

CAHUN DAVID-LÉON

THE ADVENTURES OF
CAPTAIN MAGO

David-Léon Cahun

The Adventures of Captain Mago

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David-Léon Cahun

The Adventures of Captain Mago / Or A Phoenician Expedition B.C. 1000

PREFACE

The following pages pretend to no original or scientific research. It is their object to present, in a popular form, a picture of the world as it was a thousand years before the Christian Era, and to exhibit, mainly for the young, a summary of that varied information which is contained in books, many of which by their high price and exclusively technical character are generally unattainable.

It would only have encumbered the fictitious narrative, which is the vehicle for conveying the instruction that is designed, to crowd every page with references; but it may be alleged, once for all, that for every statement which relates to the history of the period, and especially to the history of the Phoenicians, ample authority might be quoted from some one or other of the valuable books which have been consulted.

Of the most important of these a list is here appended: —

1. F. C. Movers. Das Phönizische Alterthum.
2. Renan. Mission en Phénicie.
3. Daux. Recherches sur les Emporia phéniciens dans le Zeugis et le Byzacium.
4. Nathan Davis. Carthage and her Remains.
5. Wilkinson. Manners and Customs of Ancient Egyptians.
6. Hœckh. Kreta.
7. Grote. History of Greece.
8. Mommsen. Geschichte der Römischen Republik (Introduction and Chap. I.).
9. Bourguignat. Monuments mégalithiques du nord de l'Afrique.
10. Fergusson. Rude Stone Monuments.
11. Broca and A. Bertrand. Celtes, Gaulois et Francs.
12. Abbé Bargès. Interprétation d'une inscription phénicienne trouvée à Marseille.
13. Layard. Nineveh and its Remains.
14. Botta. Fouilles de Babylone.
15. Reuss. New translation of the Bible, in course of publication.

A few foot-notes are subjoined by way of illustration of what might have been carried on throughout the volume; and an Appendix will be found at the end, containing some explanation of topics which the continuity of the fiction necessarily left somewhat obscure.

CHAPTER I

WHY BODMILCAR, THE TYRIAN SAILOR, HATES HANNO, THE SIDONIAN SCRIBE

I am Captain Mago, and Hiram,¹ King of Tyre, was well aware that my experience as a sailor was very great. It was in the third year of his reign that he summoned me to his presence from Sidon,² the city of fishermen, and the metropolis of the Phœnicians. He had already been told of my long voyages; how I had visited Malta; how I had traded to Bozrah,³ the city founded by the Sidonians, but now called Carthada⁴ by the Tyrians; and how I had reached the remote Gades in the land of Tarshish.⁵

The star of Sidon was now on the wane. The ships of Tyre were fast occupying the sea, and her caravans were covering the land. A monarchy had been established by the Tyrians, and their king, with the *suffects*⁶ as his coadjutors, was holding sway over all the other cities of Phœnicia. The fortunes of Tyre were thus in the ascendant: sailors and merchants from Sidon, Gebal, Arvad and Byblos were continually enlisting themselves in the service of her powerful corporations.

When I had made my obeisance to King Hiram, he informed me that his friend and ally, David, King of the Jews, was collecting materials for the erection of a temple to his god Adonai (or *our Lord*) in the city of Jerusalem, and that he was desirous of making his own royal contribution to assist him. Accordingly he submitted to me that at his expense I should fit out a sufficient fleet, and should undertake a voyage to Tarshish, in order to procure a supply of silver, and any other rare or valuable commodity which that land could yield, to provide embellishment for the sumptuous edifice.

Anxious as I was already to revisit Tarshish and the lands of the West, I entered most eagerly into the proposal of the King, assuring him that I should require no longer time for preparation than what was absolutely necessary to equip the ships and collect the crews.

It was still two months before the Feast of Spring, an annual festival that marked the re-opening of navigation. This was an interval sufficient for my purpose, for as the King directed me to call first at Joppa, and to proceed thence to Jerusalem to receive King David's instructions, I had no need for the present to concern myself about anything further than my ships and sailors, knowing that I could safely trust to the fertile and martial land of Judæa to provide me with provisions and soldiers.

The King was highly gratified at my ready acquiescence in his proposition. He instructed his treasurer to hand over to me at once a thousand silver shekels⁷ to meet preliminary expenses, and gave orders to the authorities at the arsenal to allow me to select whatever wood, hemp, or copper I might require.

I took my leave of the King and rejoined Hanno my scribe and Himilco my pilot, the latter of whom had been my constant associate on my previous voyages. They were sitting on the side-bench at the great gate of the palace, and had been impatiently awaiting my return, mutually speculating upon the reason that had induced the King to send for us from Sidon, and naturally conjecturing that it must relate to some future enterprise and adventure. At the first glimpse of my excited countenance, revealing my delight, Hanno exclaimed:

"Welcome back, master; surely the King has granted you some eager longing of your heart!"

¹ Hiram I. reigned from 980 to 947 B.C.

² Sidon, or Zidon, in the Phœnician tongue means "fishery."

³ Bostra, or Bozrah; hence Byrsa, the citadel.

⁴ Carthage, or Kart-Khadecht, the new city.

⁵ Tarshish, the Tartessus of the Greeks, Spain.

⁶ Suffect, or *choupheth* (plural *chopettim*), the Hebrew and Phœnician magistrates preceding the monarchy.

⁷ The silver shekel was the standard money of the Phœnicians, and was worth about 2s. It was a tenth part of a shekel of gold.

"True; and what do you suppose it is?" I asked.

"Perhaps a new ship to replace the one you lost in the Great Syrtes; and perhaps a good freight into the bargain. No son of Sidon could covet more than this."

"Yes, Hanno; this, and more beside," I answered. "But our good fortune at once demands our vows; let us hasten to the temple of Ashtoreth,⁸ and there let us render our thanks to the goddess, and sue for her protection and her favour to guard our vessels as we sail to Joppa. To Joppa we go; and onwards thence to Tarshish!"

"Tarshish!" echoed the voice of Himilco, with a cry of ecstasy; and as he spoke he raised up his sole remaining eye towards the skies; he had lost the other in a naval fight. "Tarshish," he said again: "O ye gods, that rule the destinies of ships! ye stars,⁹ that so oft have fixed my gaze in my weary watch on deck! here I offer to you six shekels on the spot; 'tis all my means allow. But take me to Tarshish, and vouchsafe that I may come across the villain whose lance took out my eye, so that I may make him feel the point of my Chalcidian sword below his ribs, and I vow that I will offer you in sacrifice an ox, a noble ox, finer than Apis, the god of the idiot Egyptians."

Hanno was less demonstrative. "For my part," he said, "I shall be satisfied if I can barter enough of the vile wine of Judæa, and the cheap ware of Sidon, to get a good return of pure white silver. I shall only be too pleased to build myself a mansion upon the sea-shore where I can enjoy my pleasure-boat as it glides along with its purple sails, and so to pass my days in ease and luxury."

"Remember, however," I replied, "that before you can get your lordly mansion, we shall again and again have to sleep under the open sky of the cheerless West; and before you arrive at all your luxury, you will have to put up with many a coarse and meagre meal."

"All the more pleasant will be the retrospect," rejoined Hanno; "and when we come to recline upon our costly couches it will be a double joy to dwell upon our adventures, and relate them to our listening guests."

Conversation of this character engaged us till we reached the cypress-grove, from which the temple of Ashtoreth upreared its silver-plated roof. The setting sun was all aglow, and cast its slanting rays upon the fabric, illuminating alike the heavy gilding and the radiant colours of the supporting pillars. Flocks of consecrated doves fluttered in the sacred grove, alighting ever and again upon the gilded rods that connected one pillar with another. Groups of girls were frequently met, dressed in white, embroidered with purple and silver, either hastening, pomegranates in their hands, to make a votive offering at the shrine, or sauntering leisurely in the sacred gardens. Ever and again, as the temple-doors were opened, there was caught the distant melody of the sistra, flutes, and tambourines, upon which the priests and priestesses were celebrating the honour of their goddess. Such were the sounds, the modulated measures of the music mingled with the soft cooings of the doves and the joyous laughter of the heedless maidens, that combined to make a mysterious murmur that could not fail to impress the minds of such as us, rough mariners unaccustomed to anything more harmonious than the groanings of the waves, the creaking of our ships, and the howling of the wind.

I went with Himilco to consult the tariff of the sacrifices, which was exhibited, engraven on a tablet and affixed to the feet of a huge marble dove at the right-hand entrance to the precincts of the temple. As my own offering, I selected some fruit and cakes, the value of which did not exceed a shekel, and was just turning back to call Hanno, when I encountered a man in a dirty and threadbare sailor's coat, who was hurrying along, muttering bitter curses as he went.

"Help me, Baal Chamaim, Lord of the heavens!" I involuntarily exclaimed; "is not this Bodmilcar, the Tyrian?"

The man paused, and recognised me in a moment; and we exchanged the warmest greetings.

⁸ Astarte. The Aphrodite of the Greeks; the goddess of navigation, and the national deity of the Sidonians.

⁹ The stars in the constellation of Ursa Major were also tutelary deities of navigation; the pole-star by the Greeks being called "the Phœnician."

Bodmilcar, whom I had thus unexpectedly met, had been one of my oldest associates. Many a time, alike in expeditions of war and commerce, he had commanded a vessel by my side. He was likewise already acquainted with Himilco, who consequently shared my surprise and regret at meeting him in so miserable a plight.

"What ill fate has brought you to this?" was my impatient inquiry. "At Tyre you used to be the owner of a couple of gaouls¹⁰ and four good galleys; what has happened? What has brought it about that you should be here in nothing better than a ragged kitonet?"¹¹

"Moloch's¹² heaviest curses be upon the Chaldeans!" ejaculated Bodmilcar. "May their cock-head Nergal¹³ torture and burn and roast them all! My story is soon told. I had a cargo of slaves. A finer cargo was never under weigh. The hold of my Tyrian gaoul carried Caucasian men as strong as oxen, and Grecian girls as lissome as reeds; there were Syrians who could cook, or play, or dress the hair; there were peasants from Judæa who could train the vine or cultivate the field. Their value was untold."

"And tell me, friend Bodmilcar," I inquired, "where are they now? Did they not yield you the countless shekels on which you reckoned?"

"Now! where are they now?" shrieked out the excited man; "they are every one upon their way to some cursed city of the Chaldeans, on the other side of Rehoboth. Instead of shekels I have got plenty of kicks and plenty of bruises, of which I shall carry the marks on my body for a long time to come. The naval sufferer gave me a few zeraas,¹⁴ just to relieve my distress, and had it not been for that, I should not have had a morsel of bread to keep life in me. It is now three days since I arrived in Tyre, and to get here I have been continually walking, till my feet are so swollen I can hardly move."

"You mean you have walked here?" said Himilco, compassionately. "But surely you might have found a boat of some sort to bring you?"

"Boat!" growled Bodmilcar, almost angrily; "when did boats begin to journey overland? Did I not tell you I came from Rehoboth in the land of those cursed Chaldeans? But hear me out, and you will sympathise with my misfortune. I started first of all along the coast, buying slaves from the Philistines, and corn and oil from the Jews. I went across to Greece, and made some profitable dealings there. I chanced upon a few wretched little Ionian barques, and secured some plunder so. Then I conceived the project of going through the straits, and I succeeded beyond my hopes in getting iron, and, what is more, in getting slaves from Caucasus. My fortune was made. I was proceeding home, when just as we neared the Phasis, on the Chalybean coast, some alien gods – for sure I am that neither Melkarth nor Moloch would so have dealt with a Tyrian sailor – some alien gods, I say, sent down a frightful storm. With the utmost peril I contrived to save my crew and all my human cargo; but the bulk of my goods was gone, and my poor vessels were shattered hopelessly. There was but one resource; I had no alternative but to convey my salvage in the best way I could across Armenia and Chaldea by land, consoling myself with the expectation of finding a market for the slaves along the road. But once again the gods were cruelly adverse. We were attacked by a troop of Chaldeans; fifty armed men could not protect a gang of four hundred slaves, who, miserable wretches as they were, could not be induced by blows or prayers to lift up a hand in their own defence. The result was that we were very soon overpowered, and that, together with all my party, I was made a prisoner. The Chaldeans proposed to sell us to the King of Nineveh, and I had the pleasure of finding myself part and parcel of my own cargo."

¹⁰ Gaoul, a round ship, employed in merchant service.

¹¹ Kitonet, a short tunic, worn by Phœnician sailors.

¹² Baal Moloch, the sun god.

¹³ Nergal, the Chaldean god of fire and war, always represented with a cock's head.

¹⁴ Zeraas, small copper coin.

"But, anyhow, here you are. How did you contrive to get out of your dilemma?" I asked my old comrade.

Bodmilcar raised the skirt of his patched and greasy kitonet, and displayed a long knife with an ivory handle hanging from his belt.

"They forgot to search me," he said, "and omitted to bind me. The very first night on which there was no moonlight I was entertaining a couple of rascals who had charge of me, by telling them wonderful tales about Libyan serpents, and about the men of Tarshish who had mouths in the middle of their chests, and eyes at the tips of their fingers; openmouthed, they were lost in amazement at the lies I was pouring into their ears, and were entirely off their guard. I seized my opportunity; and having first thrust my knife into the belly of one of them, I cut the throat of the other and made my escape. I took to my heels, and, Moloch be praised! the rascals failed to find a trace of me. But now that I am here, the gods only know what is to become of me. If I fail to get service as a pilot, I must enter as a common sailor in some Tyrian ship."

"No need of that, Bodmilcar," I exclaimed; "you have made your appearance just at a lucky moment. All praise to Ashtoreth! you are just the man I want. I have a commission from the King to fit out ships for Tarshish; I am captain of the expedition, and here at once I can appoint you my second in command. My pilot is Himilco; and here is Hanno, my scribe; we are on our way to the temple of the goddess, and are going in her presence to draw up the covenants."

"Joy, joy, dear Mago!" ejaculated Bodmilcar; "may the gods be gracious to you, and repay your goodness! I shall not regret my disaster at the hands of the Chaldeans, if it ends in a voyage to Tarshish with you. Only let Melkarth vouchsafe us a good ship, and with Himilco to guide our course, we cannot fail to prosper, even though our voyage be to the remotest confines of the world."

Hanno, who meanwhile had joined us, took out from his girdle some ink and some reeds, with a little stone to sharpen them, and having seated himself upon the temple steps, proceeded to draw up the articles which appointed me admiral of the expedition, Bodmilcar vice-admiral, and Himilco pilot-in-chief. Himilco and myself both affixed our seals to the document, and Bodmilcar was proceeding to do so likewise, feeling mechanically for his seal, which he remembered afterwards that the Chaldeans had stolen. I gave him twenty shekels to buy another, and to provide him with a new outfit of clothes. Then, with Himilco, I proceeded to make my oblation of fruits and cakes to Ashtoreth; and in the highest spirits we made our way to the harbour, where our light vessel, the *Gadita*, was awaiting us.

