

The Scourge of Damascus

A Story of the East...

By SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

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CHAPTER XIV.

As he spoke the Arab gave a loud, shrill whistle, at the same time leaping across the spring and striking the slave in the face. But Shubal was not to be overcome so easily by one man. The whistle had alarmed him, and when he saw the fellow leap, he was not wholly unprepared. The blow in the face blinded him for a moment, but as soon as his eyes served him, he caught his assailant by the throat and hurled him to the ground.

"What sort of a man are you?" the slave cried, as he held the rascal down.

"I am a juggler," replied the Arab, holding fast upon Shubal's tunic.

"Let go my clothing, or I'll kill you." The slave might have carried out his threat, but before he could make any decided movement to that end he found himself surrounded by a body of armed men. Quick as thought he leaped to his feet, leaving a piece of his tunic behind him, and made a movement toward his horse; but he was too late to reach the saddle. Half a dozen strong hands were laid upon him, while as many more were busy with the horses of the females. The princess cried aloud for help, and would have leaped from her saddle had she not been held back.

"Fair lady," spoke a rough voice, in a harsh, strange dialect, "you must keep still, and give us as little trouble as possible."

"But you will not harm me, good sirs."

"You have no occasion for fear, lady. But tell me—who are you?"

"I am the daughter of Aboul Cassem, the prime minister of Damascus."

Could Albia have moved quickly enough, she would have prevented her mistress from answering this question, but the story had been told. Ulin innocently thought that the name of her father would strike the marauders with awe, and that they would fear to molest her further, but in this she was somewhat mistaken, as subsequent events proved.

"By my life, comrades," cried he, who seemed to be the leader of the party, "we have found a rich prize. Hold still, noble lady. We will not harm you. Let us look to this unruly slave of yours, and then you shall be properly cared for. You might have fallen into worse hands than ours."

When Ulin had collected her senses, so that she could observe and comprehend things about her, she looked to see her real situation. She counted eight of the Arabs, and she had no doubt that they were robbers. Four of them were securing the slave, while the other four were watching the horses. Shubal was very soon pinioned, and restored to his feet, after which she and Albia were lifted from their saddles.

"Don't be alarmed," said the leader, as the princess cried out for mercy. "You shall be restored to your horses very soon. We have horses close at hand, and when they are brought, you shall be on your way again."

"You will set Shubal free?"

"He shall be free soon enough. Rest easy a few moments, lady. One of my men has gone after our animals. We left them upon the other side of the wood."

"But why have you taken us from our horses?" asked our heroine.

"You will see that anon, fair lady. Ah—here comes my man. Now, my fair damsel, you shall understand the whole matter. These horses of yours are not such ones as I would have you ride. I have some here much better."

"What does he mean?" asked Ulin, speaking in a low tone to her bondmaid.

"Wait," replied Albia, trying to conceal her real suspicions. "They may inform us."

Before Ulin could ask another question the Arab leader came forward with two horses, upon which he directed his companion to fix the ladies' saddles; and when this had been done he turned to the princess, and informed her that she might take her seat again. She would have opposed the movement, but a strong hand was laid upon her, and, almost before she knew it, she was once more upon her saddle.

"You will excuse me," the fellow said, "but as this horse will not carry you quite so easily as your own, I will secure you in your place."

As he spoke he passed a strong cord about Ulin's body, and fastened it to the girth upon either side. The same thing was done for Albia, and then attention was directed to Shubal, who was seated upon another strange horse, and likewise bound in his place.

"What can they mean?" asked the princess, gaining another opportunity to speak to her attendant.

"I dare not guess," said Albia.

"Do not speak in that way," urged Ulin. "Tell me what you think—I command you."

"My dear mistress," replied the bondmaid, reluctantly, "their meaning is evident enough. These horses will follow their masters!"

"Ha!—and are we prisoners?"

"I fear so. But let us hope for the best. We may not be harmed."

