincing any disposition to renew the contest.

Crœsus, in fact, seems to have considered that he was fortunate in having so far repulsed the formidable invasion which Cyrus had been intending for him. He considered Cyrus's army as repulsed, since they had withdrawn from the field, and showed no disposition to return to it. He had no doubt that Cyrus would now go back to Media again, having found how well prepared Crœsus had been to receive him. For himself, he concluded that he ought to be satisfied with the advantage which he had already gained, as the result of one campaign, and return again to Sardis to recruit his army, the force of which had been considerably impaired by the battle, and so postpone the grand invasion till the next season. He accordingly set out on his return. He dispatched messengers, at the same time, to Babylon, to Sparta, to Egypt, and to other countries with which he was in alliance, informing these various nations of the great battle of Pteria and its results, and asking them to send him, early in the following spring, all the re-enforcements that they could command, to join him in the grand campaign which he was going to make the next season.

He continued his march homeward without any interruption, sending off, from time to time, as he was moving through his own dominions, such portions of his troops as desired to return to their homes, enjoining upon them to come back to him in the spring. By this temporary disbanding of a portion of his army, he saved the expense of maintaining them through the winter.

Very soon after Crœsus arrived at Sardis, the whole country in the neighborhood of the capital was thrown into a state of universal alarm by the news that Cyrus was close at hand. It seems that Cyrus had remained in the vicinity of Pteria long enough to allow Crœsus to return, and to give him time to dismiss his troops and establish himself securely in the city. He then suddenly resumed his march, and came on toward Sardis with the utmost possible dispatch. Crœsus, in fact, had no announcement of his approach until he heard of his arrival.

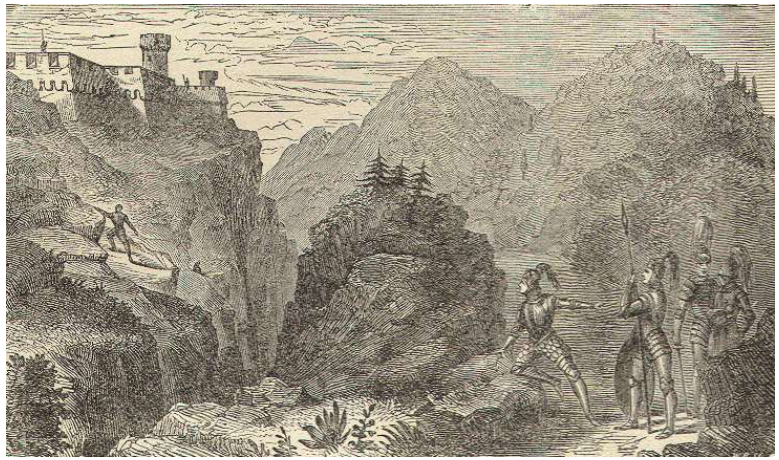
All was now confusion and alarm, both within and without the city. Crœsus hastily collected all the forces that he could command. He sent immediately to the neighboring cities, summoning all the troops in them to hasten to the capital. He enrolled all the inhabitants of the city that were capable of bearing arms. By these means he collected, in a very short time, quite a formidable force, which he drew up, in battle array, on a great plain not far from the city, and there waited, with much anxiety and solicitude, for Cyrus to come on.

The Lydian army was superior to that of Cyrus in cavalry, and as the place where the battle was to be fought was a plain, which was the kind of ground most favorable for the operations of that species of force, Cyrus felt some solicitude in respect to the impression which might be made by it on his army. Nothing is more terrible than the onset of a squadron of horse when charging an enemy upon the field of battle. They come in vast bodies, sometimes consisting of many thousands, with the speed of the wind, the men flourishing their sabers and rending the air with the most unearthly cries, those in advance being driven irresistibly on by the weight and impetus of the masses behind. The dreadful torrent bears down and overwhelms every thing that attempts to resist its way. They trample one another and their enemies together promiscuously

in the dust; the foremost of the column press on with the utmost fury, afraid quite as much of the headlong torrent of friends coming on behind them, as of the line of fixed and motionless enemies who stand ready to receive them before. These enemies, stationed to withstand the charge, arrange themselves in triple or quadruple rows, with the shafts of their spears planted against the ground, and the points directed forward and upward to receive the advancing horsemen. These spears transfix and kill the foremost horses; but those that come on behind, leaping and plunging over their fallen companions, soon break through the lines and put their enemies to flight, in a scene of indescribable havoc and confusion.

Crœsus had large bodies of horse, while Cyrus had no efficient troops to oppose them. He had a great number of camels in the rear of his army, which had been employed as beasts of burden to transport the baggage and stores of the army on their march. Cyrus concluded to make the experiment of opposing these camels to the cavalry. It is frequently said by the ancient historians that the horse has a natural antipathy to the camel, and can not bear either the smell or the sight of one, though this is not found to be the case at the present day. However the fact might have been in this respect, Cyrus determined to arrange the camels in his front as he advanced into battle. He accordingly ordered the baggage to be removed, and, releasing their ordinary drivers from the charge of them, he assigned each one to the care of a soldier, who was to mount him, armed with a spear. Even if the supposed antipathy of the horse for the camel did not take effect, Cyrus thought that their large and heavy bodies, defended by the spears of their riders, would afford the most effectual means of resistance against the shock of the Lydian squadrons that he was now able to command.

The battle commenced, and the squadrons of horse came on. But, as soon as they came near the camels, it happened that, either from the influence of the antipathy above referred to, or from alarm at the novelty of the spectacle of such huge and misshapen beasts, or else because of the substantial resistance which the camels and the spears of their riders made to the shock of their charge, the horses were soon thrown into confusion and put to flight. In fact, a general panic seized them, and they became totally unmanageable. Some threw their riders; others, seized with a sort of phrensy, became entirely independent of control. They turned, and trampled the foot soldiers of their own army under foot, and threw the whole body into disorder. The consequence was, that the army of Crœsus was wholly defeated; they fled in confusion, and crowded in vast throngs through the gates into the city, and fortified themselves there.



THE SEIGE OF SARDIS.

Cyrus advanced to the city, invested it closely on all sides, and commenced a siege. But the appearances were not very encouraging. The walls were lofty, thick, and strong, and the numbers within the city were amply sufficient to guard them. Nor was the prospect much more promising of being soon able to reduce the city by famine. The wealth of Crœsus had enabled him to lay up almost inexhaustible stores of food

and clothing, as well as treasures of silver and gold. He hoped, therefore, to be able to hold out against the besiegers until help should come from some of his allies. He had sent messengers to them, asking them to come to his rescue without any delay, before he was shut up in the city.The city of Sardis was built in a position naturally strong, and one part of the wall passed over rocky precipices which were considered entirely impassable. There was a sort of glen or rocky gorge in this quarter, outside of the walls, down which dead bodies were thrown on one occasion subsequently, at a time when the city was besieged, and beasts and birds of prey fed upon them there undisturbed, so lonely was the place and so desolate. In fact, the walls that crowned these precipices were considered absolutely inaccessible, and were very slightly built and very feebly guarded. There was an ancient legend that, a long time before, when a certain Males was king of Lydia, one of his wives had a son in the form of a lion, whom they called Leon, and an oracle declared that if this Leon were carried around the walls of the city, it would be rendered impregnable, and should never be taken. They carried Leon, therefore, around, so far as the regular walls extended. When they came to this precipice of rocks, they returned, considering that this part of the city was impregnable without any such ceremony. A spur or eminence from the mountain of Tmolus, which was behind the city, projected into it at this point, and there was a strong citadel built upon its summit.

Cyrus continued the siege fourteen days, and then he determined that he must, in some way or other, find the means of carrying it by assault, and to do this he must find some place to scale the walls. He accordingly sent a party of horsemen around to explore every part, offering them a large reward if they would find any place where an entrance could be effected. The horsemen made the circuit, and reported that their search had been in vain. At length a certain soldier, named Hyraeades, after studying for some time the precipices on the side which had been deemed inaccessible, saw a sentinel, who was stationed on the walls above, leave his post and come climbing down the rocks for some distance to get his helmet, which had accidentally dropped down. Hyraeades watched him both as he descended and as he returned. He reflected on this discovery, communicated it to others, and the practicability of scaling the rock and the walls at that point was discussed. In the end, the attempt was made and was successful. Hyraeades went up first, followed by a few daring spirits who were ambitious of the glory of the exploit. They were not at first observed from above. The way being thus shown, great numbers followed on, and so large a force succeeded in thus gaining an entrance that the city was taken.

In the dreadful confusion and din of the storming of the city, Crœsus himself had a very narrow escape from death. He was saved by the miraculous speaking of his deaf and dumb son—at least such is the story. Cyrus had given positive orders to his soldiers, both before the great battle on the plain and during the siege, that, though they might slay whomever else they pleased, they must not harm Crœsus, but must take him alive. During the time of the storming of the town, when the streets were filled with infuriated soldiers, those on the one side wild with the excitement of triumph, and those on the other maddened with rage and despair, a party, rushing along, overtook Crœsus and his helpless son, whom the unhappy father, it seems, was making a desperate effort to save. The Persian soldiers were about to transfix Crœsus with their spears, when the son, who had never spoken before, called out, "It is Crœsus; do not kill him." The soldiers were arrested by the words, and saved the monarch's life. They made him prisoner, and bore him away to Cyrus.

Crœsus had sent, a long time before, to inquire of the Delphic oracle by what means the power of speech could be restored to his son. The answer was, that that was a boon which he had better not ask; for the day on which he should hear his son speak for the first time, would be the darkest and most unhappy day of his life.

Cyrus had not ordered his soldiers to spare the life of Crœsus in battle from any sentiment of humanity toward him, but because he wished to have his case reserved for his own decision. When Crœsus was brought to him a captive, he ordered him to be put in chains, and carefully guarded. As soon as some degree of order was restored in the city, a large funeral pile was erected, by his directions, in a public square, and Crœsus was brought to the spot. Fourteen Lydian young men, the sons, probably, of the most prominent men in the state, were with him. The pile was large enough for them all, and they were placed upon it. They were all laid upon the wood. Crœsus raised himself and looked around, surveying with extreme consternation and horror the preparations which were making for lighting the pile. His heart sank within him as he thought of the dreadful fate that was before him. The spectators stood by in solemn silence, awaiting the end. Crœsus broke this awful pause by crying out, in a tone of anguish and despair,

"Oh Solon! Solon! Solon!"

The officers who had charge of the execution asked him what he meant. Cyrus, too, who was himself personally superintending the scene, asked for an explanation. Crœsus was, for a time, too much agitated and distracted to reply. There were difficulties in respect to language, too, which embarrassed the conversation, as the two kings could speak to each other only through an interpreter. At length Crœsus gave an account of his interview with Solon, and of the sentiment which the philosopher had expressed, that no one could decide whether a man was truly prosperous and happy till it was determined how his life was to end. Cyrus was greatly interested in this narrative; but, in the mean time, the interpreting of the conversation had been slow, a considerable period had elapsed, and the officers had lighted the fire. The pile had been made extremely combustible, and the fire was rapidly making its way through the whole mass. Cyrus eagerly ordered it to be extinguished. The efforts which the soldiers made for this purpose seemed, at first, likely to be fruitless; but they were aided very soon by a sudden shower of rain, which, coming down from the mountains, began, just at this time, to fall; and thus the flames were extinguished, and Crœsus and the captives saved.

Cyrus immediately, with a fickleness very common among great monarchs in the treatment of both enemies and favorites, began to consider Crœsus as his friend. He ordered him to be unbound, brought him near his person, and treated him with great consideration and honor.

Crœsus remained after this for a long time with Cyrus, and accompanied him in his subsequent campaigns. He was very much incensed at the oracle at Delphi for having deceived him by its false responses and predictions, and thus led him into the terrible snare into which he had fallen. He procured the fetters with which he had been chained when placed upon the pile, and sent them to Delphi with orders that they should be thrown down upon the threshold of the temple—the visible symbol of his captivity and ruin—as a reproach to the oracle for having deluded him and caused his destruction. In doing this, the messengers were to ask the oracle whether imposition like that which had been practiced on Crœsus was the kind of gratitude it evinced to one who had enriched it by such a profusion of offerings and gifts.

To this the priests of the oracle said in reply, that the destruction of the Lydian dynasty had long been decreed by the Fates, in retribution for the guilt of Gyges, the founder of the line. He had murdered his master, and usurped the throne, without any title to it whatever. The judgments of Heaven had been denounced upon Gyges for this crime, to fall on himself or on some of his descendants. The Pythian Apollo at Delphi had done all in his power to postpone the falling of the blow until after the death of Crœsus, on account of the munificent benefactions which he had made to the oracle; but he had been unable to effect it: the decrees of Fate were inexorable. All that the oracle could do was to postpone—as it had done, it said,

for three years—the execution of the sentence, and to give Crœsus warning of the evil that was impending. This had been done by announcing to him that his crossing the Halys would cause the destruction of a mighty empire, meaning that of Lydia, and also by informing him that when he should find a mule upon the throne of Media he must expect to lose his own. Cyrus, who was descended, on the father's side, from the Persian stock, and on the mother's from that of Media, was the hybrid sovereign represented by the mule.