Early next morning we set vigorously to work. I drew out the plans of my vessels upon papyrus sheets. My own *Gadita* was to be kept as a light vessel; but I resolved to have a large *gaoul* constructed as a transport to carry the merchandise, and two barques to act as tenders to the *gaoul*, which would draw too much water to approach very near the shore. As an escorting convoy I chose two large double-decked galleys,¹⁵ manned by fifty oarsmen, similar to those recently invented at Sidon. At this period, the Tyrians had three of these galleys in port; they were very rapid in their course, and drew very little water; they were armed with strong beaks at the prow; were worked both by oars and sails, and were adapted either for war or commerce.

I determined to use cedar for the keel and sides of my vessel, and oak from Bashan, in Judæa, for the masts and yards. I discarded the ancient method of making my sails of Galilean reeds or papyrus-fibre, preferring to have them woven out of our excellent Phœnician hemp, which the people of Arvad and Tyre are skilful in twisting into a very substantial texture. It was of the same material that I resolved to make my ropes.

As I was going through the arsenal, and wondering at the accumulated mass of copper, I espied a little store of the beautiful white tin obtained from the Celts in the distant islands of the far north-west. Previously to my own voyage those islands had been all but unknown, and I believe that I may

¹⁵ For details of the construction of these galleys, see notes at the end of the Volume.

say that my own investigation of them has conferred as great a benefit upon the Phœnicians as they had reaped two hundred years before by the discovery of the silver mines of Tarshish.

The sight of the copper determined me upon carrying out a plan which I had for some time been contemplating. It occurred to me that if the keel and flanks under water were protected with copper in the same way as the prows had hitherto been, the solidity of the vessel would be greatly increased, and the wood would be far less liable to decay. Accordingly, I made up my mind to protect the prows of the galleys with a hard alloy of copper and tin, and to sheathe the keels and flanks of all the four vessels with plates of wrought copper. The copper of Cyprus I rejected as being too soft and spongy for my purpose, and that of Libanus as far too brittle; but the firm yet ductile Cilician metal suited me admirably, and Khelesh-baal, the renowned Tyrian founder, set to work at once to forge me some large sheets, three cubits¹⁶ long by two wide.

The King had placed 200 workmen at my disposal; and, in order that I might better superintend their operations, I took a lodging with my three friends in a house at the corner of the Street of Caulkers, just opposite the arsenal, and there from my window upon the fourth floor I could well overlook the men working in the docks below. I directed Hanno to make out a list of the goods we should require for barter, and he and Himilco chiefly busied themselves in collecting the things together; whilst Bodmilcar, with two of my sailors, kept perambulating the neighbourhood of the harbour, succeeding tolerably well in securing recruits for my crew from amongst the seamen who were loitering about the quays, with tilted hats, looking out for employment.

On the first day of the month Nisan,¹⁷ just four weeks after I had undertaken my commission, I returned home for my evening meal, and found my companions in hot dispute.

"How now!" I cried, on entering the room; "what's this? What is the meaning of this angry contention?"

"I am telling Bodmilcar," said Hanno, "that he has about as much brains as a bullock, and about as much elegance as a Bactrian camel."

"And am I to endure this insolence from a young stripling?" cried Bodmilcar, angrily; "am I to put up with it from a fresh-water lubber, who will cry like a baby at the first gust of wind, and implore us to put him on shore again? He has lived among women and scribblers till he has no more pluck in him than a garden-tortoise."

"I confess," rejoined Hanno, sarcastically, "that I have not had your experience; I have not had the advantage of being pounced upon by the Chaldeans, or of being thrashed by my own slaves. But let me say, I am twenty, and that I hope the first time you find me funking the sea, you will pitch me overboard like an old sandal. Anyhow, I have had a voyage as far as Chittim;¹⁸ I have been amongst the Ionians, and can speak their language ten times better than any one among you."

"Talk to me about the Ionians," shouted Bodmilcar in a fury, "and I will break every bone in your precious skin."

And, as he spoke, he laid his hand upon his knife; but Hanno, without flinching for a moment, caught up a large pitcher that was standing on the table.

"Steady, steady!" interposed Himilco, "or you will be spilling all the nectar;"¹⁹ and whilst I laid a firm grasp upon Bodmilcar's arm, he rescued the pitcher, and deposited it safely in the corner of the room.

Then addressing myself to the two excited combatants, I said: "Now then, I cannot permit this altercation; you are both under my orders, and you must both submit; conduct yourselves amicably,

¹⁶ The common cubit is about 16 inches.

¹⁷ Nisan; part of March and April.

¹⁸ Chittim, the classical *Citium*, a Phœnician colony in Cyprus.

¹⁹ Nectar; the sweet and perfumed wine of the Phœnicians, said by the Greeks to be the drink of the gods.

or it shall be the worse for him that disturbs the peace. But what is the meaning of this chatter about the Ionians?"

Hanno held out his hand to me, in token of submission, expressed his regret for having given offence to Bodmilcar, and assured me that he had only spoken in jest.

"You see now," I said to Bodmilcar, "Hanno is not your subordinate, and you are bound to treat him as your equal. However, what is it that he has said to offend you so grievously?"

Bodmilcar seemed abashed; he stood twirling his beard, and without raising his eyes, said:

"Amongst the slaves that the Chaldeans captured, there was one Ionian girl that I thought to make my wife. I spoke of her to Hanno, but he only jeered me; he told me that the girl had gone off with the Chaldeans of her own accord, merely to get out of reach of me; and his provocation made me angry."

"Nay, nay," said Hanno: "I did not want to make him angry; it was a thoughtless joke; he was somewhat old, I said, for so young a bride, and Ionian girls generally like the perfume of flowers and the fragrance of sweet spices better than the smell of tar."

"It was wrong of you," I said, as sternly as I could, though I really felt inclined to laugh.

To my suggestion that they should make up their quarrel with mutual pledges over a cup of wine, Hanno eagerly responded, "With all my heart, and Ashtoreth give me my deserts if ever wilfully I offend his grey hairs again;" but Bodmilcar took the proffered hand coldly, and with evident constraint.

Seeing that all immediate peril of a smash was over, Himilco brought forward his pitcher again from its place of safety. I heard nothing more of the disagreement; but I could not help noticing that Bodmilcar was never again the same in his demeanour towards Hanno, and that he did not speak to him any more than he could avoid.

About a week later, as I was in the arsenal for the purpose of selecting the ropes for the rigging, Himilco came running to me to inform me that one of the King's servants had arrived with a message that was to be delivered to myself. I went to meet the messenger. He was a tall Syrian eunuch with frizzled hair and painted face, arrayed in a long embroidered robe, and wearing large gold earrings after the fashion of his country. He held a long cane surmounted by a golden pomegranate, and spoke with a languid lisp.

"Are you Captain Mago, the King's naval officer?" he asked, as he eyed me from head to foot.

Receiving my reply, he continued: "I am Hazael, of the royal household; here on my finger you may see the signet which empowers me to exercise my authority. The purpose of my visit is to inspect the vessels you are building; but specially my object is to give instructions that proper accommodation shall be provided for myself, and for a slave that I have to conduct from my master to Pharaoh, King of Egypt. Two proper berths must be prepared; and the King's orders are that you are to remit us to Egypt after you have visited Jerusalem."

"As to your directions about berths," I replied, utterly astonished at his cool effrontery, "you must permit me to remind you that on board ship the captain, with his pilot under him, invariably allots the place for every passenger."

"Be it so," rejoined the eunuch; "yet it is imperative that separate apartments, tapestried and carpeted suitably, should be provided for myself and for the royal slave. Impossible for us to live in contact with the rough and tarry seamen."

I felt a strong inclination to let Hazael experience how he relished lying full length upon a heap of rubbish that was close at hand; but I controlled my indignation and said:

"I will contrive something. I will either make a partition in a corner of the hold, or put up a cabin of planks upon the deck; but whatever is done must not interfere with the working of the ship. When I have made the provision in space, I leave you to fit and furnish as you please; but mark you this, your curtains and carpets will be ruined in the first tempest that we get. However, that is your concern, not mine."

"Each of the cabins," complacently continued the eunuch, "must be twelve cubits by six; there must be six benches of sandal-wood and ivory; the bedsteads must be inlaid; the windows must be framed and fitted perfectly."

"Fitted!" I rejoined: "have I not told you already that you may furnish and adorn the cabins as you will: their size, their position must rest with me: in such matters my authority is supreme. You may tell your royal master from me that adequate accommodation shall be provided, but that with my arrangements no one is at liberty to interfere."

The eunuch looked aghast at my temerity; but he seemed somehow to comprehend that I was not to be trifled with. He muttered a few words to the effect that I had better see that everything was duly done, and without a word or gesture of leave-taking, turned on his heel and sauntered leisurely away. I watched him for a moment, and turning to Himilco, who had been near enough to overhear the conversation, I said:

"Unless I reckon badly, that fellow will give us some trouble before we have done with him."

"Ah, no; I'll take care of that," said Himilco. "Sooner than the painted hound should interfere with us too much, I'd have a rope to his heels, and he should dangle, head in the water, all the way from Joppa to Tarshish. 'Tis not for us to permit ourselves to be treated like dogs."

"No," said I; "but maybe, all will go well; Moloch will be our guardian; and once at sea we shall not fail to secure the protection of our Ashtoreth. To tell you the truth, I am really far more apprehensive about Hanno's pranks with Bodmilcar."

"We must hope for the best," replied Himilco. "Bodmilcar will be on board the gaoul, and we will contrive for Hanno to come with us in one of the galleys."

"True," I assented; "it is indispensable that they should be separated. But with regard to this eunuch's requirements; I hardly see whether it will be better to provide the cabins in the gaoul, as being the more roomy, or to have them under my own supervision. Plague upon the slave and eunuch both!"

At that moment Hanno came up, with his roll of papyrus in his hand, and caught the tenor of our conversation.

"A slave and an eunuch to go!" he exclaimed. "Surely the charge of them ought to fall to *my* lot. Such duties ever belong to a scribe. Besides, I have made some progress in the studies of a magician; and better even than a magician I could humour their fancies, and understand their likes and dislikes."

I expressed my opinion that they would have enough of magicians in Egypt whither they were going, and resolved that I would keep them under my own eye.

"There's an end then to all my pretty scheme of teaching them calligraphy, rhetoric, and what not," said Hanno, smiling. "I must fall back, I see, upon my own accounts."

He unfolded his roll, and submitted to me his reckoning of the amount that would be requisite to pay our sailors and our oarsmen, at the same time handing me his statement of the sums that had already been expended in the purchase of the goods for barter.

The outlay far exceeded the golden talent, the thousand shekels, which the King had advanced. He had, however, commissioned me to spare no expense, and had promised to meet all reasonable demands, so that I felt no uneasiness, but sent Hanno straight to the palace to exhibit the accounts and to ask for a further grant. The request was most generously met.

Meanwhile, Himilco and I continued to employ ourselves in having planks of fir from Senir²⁰ fitted to the flanks of our vessels, and in rigging our heavy masts of oak with yard-arms of cedar.

Our work progressed to our entire satisfaction. The *Gadita* was repaired and entirely refitted; the figure-head, an immense horse, was illuminated with dazzling enamel eyes; the sides of the vessel were painted red upon a black ground; and twelve shields of bronze, each glowing in the centre with a polished copper boss, were hung outside.

²⁰ Senir, in Libanus, now Djebel Sannin.

After everything had been completed, I obtained permission for the *Gadita* to be conducted with great ceremony, to the music of trumpets and cymbals, into the basin of the harbour. For the occasion the naval suffect lent me a large purple sail, reserved expressly for state festivities; twelve armed sailors, lance in hand, stood behind the shields of bronze; and twenty-two oarsmen, plying their oars in regular cadence, made the ship glide swiftly through the water. Gisgo, the helmsman, from his station in the stern, deftly wielded the tiller, according to the directions of Himilco, whose place was at the prow. Bodmilcar, Hanno, and myself were upon the poop. We were all of us in state attire, and were conscious of a keen enjoyment of the admiring gaze of the crowds of sailors who thronged, not only the adjacent quays, but the terraces of the arsenal and of the admiralty palace, and watched our manœuvres. The naval suffect was himself one of the spectators; he was seated at the grand entrance of the palace, just above the flight of steps that led down to his official wharf. So pleased he was with the appearance of the *Gadita*, that he invited all the officers to sup with him in the evening, and sent a sheep, a large jar of wine, two baskets of bread, a supply of figs and raisins, and twelve cheeses, for the entertainment of our sailors.

Arrived at the palace, we passed up the narrow staircases and dim corridors of the eastern tower, and found ourselves in a large round room with a lofty dome, from the centre of which there hung a polished copper lamp. The suffect paid us many compliments; and, on learning that we should be ready for our outfit within ten days, he gave me permission to go next morning and to choose whatever arms would be requisite for the expedition.

After our entertainment we embarked from the suffect's private wharf, intending to return, all of us, to our own quarters on shore; but all at once Bodmilcar declared himself so enamoured of the *Gadita*, that he resolved to sleep alone on board. As our boat was silently threading its way along the canal that intersected the mainland, cutting off an island by its course, Hanno commenced singing in a foreign language. My attention was arrested, and I asked him what language it was. He replied that it was Ionian, and expressed his surprise that I did not understand it.

"No," I answered; "it is strange to me. I have sailed but rarely along those coasts. But haven't you done with the Ionians yet?"

"Oh, Bodmilcar is not here to get in a rage, and we have not got the slave amongst us to be affected by any songs of mine."

"The slave!" I exclaimed with wonder. "I did not imagine that the slave would care for your songs. Is she an Ionian?"

Hanno laughed, and made me no answer; but after a while he yielded to my persuasion, and made me acquainted with all he knew.

"Hazel the eunuch," he said, "is a chattering fool. When I went to the palace I saw him, and wormed out of him that the slave in question had been brought from some Chaldean merchants, and that she had been originally carried away from her own country by a Tyrian pirate, so that the whole truth was not hard to guess."

"Not a word of this," I said; "not a word to Bodmilcar. More than ever it makes me resolve to have both eunuch and slave on board my own galley; otherwise I foresee there will be no end of mischief. Neither you nor Himilco must breathe a syllable until we have seen our unwelcome passengers securely landed at their destination."

Each promised faithfully to preserve the strictest reticence: Hanno, for his part, vehemently asseverating that if a word upon the matter should escape him, he would forthwith cut off his tongue, and devote himself to Horus, the Egyptian god of silence.

As we now reached our lodging, the conversation dropped, and for the next few days we were far too much engaged in active duties to think any further of what had transpired.

I gave my own personal superintendence to the weaving of all the sails, which were made strictly after the directions prescribed by the goddess Tannat.²¹ I saw that my ropes were well twisted and thoroughly tarred; and I arranged the benches for my oarsmen with such compactness that there was only an interval of a hand's breadth between the seat of the rower on the upper tier and the head of the man in the tier below.

To give extra strength to the masts and yards, I had them bound at regular distances with bands of ox-hide, and finally I had the entire hulls plated with sheets of copper, fastened together with bolts of bronze.