At this juncture the Arabs had mounted their horses, three of them taking the animals which belonged to their prisoners, and at a word from the leader they were on the move. Ulin instinctively clung to the rein to hold

herself steady, but her horse noticed not the guiding of her hand. The leader of the party rode in advance; then followed two more of the gang; then came two females; and behind them followed the others, with the slaves under charge. Through the wood they rode at an easy pace, and when they had gained the open plain beyond they struck into a swift gallop. Ulin had discovered to her satisfaction that the strange horse paid no attention to the rein, so she only sought to keep an easy seat. She was weak with fear and alarm, and all sorts of dreadful pictures arose to her imagination as she sped on. She could not speak with Albia, for the clattering of hoofs drowned her voice. What did it mean? Where would it end?

On they sped, straight over the plain—on, on, on—without halting or turning—on through the darkness of the night—on, league after league—until the gray streaks of morning appeared in the eastern horizon. Another wood was before them, and when it was reached, the party stopped. Not far distant, where a clump of noble palms reared aloft their plaited foliage, a crystal spring burst forth from the green earth, and the Arabs held their panting horses back from the tempting beverage.

"Now, lady, you may find repose," said the leader, as he came and lifted Ulin from her seat. "We shall remain here a few hours. I will be with you again presently."

He turned and handed Albia to the ground, and then went to where his followers were taking care of Shubal.

"Albia, what will they do with us?" cried the princess, clasping her hands in terror.

But the bondmaid could not answer. If she held suspicions, she dared not speak them.

"O, I wish I had not taken this false step! It is a punishment for my sin!"

"Hush, dear mistress. It is our fate. It is no punishment. Wait until we know what this Arab means to do with us."

"What can he mean?" It must be something dreadful. Why has he taken us away so far? O, Albia, I am frightened."

"No, no, sweet lady. Have a hope. They will not kill us."

"Ah," murmured the princess, with folded hands, "there may be a fate from which death would be a happy escape!"

The bondmaid shuddered, and from her thoughts at that moment she could frame no reply which she dared to speak aloud.

CHAPTER XV.

The Arab's Purpose.

As Ulin sat upon the greensward, with her back against a palm tree, and one hand resting upon Albia's arm, she could take a clear view of her captors. The sun was just tinging the distant mountain tops with its golden light, and the last shadow of the night had gone. The Arabs had watered the horses and left them where they could crop the green grass, and were now gathered together, listening to the words of their chief.

They were rough, dark looking men, these Arabs. Their clothing was sparse and poor, and their skin swart and dirty; but their weapons were bright and keen and their horses in most perfect condition, both as to health and cleanliness. A little while they conversed together, and then one of them brought forth the bundle which had been taken from Shubal. It was opened by the leader, and the articles of clothing which it contained were spread out upon the ground. Folded up in a silken scarf was found a purse, from which fell a score or more of broad gold pieces; whereupon the marauders gave utterance to various exclamations of satisfaction.

"They are robbers," said Ulin, as she saw them dividing the gold.

"Certainly," responded Albia. "I have suspected that from the first."

"Can they belong to Julian's band?"

"Why should you ask such a question, my mistress? You know that Julian would never have such men about him."

As she spoke, the Arab leader came towards them, and after gazing upon them for a few moments, he said, addressing the princess:

"I hope you find yourself none the worse for this little deviation from your original course; for, let me assure you, the meeting has afforded me much pleasure. Does the princess Ulin know who is speaking to her?"

"No, sir," replied Ulin.

"Then she shall know into whose protecting hand she has had the fortune of falling. I am Al Abbas. Does the name sound familiar?"

"No, sir."

"It is familiar enough to me," said Albia.

"Ah, pretty one—and what know you of it?"

"I have heard the name, sir, when speech has been made touching a certain Arab robber, whose deeds had caused him to be feared by honest travelers."

The rascal seemed pleased with this remark, and smilingly returned:

"You have hit the truth, my fair damsel. I am the robber, Al Abbas; and I am a terror to those who fear to lose their money. But, my dear lady," he continued, turning to the princess, "you cannot have any such

fears. We have found some little money belonging to you, and I take the liberty of asking you if you have any jewels about you."

He approached nearer as he spoke, and held out his hand. Ulin knew not how to refuse, and she furthermore saw that refusal would be useless; so she drew forth from her bosom a cassette of chamois skin, bound with bands of gold, and handed it over. The robber took it, and opened it; and as his eyes rested upon the sparkling jewels—pearl, diamond, emerald, topaz and opal—he gave utterance to an exclamation of delight.

"By my life, lady, you came well provided. I will take care of these gems for you. They will be much safer in my custody."