When this answer was reported to Crœsus, it is said that he was satisfied with the explanations, and admitted that the oracle was right, and that he himself had been unreasonable and wrong. However this may be, it is certain that, among mankind at large, since Crœsus's day, there has been a great disposition to overlook whatever of criminality there may have been in the falsehood and imposture of the oracle, through admiration of the adroitness and dexterity which its ministers evinced in saving themselves from exposure.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CONQUEST OF BABYLON

In his advance toward the dominions of Crœsus in Asia Minor, Cyrus had passed to the northward of the great and celebrated city of Babylon. Babylon was on the Euphrates, toward the southern part of Asia. It was the capital of a large and very fertile region, which extended on both sides of the Euphrates toward the Persian Gulf. The limits of the country, however, which was subject to Babylon, varied very much at different times, as they were extended or contracted by revolutions and wars.

The River Euphrates was the great source of fertility for the whole region through which it flowed. The country watered by this river was very densely populated, and the inhabitants were industrious and peaceable, cultivating their land, and living quietly and happily on its fruits. The surface was intersected with canals, which the people had made for conveying the water of the river over the land for the purpose of irrigating it. Some of these canals were navigable. There was one great trunk which passed from the Euphrates to the Tigris, supplying many minor canals by the way, that was navigable for vessels of considerable burden.

The traffic of the country was, however, mainly conducted by means of boats of moderate size, the construction of which seemed to Herodotus very curious and remarkable. The city was enormously large, and required immense supplies of food, which were brought down in these boats from the agricultural country above. The boats were made in the following manner: first a frame was built, of the shape of the intended boat, broad and shallow, and with the stem and stern of the same form. This frame was made of willows, like a basket, and, when finished, was covered with a sheathing of skins. A layer of reeds was then spread over the

bottom of the boat to protect the frame, and to distribute evenly the pressure of the cargo. The boat, thus finished, was laden with the produce of the country, and was then floated down the river to Babylon. In this navigation, the boatmen were careful to protect the leather sheathing from injury by avoiding all contact with rocks, or even with the gravel of the shores. They kept their craft in the middle of the stream by means of two oars, or, rather, an oar and a paddle, which were worked, the first at the bows, and the second at the stern. The advance of the boat was in some measure accelerated by these boatmen, though their main function was to steer their vessel by keeping it out of eddies tine away from projecting points of land, and directing its course to those parts of the stream where the current was swiftest, and where it would consequently be borne forward most rapidly to its destination.

These boats were generally of very considerable size, and they carried, in addition to their cargo and crew, one or more beasts of burden—generally asses or mules. These animals were allowed the pleasure, if any pleasure it was to them, of sailing thus idly down the stream, for the sake of having them at hand at the end of the voyage, to carry back again, up the country, the skins, which constituted the most valuable portion of the craft they sailed in. It was found that these skins, if carefully preserved, could be easily transported up the river, and would answer the purpose of a second voyage. Accordingly, when the boats arrived at Babylon, the cargo was sold, the boats were broken up, the skins were folded into packs, and in this form the mules carried them up the river again, the boatmen driving the mules as they walked by their side.

Babylon was a city of immense extent and magnitude. In fact, the accounts given of the space which it covered have often been considered incredible. These accounts make the space which was included within the walls four or five times as large as London. A great deal of this space was, however, occupied by parks and gardens connected with the royal palaces, and by open squares. Then, besides, the houses occupied by the common people in the ancient cities were of fewer stories in height, and consequently more extended on the ground, than those built in modern times. In fact, it is probable that, in many instances, they were mere ranges of huts and hovels, as is the case, indeed, to a considerable extent, in Oriental cities, at the present day, so that it is not at all impossible that even so large an area as four or five times the size of London may have been included within the fortifications of the city.

In respect to the walls of the city, very extraordinary and apparently contradictory accounts are given by the various ancient authors who described them. Some make them seventy-five, and others two or three hundred feet high. There have been many discussions in respect to the comparative credibility of these several statements, and some ingenious attempts have been made to reconcile them. It is not, however, at all surprising that there should be such a diversity in the dimensions given, for the walling of an ancient city was seldom of the same height in all places. The structure necessarily varied according to the nature of the ground, being high wherever the ground without was such as to give the enemy an advantage in an attack, and lower in other situations, where the conformation of the surface was such as to afford, of itself, a partial protection. It is not, perhaps, impossible that, at some particular points—as, for example, across glens and ravines, or along steep declivities—the walls of Babylon may have been raised even to the very extraordinary height which Herodotus ascribes to them.

The walls were made of bricks, and the bricks were formed of clay and earth, which was dug from a trench made outside of the lines. This trench served the purpose of a ditch, to strengthen the fortification when the wall was completed. The water from the river, and from streams flowing toward the river, was admitted to these ditches on every side, and kept them always full.

The sides of these ditches were lined with bricks too, which were made, like those of the walls, from the earth obtained from the excavations. They used for all this masonry a cement made from a species of bitumen, which was found in great quantities floating down one of the rivers which flowed into the Euphrates, in the neighborhood of Babylon.

The River Euphrates itself flowed through the city. There was a breast-work or low wall along the banks of it on either side, with openings at the terminations of the streets leading to the water, and flights of steps to go down. These openings were secured by gates of brass, which, when closed, would prevent an enemy from gaining access to the city from the river. The great streets, which terminated thus at the river on one side, extended to the walls of the city on the other, and they were crossed by other streets at right angles to them. In the outer walls of the city, at the extremities of all these streets, were massive gates of brass, with hinges and frames of the same metal. There were a hundred of these gates in all. They were guarded by watch-towers on the walls above. The watch-towers were built on both the inner and outer faces of the wall, and the wall itself was so broad that there was room between these watch-towers for a chariot and four to drive and turn.

The river, of course, divided the city into two parts. The king's palace was in the center of one of these divisions, within a vast circular inclosure, which contained the palace buildings, together with the spacious courts, and parks, and gardens pertaining to them. In the center of the other division was a corresponding inclosure, which contained the great temple of Belus. Here there was a very lofty tower, divided into eight separate towers, one above another, with a winding staircase to ascend to the summit. In the upper story was a sort of chapel, with a couch, and a table, and other furniture for use in the sacred ceremonies, all of gold. Above this, on the highest platform of all, was a grand observatory, where the Babylonian astrologers made their celestial observations.

There was a bridge across the river, connecting one section of the city with the other, and it is said that there was a subterranean passage under the river also, which was used as a private communication between two public edifices—palaces or citadels—which were situated near the extremities of the bridge. All these constructions were of the most grand and imposing character. In addition to the architectural magnificence of the buildings, the gates and walls were embellished with a great variety of sculptures: images of animals, of every form and in every attitude; and men, single and in groups, models of great sovereigns, and representations of hunting scenes, battle scenes, and great events in the Babylonian history.

The most remarkable, however, of all the wonders of Babylon—though perhaps not built till after Cyrus's time—were what were called the hanging gardens. Although called the hanging gardens, they were not suspended in any manner, as the name might denote, but were supported upon arches and walls. The arches and walls sustained a succession of terraces, rising one above another, with broad flights of steps for ascending to them, and on these terraces the gardens were made. The upper terrace, or platform, was several hundred feet from the ground; so high, that it was necessary to build arches upon arches within, in order to attain the requisite elevation. The lateral thrust of these arches was sustained by a wall twenty-five feet in thickness, which surrounded the garden on all sides, and rose as high as the lowermost tier of arches, upon which would, of course, be concentrated the pressure and weight of all the pile. The whole structure thus formed a sort of artificial hill, square in form, and rising, in a succession of terraces, to a broad and level area upon the top. The extent of this grand square upon the summit was four hundred feet upon each side.

The surface which served as the foundation for the gardens that adorned these successive terraces and the area above was formed in the following manner: Over the masonry

of the arches there was laid a pavement of broad flat stones, sixteen feet long and four feet wide. Over these there was placed a stratum of reeds, laid in bitumen, and above them another flooring of bricks, cemented closely together, so as to be impervious to water. To make the security complete in this respect, the upper surface of this brick flooring was covered with sheets of lead, overlapping each other in such a manner as to convey all the water which might percolate through the mold away to the sides of the garden. The earth and mold were placed upon this surface, thus prepared, and the stratum was so deep as to allow large trees to take root and grow in it. There was an engine constructed in the middle of the upper terrace, by which water could be drawn up from the river, and distributed over every part of the vast pile.

The gardens, thus completed, were filled to profusion with every species of tree, and plant, and vine, which could produce fruit or flowers to enrich or adorn such a scene. Every country in communication with Babylon was made to contribute something to increase the endless variety of floral beauty which was here literally enthroned. Gardeners of great experience and skill were constantly employed in cultivating the parterres, pruning the fruit-trees and the vines, preserving the walks, and introducing new varieties of vegetation. In a word, the hanging gardens of Babylon became one of the wonders of the world.

The country in the neighborhood of Babylon, extending from the river on either hand was in general level and low, and subject to inundations. One of the sovereigns of the country, a queen named Nitocris, had formed the grand design of constructing an immense lake, to take off the superfluous water in case of a flood, and thus prevent an overflow. She also opened a great number of lateral and winding channels for the river, wherever the natural disposition of the surface afforded facilities for doing so, and the earth which was taken out in the course of these excavations was employed in raising the banks by artificial terraces, such as are made to confine the Mississippi at New Orleans, and are there called *levees*. The object of Nitocris in these measures was two-fold. She wished, in the first place, to open all practicable channels for the flow of the water, and then to confine the current within the channels thus made. She also wished to make the navigation of the stream as intricate and complicated as possible, so that, while the natives of the country might easily find their way, in boats, to the capital, a foreign enemy, if he should make the attempt, might be confused and lost. These were the rivers of Babylon on the banks of which the captive Jews sat down and wept when they remembered Zion.

This queen Nitocris seems to have been quite distinguished for her engineering and architectural plans. It was she that built the bridge across the Euphrates, within the city; and as there was a feeling of jealousy and ill will, as usual in such a case, between the two divisions of the town which the river formed, she caused a bridge to be constructed with a movable platform or draw, by means of which the communication might be cut off at pleasure. This draw was generally up at night and down by day.

Herodotus relates a curious anecdote of this queen, which, if true, evinces in another way the peculiar originality of mind and the ingenuity which characterized all her operations. She caused her tomb to be built, before her death, over one of the principal gates of the city. Upon the façade of this monument was a very conspicuous inscription to this effect: "If any one of the sovereigns, my successors, shall be in extreme want of money, let him open my tomb and take what he may think proper; but let him not resort to this resource unless the urgency is extreme."

The tomb remained for some time after the queen's death quite undisturbed. In fact, the people of the city avoided this gate altogether, on account of the dead body deposited above it, and the spot became well-nigh deserted. At length, in process of time, a subsequent sover- eign, being in want of

money, ventured to open the tomb. He found, however, no money within. The gloomy vault contained nothing but the dead body of the queen, and a label with this inscription: "If your avarice were not as insatiable as it is base, you would not have intruded on the repose of the dead."

It was not surprising that Cyrus, having been so successful in his enterprises thus far, should now begin to turn his thoughts toward this great Babylonian empire, and to feel a desire to bring it under his sway. The first thing, however, was to confirm and secure his Lydian conquests. He spent some time, therefore, in organizing and arranging, at Sardis, the affairs of the new government which he was to substitute for that of Crœsus there. He designated certain portions of his army to be left for garrisons in the conquered cities. He appointed Persian officers, of course, to command these forces; but, as he wished to conciliate the Lydians, he appointed many of the municipal and civil officers of the country from among them. There would appear to be no danger in doing this, as, by giving the command of the army to Persians, he retained all the real power directly in his own hands.

One of these civil officers, the most important, in fact, of all, was the grand treasurer. To him Cyrus committed the charge of the stores of gold and silver which came into his possession at Sardis, and of the revenues which were afterward to accrue. Cyrus appointed a Lydian named Pactyas to this trust, hoping by such measures to conciliate the people of the country, and to make them more ready to submit to his sway. Things being thus arranged, Cyrus, taking Crœsus with him, set out with the main army to return toward the East.