Never had prouder ships been launched upon the Great Sea.²²

²¹ The Grecian *Tamith*; according to the Phœnician legend, she was the inventor of sails.

²² The Mediterranean.

CHAPTER II

THE SACRIFICE TO ASHTORETH

Two days before the great spring festival which celebrated the re-opening of navigation, and which was observed as a national holiday, our ships were ready in the stocks, and in the course of three hours were launched without difficulty.

The two galleys were each seventy-two ordinary cubits (or sixty-two sacred cubits) long by seventeen wide. The gaoul, with its keel of one solid piece of cedar, was sixty-seven cubits in length by twenty in width; it had three decks and, as I have said, two tiers of rowers; the decks were four cubits apart, and were raised fore and aft, so as to make the elevation sixteen cubits above the water, whilst in the centre it did not exceed twelve cubits. The galleys, when carrying their full burden, and the double line of oarsmen, stood each eight cubits above the water-line. Each contained space enough to take 150 sailors and 50 rowers; but hitherto I had only engaged 200 seamen, expecting that I should be able to enlist the services of 100 soldiers and archers who would be willing to take a share of the working of the vessel. The number of the crew of the gaoul was complete; the *Gadita* had likewise her full complement of thirty-seven men, and the barques their crews of eight. These two small craft were to be kept constantly in tow, and would consequently be in no need of a pilot; but each of the larger vessels was provided with two pilots, one at the prow, one at the stern, Himilco being pilot-in-chief. At the top of every mast, there was a look-out place, constructed of fir-wood from Senir, for the purpose of sheltering the man on watch. The apertures for the oars were arranged at equal distances along the sides; and all the vessels, after they had been caulked and tarred, were made to correspond with the *Gadita* by being painted black with red lines. Hanno had drawn up a document for each of the captains, containing the names of the respective crews, and a complete list of every piece of spare rigging on board, with a register of the place where every article was stored. All the arms, the bedding, the cooking-utensils, the water-barrels, had their positions carefully recorded, and in the crew's quarters between decks, each seaman and rower had his berth distinctly marked with his own name. The cabin under the raised deck at the stern was reserved for the use of the captain and pilots, whilst that under the prow was set apart for the officers of the crew, and the captains of the men-at-arms. On all the vessels the arrangements were identical, with the exception that at the stern of the galley which I had chosen for myself I had ordered a boarded cabin to be erected, divided into two compartments by a partition, and lighted by two small windows, for the especial use of the eunuch and the King's slave under his charge.

Hanno was extremely interested in the selection of good and appropriate names for the ships. At his wish, the gaoul, which was under the command of Bodmilcar, and numbered a large proportion of Tyrians amongst its crew, was named after Melkarth, the god of Tyre. One of the galleys was named the *Dagon*, being placed under the protection of the Philistine god of fish; whilst the one on which we ourselves were about to embark was dedicated to the Sidonian goddess Ashtoreth, to whom we were personally bound by an especial reverence. Associated with these divinities, of course it was out of all character that the *Gadita* should retain her previous name; accordingly, at Himilco's request, and in consideration that she was to sail at the head of the squadron, we gave her the designation of the *Cabiros*. Bodachmon, the high priest of Ashtoreth, undertook to present us with images of the various deities to be kept on board the ships which were severally dedicated to them.

Bodmilcar was assigned the command of the *Melkarth*, and her attendant barques; Hasdrubal, a Sidonian, was appointed to the charge of the *Dagon*; and the *Cabiros* was confided to the care of Hamilcar, another Sidonian, a bold and experienced seaman.

On board the *Ashtoreth*, my flag-ship, I took for my personal staff Hanno as scribe, Himilco as head pilot, and Hannibal of Arvad (whom I knew to be a strong, brave man) as commander of my men-at-arms.

Fore and aft of each of the ships Hannibal placed two machines of his own invention for hurling stones and darts, and called "scorpions;" thus, with the exception of the *Cabiros*, which being small could only carry two, every vessel was provided with four of these powerful engines.

We worked hard throughout the greater part of the night and all the following morning in packing and stowing the freight of our little fleet as it lay in the inner basin of the trade harbour, and the *Cabiros* joined us to receive her portion of the cargo and provisions. Towards the middle of the day we found time for rest and refreshment. Anticipating our departure on the morrow, several of us met for a frugal meal in a tent that had been erected for our accommodation on one of the quays. The three captains, the commander of my men-at-arms, the chief pilot, and myself, had just seated ourselves at the table, when the curtain that covered the entrance was drawn aside by one of the sailors, and Hazael the eunuch was announced.

Hazael entered with his usual lazy saunter; behind him was a train of six slaves carrying baskets, boxes, and bundles, and accompanied by a workman with a hammer and a variety of tools. Outside, mounted on white asses, were two women, one of them closely veiled; the face of the other was uncovered, and by her red skull-cap with its gold band and dependent white veil, as well as by her frizzled hair and prominent features, I recognised her at once as a daughter of Israel.

"We have come," said the eunuch, without pretence of courteous salutation, "to take possession of our berths, and to stow away our baggage."

Hanno started to his feet. I laid my hand upon his arm, and asked him what he was about to do.

"To stow away the baggage for them," he replied; adding, "unless, captain, you forbid me."

"Better for you," I continued, "to remain where you are; I have other business for you to do. This falls best to Himilco's duty. Go, Himilco," I said, turning to the pilot, "go and assist Hazael to arrange his property and see to the accommodation of the women."

Himilco emptied his glass, and, not without a longing glance towards the jar of wine round which we were sitting, left the tent. Hanno, who had fallen back to his seat with an assumed air of indifference, now asked:

"And what is the business for which you want me?"

"You must go," I answered, "to the temple of Ashtoreth to prepare for our sacrifice to-morrow: you must procure us some birds to take with us on board our ships; in stormy weather they will show us which way lies the land: you must find the naval suffect, and deliver him a list of all the crews, and a catalogue of all the cargoes; most of all, you must wait upon the royal treasurer and furnish him with an abstract of all accounts. Is not all this enough for you to do?"

"No time, I see, then, for me to lose," said Hanno, with impetuous eagerness; and snatching up his papyrus roll, he ran hastily away. It was my impression, as I caught sight of him through the half-opened curtain of the tent, that he turned, not in the direction of the temple, but towards the harbour-basin; however, when he came back in the evening all his commissions had been fully and faithfully executed, and I thought no more of the matter.

On his return he was accompanied by one of the officials of the temple, carrying on his head some large bird-cages made of palm-wicker. Hanno himself held a smaller cage, containing four pigeons of a rarer sort, a beautiful shot plumage glittering gaily on their breasts.

"If these birds don't bring us good luck," he said, "I am sure no others will; they come straight from the temple of Ashtoreth, and were handed over to me by the priestess herself, who made me promise that they should be prized according to their worth."

Each of the captains selected his proper share of the birds, with the exception of Bodmilcar, who contemptuously refused.

"Don't the birds suit you?" said Hanno; "what's the matter with them?"

"I want no pigeons," retorted Bodmilcar; "ravens are the birds for me, and I have taken enough of them on board already."

Hanno turned his back; but Himilco, who had witnessed what was passing, remarked:

"Fortunate for the passengers that they will not be on board the *Melkarth*. Far more congenial, I should think, the cooing of doves than the croaking of ravens, to the ears of an Ionian!"

"Ionian!" ejaculated Bodmilcar, turning pale, "is the slave an Ionian?"

In an instant I gave Himilco a sharp dig below the ribs to recall him to his senses, and as quickly he clapped his finger on his forehead, pretending to recollect himself: "No, no; not an Ionian; I mean a Lydian." And turning round to me he asked me whether he was right.

I made a sort of a gesture which I hoped would satisfy Bodmilcar, but he was manifestly still agitated; he made no further remark, but shortly afterwards quitted the room, mumbling unintelligibly as he went. As soon as his back was fairly turned, Hanno, who had been seated quietly arranging his papyrus leaves, rose from his seat, and advancing towards the door, made a low and solemn bow, a proceeding on his part that caused Himilco to burst into a roar of laughter.

"Our friend Bodmilcar," remarked Hannibal, "seems to be rather a morose sort of gentleman."

"Nothing of the sort, I assure you," said Hanno, satirically; "I hardly know a man of a brighter and more genial temperament; however, I confess that we may thank our stars that we have not to sail in the same ship with him."

Hannibal smiled, in token of assent.

Time to retire for the night had now arrived. We indulged in a parting glass, in recognition of our mutual hopes for the successful issue of the enterprise before us, and with no little emotion, parted to seek the repose which should prepare us for the ceremonial of the morrow.

Early in the morning I repaired to the arsenal, but not too soon to find the crews assembled each round its own captain. Hannibal had been successful in collecting together all the archers and the men-at-arms. Every captain was attended by his own trumpeter, in a scarlet tunic, the trumpeter of the military captain being distinguished by the magnitude of his trumpet, which was double the size of the others.

With effective precision Hannibal had arranged his soldiers in their ranks. The first rank was composed of twenty archers in white tunics, their heads covered with white linen caps, which were encircled by a band of leather studded with nails, and of which the ends hung down behind. They all wore scarlet waistbands, in which were inserted ivory-handled broadswords; their quivers were attached to a belt of ox-hide, that passed over the shoulder, and was ornamented with a profusion of copper studs. In his hand every one carried his long Chaldean bow, the upper extremity of which was carved to represent a goose's head. Next behind the archers were two ranks of armed men, twenty in each rank: they wore cuirasses composed of small plates of polished copper, and had helmets of the same material. Their tunics were scarlet, and hung below the cuirasses; on the left of their belts was a strong Chalcidian sword, and on the right an ivory-hilted dagger; one hand carried a large circular shield, ornamented in the centre with a deep-red copper figure of the sun; the other hand bore a lance, furnished with a long sharp point of bronze.

Hannibal stood at the head of his troop. He wore a Lydian helmet, surmounted with a silver crest, which was further adorned with a scarlet plume. The image of the sun in the middle of his shield was likewise silver, and around that was a circle of the eleven planets. His sword-handle was carved into the figure of a lion, the lion's head forming the guard. Like all the rest of the company he commanded, his feet and legs were protected by leather greaves or gaiters, laced up the front, and turned upwards at the point in the Jewish fashion. He no sooner saw me approaching than he unsheathed his sword, and his trumpeter sounded three blasts, an example which was followed by the other trumpeters, all blowing in unison, after which the captains and pilots advanced and made me a general salute.

Our seamen were provided with neither belts, shields, nor helmets, but carried large cutlasses below their kitonets; they wore pointed caps that covered the nape of the neck, similar to those that are constantly seen at Sidon. Hannibal proposed that they should be drawn up and drilled like the soldiers, but I did not acquiesce in his suggestion; I preferred allowing them to rove about at their pleasure, knowing that they could be drilled far better on board ship, after they had been regularly assigned their proper place and duties.

Hanno and Himilco, who had gone by my directions to see that everything was in readiness for the sacrificial rites, now joined us. They were accompanied by two men, each leading a superb bullock covered with purple housings, and with their horns decorated by fillets of embroidery, to which were attached little bells, which tinkled as they moved. Close in their rear followed my slave, carrying on his head a large basket of pomegranates, covered with a napkin embroidered with silver.

After he had stationed our four trumpeters in couples behind his own, Hannibal gave me to understand that he was only waiting for me to give the signal to march. No sooner had I signified my permission, than he shouted out the word of command, and the archers and men-at-arms doubled file and faced about with an alertness that elicited universal commendation. The trumpeters led the way with a flourish that was well-nigh deafening; the archers followed two and two; then came Hannibal at the head of his warriors, all shouldering their lances. My own place was the next; and I marched on, supported by Hanno and Himilco, and immediately followed by my slave and the two men who were in charge of the oxen devoted as victims for the altar; whilst behind us were the four troops of sailors, not marching in any special order, but each headed by its own captain and pilots. This irregular company brought up the rear.

The thoroughfares along which we passed were decorated gaily. In honour of the great yearly festival of Melkarth, which attracted the mass of all the surrounding population, they were profusely hung with coloured canvas of many a hue, and floating streamers of linen, dyed with the richest shades of purple, orange, green, and vermilion were interspersed amongst waving branches of palms and massy boughs of cedar. Each separate window was a separate centre of display. The people, in holiday attire, were wending their way in crowds in the direction of the island upon which stands the temple of Melkarth, but they stood aside in every portico to allow us to proceed; they were eager in their inquiries as to the meaning and purpose of our formal progress through the streets; and when they understood that we were marching to the shrine of the goddess Ashtoreth to make our sacrifice, and to intreat her favour upon an expedition to Tarshish which we were about to make, they rent the air with their boisterous acclamations. Men expressed their wonder at the concourse of our sailors and the quality of our oxen; women admired our attire and the carriage of our officers, being especially lavish in their praise of Hanno; the children ran after the procession, attracted equally by the glittering crest in Hannibal's helmet, by the glowing red of the trumpeters' tunics, and the swelling notes of their martial music. Every one was unanimous in declaring that never before had so magnificent a retinue left a Phœnician city on a distant enterprise.

As we passed along beneath the sycamines in front of the King's palace, the vast concourse that had assembled in readiness for the royal procession parted asunder to allow us room to pass, and the King's trumpeter and musicians, who were stationed at the gateway, broke out into strains of welcome. A messenger was observed hurrying down from the palace, and it was soon known that he came with orders for us to halt. Hannibal immediately made his men face about; the sailors, as it were involuntarily, turned towards the palace, and I myself, with Hanno and Himilco, advanced in the direction of the window at which the King is accustomed to show himself to his people, and which is easily distinguishable from the others by the gilding and tapestried hangings with which it is decorated. Meanwhile our trumpeters had taken up the strains of the royal march in concert with the King's musicians, and the melody was re-echoed by various bands in other quarters of the palace-yard.

Only a short time elapsed before the King presented himself at the window. An attendant, gorgeously attired, held over the King's head a purple canopy embroidered with gold and richly

jewelled; behind him could be seen the glittering helmets and cuirasses of his body-guard. Without a word of preface, he called me forth by name; and having prostrated myself to the earth in deep obeisance, in another moment I was standing with folded arms before him awaiting his commands.

He spoke to this effect:

"Mago! content I am with the preparation you have made. Well pleased I am with the way in which you have collected your seamen and equipped your warriors in behalf of my friend, my royal ally, King David. You quit these realms for the distant shores of Tarshish. May our guardian gods protect you! Hazael will deliver you the letters signed by my own hand, which you are to present to the various sovereigns who are my allies; to him I have further intrusted the papyrus roll on which my instructions are inscribed. Onwards now, fulfil your oblations to your goddess Ashtoreth. I go to render my sacrifice to our great Melkarth; but when I have discharged my vows, my purpose is to be myself a witness of your departure, and you shall not fail to have still further tokens of my favour."

Again I prostrated myself before the King, who then retired, leaving me to proceed upon my way, still heralded by the trumpets and greeted by the continuous acclamations of the people. We had hardly turned away, when the great gate of the palace was thrown open, and, headed by a band composed of trumpets, sistra, tambourines, and flutes, there issued the grand procession on its way to the island upon which rose the columns of the temple of Melkarth, the supreme deity of Tyre.