"I understand you," said the princess, as she saw the fellow close the cassette and place it in his own bosom. "You mean to keep those jewels, as you do the gold which you have found."

"You are shrewd at guessing, lady."

"I think I have good grounds for my opinion, sir. Take them if you want them; and in return I only ask that you let us go free. You are welcome to all that you have if you will give us our liberty."

"You will rest before you go."

"I do not wish to rest long."

"Nor would I have you. But for the present you had better lie down upon this soft grass, and find some slight repose. I will call you when we move." And as he thus spoke, he turned away and joined his companions.

"Will they let us go?" murmured Ulin, letting her head fall upon her companion's shoulder.

"I hope so, my mistress. But come—we cannot learn their intent until they please to tell us; and in the meantime you had better seek some rest. You are tired and worn. Lay your head upon my lap—so. And we will hope for the best."

Albia drew the head of her mistress gently down, and in a little while the weary princess was asleep. And the bondmaid did not long remain upon the watch. Her own lids were heavy, and very soon her senses were locked in slumber.

Al Abbas moved noiselessly to the spot where the worn maidens slept, and presently others of his band joined him.

"By the blood of Cush," muttered the robber chief, "they are beautiful enough! The lady Ulin is the fairest maiden I ever saw."

"They are both of them far too beautiful to be roaming at large," said another of the gang.

"They are worth more than jewels," added a third.

"You are right," responded the leader. "This princess would sell for a diadem, beyond the Syrian desert. But let them sleep, and when they are rested we will call them. If we would turn the prize into gold, we must not suffer it to fade from neglect."

After this the robbers sat down to their morning's meal; and when they had done eating some of them went to sleep upon the grass.

At the expiration of two hours Ulin awoke with a sharp cry, and caught her companion convulsively by the arm, and cried:

"O!—and it was only a dream. How frightful it was!"

"Only a dream, dear mistress. We are safe and well."

"Thank heaven!"

Al Abbas, as soon as he saw that the girls were awake, gave a shrill whistle, such as he had sounded on a previous occasion, and in an instant his men were upon their feet. The horses, also, noticed the signal, for they lifted their heads and moved up, together, as though ready to serve their masters.

(To be continued.)

The Nigeria Region.

Nigeria is an important region in Africa and comprises the whole of the British sphere (with the exception of the colony and the Protectorate of Lagos), within the lines of demarcation arranged by the Anglo-German agreements of 1885, 1886 and 1893, and the Anglo-French agreements of 1890, 1891 and 1898. The region covers between 400,000 and 500,000 square miles, and its population is variously estimated at from 25,000,000 to 40,000,000, but in the absence of any census, no reliance can be placed on such estimates. It is certain, however, that a great number of towns in Nigeria contain considerable population. For administrative purposes Nigeria is temporarily divided into two governments, Northern Nigeria and Southern Nigeria, but in the absence of any data it is impossible to say which section has the largest population. Brigadier-General Sir F. J. D. Lugard, K. C. M. G., C. B., D. S. O. is the high commissioner for Northern Nigeria—Montreal Herald and Star.

How Ruskin Learned Obedience.

John Ruskin, who wrote so many famous books, said the first lesson he learned was to be obedient. "One evening," he says, "when I was yet in my nurse's arms, I wanted to touch the tea-urn, which was boiling merrily. It was an early taste for bronzes. I suppose, but I was resolute about it. My mother bade me keep my fingers back. I insisted on putting them forward. My nurse would have taken me away from the urn, but my mother said: 'Let him touch it, nurse.' So I touched it, and that was my first lesson in the meaning of the word liberty I got, and the last that for some time I asked."

Truth, not eloquence, is to be sought.—A. Kempis.

OPPOSED TO REVISION

SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN EXPRESS THEIR OPINIONS.

The Delusions of "Tariff Reformers" and Ill-Informed Politicians Ably Dissected and the Truth Clearly Set Forth—People Opposed to Tariff Revision.

One of the most comprehensive and conclusive arguments supplied in response to the American Economist's requests for expressions on the subject of tariff revision is that contained in the subjoined letter of Congressman Burkett of Nebraska. There is, for example, a world of sound sense in this statement:

"The Dingley bill may not be perfect in its workings in every particular, but would the little that we could hope to better it warrant the risk of the undertaking, especially when we take into consideration the fact that the machinery of commerce and industry are all adjusted to it?"