As soon as he had left Lydia, Pactyas excited the Lydians to revolt. The name of the commander-in-chief of the military forces which Cyrus had left was Tabalus. Pactyas abandoned the city and retired toward the coast, where he contrived to raise a large army, formed partly of Lydians and partly of bodies of foreign troops, which he was enabled to hire by means of the treasures which Cyrus had put under his charge. He then advanced to Sardis, took possession of the town, and shut up Tabalus, with his Persian troops, in the citadel.

When the tidings of these events came to Cyrus, he was very much incensed, and determined to destroy the city. Crœsus, however, interceded very earnestly in its behalf. He recommended that Cyrus, instead of burning Sardis, should send a sufficient force to disarm the population, and that he should then enact such laws and make such arrangements as should turn the minds of the people to habits of luxury and pleasure. "By doing this," said Crœsus, "the people will, in a short time, become so enervated and so effeminate that you will have nothing to fear from them."

Cyrus decided on adopting this plan. He dispatched a Median named Mazares, an officer of his army, at the head of a strong force, with orders to go back to Sardis, to deliver Tabalus from his danger, to seize and put to death all the leaders in the Lydian rebellion excepting Pactyas. Pactyas was to be saved alive, and sent a prisoner to Cyrus in Persia.

Pactyas did not wait for the arrival of Mazares. As soon as he heard of his approach, he abandoned the ground, and fled northwardly to the city of Cyme, and sought refuge there. When Mazares had reached Sardis and re-established the government of Cyrus there, he sent messengers to Cyme, demanding the surrender of the fugitive.

The people of Cyme were uncertain whether they ought to comply. They said that they must first consult an oracle. There was a very ancient and celebrated oracle near Miletus. They sent messengers to this oracle, demanding to know whether it were according to the will of the gods or not that the fugitive should be surrendered. The answer brought back was, that they might surrender him.

They were accordingly making arrangements for doing this, when one of the citizens, a very prominent and influential

man, named Aristodicus, expressed himself not satisfied with the reply. He did not think it possible, he said, that the oracle could really counsel them to deliver up a helpless fugitive to his enemies. The messengers must have misunderstood or misreported the answer which they had received. He finally persuaded his countrymen to send a second embassy: he himself was placed at the head of it. On their arrival, Aristodicus addressed the oracle as follows:

"To avoid a cruel death from the Persians, Pactyas, a Lydian, fled to us for refuge. The Persians demanded that we should surrender him. Much as we are afraid of their power, we are still more afraid to deliver up a helpless suppliant for protection without clear and decided directions from you."

The embassy received to this demand the same reply as before.

Still Aristodicus was not satisfied; and, as if by way of bringing home to the oracle somewhat more forcibly a sense of the true character of such an action as it seemed to recommend, he began to make a circuit in the grove which was around the temple in which the oracle resided, and to rob and destroy the nests which the birds had built there, allured, apparently, by the sacred repose and quietude of the scene. This had the desired effect. A solemn voice was heard from the interior of the temple, saying, in a warning tone,

"Impious man! how dost thou dare to molest those who have placed themselves under my protection?"

To this Aristodicus replied by asking the oracle how it was that it watched over and guarded those who sought its own protection, while it directed the people of Cyme to abandon and betray suppliants for theirs. To this the oracle answered,

"I direct them to do it, in order that such impious men may the sooner bring down upon their heads the judgments of heaven for having dared to entertain even the thought of delivering up a helpless fugitive."

When this answer was reported to the people of Cyme, they did not dare to give Pactyas up, nor, on the other hand, did they dare to incur the enmity of the Persians by retaining and protecting him. They accordingly sent him secretly away. The emissaries of Mazares, however, followed him. They kept constantly on his track, demanding him successively of every city where the hapless fugitive sought refuge, until, at length, partly by threats and partly by a reward, they induced a certain city to surrender him. Mazares sent him, a prisoner, to Cyrus. Soon after this Mazares himself died, and Harpagus was appointed governor of Lydia in his stead.

In the mean time, Cyrus went on with his conquests in the heart of Asia, and at length, in the course of a few years, he had completed his arrangements and preparations for the attack on Babylon. He advanced at the head of a large force to the vicinity of the city. The King of Babylon, whose name was Belshazzar, withdrew within the walls, shut the gates, and felt perfectly secure. A simple wall was in those days a very effectual protection against any armed force whatever, if it was only high enough not to be scaled, and thick enough to resist the blows of a battering ram. The artillery of modern times would have speedily made a fatal breach in such structures; but there was nothing but the simple force of man, applied through brazen-headed beams of wood, in those days, and Belshazzar knew well that his walls would bid all such modes of demolition a complete defiance. He stationed his soldiers, therefore, on the walls, and his sentinels in the watch towers, while he himself, and all the nobles of his court, feeling perfectly secure in their impregnable condition, and being abundantly supplied with all the means that the whole empire could furnish, both for sustenance and enjoyment, gave themselves up, in their spacious palaces and gardens, to gayety, festivity, and pleasure.

Cyrus advanced to the city. He stationed one large detachment of his troops at the opening in the main walls where the river entered into the city, and another one below,

where it issued from it. These, detachments were ordered to march into the city by the bed of the river, as soon as they should observe the water subsiding. He then employed a vast force of laborers to open new channels, and to widen and deepen those which had existed before, for the purpose of drawing off the waters from their usual bed. When these passages were thus prepared, the water was let into them one night, at a time previously designated, and it soon ceased to flow through the city. The detachments of soldiers marched in over the bed of the stream, carrying with them vast numbers of ladders. With these they easily scaled the low walls which lined the banks of the river, and Belshazzar was thunderstruck with the announcement made to him in the midst of one of his feasts that the Persians were in complete and full possession of the city.

CHAPTER IX

THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS

The period of the invasion of Babylonia by Cyrus, and the taking of the city, was during the time while the Jews were in captivity there. Cyrus was their deliverer. It results from this circumstance that the name of Cyrus is connected with sacred history more than that of any other great conqueror of ancient times.

It was a common custom in the early ages of the world for powerful sovereigns to take the people of a conquered country captive, and make them slaves. They employed them, to some extent, as personal household servants, but more generally as agricultural laborers, to till the lands.

An account of the captivity of the Jews in Babylon is given briefly in the closing chapters of the second book of Chronicles, though many of the attendant circumstances are more fully detailed in the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah was a prophet who lived in the time of the captivity. Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, made repeated incursions into the land of Judea, sometimes carrying away the reigning monarch, sometimes deposing him and appointing another sovereign in his stead, sometimes assessing a tax or tribute upon the land, and sometimes plundering the city, and carrying away all the gold and silver that he could find. Thus the kings and the people were kept in a continual state of anxiety and terror for many years, exposed incessantly to the inroads of this nation of robbers and plunderers, that had, so unfortunately for them, found their way across their frontiers. King Zedekiah was the last of this oppressed and unhappy line of Jewish kings.

The prophet Jeremiah was accustomed to denounce the sins of the Jewish nation, by which these terrible calamities

had been brought upon them, with great courage, and with an eloquence solemn and sublime. He declared that the miseries which the people suffered were the special judgments of Heaven, and he proclaimed repeatedly and openly, and in the most public places of the city, still heavier calamities which he said were impending. The people were troubled and distressed at these prophetic warnings, and some of them were deeply incensed against Jeremiah for uttering them. Finally, on one occasion, he took his stand in one of the public courts of the Temple, and, addressing the concourse of priests and people that were there, he declared that, unless the nation repented of their sins and turned to God, the whole city should be overwhelmed. Even the Temple itself, the sacred house of God, should be destroyed, and the very site abandoned.

The priests and the people who heard this denunciation were greatly exasperated. They seized Jeremiah, and brought him before a great judicial assembly for trial. The judges asked him why he uttered such predictions, declaring that by doing so he acted like an enemy to his country and a traitor, and that he deserved to die. The excitement was very great against him, and the populace could hardly be restrained from open violence. In the midst of this scene Jeremiah was calm and unmoved, and replied to their accusations as follows:

"Every thing which I have said against this city and this house, I have said by the direction of the Lord Jehovah. Instead of resenting it, and being angry with me for delivering my message, it becomes you to look at your sins, and repent of them, and forsake them. It may be that by so doing God will have mercy upon you, and will avert the calamities which otherwise will most certainly come. As for myself, here I am in your hands. You can deal with me just as you think best. You can kill me if you will, but you may be assured that if you do so, you will bring the guilt and the consequences of shedding innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city. I have said nothing and foretold nothing but by commandment of the Lord."

The speech produced, as might have been expected, a great division among the hearers. Some were more angry than ever, and were eager to put the prophet to death. Others defended him, and insisted that he should not die. The latter, for the time, prevailed. Jeremiah was set at liberty, and continued his earnest expostulations with the people on account of their sins, and his terrible annunciations of the impending ruin of the city just as before.

These unwelcome truths being so painful for the people to hear, other prophets soon began to appear to utter contrary predictions, for the sake, doubtless, of the popularity which they should themselves acquire by their promises of returning peace and prosperity. The name of one of these false prophets was Hananiah. On one occasion, Jeremiah, in order to present and enforce what he had to say more effectually on the minds of the people by means of a visible symbol, made a small wooden yoke, by divine direction, and placed it upon his neck, as a token of the bondage which his predictions were threatening. Hananiah took this yoke from his neck and broke it, saying that, as he had thus broken Jeremiah's wooden yoke, so God would break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar from all nations within two years; and then, even those of the Jews who had already been taken captive to Babylon should return again in peace. Jeremiah replied that Hananiah's predictions were false, and that, though the wooden yoke was broken, God would make for Nebuchadnezzar a yoke of iron, with which he should bend the Jewish nation in a bondage more cruel than ever. Still, Jeremiah himself predicted that after seventy years from the time when the last great captivity should come, the Jews should all be restored again to their native land.

He expressed this certain restoration of the Jews, on one occasion, by a sort of symbol, by means of which he made a much stronger impression on the minds of the people than could have been done by simple words. There was a piece of land in the country of Benjamin, one of the provinces of Judea, which belonged to the family of Jeremiah, and it was held in

such a way that, by paying a certain sum of money, Jeremiah himself might possess it, the right of redemption being in him. Jeremiah was in prison at this time. His uncle's son came into the court of the prison, and proposed to him to purchase the land. Jeremiah did so in the most public and formal manner. The title deeds were drawn up and subscribed, witnesses were summoned, the money weighed and paid over, the whole transaction being regularly completed according to the forms and usages then common for the conveyance of landed property. When all was finished, Jeremiah gave the papers into the hands of his scribe, directing him to put them safely away and preserve them with care, for after a certain period the country of Judea would again be restored to the peaceable possession of the Jews, and such titles to land would possess once more their full and original value.

On one occasion, when Jeremiah's personal liberty was restricted so that he could not utter publicly, himself, his prophetical warnings, he employed Baruch, his scribe, to write them from his dictation, with a view of reading them to the people from some public and frequented part of the city. The prophecy thus dictated was inscribed upon a roll of parchment. Baruch waited, when he had completed the writing, until a favorable opportunity occurred for reading it, which was on the occasion of a great festival that was held at Jerusalem, and which brought the inhabitants of the land together from all parts of Judea. On the day of the festival, Baruch took the roll in his hand, and stationed himself at a very public place, at the entrance of one of the great courts of the Temple; there, calling upon the people to hear him, he began to read. A great concourse gathered around him, and all listened to him with profound attention. One of the by-standers, however, went down immediately into the city, to the king's palace, and reported to the king's council, who were then assembled there, that a great concourse was convened in one of the courts of the Temple, and that Baruch was there reading to them a discourse or prophecy which had been written by Jeremiah. The members of the council sent a summons to Baruch to come immediately to them, and to bring his writing with him.

When Baruch arrived, they directed him to read what he had written. Baruch accordingly read it. They asked him when and how that discourse was written. Baruch replied that he had written it, word by word, from the dictation of Jeremiah. The officers informed him that they should be obliged to report the circumstances to the king, and they counseled Baruch to go to Jeremiah and recommend to him to conceal himself, lest the king, in his anger, should do him some sudden and violent injury.

The officers then, leaving the roll in one of their own apartments, went to the king, and reported the facts to him. He sent one of his attendants, named Jehudi, to bring the roll. When it came, the king directed Jehudi to read it. Jehudi did so, standing by a fire which had been made in the apartment, for it was bitter cold.

After Jehudi had read a few pages from the roll, finding that it contained a repetition of the same denunciations and warnings by which the king had often been displeased before, he took a knife and began to cut the parchment into pieces, and to throw it on the fire. Some other persons who were standing by interfered, and earnestly begged the king not to allow the roll to be burned. But the king did not interfere. He permitted Jehudi to destroy the parchment altogether, and then sent officers to take Jeremiah and Baruch, and bring them to him, but they were nowhere to be found.