We had hardly reached the limit of the royal court-yard, when Bodmilcar, who had quickened his pace to overtake me, came to my side and said mysteriously,

"Melkarth is a great god!"

"Assuredly!" I said, but did not in the least comprehend his meaning.

"A great god is Melkarth of the Tyrians," he repeated. "Melkarth requires greater sacrifices than Ashtoreth: his sacrifices are large as Moloch's; and they are going to offer him some children to-day."

I assented, yet still failed to see his purpose; but after a little hesitation, he said:

"Might it be permitted me to take my Tyrians and to join the worship of our own Melkarth?"

The discovery of his intention vexed me exceedingly; it was mortifying to myself to see the number of my own retinue diminished, or to allow the dignity of our own observances to Ashtoreth to be curtailed; but I felt that I had no alternative than to comply with his request to make his sacrifice to the god of his peculiar veneration. Reluctantly I gave him my assent, and when we reached the steep street that led up to the elevated groves of "Baaltis-Ashtoreth,"²³ I saw that, instead of continuing with us, he dropped out of our line and joined himself with about thirty of our sailors to a procession that was conducting a chariot, resplendent with gold, and surmounted by a canopy ornamented with plumes of ostrich-feathers. This chariot was conveying the children that were to be offered as the victims of the sacrifice. To welcome the addition to the throng, the shouts of the populace and the clang of the cymbals burst forth with redoubled vehemence.

"How I hate that sacrificing of children!" said Hanno to me.

"Yes;" I concurred, "but if Moloch and Melkarth demand it, what can be said?"

"With all due reverence for Moloch and Melkarth," he continued, "I cannot but rejoice that Ashtoreth of Sidon makes no such request."

We had now turned into the pathway through the grove that winds up to the temple of Baaltis. By far the greater proportion of the temple-officials were absent, having gone to join the general celebration of the city in honour of Melkarth; only six priests and four priestesses remained. Seen through the hazy glow of the rising sun, the grove and temple looked surprisingly lovely, and one could hardly help being conscious of some feeling of regret at having to leave such charming scenes. But amidst all the fascination of the prospect, I realised how a perpetual residence in such an abode would make a man effeminate, and unfit him for peril and adventure; and proudly I recalled the recollection

²³ Baaltis, feminine of Baal, lord.

that apart from the enterprise of her sons, Phœnicia could have known no luxury: it was her commerce that had brought her wealth; and had it not been for their bold and undaunted navigation, the people might have seen their shores the prey of invading kings.

Hanno had manifestly been under a like influence, and had been following a kindred train of thought.

"Yes," he said, as if uttering aloud the conclusion of his own reflections; "yes, even if Pharaoh, Melek-David,²⁴ the Chaldeans and Assyrians all were to concentrate their hosts and fall on us Phœnicians, we could betake ourselves to our ships and brave them on the seas. Aye, though they should drive us out from our own domain, build ships, and encounter us upon the ocean where the supremacy has hitherto all of late been ours, yet we have Chittim, Utica, Carthage, Tarshish to fall back upon; the whole world is ours!"

"True," I replied; "in a sense, the world is ours: but it is nothing except our own undaunted perseverance that has made it so. We have had no kings to lead us on to vanquish neighbouring states; we have had no generals to gain us victories and acquire us power; but depending only on our native resources, trusting simply to our own courage, and relying on the good protection of our gods, we have traversed regions that were unexplored, and discovered wealth that was unknown. And now, none dares to assail us; we command the respect of all. None too proud to ask our aid, none too independent to own our service. Who procures Melek-David his choicest timber, his silver and gold? Who provides Pharaoh with balm, his jewels, his copper and his tin? From whom does the Assyrian seek his purple and glass, his ivory and embroidery? Who is the great purveyor of every luxury for every prince and magnate of the world? A Tyrian may well be proud when he claims all this for the mariners of Sidon and the merchant-princes of Phœnicia."

Stirred to emotion by my enthusiasm, Himilco took up the strain: "Yes; great and deservedly great is Tyre's renown. May her spirit of adventure never flag! For my part, give me but the favour of Cabiros for my guiding star, and I would not exchange my peaked sea-cap and ragged kitonet for the tiara sparkling with its fleur-de-lys,²⁵ and the mantle gorgeous with embroidered work that grace the King of Nineveh!"

Whilst we were thus indulging the spirit of our national pride, the priests within had been lighting the altar-fires and preparing the sacrificial basins, some of which they filled with water, leaving the rest empty. Hannibal had drawn up his men in order upon the temple-steps, making an imposing array: he had just put them in the form of a crescent, of which the archers in double file at the top were the extremities, the centre being made by the men-at-arms, four deep, and below, an avenue was left for the progress of myself and my companions, the oxen being conducted into the temple by an entrance at the back.

On our approach, our trumpeters gave a loud flourish, which was answered by the flutes and instruments within. The high priest advanced towards us and, in sonorous tones, exclaimed:

"Let Mago, the Sidonian, the son of Maherbaal, now draw near. Commander of the expedition, he comes to present himself before the goddess. Let him now approach, and all his followers attend him!"

Obedient to the summons, I ascended the steps, followed immediately by my slaves; Hanno and Hannibal were on my right hand; Hasdrubal, Hamilcar and Himilco on my left; behind us was the general throng of sailors and of oarsmen. At a sign from Hannibal, the soldiers shouldered their bows and lances, and having faced about, entered the temple by the two side doors, and completely lined the edifice.

An official proclaimed silence. "Order!" he shouted; "Mago, son of Maherbaal, makes an offering for his people."

²⁴ Melek was the title of the Kings of Judah, as Pharaoh was that of the Kings of Egypt.

²⁵ See note on Chap. II. at end of Volume.

It was the work of but a short time to bring in the oxen, and have them slain and quartered, and while this was being done my slave distributed amongst us the pomegranates he had brought. The high priest with much formality presented me with the shoulder of one of the victims, upon which, according to rule, I laid a purse containing six shekels of coined money. The officiating priest accepted the offering, and while he was proclaiming my liberality aloud, the sacerdotal scribe was inscribing the names of myself and my captains, together with the amount of my donation, in the temple register. The chief priest then took the breasts of the victims and placed them upon the altar, whence the smoke ascended high towards the round window in the dome. The black stone at Sidon is the true goddess, but here at Tyre, Ashtoreth is merely represented by a statue. Standing with his face towards this, the priest made his invocation and chanted some prayers to music, which gradually died away into perfect silence.

During the time that these ceremonies were proceeding, the remaining portions of the oxen were being steeped in the lavers, after which they were thrown into great caldrons, part to be boiled over the chafing-dishes in the temple-kitchen, and part to be cooked in the open air of the sacred groves. The sailors lent their ready assistance in kindling the fires and superintending the boilers.

The chief priest next handed me one of the bullock's breasts. I raised it on high with both hands before the goddess, and delivered it back to the priest, who turned it round three times, as if solemnly dedicating it to the deity on my behalf. Hanno went through a corresponding ceremony with the other breast, which was turned round seven times in behalf of us all.

I had given the scribe five shekels to provide us with bread for the entertainment, and in the name of the captains, pilots, and sailors, Hamilcar gave him eight shekels, a part to provide us with wine, a part as a free tribute to the goddess. He entered the several sums upon the registers, and the officiating priest again made a public announcement of our liberality. One after another we prostrated ourselves before the image of the goddess, the high priest made a short final invocation, and full of joy we withdrew from the temple to the adjacent grove. At a sign from Hannibal, the soldiers, who had stood mute and motionless throughout the ceremony, fell out of their ranks, and rushing in wild confusion, mingled with the sailors to assist them in preparing the banquet.

I took my seat at the foot of a noble cypress, and Hanno, Hannibal, and Gisgo, placed themselves as my supporters on either hand, Himilco charging himself with the duty of superintending the filling of a large earthenware vase with wine. My slave arranged the drinking-cups by placing mine (which had a lion's head at its mouth) in the centre, and disposing those of the captains in order round it. Hannibal's cup was of plated copper, with a stem and two handles, and embossed with flowers and bunches of grapes. Having done this, the slave went away, and returned ushering in two soldiers, who carried a huge caldron; they let the caldron down heavily on the ground, their cuirasses rattling again with their exertion. The lid of the caldron was at once removed; a large basket of bread had been handed round preparatory to the repast, and each man having brought out the wooden knife and spoon that he carried at his waist, the whole of us set ourselves to enjoy an abundant meal.

When the wine-cups had been distributed and charged, I rose from my seat, and raising my cup on high, drank to the health and welfare of the whole assembly.

"A goodly draught is this!" said Hannibal, when he had drained his cup to the very dregs; "it is the wine of my own city Arvad; it gives life and strength to those that drink it; hence Arvad's wide renown for wits and warriors."

"And Arvad's warriors," I said, turning to the captain, "deserve their fame. By-the-by, have your wide wanderings by sea and land ever taken you into Judæa before? Thither it is, you know, that we first direct our course."

"Truly, yes;" replied Hannibal, with his mouth full; "this very sword that I am wearing, and this purple shoulder-belt, were presents from Joab, the general and cousin of the King. I commanded twenty archers under him at the battle of Gebah, when the Philistines were defeated at the mulberry groves. Nor was that the only time. I was garrisoned for a year or more at Hamath, with the troops

of Nahari, Joab's armour-bearer, one of David's thirty-seven mighty men. It was on returning thence that I had the command of the soldiers on board the ship of our friend Hasdrubal here, at the time when the galleys of Sidon were sent to engage the Cilician fleet."

"Aye, I have heard of that expedition," said Himilco; "at that time we were far away at Gades."

"And we," broke in Hamilcar, "were in the service of Pharaoh, sailing along the coast of Ethiopia, beyond the Sea of Reeds.²⁶ What splendid shells were there, containing precious pearls! and one great fish there was that could swallow a man entire!"

At this moment one of the young priestesses approached our party, and handed Hanno a small packet, carefully wrapped in linen.

"This," she said to him, "is the image of Baaltis. Over it I have burnt the costliest perfumes; I have anointed it with the rarest ointments; I have laid it before the goddess, who has graciously accepted it. To you, Sidonian, I now entrust it, and may it bring good fortune to yourself and all who share your enterprise."

The high priest came in person to deliver us the other images of the gods, that of Melkarth alone excepted, which Bodmilcar himself was to convey from the temple to which he had separately gone.

The priestess offered to accompany us to our ships, that she might sprinkle the images on board before we took our departure.

Himilco craved permission to carry the image of the Cabiros down to the quay before resigning it to the keeping of the captain.

"How about your vow of twenty shekels and a bullock that you made to the Cabiri?" I asked him, as we rose to go.

"That will have to wait," he answered, "till I have come across that Tarshish rascal who deprived me of my eye. The patient gods, I have no doubt, will give me credit, and not require me to pay at once, or in advance."

Meantime Hanno had been uncovering his image of Ashtoreth, and was standing holding it in both hands and gazing at it with the profoundest admiration. It was an alabaster figure, with a necklace of three rows of gold beads and a pointed cap, beneath which flowed ample masses of wavy hair.

"I, too," said Hanno, "have made a vow to my goddess, but she has promised to abide my time, and to tarry till my expectations and my longings are fulfilled;" and as he spoke, he stooped and kissed the face of the image. I know not whether it was imagination on my part, but I certainly thought the cypresses around gave a soft yet perceptible rustle in response to his words. Perhaps the priestess observed it also, for she smiled on me, and laid her hand on Hanno's shoulder.

"But now, Captain Mago," she cried, "let us start. The time for embarkation is at hand, and the goddess pronounces that it is a favourable hour. Come, let us proceed!"

"To your ships, men; to your ships!" I shouted; and turning for a moment towards the temple, said, "Farewell, Baaltis, Queen of Heaven: to-night thou shalt behold us on the waters of the Great Sea!"

Hannibal, who had resumed his helmet, made a signal to the trumpeters to summon the soldiers and sailors. Hanno and the priestess came on one side of me; Himilco, carrying the image of his god, took his place on the other, and in the same order in which it had come, our *cortége* wended its way along the decorated streets down towards the port. The roads adjacent to the harbour and all the quays were so densely thronged, that it was only with considerable difficulty that we could force our way along. Every nation seemed to make its contribution to the crowd: besides the native Phœnicians, there were Syrians in their fringed and bordered robes; Chaldeans with their frizzled beards; and Jews in their short tunics and long gaiters, with panther-skins thrown across their shoulders. Again, there were Lydians with bands around their foreheads; Egyptians, some with shorn heads, and some with enormous wigs; Chalybeans, wild in aspect, and half naked; and men of Caucasus, gigantic in size

²⁶ Jam Souph, the Red Sea.

and strength. Many a far distant land had sent its sons to our Phœnician cities as the headquarters and the home of industry and commerce; Arabs and Midianites were here looking with astonishment at the height of the houses, and bewildered at the multitude of the population; whilst the Scythians of Thogarma, their legs strap-bound, moved with heavy strides, and looked around amazed, perplexed at the absence alike of horses and of chariots from the narrow streets.

The air was filled with songs and shouts of many a different tongue; the people jostled one another in their eagerness to catch a sight of whatever company came last in view. Every band of musicians enlisted its own admirers; every troop of priests attracted the closest scrutiny. Every regiment with its painted shield excited a perpetual interest; and as our own procession, with its trumpeters and soldiers and promiscuous groups of sailors, could not fail to draw a large and curious concourse, it was in the midst of a veritable whirl that we passed the arsenal and made our way to the reserved quay, where our ships, poops inward to the shore, had been left under the care of a few sailors.

Bodmilcar and the eunuch had arrived before us, and were standing in eager conversation on the gangway that led to the poop of the *Melkarth*. As soon as they observed us, they stopped abruptly, and Bodmilcar whistled for his sailors, whilst the eunuch advanced to meet me.

"Is all your baggage duly stowed on board?" I asked Hazael.

"It is," he answered; "but it disappoints me much that our berths have not been made upon this larger ship; here we might have far more space and comfort: however, it matters little; at the first point we touch we can make a change. Bodmilcar thinks it will be best we should."

"It cannot be," I said; "the King's slave has been entrusted to myself, and under my supervision she must be. The *Melkarth* is a transport, and the captain of a transport has no concern with passengers. I must hear no more of this. Do I understand aright that you have letters for me from the King?"

Without one word in reply, the eunuch handed me a box of sandal-wood, which I opened, and found it to contain several sheets of papyrus, on which were written various instructions to myself.

I was about to give orders to my trumpeter to proclaim silence, but before the words were out of my mouth, Bodmilcar rushed forward and threw himself into my arms.

"I have been sacrificing to Melkarth," he exclaimed; "I have paid my vows to my god, and I must unburden my conscience. I wish to ask pardon of any and of all to whom I have shown insolence or ill-temper."

Without hesitation, Hanno offered him his hand, assuring him that he fully forgave everything that had happened in the past, and that, forgetting all previous quarrels, for the future he would show him all proper deference, and yield to his authority. Pleased with this open reconciliation, I expressed my satisfaction that we were able thus to set out with so universal a spirit of harmony and of concord.