Congressman Burkett's letter in full follows:

In response to your letter of recent date asking my opinion of a general revision of the tariff law in the fifty-seventh congress, permit me to say I do not find any demand in the Middle West for tariff revision. In fact, I should say it is not desired. The people are prosperous, and in my judgment they do not forget with what promptness their prosperity followed the enactment of the Dingley bill. In this, I would differ with the eminent statesman from Ohio, General Grosvenor, in his letter of June 1, a copy of which is before me, and wherein he said:

"The great danger to the future welfare of the American people lies in the shortness of their memory."

The "people" have not forgotten, nor will they ever forget, the disasters in business during the unfortunate period of free trade in this country.

The agitation for revision of the tariff laws is neither the voice nor the mind of "the people." It does not sound like "the people"; it does not look like "the people"; it does not come through proper channels to be recognized as of "the people." I have failed to find any expression of "the people" whatsoever, either in election returns or elsewhere, indicating their dissatisfaction with the present conditions.

Agitators may always be found. Those who believe in free trade would no doubt like to see the advocates of the "American System" in a clash among themselves as to detail. Persons interested in certain ways no doubt may pretend to believe a revision of the tariff desirable; but neither the voice of the agitator, nor of the free trader, nor the interested one, should be mistaken for the voice of "the people."

Some may attempt to name particular faults in our present tariff laws, but the chances are that they are not in sympathy with the general policy of protection.

It can be said without doubt that no legislation could be enacted that would suit everybody and every individual's interest. The welfare of the whole American people is the criterion by which the American congress should be guided. The farmer in the West, the planter in the South, the manufacturer in the East and the wool grower in the Northwest and the laboring man all over the country are prosperous at present and in my judgment ask no change.

The Dingley bill may not be perfect in its workings in every particular, but would the little that we could hope to better it warrant the risk of the undertaking, especially when we take into consideration the fact that the machinery of commerce and industry are all adjusted to it? Besides, reciprocity is a wisely devised and constructed safety valve to guard against any possible danger of too high tension of the tariff law itself in any particular. A tariff law is the commercial policy of the nation. It is the governor, so to speak, on the commercial and industrial machinery of the nation, and if we would take it off to mend it the machinery would either run away with itself or stop on a dead center. Any threat of tinkering with the law would create such fear in business centers and among the people interested as to do much harm, even if the only excuse therefor should prove to be the familiar philosophy that the bark is often worse than the bite.

Yours truly,

E. J. BURKETT,

M. C., First Dist. of Nebraska, Lincoln, Neb., July 24, 1901.

WILL NOT SUCCEED.

The free trade agitators who are anxious to precipitate a tariff contest at the next session of congress are trying to make it appear that the wool manufacturers will urge a reduction in the tariff on wool, regardless of the effect of such action upon the wool growers of this country.

That, however, is denied by an eastern commercial newspaper, which claims to know the sentiment of the wool manufacturers. It says that the attitude of the manufacturers toward the wool growers is the same today that it has been during the past seventy-five years. While it is true that the tariff on wool has operated against the manufacturers of wools, because it has shut them out of the world's market to a certain extent and deprived them of the chance to make greater profits by purchasing cheaper raw materials, yet the manufacturers have always been willing that the sheep industry should be protected, because they know that without the competition afforded by American wool they would be at the mercy of the foreign wool growers and would have to

pay whatever price might be demanded. It has been proved by frequent trials in this country without the help of a protective tariff, and for that reason the manufacturers have refrained from serving their own immediate interests by advocating a reduction in the tariff on the raw material.

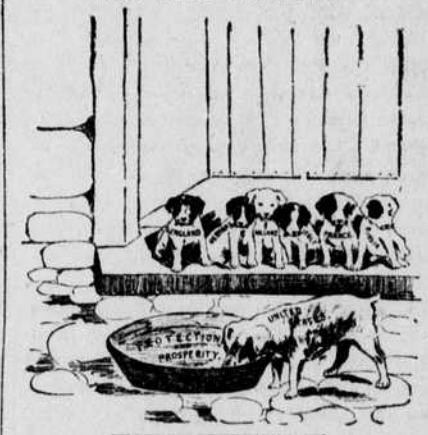
The free traders are exerting every effort to array the protected industries against one another, but they will not succeed in their attempt to induce the wool manufacturers to antagonize the sheep raisers.—Cleveland Leader.