The prophet, on one occasion, was reduced to extreme distress by the persecutions which his faithfulness, and the incessant urgency of his warnings and expostulations had brought upon him. It was at a time when the Chaldean armies had been driven away from Jerusalem for a short period by the Egyptians, as one vulture drives away another from its prey. Jeremiah determined to avail himself of the opportunity to go to the province of Benjamin, to visit his friends and family there. He was intercepted, however, at one of the gates, on his

way, and accused of a design to make his escape from the city, and go over to the Chaldeans. The prophet earnestly denied this charge. They paid no regard to his declarations, but sent him back to Jerusalem, to the officers of the king's government, who confined him in a house which they used as a prison.

After he had remained in this place of confinement for several days, the king sent and took him from it, and brought him to the palace. The king inquired whether he had any prophecy to utter from the Lord. Jeremiah replied that the word of the Lord was, that the Chaldeans should certainly return again, and that Zedekiah himself should fall into their hands, and be carried captive to Babylon. While he thus persisted so strenuously in the declarations which he had made so often before, he demanded of the king that he should not be sent back again to the house of imprisonment from which he had been rescued. The king said he would not send him back, and he accordingly directed, instead, that he should be taken to the court of the public prison, where his confinement would be less rigorous, and there he was to be supplied daily with food, so long, as the king expressed it, as there should be any food remaining in the city.

But Jeremiah's enemies were not at rest. They came again, after a time, to the king, and represented to him that the prophet, by his gloomy and terrible predictions, discouraged and depressed the hearts of the people, and weakened their hands; that he ought, accordingly, to be regarded as a public enemy; and they begged the king to proceed decidedly against him. The king replied that he would give him into their hands, and they might do with him what they pleased.

There was a dungeon in the prison, the only access to which was from above. Prisoners were let down into it with ropes, and left there to die of hunger. The bottom of it was wet and miry, and the prophet, when let down into its gloomy depths, sank into the deep mire. Here he would soon have died of hunger and misery; but the king, feeling some misgivings in regard to what he had done, lest it might really be a true prophet of God that he had thus delivered into the hands of his enemies, inquired what the people had done with their prisoner; and when he learned that he had been thus, as it were, buried alive, he immediately sent officers with orders to take him out of the dungeon. The officers went to the dungeon. They opened the mouth of it. They had brought ropes with them, to be used for drawing the unhappy prisoner up, and cloths, also, which he was to fold together and place under his arms, where the ropes were to pass. These ropes and cloths they let down into the dungeon, and called upon Jeremiah to place them properly around his body. Thus they drew him safely up out of the dismal den.

RAISING JEREMIAH FROM THE DUNGEON.

These cruel persecutions of the faithful prophet were all unavailing either to silence his voice or to avert the calamities which his warnings portended. At the appointed time, the judgments which had been so long predicted came in all their terrible reality. The Babylonians invaded the land in great force, and encamped about the city. The siege continued for two years. At the end of that time the famine became insupportable. Zedekiah, the king, determined to make a

sortie, with as strong a force as he could command, secretly, at night, in hopes to escape with his own life, and intending to leave the city to its fate. He succeeded in passing out through the city gates with his band of followers, and in actually passing the Babylonian lines; but he had not gone far before his escape was discovered. He was pursued and taken. The city was then stormed, and, as usual in such cases, it was given up to plunder and destruction. Vast numbers of the inhabitants were killed; many more were taken captive; the principal buildings, both public and private, were burned; the walls were broken down, and all the public treasures of the Jews, the gold and silver vessels of the Temple, and a vast quantity of private plunder, were carried away to Babylon by the conquerors. All this was seventy years before the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus.

Of course, during the time of this captivity a very considerable portion of the inhabitants of Judea remained in their native land. The deportation of a whole people to a foreign land is impossible. A vast number, however, of the inhabitants of the country were carried away, and they remained, for two generations, in a miserable bondage. Some of them were employed as agricultural laborers in the rural districts of Babylon; others remained in the city, and were engaged in servile labors there. The prophet Daniel lived in the palaces of the king. He was summoned, as the reader will recollect, to Belshazzar's feast, on the night when Cyrus forced his way into the city, to interpret the mysterious writing on the wall, by which the fall of the Babylonian monarchy was announced in so terrible a manner.

One year after Cyrus had conquered Babylon, he issued an edict authorizing the Jews to return to Jerusalem, and to rebuild the city and the Temple. This event had been long before predicted by the prophets, as the result which God had determined upon for purposes of his own. We should not naturally have expected that such a conqueror as Cyrus would feel any real and honest interest in promoting the designs of God; but still, in the proclamation which he issued authorizing the Jews to return, he acknowledged the supreme divinity of Jehovah, and says that he was charged by him with the work of rebuilding his Temple, and restoring his worship at its ancient seat on Mount Zion. It has, however, been supposed by some scholars, who have examined attentively all the circumstances connected with these transactions, that so far as Cyrus was influenced by political considerations in ordering the return of the Jews, his design was to re-establish that nation as a barrier between his dominions and those of the Egyptians. The Egyptians and the Chaldeans had long been deadly enemies, and now that Cyrus had become master of the Chaldean realms, he would, of course, in assuming their territories and their power, be obliged to defend himself against their foes.

Whatever may have been the motives of Cyrus, he decided to allow the Hebrew captives to return, and he issued a proclamation to that effect. As seventy years had elapsed since the captivity commenced, about two generations had passed away, and there could have been very few then living who had ever seen the land of their fathers. The Jews were, however, all eager to return. They collected in a vast assembly, with all the treasures which they were allowed to take, and the stores of provisions and baggage, and with horses, and mules, and other beasts of burden to transport them. When assembled for the march, it was found that the number, of which a very exact census was taken, was forty-nine thousand six hundred and ninety-seven.

They had also with them seven or eight hundred horses, about two hundred and fifty mules, and about five hundred camels. The chief part, however, of their baggage and stores was borne by asses, of which there were nearly seven thousand in the train. The march of this peaceful multitude of families—men, women, and children together—burdened as they went, not with arms and ammunition for conquest and destruction, but with tools and implements for honest industry,

and stores of provisions and utensils for the peaceful purposes of social life, as it was, in its bearings and results, one of the grandest events of history, so it must have presented, in its progress, one of the most extraordinary spectacles that the world has ever seen.

The grand caravan pursued its long and toilsome march from Babylon to Jerusalem without molestation. All arrived safely, and the people immediately commenced the work of repairing the walls of the city and rebuilding the Temple. When, at length, the foundations of the Temple were laid, a great celebration was held to commemorate the event. This celebration exhibited a remarkable scene of mingled rejoicing and mourning. The younger part of the population, who had never seen Jerusalem in its former grandeur, felt only exhilaration and joy at their re-establishment in the city of their fathers. The work of raising the edifice, whose foundations they had laid, was to them simply a new enterprise, and they looked forward to the work of carrying it on with pride and pleasure. The old men, however, who remembered the former Temple, were filled with mournful recollections of days of prosperity and peace in their childhood and of the magnificence of the former Temple, which they could now never hope to see realized again. It was customary in those days, to express sorrow and grief by exclamations and outcries, as gladness and joy are expressed audibly now. Accordingly, on this occasion, the cries of grief and of bitter regret at the thought of losses which could now never be retrieved, were mingled with the shouts of rejoicing and triumph raised by the ardent and young, who knew nothing of the past, but looked forward with hope and happiness to the future.

The Jews encountered various hindrances, and met with much opposition in their attempts to reconstruct their ancient city, and to re-establish the Mosaic ritual there. We must, however, now return to the history of Cyrus, referring the reader for a narrative of the circumstances connected with the rebuilding of Jerusalem to the very minute account given in the sacred books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

CHAPTER X

THE STORY OF PANTHEA

In the preceding chapters of this work, we have followed mainly the authority of Herodotus, except, indeed, in the account of the visit of Cyrus to his grandfather in his childhood, which is taken from Xenophon. We shall, in this chapter, relate the story of Panthea, which is also one of Xenophon's tales. We give it as a specimen of the romantic narratives in which Xenophon's history abounds, and on account of the many illustrations of ancient manners and customs which it contains, leaving it for each reader to decide for himself what weight he will attach to its claims to be regarded as veritable history. We relate the story here in our own language, but as to the facts, we follow faithfully the course of Xenophon's narration.

Panthea was a Susian captive. She was taken, together with a great many other captives and much plunder, after one of the great battles which Cyrus fought with the Assyrians. Her husband was an Assyrian general, though he himself was not captured at this time with his wife. The spoil which came into possession of the army on the occasion of the battle in which Panthea was taken was of great value. There were beautiful and costly suits of arms, rich tents made of splendid materials and highly ornamented, large sums of money, vessels of silver and gold, and slaves—some prized for their beauty, and others for certain accomplishments which were highly valued in those days. Cyrus appointed a sort of commission to divide this spoil. He pursued always a very generous policy on all these occasions, showing no desire to secure such treasures to himself, but distributing them with profuse liberality among his officers and soldiers.

The commissioners whom he appointed in this case divided the spoil among the various generals of the army, and among the different bodies of soldiery, with great impartiality. Among the prizes assigned to Cyrus were two singing women of great fame, and this Susian lady. Cyrus thanked the distributors for the share of booty which they had thus assigned to him, but said that if any of his friends wished for either of these captives, they could have them. An officer asked for one of the singers. Cyrus gave her to him immediately, saying, "I consider myself more obliged to you for asking her, than you are to me for giving her to you." As for the Susian lady, Cyrus had not yet seen her, but he called one of his most intimate and confidential friends to him, and requested him to take her under his charge.

The name of this officer was Araspes. He was a Mede, and he had been Cyrus's particular friend and playmate when he was a boy, visiting his grandfather in Media. The reader will perhaps recollect that he is mentioned toward the close of our account of that visit, as the special favorite to whom Cyrus presented his robe or mantle when he took leave of his friends in returning to his native land.

Araspes, when he received this charge, asked Cyrus whether he had himself seen the lady. Cyrus replied that he had not. Araspes then proceeded to give an account of her. The name of her husband was Abradates, and he was the king of Susa, as they termed him. The reason why he was not taken prisoner at the same time with his wife was, that when the battle was fought and the Assyrian camp captured, he was absent, having gone away on an embassage to another nation. This circumstance shows that Abradates, though called a king, could hardly have been a sovereign and independent prince, but rather a governor or viceroy—those words expressing to our minds more truly the station of such a sort of king as could be sent on an embassy.

Araspes went on to say that, at the time of their making the capture, he, with some others, went into Panthea's tent, where they found her and her attendant ladies sitting on the ground, with veils over their faces, patiently awaiting their

doom. Notwithstanding the concealment produced by the attitudes and dress of these ladies, there was something about the air and figure of Panthea which showed at once that she was the queen. The leader of Araspes's party asked them all to rise. They did so, and then the superiority of Panthea was still more apparent than before. There was an extraordinary grace and beauty in her attitude and in all her motions. She stood in a dejected posture, and her countenance was sad, though inexpressibly lovely. She endeavored to appear calm and composed, though the tears had evidently been falling from her eyes.

The soldiers pitied her in her distress, and the leader of the party attempted to console her, as Araspes said, by telling her that she had nothing to fear; that they were aware that her husband was a most worthy and excellent man; and although, by this capture, she was lost to him, she would have no cause to regret the event, for she would be reserved for a new husband not at all inferior to her former one either in person, in understanding, in rank, or in power.

These well-meant attempts at consolation did not appear to have the good effect desired. They only awakened Panthea's grief and suffering anew. The tears began to fall again faster than before. Her grief soon became more and more uncontrollable. She sobbed and cried aloud, and began to wring her hands and tear her mantle—the customary Oriental expression of inconsolable sorrow and despair. Araspes said that in these gesticulations her neck, and hands, and a part of her face appeared, and that she was the most beautiful woman that he had ever beheld. He wished Cyrus to see her.

Cyrus said, "No; he would not see her by any means." Araspes asked him why. He said that there would be danger that he should forget his duty to the army, and lose his interest in the great military enterprise in which he was engaged, if he should allow himself to become captivated by the charms of such a lady, as he very probably would be if he were now to visit her. Araspes said in reply that Cyrus might at least see her; as to becoming captivated with her, and devoting himself to her to such a degree as to neglect his other duties, he could certainly control himself in respect to that danger. Cyrus said that it was not certain that he could so control himself; and then there followed a long discussion between Cyrus and Araspes, in which Araspes maintained that every man had the command of his own heart and affections, and that, with proper determination and energy, he could direct the channels in which they should run, and confine them within such limits and bounds as he pleased. Cyrus, on the other hand, maintained that human passions were stronger than the human will; that no one could rely on the strength of his resolutions to control the impulses of the heart once strongly excited, and that a man's only safety was in controlling the circumstances which tended to excite them. This was specially true, he said, in respect to the passion of love. The experience of mankind, he said, had shown that no strength of moral principle, no firmness of purpose, no fixedness of resolution, no degree of suffering, no fear of shame, was sufficient to control, in the hearts of men, the impetuosity of the passion of love, when it was once fairly awakened. In a word, Araspes advocated, on the subject of love, a sort of new school philosophy, while that of Cyrus leaned very seriously toward the old.