In the meanwhile the captains had severally collected their crews, and Hannibal had told off his men-at-arms, reserving ten archers and ten soldiers for our own ship. The priestess then, with the accustomed solemnities, presented each vessel with the image of its own peculiar divinity.

Before we started, our host, with whom we had been sojourning, accompanied by his wife and son, forced his way through the guards that had been keeping the inclosure, and came in haste to me.

"Mago, dear friend," he said, "I could not suffer you to go without seeing you once more. Here are cakes, and here is a basket of dried grapes; but, most of all, here are two goat-skins of genuine nectar. Accept them from me in token of my good-will. Farewell, and the gods grant you a prosperous voyage!"

"Farewell, honest pilot," said my host's wife to Himilco; "for you I have brought this goat-skin of Byblos, because I know there is no wine you like so well."

"Thanks, good hostess, many thanks," replied Himilco; "to me there is no wine that can compare with the rich and luxurious produce of Phœnicia. I shall not forget your bounty, and if only

our star shall favour us, and the *Cabiros* shall safely bring us home again, I promise to bring you such a gift as shall make the Tyrian women die with envy."

The son, a youth of about sixteen, was devotedly attached to Hanno, and only with the greatest difficulty could be dissuaded from accompanying him upon his voyage. As a farewell gift, he had brought his friend a large packet of the choicest reeds for writing; and the two parted with mutual expressions of affection.

Amongst those present there was yet another whom I regarded with the profoundest reverence, and whose knowledge was accounted as little short of divine. This was an aged priest, named Sanchoniathon,²⁷ the historian and chronicler of past events; although no traveller himself, he had acquired the fullest information concerning well-nigh every country of the world.

Addressing himself to me, he said: "Mago, my son, Hanno your scribe has undertaken to transmit to me, in writing, an account of whatever he may see rare or wonderful in the far-off lands to which you go; his genius seems bright and quick, but his youth renders him wild and unstable as a kid. Is it too much to ask of you that you will urge him on to keep his word?"

"To gratify you, my father," said Hanno, "I will do all I can to control the caprices and irregularities of my youth. My own indebtedness to you is great. I trust that I may not forget the lessons you have taught me; and if I can render any aid in enabling you to keep the Phœnicians informed of the wonders of the world, I shall be ready to show myself a pupil worthy of my master."

The aged Sanchoniathon then gave us his blessing. He had scarcely concluded his benediction when the priestess of Ashtoreth came by, returning from the ships. As she passed Hanno I distinctly heard her say in an undertone:

"She is as good as she is beautiful!"

"Hush!" he murmured; "I must forget her! Happy Pharaoh!"

Everything being reported ready, I ordered the trumpeters to sound the signal for departure, and we proceeded to embark. The first man to step on board was old Gisgo, the pilot of the *Cabiros*, commonly known as Gisgo the Celt, and perhaps still more frequently spoken of as Gisgo the Earless. He had been eight times on a voyage to the Rhone, and the story went that on one of his visits there he had married a Celtic wife, with yellow hair, who was still awaiting him in her native forests; on another occasion he had been taken prisoner by the Siculians, who had cut off both his ears. Having mounted the poop, the old man waved his cap and shouted cheerily:

"Mariners, mariners all! quick and ready! quick on board! rulers of the ocean! sons of Ashtoreth! listen to your captain's call. Tyrians and Sidonians! To sea! to sea! and long live Captain Mago!"

The men all hastened to their several ships, and as soon as I had taken my station on the raised bench of the poop of the *Ashtoreth*, my standard was hoisted as the signal of departure, the gangways were removed, the boathooks were driven vigorously towards the facing of the quay, and we were on our way.

The *Cabiros*, with its twenty-two oarsmen, took the lead; next came the *Ashtoreth*; the *Dagon* towed the *Melkarth*, which was too large to hoist a sail in port. Our little squadron floated on past the numerous ships that lined the quays, making its way through crowds of boats that darted to and fro, conveying the countless visitors to the island where the feast of Melkarth was still in course of celebration. Our trumpeters continued to blow, our oars rose and fell in regular cadence, and the voices of thousands of spectators kept up a perpetual acclamation.

From my own position I could overlook the decks of all the other vessels. Hanno was at my side, and Himilco stood at the bow giving his orders to the helmsman. Hannibal had made his warriors hang their shields over the ship's sides; every one had betaken himself to his proper post, Hazael the eunuch being no exception, as he had retired to the privacy of his own cabin.

²⁷ I am guilty of an anachronism here for the mere satisfaction of introducing the name of the great historian.

Passing the mouth of the trade-harbour, with its two watch-towers, we entered the canal that led to the island; it was covered with boats decorated with holiday-trappings; above it rose the palace of the naval suffect, its terraces all decked with coloured hangings, and thronged with a motley crowd. Beyond again, in the centre of the island, I could see the dome of the temple of Melkarth, the blue smoke of the sacrifices rising high above its ochred roof. I could even hear the uproarious clanging of the cymbals and the other instruments within.

The royal galley, escorted by the galley of the naval suffect, came forth to meet us. On the poop of the royal vessel was a raised platform, which shone as if it were a mass of solid metal, being covered entirely with cloth of gold and silver. The oars were faced with ivory; the sails were embroidered with silver thread, with representations of Melkarth, Moloch, and Ashtoreth, the large hyacinth-coloured sail in the middle being worked with green to imitate waves, from which rose the figure of Ashtoreth protecting the fish from the fury of Dagon. A full band of musicians was playing at the bows, and, on deck, a number of graceful women, wearing state tiaras and triple necklaces, performed upon gaily painted tambourines, and waved light rods adorned with little bells and tassels of pale green and purple. At the stern sat King Hiram. He wore a Phœnician cap, his beard was frizzled in the Syrian fashion, and he had two gold bracelets on each arm. His throne was of gold and enamel; the back of it was carved into the image of a ship, and the arms were representations of dolphins. In attendance, standing with folded arms, were his scribe and the keeper of the seals; behind him stood two officers, one of them holding the purple canopy of state, fringed with gold, the other carrying the royal standard, which bore, worked in silver on a hyacinth-coloured ground, representations of the sun and the planets, with the crescent moon above. The suffects were on board the Admiralty galley, surrounded by guards in Lydian helmets, whose silver shields and cuirasses glittered brightly in the sun.

At sight of the royal *cortège* I ordered my men to ship their oars and to bring our vessels to a standstill. A corresponding order was given to the royal ships, and it was but the work of a few minutes for the slaves to throw the ebony gangway across, and to cover it with a brilliant carpet. King Hiram rose from his seat and stepped on board, and I had the honour of conducting him all over my vessel, and of showing him the double deck, the stowage of the cargo, and the great earthen reservoirs of water. He went, unaccompanied, to visit the berth that had been provided for the slave, and before leaving, presented me, through his treasurer, with two talents of silver. When he had returned to his throne, the temporary passage was withdrawn, and at a signal from me, our hundred and twenty-two oars cleft the water without a splash. The trumpets sounded; soldiers, sailors, rowers, raised a tremendous cheer, and from my place I shouted aloud:

"Farewell, my King! Tyre and Phœnicia, farewell! And now, children of Ashtoreth, my crew, forwards, forwards!"

Quickly the squadron made its way past the two towers that guarded the military harbour, and on which perpetual watch was kept. I cast one look back at the canal with its swarm of gala-boats; at the quays still thronged with the motley crowd; at the city, rising like a vast white amphitheatre intersected by the threading of its narrow, crooked streets; at the mass of the yellow temple of Melkarth; at the great Admiralty Palace, above which were the glittering walls of the temple of Baaltis; and, last of all, at the heights of Libanus beyond, standing out green and black against the background of the sky. I turned away to give my attention to the ships that were dashing the snowy foam from their prows. The *Cabiros* was riding the waves like a dolphin; the *Melkarth*, now no longer in tow, and the *Dagon* were crowded with sail.

A favourable wind bore us onwards to the south-west, so that I gave orders that the galleys should hoist their sails, and that half the rowers should ship their oars and take an interval of rest. I sat down and gazed upon the broad and glittering ocean.

We were now fairly on our way to Tarshish.

CHAPTER III

CHAMAI RECOGNISED BY THE ATTENDANT OF THE SLAVE

In order to clear the White Cape in the south-west, I took an oblique course across the bay, on the north of which stands the city of Tyre. From White Cape²⁸ I should sight the distant promontory of Mount Carmel, and avoiding the deep waters of the bay to the north of this point, I should double it and coast along direct to Joppa.

The *Cabiros* was quite capable of making 1300 stadia²⁹ in twenty-four hours; but the gaoul, which was always in ordinary weather worked by sails and was now heavily laden, could not attain that speed; neither could the galleys. I succeeded in accomplishing a rate of 1000 stadia in the twenty-four hours, so that in about three hours after our departure we had rounded White Cape, and holding on by a south-west course, by nightfall had lost sight of land. Towards midnight Himilco roused me with the announcement that we were off Mount Carmel. I could just discern its bluff peak standing out in the moonlight, and gave instructions that our course should be changed to the south; at the same time I took the precaution to signal to the *Melkarth* to clew up her sail and use her oars, because we were again approaching the shore. A brisk breeze in the morning brought us in sight of the low, level coast of Palestine, and before noon we recognised Joppa by its elevated towers and surrounding groves of palms and wild fig-trees.

After passing the mouth of a river which empties itself about forty stadia north of the port, the *Cabiros* neared the shore, while the *Melkarth* and the two galleys, owing to the shallowness of the water, were brought to anchor at about a stadium and a half away.

The harbour of Joppa is insignificant, and has neither basins nor piers; scattered about the beach are a few cabins and dilapidated hovels, in the midst of which rises the small fortress of rubble built by King David when he opened traffic with the Phœnicians, and made Joppa the port whither the firs and cedars hewn down in Lebanon were brought on floats. A large Phœnician barque, and a miserable Egyptian craft, with a goose as its figure-head, were stranded in the mud below the beach, and on the beach itself were a few wretched boats belonging to the Jewish fishermen.

Taking Hanno and Hannibal with me, I went on shore in one of my small boats, for the purpose of paying a visit to the governor in command of the little garrison that occupied the fortress. Before, however, we had gone far, we saw the governor himself coming to meet us, followed by about fifteen men armed with swords, lances, and square shields. They wore linen girdles, fastened at the side by a strap, which was finished off at the end with a cut and polished flint. Their heads were bare, but their hair was arranged in a lot of little tresses; upon their feet and legs were long laced gaiters, and a panther's skin, according to Jewish habit, was thrown across their shoulders. The captain alone was distinguished by a cuirass, which was of copper, and badly made. As soon as I was within a few paces of him I stopped and made him my salute, a courtesy which he acknowledged, giving me to understand that he was already aware I came as an envoy from King Hiram.

"Peace be with you!" he said. "Having been informed of your arrival, I have come to offer you the escort to Jerusalem which you require. But now, I beg you, come to the fortress and partake of what hospitality we have it in our power to give."

We were pleased at our reception, and followed our host to the vaulted gate of the tower that overhung the fortress. He conducted us to a lofty chamber overlooking the sea, and made his servants spread a carpet over the floor, that was but roughly paved. The walls of the room were of the coarsest

²⁸ Now Ras-el-Abiad.

²⁹ That is, 32½ geographical miles, the rate given by Herodotus.

rubble and perfectly bare, the entire building being of the most meagre construction. Water, bread, dried figs, and cheese was the simple fare that was set before us, to which, however, there was added some very palatable wine, which the Jews, since their conquest of Syria, had been able to procure from Helbon.

While the repast was being prepared we interchanged mutual inquiries about ourselves and our respective kings, but the meal was no sooner ready than the Jewish commandant set us the example of eating by cramming his mouth chockfull of cheese.

Presently, as he observed me throwing glances round the room, he said:

"Ah, yes, you are thinking that we have not your Phœnician skill in building! We lack your taste and finish. But, remember, we have not your wealth nor your materials. However, you must recollect that this is only a poor straggling village; patience! and you shall see our populous cities, as well as our fertile country, before you reach Jerusalem."

"The land of Judah," said Hannibal, "is not unknown to me. I have traversed it already, and can bear witness to its richness and fertility; truly it is a land of olives, dates, and corn and wine. And not only are you husbandmen, you are proud of being warriors. Every nation has its own pursuit. We men of Tyre and Sidon for the most part are sailors full of ardour, and merchants full of enterprise: but yet I think we may boast of our warriors, too: Arvad, for instance, need not be ashamed of the generals she can show."

"True enough," rejoined the other, as his eye rested with involuntary admiration on Hannibal's arms and cuirass, "and no doubt Phœnician soldiers are well equipped."

"I can tell you," said Hannibal, "something that may perhaps surprise you. In spite of your keeping no standing army, and of your never admitting strangers into your service, I have myself served under your king. It happened in this way: when I was very young I was taken to the town of Cana, in the heritage of the sons of Asher; I grew up as a child of the tribe, and eventually, at the regular age, I was enlisted into your army."

The Jewish captain was delighted; he rose and embraced Hannibal, and in token of their friendship they partook of a cup of wine, which was afterwards passed on to Hanno and myself. "I belong," he said, "to the tribe of Judah, through whose inheritance we shall have to pass as we go to Jerusalem. The King is maintaining some troops at his own expense, and I am one of the captains of twenty. My mission here is to await your arrival; the requisite horses and asses are provided for your journey, and you may start whenever it suits your wishes; this very evening, if you choose."

"Impossible to-night," I answered; "I cannot be absent from the ships until I have returned and made all things ready. To-morrow, however, I shall be prepared."

As there seemed time at our disposal, he inquired whether he might not be permitted to visit our ships, suggesting that as we were Phœnicians, we might probably have commodities to offer that they might be glad to purchase.

I explained that being in the royal service we were not carrying any goods for commercial transactions, but had only such articles on board as we hoped to barter for the provisions that we might require on our way.

"In that case," he said, "I may perchance further your designs; we have flocks of goats, and we have balm and olives in abundance. I will serve you in any way I can. I am Chamai, the son of Rehaiah; my father is well known throughout the country."

I acquiesced in his wish of visiting our ships, and he followed me down after a very short interval.

During my absence the sailors had been displaying on the beach the few articles that they had brought for their own private benefit, and were driving a briskish trade with the fishermen and shepherds that had gathered round them. On board the *Melkarth* some of the barter-goods were already unpacked, and Hanno was not long in drawing up a list of such things as I was ready to part with, and such as I was anxious to procure in exchange. The additions to my store of which I was

in especial need were ten measures of grain, two measures of oil, a barrel of olives, half a measure of balm, six baskets of dried figs, six baskets of dates, and fifty cheeses; and I further instructed Bodmilcar, who superintended the exchanges, to purchase some sheep and kids, in order that our men should be adequately supplied with fresh meat until our arrival in Egypt. Other supplies would be requisite; but for these I reckoned upon the generosity of King David, and upon what I should be able to buy at Jerusalem.