In conclusion, Cyrus jocosely counseled Araspes to beware lest he should prove that love was stronger than the will by becoming himself enamored of the beautiful Susian queen. Araspes said that Cyrus need not fear; there was no danger. He must be a miserable wretch indeed, he said, who could not summon within him sufficient resolution and energy to control his own passions and desires. As for himself, he was sure that he was safe.

As usual with those who are self-confident and boastful, Araspes failed when the time of trial came. He took charge of the royal captive whom Cyrus committed to him with a very firm resolution to be faithful to his trust. He pitied the unhappy queen's misfortunes, and admired the heroic

patience and gentleness of spirit with which she bore them. The beauty of her countenance, and her thousand personal charms, which were all heightened by the expression of sadness and sorrow which they bore, touched his heart. It gave him pleasure to grant her every indulgence consistent with her condition of captivity, and to do every thing in his power to promote her welfare. She was very grateful for these favors, and the few brief words and looks of kindness with which she returned them repaid him for his efforts to please her a thousand-fold. He saw her, too, in her tent, in the presence of her maidens, at all times; and as she looked upon him as only her custodian and guard, and as, too, her mind was wholly occupied by the thoughts of her absent husband and her hopeless grief, her actions were entirely free and unconstrained in his presence. This made her only the more attractive; every attitude and movement seemed to possess, in Araspes's mind, an inexpressible charm. In a word, the result was what Cyrus had predicted. Araspes became wholly absorbed in the interest which was awakened in him by the charms of the beautiful captive. He made many resolutions, but they were of no avail. While he was away from her, he felt strong in his determination to yield to these feelings no more; but as soon as he came into her presence, all these resolutions melted wholly away, and he yielded his heart entirely to the control of emotions which, however vincible they might appear at a distance, were found, when the time of trial came, to possess a certain mysterious and magic power, which made it most delightful for the heart to yield before them in the contest, and utterly impossible to stand firm and resist. In a word, when seen at a distance, love appeared to him an enemy which he was ready to brave, and was sure that he could overcome; but when near, it transformed itself into the guise of a friend, and he accordingly threw down the arms with which he had intended to combat it, and gave himself up to it in a delirium of pleasure.

Things continued in this state for some time. The army advanced from post to post, and from encampment to encampment, taking the captives in their train. New cities were taken, new provinces overrun, and new plans for future conquests were formed. At last a case occurred in which Cyrus wished to send some one as a spy into a distant enemy's country. The circumstances were such that it was necessary that a person of considerable intelligence and rank should go, as Cyrus wished the messenger whom he should send to make his way to the court of the sovereign, and become personally acquainted with the leading men of the state, and to examine the general resources of the kingdom. It was a very different case from that of an ordinary spy, who was to go into a neighboring camp merely to report the numbers and disposition of an organized army. Cyrus was uncertain whom he should send on such an embassy.

In the mean time, Araspes had ventured to express to Panthea his love for her. She was offended. In the first place, she was faithful to her husband, and did not wish to receive such addresses from any person. Then, besides, she considered Araspes, having been placed in charge of her by Cyrus, his master, only for the purpose of keeping her safely, as guilty of a betrayal of his trust in having dared to cherish and express sentiments of affection for her himself. She, however, forbore to reproach him, or to complain of him to Cyrus. She simply repelled the advances that he made, supposing that, if she did this with firmness and decision, Araspes would feel rebuked and would say no more. It did not, however, produce this effect. Araspes continued to importune her with declarations of love, and at length she felt compelled to appeal to Cyrus.

Cyrus, instead of being incensed at what might have been considered a betrayal of trust on the part of Araspes, only laughed at the failure and fall in which all his favorite's promises and boastings had ended. He sent a messenger to Araspes to caution him in regard to his conduct, telling him that he ought to respect the feelings of such a woman as Panthea had proved herself to be. The messenger whom Cyrus sent was not content with delivering his message as Cyrus had

dictated it. He made it much more stern and severe. In fact, he reproached the lover, in a very harsh and bitter manner, for indulging such a passion. He told him that he had betrayed a sacred trust reposed in him, and acted in a manner at once impious and unjust. Araspes was overwhelmed with remorse and anguish, and with fear of the consequences which might ensue, as men are when the time arrives for being called to account for transgressions which, while they were committing them, gave them little concern.

When Cyrus heard how much Araspes had been distressed by the message of reproof which he had received and by his fears of punishment, he sent for him. Araspes came. Cyrus told him that he had no occasion to be alarmed. "I do not wonder," said he, "at the result which has happened. We all know how difficult it is to resist the influence which is exerted upon our minds by the charms of a beautiful woman, when we are thrown into circumstances of familiar intercourse with her. Whatever of wrong there has been ought to be considered as more my fault than yours. I was wrong in placing you in such circumstances of temptation, by giving you so beautiful a woman in charge."

Araspes was very much struck with the generosity of Cyrus, in thus endeavoring to soothe his anxiety and remorse, and taking upon himself the responsibility and the blame. He thanked Cyrus very earnestly for his kindness; but he said that, notwithstanding his sovereign's willingness to forgive him, he felt still oppressed with grief and concern, for the knowledge of his fault had been spread abroad in the army; his enemies were rejoicing over him, and were predicting his disgrace and ruin; and some persons had even advised him to make his escape, by absconding before any worse calamity should befall him.

"If this is so," said Cyrus, "it puts it in your power to render me a very essential service." Cyrus then explained to Araspes the necessity that he was under of finding some confidential agent to go on a secret mission into the enemy's country, and the importance that the messenger should go under such circumstances as not to be suspected of being Cyrus's friend in disguise. "You can pretend to abscond," said he; "it will be immediately said that you fled for fear of my displeasure. I will pretend to send in pursuit of you. The news of your evasion will spread rapidly, and will be parried, doubtless, into the enemy's country; so that, when you arrive there, they will be prepared to welcome you as a deserter from my cause, and a refugee."

This plan was agreed upon, and Araspes prepared for his departure. Cyrus gave him his instructions, and they concerted together the information—fictitious, of course—which he was to communicate to the enemy in respect to Cyrus's situation and designs. When all was ready for his departure, Cyrus asked him how it was that he was so willing to separate himself thus from the beautiful Panthea. He said in reply, that when he was absent from Panthea, he was capable of easily forming any determination, and of pursuing any line of conduct that his duty required, while yet, in her presence, he found his love for her, and the impetuous feelings to which it gave rise, wholly and absolutely uncontrollable.

As soon as Araspes was gone, Panthea, who supposed that he had really fled for fear of the indignation of the king, in consequence of his unfaithfulness to his trust, sent to Cyrus a message, expressing her regret at the unworthy conduct and the flight of Araspes, and saying that she could, and gladly would, if he consented, repair the loss which the desertion of Araspes occasioned by sending for her own husband. He was, she said, dissatisfied with the government under which he lived, having been cruelly and tyrannically treated by the prince. "If you will allow me to send for him," she added, "I am sure he will come and join your army; and I assure you that you will find him a much more faithful and devoted servant than Araspes has been."

Cyrus consented to this proposal, and Panthea sent for Abradates. Abradates came at the head of two thousand horse,

which formed a very important addition to the forces under Cyrus's command. The meeting between Panthea and her husband was joyful in the extreme. When Abradates learned from his wife how honorable and kind had been the treatment which Cyrus had rendered to her, he was overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude, and he declared that he would do the utmost in his power to requite the obligations he was under.

THE WAR CHARIOT OF ABRADATES.

Abradates entered at once, with great ardor and zeal, into plans for making the force which he had brought as efficient as possible in the service of Cyrus. He observed that Cyrus was interested, at that time, in attempting to build and equip a corps of armed chariots, such as were often used in fields of battle in those days. This was a very expensive sort of force, corresponding, in that respect, with the artillery used in modern times. The carriages were heavy and strong, and were drawn generally by two horses. They had short, scythe-like blades of steel projecting from the axle-trees on each side, by which the ranks of the enemy were mowed down when the carriages were driven among them. The chariots were made to contain, besides the driver of the horses, one or more warriors, each armed in the completest manner. These warriors stood on the floor of the vehicle, and fought with javelins and spears. The great plains which abound in the interior countries of Asia were very favorable for this species of warfare.

Abradates immediately fitted up for Cyrus a hundred such chariots at his own expense, and provided horses to draw them from his own troop. He made one chariot much larger than the rest, for himself, as he intended to take command of this corps of chariots in person. His own chariot was to be drawn by eight horses. His wife Panthea was very much interested in these preparations. She wished to do something herself toward the outfit. She accordingly furnished, from her own private treasures, a helmet, a corslet, and arm-pieces of gold. These articles formed a suit of armor sufficient to cover all that part of the body which would be exposed in standing in the chariot. She also provided breast-pieces and side-pieces of brass for the horses. The whole chariot, thus quipped, with its eight horses in their gay trappings and resplendent armor, and with Abradates standing within it, clothed in his panoply of gold, presented, as it drove, in the sight of the whole army, around the plain of the encampment, a most imposing spectacle. It was a worthy leader, as the spectators thought, to head the formidable column of a hundred similar engines which were to follow in its train. If we imagine the havoc which a hundred scythe-armed carriages would produce when driven, with headlong fury, into dense masses of men, on a vast open plain, we shall have some idea of one item of the horrors of ancient war.

The full splendor of Abradates's equipments were not, however, displayed at first, for Panthea kept what she had done a secret for a time, intending to reserve her contribution for a parting present to her husband when the period should arrive for going into battle. She had accordingly taken the measure for her work by stealth, from the armor which Abradates was accustomed to wear, and had caused the artificers to make the golden pieces with the utmost secrecy. Besides the substantial defenses of gold which she provided,

she added various other articles for ornament and decoration There was a purple robe, a crest for the helmet, which was of a violet color, plumes, and likewise bracelets for the wrists. Panthea kept all these things herself until the day arrived when her husband was going into battle for the first time with his train, and then, when he went into his tent to prepare himself to ascend his chariot, she brought them to him.

Abradates was astonished when he saw them. He soon understood how they had been provided, and he exclaimed, with a heart full of surprise and pleasure, "And so, to provide me with this splendid armor and dress, you have been depriving yourself of all your finest and most beautiful ornaments!"

"No," said Panthea, "you are yourself my finest ornament, if you appear in other people's eyes as you do in mine, and I have not deprived myself of you."

The appearance which Abradates made in other people's eyes was certainly very splendid on this occasion. There were many spectators present to see him mount his chariot and drive away; but so great was their admiration of Panthea's affection and regard for her husband, and so much impressed were they with her beauty, that the great chariot, the resplendent horses, and the grand warrior with his armor of gold, which the magnificent equipage was intended to convey, were, all together, scarcely able to draw away the eyes of the spectators from her. She stood, for a while, by the side of the chariot, addressing her husband in an under tone, reminding him of the obligations which they were under to Cyrus for his generous and noble treatment of her, and urging him, now that he was going to be put to the test, to redeem the promise which she had made in his name, that Cyrus would find him faithful, brave, and true.

The driver then closed the door by which Abradates had mounted, so that Panthea was separated from her husband, though she could still see him as he stood in his place. She gazed upon him with a countenance full of affection and solicitude. She kissed the margin of the chariot as it began to move away. She walked along after it as it went, as if, after all, she could not bear the separation. Abradates turned, and when he saw her coming on after the carriage, he said, waving his hand for a parting salutation, "Farewell, Panthea; go back now to your tent, and do not be anxious about me. Farewell." Panthea turned—her attendants came and took her away—the spectators all turned, too, to follow her with their eyes, and no one paid any regard to the chariot or to Abradates until she was gone.

On the field of battle, before the engagement commenced, Cyrus, in passing along the lines, paused, when he came to the chariots of Abradates, to examine the arrangements which had been made for them, and to converse a moment with the chief. He saw that the chariots were drawn up in a part of the field where there was opposed to them a very formidable array of Egyptian soldiers. The Egyptians in this war were allies of the enemy. Abradates, leaving his chariot in the charge of his driver, descended and came to Cyrus, and remained in conversation with him for a few moments, to receive his last orders. Cyrus directed him to remain where he was, and not to attack the enemy until he received a certain signal. At length the two chieftains separated; Abradates returned to his chariot, and Cyrus moved on. Abradates then moved slowly along his lines, to encourage and animate his men; and to give them the last directions in respect to the charge which they were about to make on the enemy when the signal should be given. All eyes were turned to the magnificent spectacle which his equipage presented as it advanced toward them; the chariot, moving slowly along the line, the tall and highly-decorated form of its commander rising in the center of it, while the eight horses, animated by the sound of the trumpets, and by the various excitements of the scene, stepped proudly, their brazen armor clanking as they came.

When, at length, the signal was given, Abradates, calling on the other chariots to follow, put his horses to their speed, and the whole line rushed impetuously on to the attack of the Egyptians. War horses, properly trained to their work, will fight with their hoofs with almost as much reckless determination as men will with spears. They rush madly on to encounter whatever opposition there may be before them, and strike down and leap over whatever comes in their way, as if they fully understood the nature of the work that their riders or drivers were wishing them to do. Cyrus, as he passed along from one part of the battle field to another, saw the horses of Abradates's line dashing thus impetuously into the thickest ranks of the enemy. The men, on every side, were beaten down by the horses' hoofs, or overturned by the wheels, or cut down by the scythes; and they who here and there escaped these dangers, became the aim of the soldiers who stood in the chariots, and were transfixed with their spears. The heavy wheels rolled and jolted mercilessly over the bodies of the wounded and the fallen, while the scythes caught hold of and cut through every thing that came in their way—whether the shafts of javelins and spears, or the limbs and bodies of men—and tore every thing to pieces in their terrible career. As Cyrus rode rapidly by, he saw Abradates in the midst of this scene, driving on in his chariot, and shouting to his men in a phrensy of excitement and triumph.

The battle in which these events occurred was one of the greatest and most important which Cyrus fought. He gained the victory. His enemies were every where routed and driven from the field. When the contest was at length decided, the army desisted from the slaughter and encamped for the night. On the following day, the generals assembled at the tent of Cyrus to discuss the arrangements which were to be made in respect to the disposition of the captives and of the spoil, and to the future movements of the army. Abradates was not there. For a time, Cyrus, in the excitement and confusion of the scene did not observe his absence. At length he inquired for him. A soldier present told him that he had been killed from his chariot in the midst of the Egyptians, and that his wife was at that moment attending to the interment of the body, on the banks of a river which flowed near the field of battle. Cyrus, on hearing this, uttered a loud exclamation of astonishment and sorrow. He dropped the business in which he had been engaged with his council, mounted his horse, commanded attendants to follow him with every thing that could be necessary on such an occasion, and then, asking those who knew to lead the way, he drove off to find Panthea.

When he arrived at the spot, the dead body of Abradates was lying upon the ground, while Panthea sat by its side, holding the head in her lap, overwhelmed herself with unutterable sorrow. Cyrus leaped from his horse, knelt down by the side of the corpse, saying, at the same time, "Alas! thou brave and faithful soul, and art thou gone?"

At the same time, he took hold of the hand of Abradates; but, as he attempted to raise it, the arm came away from the body. It had been out off by an Egyptian sword. Cyrus was himself shocked at the spectacle, and Panthea's grief broke forth anew. She cried out with bitter anguish, replaced the arm in the position in which she had arranged it before, and told Cyrus that the rest of the body was in the same condition. Whenever she attempted to speak, her sobs and tears almost prevented her utterance. She bitterly reproached herself for having been, perhaps, the cause of her husband's death, by urging him, as she had done, to fidelity and courage when he went into battle. "And now," she said, "he is dead, while I, who urged him forward into the danger, am still alive."

Cyrus said what he could to console Panthea's grief; but he found it utterly inconsolable. He gave directions for furnishing her with every thing which she could need, and promised her that he would make ample arrangements for providing for her in future. "You shall be treated," he said, "while you remain with me, in the most honorable manner; or,

if you have any friends whom you wish to join, you shall be sent to them safely whenever you please."

Panthea thanked him for his kindness. She had a friend, she said, whom she wished to join, and she would let him know in due time who it was. In the mean time, she wished that Cyrus would leave her alone, for a while, with her servants, and her waiting-maid, and the dead body of her husband. Cyrus accordingly withdrew. As soon as he had gone, Panthea sent away the servants also, retaining the waiting-maid alone. The waiting-maid began to be anxious and concerned at witnessing these mysterious arrangements, as if they portended some new calamity. She wondered what her mistress was going to do. Her doubts were dispelled by seeing Panthea produce a sword, which she had kept concealed hitherto beneath her robe. Her maid begged her, with much earnestness and many tears, not to destroy herself; but Panthea was immovable. She said she could not live any longer. She directed the maid to envelop her body, as soon as she was dead, in the same mantle with her husband, and to have them both deposited together in the same grave; and before her stupefied attendant could do any thing to save her, she sat down by the side of her husband's body, laid her head upon his breast, and in that position gave herself the fatal wound. In a few minutes she ceased to breathe.

Cyrus expressed his respect for the memory of Abradates and Panthea by erecting a lofty monument over their common grave.

CHAPTER XI

CONVERSATIONS

We have given the story of Panthea, as contained in the preceding chapter, in our own language, it is true, but without any intentional addition or embellishment whatever. Each reader will judge for himself whether such a narrative, written for the entertainment of vast assemblies at public games and celebrations, is most properly to be regarded as an invention of romance, or as a simple record of veritable history.

A great many extraordinary and dramatic incidents and adventures, similar in general character to the story of Panthea, are interwoven with the narrative in Xenophon's history. There are also, besides these, many long and minute details of dialogues and conversations, which, if they had really occurred, would have required a very high degree of skill in stenography to produce such reports of them as Xenophon has given. The incidents, too, out of which these conversations grew, are worthy of attention, as we can often judge, by the nature and character of an incident described, whether it is one which it is probable might actually occur in real life, or only an invention intended to furnish an opportunity and a pretext for the inculcation of the sentiments, or the expression of the views of the different speakers. It was the custom in ancient days, much more than it is now, to attempt to add to the point and spirit of a discussion, by presenting the various views which the subject naturally elicited in the form of a conversation arising out of circumstances invented to sustain it. The incident in such cases was, of course, a fiction, contrived to furnish points of attachment for the dialogue—a sort of trellis, constructed artificially to support the vine.

We shall present in this chapter some specimens of these conversations, which will give the reader a much more

distinct idea of the nature of them than any general description can convey.

At one time in the course of Cyrus's career, just after he had obtained some great victory, and was celebrating his triumphs, in the midst of his armies, with spectacles and games, he instituted a series of races, in which the various nations that were represented in his army furnished their several champions as competitors. The army marched out from the city which Cyrus had captured, and where he was then residing, in a procession of the most imposing magnificence. Animals intended to be offered in sacrifice, caparisoned in trappings of gold, horsemen most sumptuously equipped, chariots of war splendidly built and adorned, and banners and trophies of every kind, were conspicuous in the train. When the vast procession reached the race-ground, the immense concourse was formed in ranks around it, and the racing went on.

When it came to the turn of the Sacian nation to enter the course, a private man, of no apparent importance in respect to his rank or standing, came forward as the champion; though the man appeared insignificant, his horse was as fleet as the wind. He flew around the arena with astonishing speed, and came in at the goal while his competitor was still midway of the course. Every body was astonished at this performance. Cyrus asked the Sacian whether he would be willing to sell that horse, if he could receive a kingdom in exchange for it—kingdoms being the coin with which such sovereigns as Cyrus made their purchases. The Sacian replied that he would not sell his horse for any kingdom, but that he would readily give him away to oblige a worthy man.

"Come with me," said Cyrus, "and I will show you where you may throw blindfold, and not miss a worthy man."

So saying, Cyrus conducted the Sacian to a part of the field where a number of his officers and attendants were moving to and fro, mounted upon their horses, or seated in their chariots of war. The Sacian took up a hard clod of earth from a bank as he walked along. At length they were in the midst of the group.

"Throw!" said Cyrus.

The Sacian shut his eyes and threw.

It happened that, just at that instant, an officer named Pheraulas was riding by. He was conveying some orders which Cyrus had given him to another part of the field. Pheraulas had been originally a man of humble life, but he had been advanced by Cyrus to a high position on account of the greet fidelity and zeal which he had evinced in the performance of his duty. The clod which the Sacian threw struck Pheraulas in the mouth, and wounded him severely. Now it is the part of a good soldier to stand at his post or to press on, in obedience to his orders, as long as any physical capacity remains; and Pheraulas, true to his military obligation, rode on without even turning to see whence and from what cause so unexpected and violent an assault had proceeded.

The Sacian opened his eyes, looked around, and coolly asked who it was that he had hit. Cyrus pointed to the horseman who was riding rapidly away, saying, "That is the man, who is riding so fast past those chariots yonder. You hit *him*."

"Why did he not turn back, then?" asked the Sacian.

"It is strange that he did not," said Cyrus; "he must be some madman."

The Sacian went in pursuit of him. He found Pheraulas with his face covered with blood and dirt, and asked him if he had received a blow. "I have," said Pheraulas, "as you see." "Then," said the Sacian, "I make you a present of my horse." Pheraulas asked an explanation. The Sacian accordingly gave him an account of what had taken place between himself and Cyrus, and said, in the end, that he gladly gave him his horse,

as he, Pheraulas, had so decisively proved himself to be a most worthy man.

Pheraulas accepted the present, with many thanks, and he and the Sacian became thereafter very strong friends.

Some time after this, Pheraulas invited the Sacian to an entertainment, and when the hour arrived, he set before his friend and the other guests a most sumptuous feast, which was served in vessels of gold and silver, and in an apartment furnished with carpets, and canopies, and couches of the most gorgeous and splendid description. The Sacian was much impressed with this magnificence, and he asked Pheraulas whether he had been a rich man at home, that is, before he had joined Cyrus's army. Pheraulas replied that he was not then rich. His father, he said, was a farmer, and he himself had been accustomed in early life to till the ground with the other laborers on his father's farm. All the wealth and luxury which he now enjoyed had been bestowed upon him, he said, by Cyrus.

"How fortunate you are!" said the Sacian; "and it must be that you enjoy your present riches all the more highly on account of having experienced in early life the inconveniences and ills of poverty. The pleasure must be more intense in having desires which have long been felt gratified at last than if the objects which they rested upon had been always in one's possession."

"You imagine, I suppose," replied Pheraulas, "that I am a great deal happier in consequence of all this wealth and splendor; but it is not so. As to the real enjoyments of which our natures are capable, I can not receive more now than I could before. I can not eat any more, drink any more, or sleep any more, or do any of these things with any more pleasure than when I was poor. All that I gain by this abundance is, that I have more to watch, more to guard, more to take care of. I have many servants, for whose wants I have to provide, and who are a constant source of solicitude to me. One calls for food, another for clothes, and a third is sick, and I must see that he has a physician. My other possessions, too, are a constant care. A man comes in, one day, and brings me sheep that have been torn by the wolves; and, on another day, tells me of oxen that have fallen from a precipice, or of a distemper which has broken out among the flocks or herds. My wealth, therefore, brings me only an increase of anxiety and trouble, without any addition to my joys."

"But those things," said the Sacian, "which you name, must be unusual and extraordinary occurrences. When all things are going on prosperously and well with you, and you can look around on all your possessions and feel that they are yours, then certainly you must be happier than I am."

"It is true," said Pheraulas, "that there is a pleasure in the possession of wealth, but that pleasure is not great enough to balance the suffering which the calamities and losses inevitably connected with it occasion. That the suffering occasioned by losing our possessions is greater than the pleasure of retaining them, is proved by the fact that the pain of a loss is so exciting to the mind that it often deprives men of sleep, white they enjoy the most calm and quiet repose so long as their possessions are retained, which proves that the pleasure does not move them so deeply. They are kept awake by the vexation and chagrin on the one hand, but they are never kept awake by the satisfaction on the other."

"That is true," replied the Sacian. "Men are not kept awake by the mere continuing to possess their wealth, but they very often are by the original acquisition of it."

"Yes, indeed," replied Pheraulas; "and if the enjoyment of *being* rich could always continue as great as that of first becoming so, the rich would, I admit, be very happy men; but it is not, and can not be so. They who possess much, must lose, and expend, and give much; and this necessity brings more of pain than the possessions themselves can give of pleasure."

The Sacian was not convinced. The giving and expending, he maintained, would be to him, in itself, a source

of pleasure. He should like to have much, for the very purpose of being able to expend much. Finally, Pheraulas proposed to the Sacian, since he seemed to think that riches would afford him so much pleasure, and as he himself, Pheraulas, found the possession of them only a source of trouble and care, that he would convey all his wealth to the Sacian, he himself to receive only an ordinary maintenance from it.

"You are in jest," said the Sacian.