Chamai expressed his great delight at the order and arrangement of our ships; and as almost everything presented some feature of novelty to him, he could hardly find words to describe his admiration. The discipline of the crews and the completeness of the rigging seemed equally to fill him with surprise. He accepted my invitation to remain to supper; and as we were all seated on the poop of the *Ashtoreth*, he gave a deep sigh, and exclaimed:

"How glorious your long voyages are! How glorious to be able to obtain the wealth that the Great Sea can give! Here, in our mountains, we are as ignorant as goats. From time to time we may plunder a few villages, but our chiefs always get the lion's share of the prey, which, after all, is meagre enough compared with what you gain by commerce."

I reminded him how that there was something more to charm an adventurer on the seas than merely getting wealth; there was the advantage of seeing the wonders of the world.

"Ah, yes," he assented. "I have heard your Phœnician merchants tell of enormous serpents, and of fishes fifty cubits long. I have listened to their tales of valleys full of precious stones, and mines with inexhaustible stores of silver and of gold. I know, too, that they relate wonderful stories about giants, and about mountains that belch forth fire and smoke."

"No doubt," I said, "you must allow a little for exaggeration in travellers' tales; but beyond a question there are strange sights for travellers to see."

"And do you not," he asked, "occasionally have to fight? I have had some experience in fighting; I have slain Moabites and Philistines with my own hand. I could fight again; and if you are likely to have any more fighting I should like to go with you. Could you not take me?"

Hannibal laid his hand upon Chamai's shoulder, and said: "Look here, captain. If you are in earnest, perhaps that might be done. I want forty recruits as archers. Would it be in your power to get them for us?"

"Yes, yes!" he cried eagerly, adding his accustomed oath, "in the name of El, the Lord of hosts."

"Get them then," I said; "and if they are forty sturdy fellows, fit for soldiers, you shall have the command of them, under Hannibal." I further delighted him by promising him a new cuirass, and a Chalybean dagger with an ivory handle.

"Long live the King!" he cried, in an ecstasy of joy; and Hannibal rubbed his hands with glee at the prospect of so successfully recruiting the number of his troops, saying that now they might face the world and conquer kingdoms.

"Whatever kingdoms I conquer," broke in Hanno, "I shall sell forthwith, subjects and all; I shall put them up to auction to the highest bidder, and shall purchase my palace with the proceeds. You, Himilco, shall be appointed cup-bearer. 'When the goat is gardener, the goat-skins are taken care of;' you know the proverb."

"But instead of talking about *your* feast," said Himilco, drily, "we may as well proceed to enjoy our own;" and he moved towards the table on which the supper had now been laid.

We had hardly commenced our repast, when a sailor came from Bodmilcar to announce that he had completed all his purchases. I inquired why the captain himself did not come to join our party. The man said that he could give no other reason than that he believed Bodmilcar had invited the eunuch to supper with him on board the *Melkarth*.

Hanno turned pale.

"That rascally eunuch, I fear, is manœuvring some mischief," I said, when the sailor had left us; "however, let us hope that the women are not in the plot."

Hanno was on the point of hurrying off immediately to the cabin, when the door opened, and the waiting-maid made her appearance, followed by her mistress, closely veiled.

"Never fear, captain," said the maid, smiling; "the hawk may fly, but the doves do not follow."

"Did he tell you to follow him?" I asked angrily.

"He did not insist upon it," replied the girl; "and we preferred remaining here; we had no taste for taking up our quarters on that big black ship."

I told her that she had only done right, and that I should reprimand Hazael most severely if he made the slightest attempt at removing them from my immediate supervision. She then made a request, to which I willingly acceded, that they might enjoy a stroll in the fresh air upon the deck; but before she turned away, Chamai, who had hitherto been engrossed in some military discussion with Hannibal, caught sight of her face, and suddenly starting to his feet, exclaimed:

"Abigail, you here!"

"Chamai, is it you?" she answered; and in an instant they were grasping each other's hands; and gazing in each other's eyes, they wept aloud.

As soon as Chamai had recovered his composure, he asked her by what strange chance it happened that she was on board a Phœnician vessel.

"Did you not know," she asked in return, "that the Philistines came down on Guedor, our native village, and carried me off to Askelon, and afterwards sold me to the Tyrians?"

"No," he said; "all this is new to me. I was away in the north, fighting against the King of Zobah, and since that time, have not been home."

It did not take Abigail long to regain all her wonted cheerfulness and vivacity; and she went on to tell how she had been purchased by the King of Tyre, and was now on her way to Egypt in attendance upon the Ionian lady, whom King Hiram had bought at the same time as herself, and whom he was now sending as a present to Pharaoh.

Chamai, in his turn, informed her that he was to be allowed to accompany us in our expedition, but was loud in expressing his regret that the voyage to Egypt would be so quickly over; he could have wished, he said, that it would take as long as his forefathers' wandering in the wilderness.

Touched by the incident of this mutual recognition, I invited the girl to sit down for a little while amongst us; and requested Hanno, who was acquainted with the Ionian dialect, to ask the lady to do the same. With a graceful obeisance, she took her seat on a cushion that was placed for her.

The evening meal proceeded pleasantly enough. Abigail and Chamai entertained us with the story of their attachment, relating how in the days of their early childhood they had tended goats together in their native pastures. I could not refrain from expressing my sorrow that they had met to be parted again so soon.

"But perhaps," said Abigail, "Pharaoh will not want to keep me; of such as I am, King Pharaoh must have thousands. My mistress here is sent for him; but me, surely, he will send back again."

Chamai clenched his strong fists, and gave an appealing look at me; but I could give him no further consolation than by remarking that it was very probable the company of the waiting-woman was only required for the lady during the voyage.

"Apart from that," said Hannibal, "she would be lonely and desolate enough. Little is the trouble that the eunuch Hazael puts himself to for the sake of entertaining her."

Meanwhile, Hanno and the Ionian lady had entered into a conversation so close, and apparently so confidential, that it gave me a feeling of uneasiness; and in order to interrupt it, I took the opportunity, while the wine-cups were being replenished, of asking Hanno whether, as he had a reputation for playing the psaltery, he could not persuade the lady to allow him to accompany her while she sung one of the songs of her country. She had some slight acquaintance with Phœnician, and answered for herself that she should have much pleasure in singing as I wished.

Hanno fetched his psaltery, and as soon as it was tuned, the captive damsel turned back her veil and revealed a countenance of peculiar beauty. She was dressed as a Phœnician, in a purple

robe embroidered with silver, and wore a necklace composed of three rows of gold beads and gold ornaments of elaborate design. Her head was bare, and her hair was arranged in the fashion of her own country, turned back from the forehead and secured in the middle. We sat in silence, as though riveted by a spectacle of surpassing beauty.

As soon as my slave had attached the earthenware lamps to the supports that were ready for them in the ship's side, the Ionian, in a rich harmonious voice, commenced one of the songs of her native land. I cannot profess to be familiar with the Ionic tongue, but in the course of my wanderings I had gained sufficient acquaintance with it to be aware that the verses which she sung were in celebration of the wars made long, long ago by her countrymen, the Achæans, against Priam and the city of Troy. Ever and again, as her voice rose in thrilling sweetness, Chamai's eyes could be noticed flashing with emotion, and Hannibal's fingers seemed to be feeling for the hilt of his sword; and even those who could not comprehend the meaning of the words were all enraptured by the melody of the song and the bewitching loveliness of the singer. When she had finished, she rose and retired with a step stately as that with which Ashtoreth might move along the floods.

Immediately after she had gone, Hanno moved to the ship's side, where he stood for a considerable time gazing moodily into the water. I missed his merry voice from our party, and going up to him asked him what was the matter.

"Nothing but what will soon pass away," he replied.

"Take my advice," I said, "and let nothing be told Bodmilcar about what has transpired this evening. I neither trust him nor the eunuch."

"Let Bodmilcar do as he pleases," replied Hanno, quickly. "For my part, I shall abide by the promise I have made. What I want now is to get to Tarshish, and to find adventures to divert me. I think I shall be a good sailor yet, captain;" and his tone brightened as he spoke. I shook him heartily by the hand. Somehow or other I felt myself every day to be drawn closer to the youth.

When I rejoined the others I found Chamai on the point of returning to shore.

"Good-night, Chamai," said I; "we meet again in the morning."

"Good-night, captain; good-night all;" and as soon as he was in the boat he shouted, "Good-night, Abigail, my charming dove!"

"Good-night, my pretty lamb!" responded Abigail, saucily, as she looked forth from the interior of her cabin.

At this very moment the eunuch arrived. "The fellow has good lungs," he sneered, as he passed; "but I question whether King Pharaoh would be best pleased to know that his slaves had been displayed to all the world."

"No, nor if he should learn that they have been entertained by a ship's captain and his scribe," put in Bodmilcar, contemptuously kicking aside Hanno's psaltery, which had been accidentally left upon the cushion that had been occupied by the Ionian.

"Your proceedings displease *me*;" I began, in a tone of reproof; but Bodmilcar interrupted me by saying sharply: "Hazel has the King's authority for placing the slaves wherever he thinks best."

This was too exasperating. It was intolerable that a Syrian eunuch, himself a mere slave, should presume to set up his authority over me, a free man and a captain of a Sidonian fleet, and I stared steadily at Bodmilcar, as if he could hardly be aware of what he said; but he only returned my gaze with a look of defiance.

He proceeded in a haughty tone: "This Ionian damsel was once mine, but she was stolen from me by men who sold her to the King. The King sends her to King Pharaoh as a present, and I shall do my duty to the King by preventing his present from falling into the hands of your scribe."

I answered firmly: "In all these matters I alone am judge. On these vessels my authority in all things is supreme, and woe to any one who questions it."

"Well spoken!" cried Hannibal. "Discipline and obedience for ever!"

"I shall do *this*, then," he began, with a voice half-choked with rage; but I took him up coolly and decisively: "You will do what I order; you will go back to your ship and look after your sailors. I shall be away five days."

He retreated slowly towards the boat, muttering threats and oaths as he went, but to these I did not pay the slightest heed.

When he was gone, Hazael said: "And now I shall go and chastise that girl."

I laid my hand upon his shoulder to deter him; but he shook himself free, and was about to open the cabin-door, when the powerful grasp of Hannibal was upon him, so that he was twisted completely round.

"How? – how now?" he stammered out, looking first at me and then at Hannibal, who still retained a firm hold upon him. I folded my arms and looked steadily at him.

"Listen!" I said; "listen to me. The rule of a Phœnician ship is this: whoever defies the captain's orders is tied to a rope from the yard-arm and dipped three times in the water. Do you understand me?"

Quivering with fear, the eunuch only bowed his head in assent.

"Remember it then," I added; "and remember, too, another rule: when any one curses another he is fastened tight to that mast and flogged; five-and-twenty lashes. Do you understand?"

He bent his head again.

"And don't forget," I said, "that Abigail has a busy tongue, and that I have sharp ears. Now, Hannibal, let him go."

Hazael made his way to his cabin without a word. Hannibal could not suppress his glee. He exclaimed: "Bravo! captain! all right! no good doing things by halves; mutiny in a ship is as bad as rebellion in a camp."

Early next morning I sent for Bodmilcar.

"Bodmilcar," said I, "you are an old Phœnician mariner and ought to be trusted, but I am afraid the influence of that eunuch has turned your head. He will not be long with us; and when he takes his women ashore, I hope you will be yourself again: but meanwhile you must give me your word that you will not be promoting further discord."

He attempted to deny that he had in any way fostered discord, but I was not to be put off; I insisted upon the promise being distinctly given, and when he had yielded and made me the promise I required, I said to him:

"Now, attend to my instructions. You will remain here in command of the vessels, while I am gone to Jerusalem. Hanno and Hannibal will accompany me, but Hasdrubal, Hamilcar and Himilco will remain with you, and you will be under the protection of the soldiers. We will make it our business to get provisions in the interior of the country, so that you will have nothing to concern yourself about in the way of purchases."

"And what becomes of the two women?" he inquired.

"That is my affair," I answered; "I shall see that they are provided for on shore. But we are off at once; so look to your duty. Farewell!"

I directed Hanno and Hannibal to get into the boat, and ordered my slave, with two sailors carrying the baggage, to accompany them. As Hanno passed Bodmilcar, I noticed that the latter scowled and spat upon the ground. Hanno merely shrugged his shoulders.

Before I took my own place in the boat, I saw the women and the eunuch safely on board the other boat, and told two sailors to go with them, and take on shore all that they might require. Hazael tried to invent some pretext for remaining behind; he would look after the baggage, he said, but on hearing me cry out, "No, no," he embarked without further remonstrance.

Everything being ready, I gave the word for starting, and the two boats moved off. Bodmilcar stood upon the poop watching us gloomily, whilst Himilco, who was by his side, bade us good-bye with a friendly cheer.

A very few strokes of the oar brought us to land; Chamai had been impatiently awaiting our arrival, and hastened to assist Abigail from the boat. We made our way straight to the village, which lies in a grove of wild fig-trees, about two bowshots from the fortress, and is provided with a good cistern. In front of the house that seemed by far the most important in the place, there were tied two horses and about a dozen asses. The horses were well caparisoned with embroidered bridles, and had their heads decked out with scarlet network, trimmed with little bells and parti-coloured rosettes, their tails being tied up with scarlet bands. The asses' manes and tails, according to a general custom, were dyed with henna, and these animals, like the horses, were all well harnessed.

"This," said Chamai, "is the house of Bichri; he is one of the men that I propose getting to join you on your voyage. He is young and strong, and skilful in the use alike of his bow, his sword, and his shield. He has been a vine-dresser on the mountains, and has learnt the art of making wine."

Bichri himself at this moment came forward to give us his greeting; he was accompanied by another man with a young woman.

"This is Barzillai, one of my captains of ten," said Chamai, introducing him to me; "and this is his wife, Milcah; she is the sister of our friend Bichri here, and is famous for the honey-cakes she makes."

Hannibal suggested that Barzillai and his wife should join us on our expedition, but Chamai explained that nothing would induce them to go to sea.

I next proceeded to make arrangements for lodging the two women during my absence. I found that they could either be accommodated in the tower, or that they could be received into Bichri's house, where they would be near enough to Barzillai to have the companionship of his wife, and the protection of his men-at-arms. At first Chamai was disposed to murmur when he learnt that Abigail was not to accompany us to Jerusalem; but when he understood that it was my wish that she and her mistress should remain together where they were, he acquiesced without another word of disapprobation. To Barzillai I give the strictest injunctions to allow no one, except the eunuch, to see the Ionian lady on any pretence whatever, and he struck his hand upon the hilt of his sword as a guarantee that he would be faithful to his trust.

"And where am I to lodge?" asked the eunuch.

"Wherever you may choose," I answered; "in Bichri's house, if you like."

"In my house!" cried Bichri; "a Syrian of Zobah in my house! No, no, captain, by your leave, I'd rather not. It cannot be."

"Why not?" yelled out the eunuch; "are we Syrians not as good as you?"

"No; Syrians are slaves: our King conquered you at Zobah and Damascus both; you are fleas, dead dogs!"