"No," said Pheraulas, "I am in earnest." And he renewed his proposition, and pressed the Sacian urgently to accept of it.

The Sacian then said that nothing could give him greater pleasure than such an arrangement. He expressed great gratitude for so generous an offer, and promised that, if he received the property, he would furnish Pheraulas with most ample and abundant supplies for all his wants, and would relieve him entirely of all responsibility and care. He promised, moreover, to obtain from Cyrus permission that Pheraulas should thereafter be excused from the duties of military service, and from all the toils, privations, and hardships of war, so that he might thenceforth lead a life of quiet, luxury, and ease, and thus live in the enjoyment of all the benefits which wealth could procure, without its anxieties and cares.

The plan, thus arranged, was carried into effect. Pheraulas divested himself of his possessions, conveying them all to the Sacian. Both parties were extremely pleased with the operation of the scheme, and they lived thus together for a long time. Whatever Pheraulas acquired in any way, he always brought to the Sacian, and the Sacian, by accepting it, relieved Pheraulas of all responsibility and care. The Sacian loved Pheraulas, as Xenophon says, in closing this narrative, because he was thus continually bringing him gifts; and Pheraulas loved the Sacian, because he was always willing to take the gifts which were thus brought to him.

Among the other conversations, whether real or imaginary, which Xenophon records, he gives some specimens of those which took place at festive entertainments in Cyrus's tent, on occasions when he invited his officers to dine with him. He commenced the conversation, on one of these occasions, by inquiring of some of the officers present whether they did not think that the common soldiers were equal to the officers themselves in intelligence, courage, and military skill, and in all the other substantial qualities of a good soldier.

"I know not how that may be," replied one of the officers. "How they will prove when they come into action with the enemy, I can not tell; but a more perverse and churlish set of fellows in camp, than those I have got in my regiment, I never knew. The other day, for example, when there had been a sacrifice, the meat of the victims was sent around to be distributed to the soldiers. In our regiment, when the steward came in with the first distribution, he began by me, and so went round, as far as what he had brought would go. The next time he came, he began at the other end. The supply failed before he had got to the place where he had left off before, so that there was a man in the middle that did not get any thing. This man immediately broke out in loud and angry complaints, and declared that there was no equality or fairness whatever in such a mode of division, unless they began sometimes in the center of the line.

"Upon this," continued the officer, "I called to the discontented man, and invited him to come and sit by me, where he would have a better chance for a good share. He did so. It happened that, at the next distribution that was made, we were the last, and he fancied that only the smallest pieces were left, so he began to complain more than before. 'Oh, misery!' said he, 'that I should have to sit here!' 'Be patient,' said I; 'pretty soon they will begin the distribution with us, and then you will have the best chance of all.' And so it proved, for, at the next distribution, they began at us, and the man took his share first; but when the second and third men took theirs, he

fancied that their pieces looked larger than his, and he reached forward and put his piece back into the basket, intending to change it; but the steward moved rapidly on, and he did not get another, so that he lost his distribution altogether. He was then quite furious with rage and vexation."

Cyrus and all the company laughed very heartily at these mischances of greediness and discontent; and then other stories, of a somewhat similar character, were told by other guests. One officer said that a few days previous he was drilling a part of his troops, and he had before him on the plain what is called, in military language, a *squad* of men, whom he was teaching to march. When he gave the order to advance, one, who was at the head of the file, marched forward with great alacrity, but all the rest stood still. "I asked him," continued the officer, "what he was doing. 'Marching,' said he, 'as you ordered me to do.' 'It was not you alone that I ordered to march,' said I, 'but all.' So I sent him back to his place, and then gave the command again. Upon this they all advanced promiscuously and in disorder toward me, each one acting for himself, without regard to the others, and leaving the file-leader, who ought to have been at the head, altogether behind. The file-leader said, 'Keep back! keep back!' Upon this the men were offended, and asked what they were to do about such contradictory orders. 'One commands us to advance, and another to keep back!' said they; 'how are we to know which is obey?' "

Cyrus and his guests were so much amused at the awkwardness of these recruits, and the ridiculous predicament in which the officer was placed by it, that the narrative of the speaker was here interrupted by universal and long-continued laughter.

"Finally," continued the officer, "I sent the men all back to their places, and explained to them that, when a command was given, they were not to obey it in confusion and unseemly haste, but regularly and in order, each one following the man who stood before him. 'You must regulate your proceeding,' said I, 'by the action of the file-leader; when he advances, you must advance, following him in a line, and governing your movements in all respects by his.' "

"Just at this moment," continued the officer, "a man came to me for a letter which was to go to Persia, and which I had left in my tent. I directed the file-leader to run to my tent and bring the letter to me. He immediately set off, and the rest, obeying literally the directions which I had just been giving them, all followed, running behind him in a line like a troop of savages, so that I had the whole squad of twenty men running in a body off the field to fetch a letter!"

When the general hilarity which these recitals occasioned had a little subsided, Cyrus said he thought that they could not complain of the character of the soldiers whom they had to command, for they were certainly, according to these accounts, sufficiently ready to obey the orders they received. Upon this, a certain one of the guests who was present, named Aglaitadas, a gloomy and austere-looking man, who had not joined at all in the merriment which the conversation had caused, asked Cyrus if he believed those stories to be true.

"Why?" asked Cyrus; "what do *you* think of them?"

"*I* think," said Aglaitadas, "that these officers invented them to make the company laugh. It is evident that they were not telling the truth, since they related the stories in such a vain and arrogant way."

"Arrogant!" said Cyrus; "you ought not to call them arrogant; for, even if they invented their narrations, it was not to gain any selfish ends of their own, but only to amuse us and promote our enjoyment. Such persons should be called polite and agreeable rather than arrogant."

"If, Aglaitadas," said one of the officers who had related the anecdotes, "we had told you melancholy stories to make you gloomy and wretched, you might have been justly

displaced; but you certainly ought not to complain of us for making you merry."

"Yes," said Aglaitadas, "I think I may. To make a man laugh is a very insignificant and useless thing. It is far better to make him weep. Such thoughts and such conversation as makes us serious, thoughtful, and sad, and even moves us to tears, are the most salutary and the best."

"Well," replied the officer, "if you will take my advice, you will lay out all your powers of inspiring gloom, and melancholy, and of bringing tears, upon our enemies, and bestow the mirth and laughter upon us. There must be a prodigious deal of laughter in you, for none ever comes out. You neither use nor expend it yourself, nor do you afford it to your friends."

"Then," said Aglaitadas, "why do you attempt to draw it from me?"

"It *is* preposterous!" said another of the company; "for one could more easily strike fire out of Aglaitadas than get a laugh from him!"

Aglaitadas could not help smiling at this comparison; upon which Cyrus, with an air of counterfeited gravity, reproved the person who had spoken, saying that he had corrupted the most sober man in the company by making him smile, and that to disturb such gravity as that of Aglaitadas was carrying the spirit of mirth and merriment altogether too far.

These specimens will suffice. They serve to give a more distinct idea of the Cyropaedia of Xenophon than any general description could afford. The book is a drama, of which the principal elements are such narratives as the story of Panthea, and such conversations as those contained in this chapter, intermingled with long discussions on the principles of government, and on the discipline and management of armies. The principles and the sentiments which the work inculcates and explains are now of little value, being no longer applicable to the affairs of mankind in the altered circumstances of the present day. The book, however, retains its rank among men on account of a certain beautiful and simple magnificence characterizing the style and language in which it is written, which, however, can not be appreciated except by those who read the narrative in the original tongue.

CHAPTER XII

THE DEATH OF CYRUS

After having made the conquest of the Babylonian empire, Cyrus found himself the sovereign of nearly all of Asia, so far as it was then known. Beyond his dominions there lay, on every side, according to the opinions which then prevailed, vast tracts of uninhabitable territory, desolate and impassable. These wildernesses were rendered unfit for man, sometimes by excessive heat, sometimes by excessive cold, sometimes from being parched by perpetual drought, which produced bare and desolate deserts, and sometimes by incessant rains, which drenched the country and filled it with morasses and fens. On the north was the great Caspian Sea, then almost wholly unexplored, and extending, as the ancients believed, to the Polar Ocean.

On the west side of the Caspian Sea were the Caucasian Mountains, which were supposed, in those days, to be the highest on the globe. In the neighborhood of these mountains there was a country, inhabited by a wild and half-savage people, who were called Scythians. This was, in fact, a sort of generic term, which was applied, in those days, to almost all the aboriginal tribes beyond the confines of civilization. The Scythians, however, if such they can properly be called, who lived on the borders of the Caspian Sea, were not wholly uncivilized. They possessed many of those mechanical arts which are the first to be matured among warlike nations. They had no iron or steel, but they were accustomed to work other metals, particularly gold and brass. They tipped their spears and javelins with brass, and made brazen plates for defensive armor, both for themselves and for their horses. They made, also, many ornaments and decorations of gold. These they attached to their helmets, their belts, and their banners. They were very formidable in war, being, like all other northern nations, perfectly desperate and reckless in battle. They were excellent horsemen, and had an abundance of horses with which to exercise their skill; so that their armies consisted, like those of the Cossacks of modern times, of great bodies of cavalry.

The various campaigns and conquests by which Cyrus obtained possession of his extended dominions occupied an interval of about thirty years. It was near the close of this interval, when he was, in fact, advancing toward a late period of life, that he formed the plan of penetrating into these northern regions, with a view of adding them also to his domains.

He had two sons, Cambyses and Smerdis. His wife is said to have been a daughter of Astyages, and that he married her soon after his conquest of the kingdom of Media, in order to reconcile the Medians more easily to his sway, by making a Median princess their queen. Among the western nations of Europe such a marriage would be abhorred, Astyages having been Cyrus's grandfather; but among the Orientals, in those days, alliances of this nature were not uncommon. It would seem that this queen was not living at the time that the events occurred which are to be related in this chapter. Her sons had grown up to maturity, and were now princes of great distinction.

One of the Scythian or northern nations to which we have referred were called the Massagetae. They formed a very extensive and powerful realm. They were governed, at this time, by a queen named Tomyris. She was a widow, past middle life. She had a son named Spargapizes, who had, like the sons of Cyrus, attained maturity, and was the heir to the throne. Spargapizes was, moreover, the commander-in-chief of the armies of the queen.

The first plan which Cyrus formed for the annexation of the realm of the Massagetae to his own dominions was by a matrimonial alliance. He accordingly raised an army and commenced a movement toward the north, sending, at the

same time, embassadors before him into the country of the Massagetae, with offers of marriage to the queen. The queen knew very well that it was her dominions, and not herself, that constituted the great attraction for Cyrus, and, besides, she was of an age when ambition is a stronger passion than love. She refused the offers, and sent back word to Cyrus forbidding his approach.

Cyrus, however, continued to move on. The boundary between his dominions and those of the queen was at the River Araxes, a stream flowing from west to east, through the central parts of Asia, toward the Caspian Sea. As Cyrus advanced, he found the country growing more and more wild and desolate. It was inhabited by savage tribes, who lived on roots and herbs, and who were elevated very little, in any respect, above the wild beasts that roamed in the forests around them. They had one very singular custom, according to Herodotus. It seems that there was a plant which grew among them, that bore a fruit, whose fumes, when it was roasting on a fire, had an exhilarating effect, like that produced by wine. These savages, therefore, Herodotus says, were accustomed to assemble around a fire, in their convivial festivities, and to throw some of this fruit in the midst of it. The fumes emitted by the fruit would soon begin to intoxicate the whole circle, when they would throw on more fruit, and become more and more excited, until, at length, they would jump up, and dance about, and sing, in a state of complete inebriation.

Among such savages as these, and through the forests and wildernesses in which they lived, Cyrus advanced till he reached the Araxes. Here, after considering, for some time, by what means he could best pass the river, he determined to build a floating bridge, by means of boats and rafts obtained from the natives on the banks, or built for the purpose. It would be obviously much easier to transport the army by using these boats and rafts to *float* the men across, instead of constructing a bridge with them; but this would not have been safe, for the transportation of the army by such a means would be gradual and slow; and if the enemy were lurking in the neighborhood, and should make an attack upon them in the midst of the operation, while a part of the army were upon one bank and a part upon the other, and another portion still, perhaps, in boats upon the stream, the defeat and destruction of the whole would be almost inevitable. Cyrus planned the formation of the bridge, therefore, as a means of transporting his army in a body, and of landing them on the opposite bank in solid columns, which could be formed into order of battle without any delay.