"True," chimed in Chamai; "the Philistines of Gaza and Askelon are foes worth conquering, but as to Syrians, I could spit a dozen of them on my lance and carry them across my shoulder."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Hannibal; "Chamai dearly loves a joke; he will make good sport for us along our way."

To Barzillai's inquiries whether the women were ever to be allowed to go out, I replied that Abigail, since she belonged to the country, might occasionally take a walk in company with Milcah, but that the Ionian must not be allowed to leave the house until my return. They engaged to make the lady's time pass agreeably, and Milcah undertook to initiate her into the art of making cakes and other delicacies.

Having thus satisfactorily made our preliminary arrangements, we entered the house to partake of some refreshment before our departure.

In order to ensure that the guard should be sufficiently strong, Barzillai had offered to find quarters in the village for fifteen of our men in addition to his own. Hannibal accordingly sent to the ships for fifteen archers to come on shore, and I took the opportunity of sending by the same messenger to Hamilcar and those who were with him, to inform them what I had done by way of

putting an effectual check upon any scheme that Bodmilcar and the eunuch might concert between them.

The eunuch had declined joining our meal, and had returned sulkily to the ships. Milcah conducted the Ionian to her apartment, but soon reappeared, bringing a supply of her renowned honey-cakes, three for every guest. So engrossed, however, were Abigail and Chamai with each other's society, that they forgot all about taking their own shares, which Hannibal was nothing loath to eat for them.

Bichri went out first to see that the horses and asses were in readiness, and we followed him as soon as we had taken our leave of Barzillai and Milcah. The parting between the young lovers, it need scarcely be said, was somewhat protracted. Thoroughbred Sidonian as I was, more accustomed to the rolling of a ship than the curvetings of a steed, I declined mounting the high-spirited horse which the Jew offered me, feeling that I should be more at my ease upon a pacific steady-going ass. By my directions Hanno had made a present to our host of a piece of scarlet cloth; to his wife I had given a pair of silver earrings, with which she was extremely delighted; and we had distributed a number of earthenware dolls and toys to the children who crawled about or clambered on our knees. Chamai (who had donned his new cuirass and bestowed his old one upon Barzillai), detained us by running back a dozen times upon some frivolous pretext, which ill disguised his real design of saying good-bye once more to his sweetheart, but at last made up his mind to mount the horse which Hanno, as well as myself, had refused to ride. Hannibal had already mounted the other horse, and was exhibiting his skill as an equestrian, by cantering about us. Of the asses, four were laden with our baggage; Hanno, the two sailors, and my own slave, got upon the others; and Bichri, with his strong mountaineer's stride, marched on ahead of the caravan to pioneer the way.

CHAPTER IV

KING DAVID

After crossing the fertile corn-fields of the low-lying plains, thickly studded with groves of figs and dates, and with clumps of the stunted trees which abound in Judæa, expanding their parasol-like foliage, we began to ascend the mountain by narrow pathways, bordered by forests of terebinths, alternating with vineyards and plantations of olives. This route, delightful in its shade, brought us to the little town of Timnah, on the ridge of the hill, where Chamai introduced us to a man who found us lodging, and provided shelter for our beasts. Timnah is not only small, but it is most irregularly built; it is encircled by an embattled wall, with two gateways and twelve circular towers; the houses are only of one storey, being detached, and generally surrounded by gardens.

We were tormented by myriads of fleas, which appeared to be especially remarkable for avidity. There were also countless swarms of flies; and Hannibal, who had taken off his cuirass in order that he might more effectually scratch himself, remarked, with some show of reason, that he thought the inhabitants of Judæa ought to implore Beelzebub, as the god of flies, to relieve them of this plague of vermin.

On the following morning, after traversing several ravines, and crossing several ridges of the hilly but well-cultivated country, we came in sight of a deep valley, sterile and deserted. The rocks that formed alike its bottom and its sides were scattered over with human bones, that were bleaching in the air. Towards the east some eminences could be discerned, surmounted by a fort, whilst the valley again sloped upwards towards the ridges that bounded it on the south.

"This is the Valley of Giants," said Bichri, as he turned over a skull with the end of a staff he carried.

"Well enough I know it," broke in Chamai. "When I was young I was Benaiah's armour-bearer. Benaiah was one of King David's mighty men, a captain of a hundred; one snowy day he killed a lion in a pit; and once in single fight he slew an Egyptian giant; and here in this very vale of Rephaim, when I was serving under him, we routed the Philistines so utterly, that the men of Ashdod have been tributary to us ever since."

"And I, too, can recall it well," said Hannibal. "The Philistines were up there to the right, designing to storm the fortress in our front; half-way down the valley the King encountered them and drove them to their heights again. The heat of the battle was in the valley, but the greatest carnage was on the flight up yonder ridge."

As we proceeded, Hannibal pointed out to us on the further side of the valley the thirty stakes to which the King had had the chiefs of the Philistines bound after the battle; fragments of the skeletons were still attached to them.

"Ours is a good King," exclaimed Chamai; "Absalom, his son, rebelled against him, but I stood fast by David."

"And I, too," said Bichri; "and a battle followed in which I killed Othniel, the son of Ziba: I sent a javelin clean through his temples; this girdle of purple linen, which I am wearing now, was his."

All along, as we proceeded, Chamai, Hannibal and Bichri continued in this way to point out the sites, and to recall the history of places and events to which any interest attached. Whenever we passed a village or a town, the inhabitants, recognising us as Phœnicians, came flocking towards us with offerings of milk, dried grapes, figs, wine, or other refreshment, but were always eager in their inquiries whether we had any commodities of our own to sell. Bichri invariably told them that if they wished to inspect our merchandise, they must either come to Jerusalem, whither we were going, or go down to Joppa, where we had left our ships. Occasionally the goat-herds, who were in charge of fine flocks upon the hill-sides, accosted us, but we bought nothing of them except a couple of the

excellent cheeses of the country, for which we paid only a few zeraas. As we were eating the cheeses under the shade of a terebinth, some girls brought us cool water from a neighbouring spring, and in acknowledgment of their attention, Hanno gave them a number of glass beads, with which they seemed highly delighted.

Shortly before sunset, on the evening of the second day we reached Jerusalem, a city very strongly built upon a steep and elevated plateau. The distant view of the city is extremely striking; the soil on which it is built is undulating and irregular, so as to produce an effect of the whole place being literally studded with domes and terraces; the whiteness of the walls, and the numerous roofs that are imbedded in the foliage of the olive-yards that skirt the walls, all combine to make up a picture that cannot fail most favourably to impress the traveller with its beauty.

After crossing a road that was bounded on one side by the torrent of Kedron, and which was lost to view as it deflected towards the deserts, we had surmounted the last of the olive-covered hills, and passed the last of the ravines, and soon began ascending a paved street, wide enough to admit three horsemen abreast, of which the houses were of brick, their gardens being enclosed by low clay walls. Night was coming on, and Chamai, who had galloped on ahead (leaving us to the guidance of Bichri), was now awaiting us at the gate of a large garden attached to a handsome brick house of two storeys. This house was the residence of Ira, one of the King's officers, to whom the duty was specially entrusted of providing for the entertainments of foreign ambassadors. Immediately on our arrival, some slaves came to take charge of our beasts, and to carry our baggage into the dwelling, where we were first conducted into a long low room, and water was brought us for our feet. It was not long before Ira himself appeared to bid us welcome, and to offer us refreshment. I informed him of my name and errand, and showed him the letter I bore from King Hiram to King David. He raised it to his head in token of his respect, and promised to give his sovereign an immediate notice of my arrival.

When we had completed our repast, I began to prepare my presents for King David. First of all I chose a hyacinth-coloured under tunic, made of the finest Egyptian linen, and a purple upper tunic embroidered round the neck and sleeves with flowers, and bordered with silver fringe; to these I added a girdle wrought in gold and silver, with a lion's head in gold for a clasp, the eyes being of bright enamel. This girdle was a most elaborate specimen of Egyptian workmanship, being one of four that I had purchased of a native artist, intending them for presents to any monarchs to whose presence I might be admitted in the course of my progress. Another gift that I selected was a drinking-cup of silver with two handles; it was raised upon a stem, and embossed with ornaments, worked in gold, representing fruit and flowers. The whole of these I deposited in a box of the sandal-wood of Ophir, curiously inlaid with gold and mother-of-pearl. Remembering that the King was not only fond of music, but was himself a skilful performer, I further looked out for him a three-stringed harp of sandal-wood, ornamented with coloured tufts, and surmounted by the figure in solid gold of a bird with open beak and outstretched wings. This instrument could not be matched out of Phœnicia, and the wood of which it was made, like that of the box, had been brought from Ophir. I had procured the harp from Khelesh-baal, a Sidonian, to whom it had been given by the Queen of Ophir as an acknowledgment of his having designed some ships for her which could brave the open sea.

Early next morning when Ira came to inform me that he had announced my arrival to the King, he expressed his astonishment at the presents which I showed him I was about to make; he told me that they would be most acceptable to the King, who was very desirous of seeing me.

About two hours afterwards some of the royal slaves arrived, bringing a calf, some bread, several cheeses, a basket of cakes and figs, a large jar of olives, and a still larger jar of the good wine of Helbon; one of them, saluting me as an ambassador from King Hiram, said:

"I am instructed by King David to conduct you and your companions to the palace: come at once."

I gave the box containing the presents to my two sailors to carry, and collected my people together. Hannibal donned his helmet and cuirass, Hanno put his official inkhorn in his girdle, and

we lost no time in setting off. Chamai and Bichri both accompanied us: they were in high glee, the latter especially, as, although he was one of David's subjects, he had never hitherto seen his King. On our way he remarked:

"David wronged our tribe of Benjamin; but he made amends by his kindness to Saul's kindred. He is truly the glory of the tribes: I shall be rejoiced to see him; I have never seen him yet."

"And after all," said Chamai, "he did not want to be hard upon the tribe of Benjamin; it went against his heart. Think, too, of his love for Jonathan, and of his marrying Michal; and Jonathan and Michal were both Saul's children. And how he avenged the death of Saul himself! He has no ill-will against you children of Benjamin."

"He is a valiant King," said Hannibal; "and valiant, too, is his general, his sister Zeruah's son. He and Joab, both are warriors worthy of their renown."

While this conversation had been going on, we had been making our way through a succession of steep, narrow streets, with houses, one or two storeys high, and gardens on either hand. Seeing that we were ushered along by the royal servants, easily recognised as these were by the purple borders of their white garments, all the people saluted us respectfully as we passed, an evidence of the high esteem in which the King is held by his subjects.

We crossed a quarter of the city known by the name of Millo, and came to a canal which runs out in the direction of the open country, and which is overhung by an eminence called Sion, the entire space between Sion and Millo being occupied by houses recently erected at the King's own cost. In the surrounding wall there still remained the breach which had been opened by David, when he took the city from the Jebusites. On the summit of Sion stands a fortress, in the interior court of which the royal palace has been built. Designed by Tyrian architects, this is three storeys high, with a central dome, and is surrounded by magnificent gardens, the edifice for the most part being constructed of hewn stone and sandal-wood. On either side of the gateway are two stately pillars of bronze, and against the wall, to the right of one of these pillars, is placed the seat where the King sits to administer justice; the gallows for the execution of capital sentences being close at hand. In the rear are other gardens, and the buildings set apart for the women of the household.

Ira was at the palace-gate to meet us, and conducted us by a winding staircase into a square apartment, well lighted, and hung with tapestries figured with birds and flowers. At one end was a raised sandal-wood dais, three steps above the level of the floor; upon this stood the throne, which was likewise of sandal-wood, but perfectly plain and unadorned either with carving or gilding, a lion's skin stretched out at its foot. On the right hand stood Joab, the King's general, in helmet and cuirass; at a little distance behind was the royal armour-bearer holding the King's sword, while his lance rested against the wall; several officers were stationed upon the steps; and in front four of the King's body-guard of mighty men, with their swords drawn.

Seated upon the throne was the monarch himself, a man of moderate stature and slight build, advanced in years, but nevertheless retaining unimpaired every symptom of agility and vigour. His straight, uncurled beard was perfectly white, but his hair was dressed in the ordinary fashion of his countrymen. His costume was very simple; neither frontlet nor coronet adorned his brow; no bracelets encircled his wrists; no rings were upon his toes; he wore a plain white tunic with a purple border, and instead of the high-heeled shoes usually worn by kings, he had on his feet a pair of mountaineer's sandals. There was nothing in his attire to distinguish him from ordinary men; only by the penetrating glance of his clear blue eye could he be marked out as one that was born to reign.

My people having ranged themselves in a line behind me, I stepped forward and prostrated myself at the foot of the dais; then rising, I stood with folded hands, waiting for the King to speak. He began by bidding me welcome, and proceeded to ask whether our voyage hither had been prosperous, and made numerous inquiries after the welfare of the kings of Tyre and Sidon and their subjects. Expressing his satisfaction at the tenor of my answers, he called for King Hiram's letters to himself.

I handed the sealed papyrus to one of the officers, who presented it open to the King. The King perused it deliberately, and turning to me with a kindly smile, said:

"Mago, son of Maherbaal, I rejoice to see you. Who are these that you bring with you?"

One by one, I introduced my companions.

The King expressed his approval at seeing Chamai and Bichri amongst my followers, and said:

"I like my younger people to travel; it gives them courage, as well as wisdom and experience. I am glad, too, that your soldiers are under the command of Hannibal; he is an able leader; I remember him well. And now," he continued, "Jehoshaphat the recorder shall prepare you a catalogue of the materials which I require you to procure and I leave it to your own discretion to purchase, in addition, whatever else you may meet with that is curious or rare. It remains for me to inquire what are the supplies you need before you start."

I explained that I was anxious that forty experienced men should be added as recruits to Chamai's force, and that a sufficient store of corn and wine and oil, and other things that would not be the worse for keeping, might be provided to maintain us on our voyage.

"Just and fair are your demands," replied the King. "Joab shall choose you out forty men, whom Chamai and Hannibal may command, and my treasurer shall hand you over the money needed for their pay. Ira shall take you to the storehouses, and you shall be at liberty to select what stores you please; he will provide you also with asses to convey them to the ships. You have only to say what you require, and it is yours."

Again I prostrated myself before the King in token of my gratitude, and requested him graciously to accept the presents that I had been commissioned to deliver. He seemed highly gratified, and inquired with the liveliest interest about the history of each gift, as it was shown him; he then rose, and bade us follow him into an adjoining room, where wine was prepared for us. He insisted upon drinking from the cup which I had just given him, and when he had taken his seat again upon his throne, which had been brought in after him, he honoured me still further by asking me about the various countries I had visited. His curiosity seemed awakened by my replies, and amongst other things, he asked me whether peacocks and asses were not found in the West. I informed him that they came from Ophir, whither, subject to his permission, I contemplated making a voyage upon my return.

"You are a dauntless man," he said, "to talk about a second voyage before you have accomplished a first. I admire your courage, and confess that Hiram has done well in choosing you for this undertaking. I want now to show you the site of the temple that it is in my heart to rear."

With a tread elastic as a young man's, the King conducted us from the palace to an adjacent hill upon which was a threshing-floor. The name of the hill was Moriah.

"I have just bought this threshing-floor and some oxen, for fifty shekels of silver, of Araunah the Jebusite," he said; adding, "to my mind, the spot is adapted equally for a temple or for a fortress."

Hanno remarked, "I have heard it said that the King has taken more fortresses than he has built, and that his sword is the best stronghold of his people."

"You are a flatterer, scribe," said the King, smiling; "nevertheless, I believe that bold hearts do more to defend their country than any masses of piled-up stone."

"Then I am no flatterer," rejoined the scribe; "I do but echo the King's own sentiments. Happy the people whose pride and confidence are in their King!"

"If you use such silvery speech to women," replied the King, "you must ultimately marry a princess."

Hanno coloured: the King laughed, and turning to me said that I had an excellent scribe.

"Ah, my lord and King," said Hanno, "we are going where eloquence can avail us nothing. The winds and waves of the Great Sea will not listen to the smooth speech of Canaan. The barbarians of the West will demand a language of a rougher, sterner sort. Compliments will not move the men of Tarshish."

The King was evidently much pleased with Hanno, and told him that he should be gratified if he would bring him back a written description of whatever he might see in the course of his voyage; he further inquired whether he had any of his own compositions with him. Upon this, Hanno handed him a little scroll inscribed with some verses he had written in praise of a lady. After the King, himself a poet of the highest order, had admired the flow of the lines, and commended the beauty of the handwriting, he presented Hanno with a copy of some of his own poetry.

"There is another poetry," said Hanno, "of a severer style, which the King has written in the valley of Rephaim, and on many another battle-field: I fear he cannot give us that."

In an instant David took the sword from his armour-bearer's hand. "Here," he said, "is the pen that wrote it. Take it; it may give you the power to write verses of the character that, in the valley of the giants, I have made to the honour of my God."

"The King's word is a prophecy," said Hanno, kissing the blade; "be it my care that it comes to pass!"

We had now to take our leave of the kind and courteous King, and I went with Ira direct to the storehouses, whilst Hannibal, Chamai, and Bichri followed Joab.

The chief storehouse is a long brick building approached by a paved pathway lined with sycamines; it is built in the Phœnician style over a water-tank, and is flanked by the stables for the royal chariots and the meadows for the horses and other cattle. Hanno had prepared a list, of which a duplicate copy was written for the King: the items were a hundred measures of grain, fifty measures of oil, fifty measures of wine, equal quantities of cheese, figs, and dried grapes, and two thousand shekels of dry salt meat: to these were added salt, beans, lentils, and dates, Ira undertaking that asses, with drivers, should be ready to convey them all to the ships on the following morning.

King David is renowned for generosity; and on our return to Ira's house we found that several of the royal servants had arrived before us, bringing various presents for us all. For myself there was a shield, a lance, a dagger, and an Egyptian battle-axe; for Hannibal, a sword and a mace of Chaldean manufacture; for Bichri, a bow and quiver and an archer's belt; while for Hanno there was another sword, in addition to the one he had already received.

Towards evening Hannibal returned, bringing word that he had completed his number of men; Jehoshaphat also came to bring me the King's final letters of instruction.

On rising the next morning I found the street outside the house crowded with asses and their drivers, the beasts being laden with the heavy packs containing our supplies; we had therefore nothing further to do than to take leave of our host. I gave him two phials of royal perfume for his wives, and without further delay we took our departure for Joppa.

Our return journey was unmarked by any special incident. From time to time Bichri gave us proof of his dexterity by using his new bow to shoot partridges and other birds while they were on the wing, and Hanno (with his sword passed through his girdle in Jewish fashion) was as gay as ever, beguiling the time with cheerful songs.

"Every one owns King David as a prophet," he repeated more than once; "and as I have David's sword, I should think I might conquer the world."

"I hope you do not intend to kill King Pharaoh," said I, rather startled at his martial enthusiasm.

"Pshaw!" he replied; "my mistress is Ashtoreth, queen of sea and sky! She can laugh to scorn Pharaoh and Bodmilcar, both alike!"

Bichri interrupted us by bringing a partridge he had just brought down. "Can you tell me, captain," he asked, "whether there are any vines in Tarshish?"

"To the great regret of our Phœnician colonists," I answered, "there are no vines at all."

"It may be a good thing then," he rejoined, "that I have brought some cuttings with me. The climate is warm, even as our own, and who can tell whether ere long they shall not be producing wine as good as ours?"

"An excellent venture of yours, archer," I replied; "I wish your foresight all success."

The tower of Joppa and the masts of our vessels were hardly visible in the distance before we espied Abigail advancing towards us. Chamai alighted from his horse, and received her with a warm embrace.

"What news?" said I, hurrying forward.

Learning that all was well, I left the young people together, and made my own way down immediately to the beach. The first person that I saw was Barzillai, who informed me that the eunuch had not been into the village since my departure, and that no one had attempted to hold any communication with the Ionian lady. Very shortly afterwards, Hamilcar and all the rest, including Bodmilcar, came to greet me on my return, and we proceeded at once to embark the supplies that we had brought. I put all the fresh recruits on board my own galley, thus making up my full complement of 210 men; namely, 50 rowers, 70 sailors, 80 soldiers, and 10 officers.

While the drivers were assisting my own people to unlade the asses, one of them, a man of gigantic size and stature, stalked up to me, swinging his arms, and stood looking at me with a fixed and steady gaze. His appearance was remarkable; his short bull-neck was imbedded, as it were, between his immense broad shoulders, and he had long shaggy hair that hung close over his brow and was met by a thick beard that grew almost up to his eyes.

"Do you want me?" I asked.

In a stentorian voice he answered, "I am Jonah, of the village of Eltekeh, in the tribe of Dan."

"Well, what of that?" I said.

"I want to go with you: I want to go where the wild beasts are."

"But what for; what can you do if you get there?"

"I want to go," again he growled.

"But you can do nothing; what is the use of taking you?"

"I want to go," he still persisted.

Puzzled in my mind, I asked him whether he could in any way make himself of use on board a ship.

"I am strong," he said; "I am a descendant of Samson; I can carry an ox upon my shoulders, and I can blow a trumpet;" and as he spoke he struck himself heavily in the chest.

Hannibal, who all this while had been scanning the man with the eye of a connoisseur, observed: "I don't think we shall find a cuirass big enough to fit the fellow; but he looks as if he mightn't be a bad trumpeter;" and turning towards him, he said: "Now look here, man; I have a good trumpeter already; but if Captain Mago will allow it, I should like to have a trumpet-match, and see which of you can blow the best."

Of course I had no objection to allege, and Hannibal's trumpeter was summoned to the spot. A huge clarion was fetched from the stores and handed to Jonah, and thus the rivals were brought face to face in the middle of a circle of curious listeners.

"Blow away, my men," said Hannibal, "as hard as you like!"

Both raised their instruments to their lips, and simultaneously gave forth a series of strong, clear notes, which waxed louder and louder, as the performers, with necks outstretched and inflated cheeks, seemed to grow warm to the work. After a considerable time, during which neither appeared to have much superior power, the eyes of Hannibal's trumpeter began to start painfully from their sockets, and he showed symptoms of evident fatigue; whilst Jonah, although the veins of his neck were swollen as large as one's finger, continued to give forth notes that almost split our ears, and which seemed still louder in contrast to the enfeebled strain of his competitor. At last, when full fifteen minutes had elapsed, Hannibal's herald gave one prolonged and plaintive note, and sunk down upon a stone, breathless and exhausted. Jonah, without exhibiting any sign of distress, stood with his hand upon his hip, and raising his trumpet high into the air, gave vent to a loud triumphal flourish.

"Enough, enough!" we shouted one and all.

"Bring out the very largest scarlet tunic that we have on board," said Hannibal; "the fellow has gained his day."

"Then may I go?" asked Jonah.

Hannibal made him understand that I had given my consent, and told him to put on the tunic. While he was endeavouring to fasten the garment, which seemed ready to burst out at every seam, Himilco walked round him, and surveyed him with a puzzled air.

"I should like to see inside the rascal," he said; "I have never heard such lungs."

"I am thirsty," roared the giant.

A great cup of wine was handed to him; he drained it at a gulp.

"Do you call that a draught?" he asked. "I should give as much to my little children; can't you let me drink from a pitcher or a cask?"

Himilco refilled the cup, and handed it back to Jonah. With an air of wonder, that almost amounted to terror, he muttered to himself, "An extraordinary fellow, but it will cost us something to keep him!"

When we had embarked all our goods, we took leave of Barzillai and his wife. The Ionian bade a most affectionate farewell to Milcah, who had treated her with the greatest kindness and hospitality. Abigail was the last to leave the shore, and when she did so, it was with a look, long and lingering, towards her native mountains.

By the following evening we had rounded the point of Pelusium, easily distinguished from the surrounding lowland by its rising grove of palms. The sea was rough, and to many on board the consequent sickness was very trying. Towards noon next day we came in sight of the troubled waters caused by the outflow of the Nile.

CHAPTER V

PHARAOH ARRIVES TOO LATE

We shortly hove in sight of what is known as the Tanitic mouth of the Nile, beyond which, in the distance, could be discerned the tall obelisks of the City of Tanis. The deposit brought down by the river itself, combined with the action of the wind and surf upon the two headlands of the bay, has a perpetual tendency to block up this outlet of the Nile; and when the *Cabiros*, which had been sent on ahead to explore the bar, returned with the intelligence that the water was too shallow to permit a safe passage to the *Melkarth*, I determined to push on a little further to the Mendezian mouth, which is considerably wider, and which leads, moreover, direct to Memphis. Night was coming on, so that I would not venture to stem the somewhat rapid current of the river in the dark, but brought my ships to anchor within a bowshot of the shore.

Hazael came to me and asked permission to pass the night with his friend Bodmilcar. I was equally surprised at his request, and at the submissive manner in which he made it; but after ascertaining that the Ionian was in her cabin, and that Abigail was with Chamai on deck, I allowed him to go.

Remembering that we had arrived at a land of strangers, with whom hitherto we had held no communication, I doubled the watch, and gave Hannibal special directions to keep a sharp look-out. The order in which our ships were arranged was this: on the right, furthest to the south, was the *Cabiros*; the *Ashtoreth* was moored to some piles about half a bowshot behind; the *Melkarth* and the *Dagon* were stationed on the opposite bank, where the water was deeper. One of the small barques was with me, the other with the *Melkarth*.

Anchored higher up the river were several Egyptian vessels, and a considerable number was drawn up upon the shore. I wondered why there should be so many at a spot where there was no regular anchorage, but I subsequently learnt that Pharaoh was about to send forth a squadron for the purpose of putting down a revolt that had broken out at Pelusium. Two officers, accompanied by a troop of soldiers, some armed with battle-axes, and some with bows, had already boarded my ship to inquire who we were and what we wanted, and had retired satisfied with my explanation. As the shades of night deepened, we could observe the lights of two galleys cruising about in the open channel, and shortly afterwards another Egyptian came on board and ordered my own lights to be extinguished, a direction which was instantly obeyed.

The night was intensely warm, and the scorching east wind, laden with the sand of the desert, blew from time to time in dry and unrefreshing gusts. The sky was overcast, and although the night was not black it was so dark that little could be distinguished except the gleam from the fires of a large camp pitched on the right bank, and the inconstant lights of the distant villages on either shore. Close in front of us were still burning the torches of the two galleys I have mentioned; but besides these, there was only the occasional flicker from some little boat that moved upon the stream.

Towards midnight, five or six hours after our anchoring, I resigned my watch to Himilco, intending to take some rest. On my way to my berth I cast my eye towards the right bank, and through the gloom I could see indistinctly that there was a crowd of vessels there; but everything was silent, and I went below.

I had not been asleep for more than a half-an-hour when I was roughly aroused by Himilco.

"We are adrift!" he exclaimed.

In an instant I was upon my feet, and rushed to examine our moorings. They were cut asunder.

"All hands on deck! lights! light the lamps!" I cried with all my might; and at the same time I noticed lights appearing on the left, and heard a distant voice hailing the *Ashtoreth* with the cry, "Our

moorings have been cut, and we are all adrift." I shouted in reply that they should come over to us; it was only too evident that another of our ships was in the same dilemma as ourselves.

Meantime my crew had come on deck, and had lighted several signals. I ordered the rowers to their benches, and made them backwater gently so as to keep us steady until the other ship should join us. At the distance of about four bowshots behind, I made out the *Cabiros* hoisting her lights, and could hear the voices of the crew in great excitement. Almost immediately there was a splash of oars, and the *Dagon* came alongside of us. I shouted to Hasdrubal, who was standing on board:

"Where's the *Melkarth*?"

Getting no satisfactory reply, I immediately ordered the three ships on to the left bank. The *Dagon* went straight across the river; I followed, taking an oblique course, and the *Cabiros*, hastening ahead, went a little way south, and then turned back due north, keeping as close as possible to the shore.

During the time we were getting across, Hannibal had just put all his men under arms, as it occasioned us much surprise that while there was this commotion amongst ourselves the Egyptians had made no sign nor sound; their lights were out, and their cruisers no longer to be seen. The *Cabiros* rejoined us, and reported that she had seen nothing; nor even after we had descended the river a couple of stadia was a single Egyptian vessel visible, and it was not until we were within hearing of the roar of the waves at the river's mouth that we almost ran against some black mass that loomed through the darkness.

"Back to your moorings, Phœnicians! no leaving the river at night!" shouted a voice, in Egyptian.

"We don't want, I can tell you," I replied, "to be running away like a set of thieves. We have been cut adrift, and one of our ships has disappeared."

"Then get fresh moorings," was the answer: "you must wait till morning. By Pharaoh's orders, you cannot leave to-night."

There was no help for it but to obey; and sending some men on shore in the small boat with torches, we succeeded in finding an anchorage. But scarcely had we settled in our places, when our attention was arrested by a voice from the middle of the river gasping out in Phœnician, "Help! help!"

We put off a boat in the direction of the sound; the cry was repeated still closer to us, and in a few minutes the boat returned alongside, and one of my sailors, dripping with water, was hoisted on to the deck of the *Ashtoreth*. He was in a pitiable condition, his face all bleeding, and his head gashed open in several places.

"Treason, treason! we are betrayed by Bodmilcar!" was all he could utter, as he staggered and fell senseless on the deck. I ordered him to be laid upon a piece of carpet, whilst Abigail chafed his face with ointment, and Himilco put some wine to his lips. I had ascertained quite enough to put me on my guard, and consequently had our lights extinguished, permitting only one lamp and one torch to each ship: and I gave directions to the watch to keep a keen look-out.

Meanwhile the poor fellow had recovered his consciousness, and Hanno, Hannibal, Himilco, Chamai, and myself, pressed round him to gather what he had to say. One of our sailors supported his head to facilitate his power of speech, and Abigail and the Ionian knelt beside him, with the wine and ointment.

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