While Cyrus was engaged in the work of constructing the bridge, embassadors appeared, who said that they had been sent from Tomyris. She had commissioned them, they said, to warn Cyrus to desist entirely from his designs upon her kingdom, and to return to his own. This would be the wisest course, too, Tomyris said, for himself, and she counseled him, for his own welfare, to follow it. He could not foresee the result, if he should invade her dominions and encounter her armies. Fortune had favored him thus far, it was true, but fortune might change, and he might find himself, before he was aware, at the end of his victories. Still, she said, she had no expectation that he would be disposed to listen to this warning and advice, and, on her part, she had no objection to his persevering in his invasion. She did not fear him. He need not put himself to the expense and trouble of building a bridge across the Araxes. She would agree to withdraw all her forces three days' march into her own country, so that he might cross the river safely and at his leisure, and she would await him at the place where she should have encamped; or, if he preferred it, she would cross the river and meet him on his own side. In that case, he must retire three days' march from the river, so as to afford her the same opportunity to make the passage undisturbed which she had offered him. She would then come over and march on to attack him. She gave Cyrus his option which branch of this alternative to choose.

Cyrus called a council of war to consider the question. He laid the case before his officers and generals, and asked for their opinion. They were unanimously agreed that it would be best for him to accede to the last of the two proposals made to him, viz., to draw back three days' journey toward his own dominions, and wait for Tomyris to come and attack him there.

There was, however, one person present at this consultation, though not regularly a member of the council, who gave Cyrus different advice. This was Crœsus, the fallen king of Lydia. Ever since the time of his captivity, he had been retained in the camp and in the household of Cyrus, and had often accompanied him in his expeditions and campaigns. Though a captive, he seems to have been a friend; at least, the most friendly relations appeared to subsist between him and his conqueror; and he often figures in history as a wise and honest counselor to Cyrus, in the various emergencies in which he was placed. He was present on this occasion, and he dissented from the opinion which was expressed by the officers of the army.

"I ought to apologize, perhaps," said he, "for presuming to offer any counsel, captive as I am; but I have derived, in the school of calamity and misfortune in which I have been taught, some advantages for learning wisdom which you have never enjoyed. It seems to me that it will be much better for you not to fall back, but to advance and attack Tomyris in her own dominions; for, if you retire in this manner, in the first place, the act itself is discreditable to you: it is a retreat. Then, if, in the battle that follows, Tomyris conquers you, she is already advanced three days' march into your dominions, and she may go on, and, before you can take measures for raising another army, make herself mistress of your empire. On the other hand, if, in the battle, you conquer her, you will be then six days' march back of the position which you would occupy if you were to advance now.

"I will propose," continued Crœsus, "the following plan: Cross the river according to Tomyris's offer, and advance the three days' journey into her country. Leave a small part of your force there, with a great abundance of your most valuable baggage and supplies—luxuries of all kinds, and rich wines, and such articles as the enemy will most value as plunder. Then fall back with the main body of your army toward the river again, in a secret manner, and encamp in an ambuscade. The enemy will attack your advanced detachment. They will conquer them. They will seize the stores and supplies, and will suppose that your whole army is vanquished. They will fall upon the plunder in disorder, and the discipline of their army will be overthrown. They will go to feasting upon the provisions and to drinking the wines, and then, when they are in the midst of their festivities and revelry, you can come back suddenly with the real strength of your army, and wholly overwhelm them."

Cyrus determined to adopt the plan which Crœsus thus recommended. He accordingly gave answer to the embassadors of Tomyris that he would accede to the first of her proposals. If she would draw back from the river three days' march, he would cross it with his army as soon as practicable, and then come forward and attack her. The embassadors received this message, and departed to deliver it to their queen. She was faithful to her agreement, and drew her forces bank to the place proposed, and left them there, encamped under the command of her son.

Cyrus seems to have felt some forebodings in respect to the manner in which this expedition was to end. He was advanced in life, and not now as well able as he once was to endure the privations and hardships of such campaigns. Then, the incursion which he was to make was into a remote, and wild, and dangerous country and he could not but be aware that he might never return. Perhaps he may have had some compunctions of conscience, too, at thus wantonly disturbing the peace and invading the territories of an innocent neighbor,

and his mind may have been the less at ease on that account. At any rate, he resolved to settle the affairs of his government before he set out, in order to secure both the tranquility of the country while he should be absent, and the regular transmission of his power to his descendants in case he should never return.

Accordingly, in a very formal manner, and in the presence of all his army, he delegated his power to Cambyses, his son, constituting him regent of the realm during his absence. He committed Crœsus to his son's special care, charging him to pay him every attention and honor. It was arranged that these persons, as well as a considerable portion of the army, and a large number of attendants that had followed the camp thus far, were not to accompany the expedition across the river, but were to remain behind and return to the capital. These arrangements being all thus finally made, Cyrus took leave of his son and of Crœsus, crossed the river with that part of the army which was to proceed, and commenced his march.

The uneasiness and anxiety which Cyrus seems to have felt in respect to his future fate on this memorable march affected even his dreams. It seems that there was among the officers of his army a certain general named Hystaspes. He had a son named Darius, then a youth of about twenty years of age, who had been left at home, in Persia, when the army marched, not being old enough to accompany them. Cyrus dreamed, one night, immediately after crossing the river, that he saw this young Darius with wings on his shoulders, that extended, the one over Asia and the other over Europe, thus overshadowing the world. When Cyrus awoke and reflected upon his dream, it seemed to him to portend that Darius might be aspiring to the government of his empire. He considered it a warning intended to put him on his guard.

When he awoke in the morning, he sent for Hystaspes, and related to him his dream. "I am satisfied," said he, "that it denotes that your son is forming ambitious and treasonable designs. Do you therefore, return home, and arrest him in this fatal course. Secure him, and let him be ready to give me an account of his conduct when I shall return."

Hystaspes, having received this commission, left the army and returned. The name of this Hystaspes acquired a historical immortality in a very singular way, that is, by being always used as a part of the appellation by which to designate his distinguished son. In after years Darius did attain to a very extended power. He became Darius the Great. As, however, there were several other Persian monarchs called Darius, some of whom were nearly as great as this the first of the name, the usage was gradually established of calling him Darius Hystaspes; and thus the name of the father has become familiar to all mankind, simply as a consequence and pendant to the celebrity of the son.

After sending off Hystaspes, Cyrus went on. He followed, in all respects, the plan of Crœsus. He marched his army into the country of Tomyris, and advanced until he reached the point agreed upon. Here he stationed a feeble portion of his army, with great stores of provisions and wines, and abundance of such articles as would, be prized by the barbarians as booty. He then drew back with the main body of his army toward the Araxes, and concealed his forces in a hidden encampment. The result was as Crœsus had anticipated. The body which he had left was attacked by the troops of Tomyris, and effectually routed. The provisions and stores fell into the hands of the victors. They gave themselves up to the most unbounded joy, and their whole camp was soon a universal scene of rioting and excess. Even the commander, Spargapizes, Tomyris's son, became intoxicated with the wine.

While things were in this state, the main body of the army of Cyrus returned suddenly and unexpectedly, and fell upon their now helpless enemies with a force which entirely overwhelmed them. The booty was recovered, large numbers of the enemy were slain, and others were taken prisoners.

Spargapizes himself was captured; his hands were bound; he was taken into Cyrus's camp, and closely guarded.

The result of this stratagem, triumphantly successful as it was, would have settled the contest, and made Cyrus master of the whole realm, if as he, at the time, supposed was the case, the main body of Tomyris's forces had been engaged in this battle; but it seems that Tomyris had learned, by reconnoiterers and spies, how large a force there was in Cyrus's camp, and had only sent a detachment of her own troops to attack them, not judging it necessary to call out the whole. Two thirds of her army remained still uninjured. With this large force she would undoubtedly have advanced without any delay to attack Cyrus again, were it not for her maternal concern for the safety of her son. He was in Cyrus's power, a helpless captive, and she did not know to what cruelties he would be exposed if Cyrus were to be exasperated against her. While her heart, therefore, was burning with resentment and anger, and with an almost uncontrollable thirst for revenge, her hand was restrained. She kept back her army, and sent to Cyrus a conciliatory message.

She said to Cyrus that he had no cause to be specially elated at his victory; that it was only one third of her forces that had been engaged, and that with the remainder she held him completely in her power. She urged him, therefore, to be satisfied with the injury which he had already inflicted upon her by destroying one third of her army, and to liberate her son, retire from her dominions, and leave her in peace. If he would do so, she would not molest him in his departure; but if he would not, she swore by the sun, the great god which she and her countrymen adored, that, insatiable as he was for blood, she would give it to him till he had his fill.

Of course Cyrus was not to be frightened by such threats as these. He refused to deliver up the captive prince, or to withdraw from the country, and both parties began to prepare again for war.

Spargapizes was intoxicated when he was taken, and was unconscious of the calamity which had befallen him. When at length he awoke from his stupor, and learned the full extent of his misfortune, and of the indelible disgrace which he had incurred, he was overwhelmed with astonishment, disappointment, and shame. The more he reflected upon his condition, the more hopeless it seemed. Even if his life were to be spared, and if he were to recover his liberty, he never could recover his honor. The ignominy of such a defeat and such a captivity, he knew well, must be indelible.

He begged Cyrus to loosen his bonds and allow him personal liberty within the camp. Cyrus, pitying, perhaps, his misfortunes, and the deep dejection and distress which they occasioned, acceded to this request. Spargapizes watched watched an opportunity to seize a weapon when he was not observed by his guards, and killed himself.

His mother Tomyris, when she heard of his fate, was frantic with grief and rage. She considered Cyrus as the wanton destroyer of the peace of her kingdom and the murderer of her son, and she had now no longer any reason for restraining her thirst for revenge. She immediately began to concentrate her forces, and to summon all the additional troops that she could obtain from every part of her kingdom. Cyrus, too, began in earnest to strengthen his lines, and to prepare for the great final struggle.

At length the armies approached each other, and the battle began. The attack was commenced by the archers on either side, who shot showers of arrows at their opponents as they were advancing. When the arrows were spent, the men fought hand to hand, with spears, and javelins, and swords. The Persians fought desperately, for they fought for their lives. They were in the heart of an enemy's country, with a broad river behind them to cut off their retreat, and they were contending with a wild and savage foe, whose natural barbarity was rendered still more ferocious and terrible than ever by the exasperation which they felt, in sympathy with

their injured queen. For a long time it was wholly uncertain which side would win the day. The advantage, here and there along the lines, was in some places on one side, and in some places on the other; but, though overpowered and beaten, the several bands, whether of Persians or Scythians, would neither retreat nor surrender, but the survivors, when their comrades had fallen, continued to fight on till they were all slain. It was evident, at last, that the Scythians were gaining the day. When night came on, the Persian army was found to be almost wholly destroyed; the remnant dispersed. When all was over, the Scythians, in exploring the field, found the dead body of Cyrus among the other ghastly and mutilated remains which covered the ground. They took it up with a ferocious and exulting joy, and carried it to Tomyris.

Tomyris treated it with every possible indignity. She cut and mutilated the lifeless form, as if it could still feel the injuries inflicted by her insane revenge. "Miserable wretch!" said she; "though I am in the end your conqueror, you have ruined my peace and happiness forever. You have murdered my son. But I promised you your fill of blood, and you shall have it." So saying, she filled a can with Persian blood, obtained, probably, by the execution of her captives, and, cutting off the head of her victim from the body, she plunged it in, exclaiming, "Drink there, insatiable monster, till your murderous thirst is satisfied."

This was the end of Cyrus. Cambyses, his son, whom he had appointed regent during his absence, succeeded quietly to the government of his vast dominions.

In reflecting on this melancholy termination of this great conqueror's history, our minds naturally revert to the scenes of his childhood, and we wonder that so amiable, and gentle, and generous a boy should become so selfish, and unfeeling, and overbearing as a man. But such are the natural and inevitable effects of ambition and an inordinate love of power. The history of a conqueror is always a tragical and melancholy tale. He begins life with an exhibition of great and noble qualities, which awaken in us, who read his history, the same admiration that was felt for him, personally, by his friends and countrymen while he lived, and on which the vast ascendency which he acquired over the minds of his fellow-men, and which led to his power and fame, was, in a great measure, founded. On the other hand, he ends life neglected, hated, and abhorred. His ambition has been gratified, but the gratification has brought with it no substantial peace or happiness; on the contrary, it has filled his soul with uneasiness, discontent, suspiciousness, and misery. The histories of heroes would be far less painful in the perusal if we could reverse this moral change of character, so as to have the cruelty, the selfishness, and the oppression exhaust themselves in the comparatively unimportant transactions of early life, and the spirit of kindness, generosity, and beneficence blessing and beautifying its close. To be generous, disinterested, and noble, seems to be necessary as the precursor of great military success; and to be hard-hearted, selfish, and cruel is the almost inevitable consequence of it. The exceptions to this rule, though some of them are very splendid, are yet very few.