HOW IT WOULD WORK.

The Ohio Democrats have declared for tariff reform and for placing all trust products on the free list. Right on the heels of this declaration comes a sweeping reduction by the American woolen trust of prices of woolen cloths, and the large number of woolen manufacturers outside the trust are considerably agitated at this procedure. It thus appears that a trust may reduce prices as well as advance prices. But it still remains a trust for all that, and according to the Babcock plan and the Ohio Democratic plan and the plan of the tariff revisionaries generally, the tariff must be repealed on all imports competing with domestic trust products. An application of this wonderful theory in the case of the Woolen trust would doubtless work some hardship on that corporation, for the tariff on wool would still stand, as nobody claims that wool growing is monopolized by a trust, and the cloth makers of England who use low priced free wool would take immediate possession of the big American market.

Such would be the result unless, as might easily happen, the domestic Woolen trust, finding that the repeal of the tariff had swept every non-trust woolen mill out of existence, and finding the domestic field thus cleared of all troublesome competition, should do as the salt companies of the United States and Europe are doing—form an international trust that would control production, prices and wages. Of course, we should see half a million people now working in non-trust woolen mills thrown out of employment and half a billion of capital invested in buildings and machinery rendered valueless. But the domestic free trader and trust smasher wouldn't let that worry him. What he wants is to kill the tariff, no matter who or what else is killed.

HOW THEY ENVY HIM.



TARIFF AND THE STEEL TRUST.

Discussion of Hon. J. W. Babcock's idea of removing the tariff from all products of the steel trust has brought out some interesting facts about the steel trade. It has been shown that big as the big trust is, it by no means controls the steel trade in this country, there being many establishments, some of them employing a large number of men, which have no connection with the trust. It seems to be generally admitted that the removal of the tariff on steel products would not injure the big trust to any marked extent, but it is claimed that it would necessitate an immediate reduction of wages in all steel establishments not in the trust. This claim, which is being made by those who ought to know whereof they speak, is causing many who were at first inclined to favor Mr. Babcock's idea to entertain doubts of its wisdom, and if it be substantiated by unprejudiced investigation, which a number of members of the house are quietly making, the bill for the repeal of the tariff on steel products will not be supported by a corporal's guard of Republicans in either branch of congress at the coming session. Desirable as many consider it to curb the power of the big trusts, the Republican majority in congress is not going to be stampeded into the support of anything of that sort without carefully considering it from every point of view, and they will certainly not allow any legislation to get through that will reduce the wages of American workmen.—Baraboo (Wis.) Republic.

Tariff Reform Bosh.

"Tariff reform was never more urgently needed than now, when the production of the country so far exceeds its power of consumption that foreign markets are a prime condition of its continued prosperity." This is the language of the Ohio Democratic platform, and it is calculated to make one smile. We have just closed the books of a fiscal year, and they show that we have sold more of our commodities in foreign markets than in any other year in our whole national existence. Then, where is the suggestion based upon wisdom, that we should reform the tariff in order to increase our foreign trade? It is more satisfactory that it ever has been; therefore, what is wrong?—Knoxville (Tenn.) Tribune.

Not at All.

Certainly the argument that the removal of the tariff is the way to suppress the trust is decidedly untenable and a greater menace to the United States than any trust can be.—New Castle (Pa.) News.

Small Irrigation Plants.

From the 1900 report of the New Jersey Experiment Station we take the following:

The irrigation practiced in the East has thus far been on a small scale. Plants capable of irrigating 6 to 8 acres are the rule. They have, however, clearly demonstrated two points—first, an irrigation plant is a desirable adjunct to a farm; and second, that it pays. In most cases the water has been applied by pumping, either from a stream or from wells. The cost of these small plants is relatively large per acre, yet in all cases they have proved profitable, because the water has been used for such crops as are liable to suffer seriously in case of short drouths. Of the eight small plants of which full data have been obtained, the initial cost per acre for them ranges from \$25 to \$100, and, with the exception of one case, the water is applied by pumping; in four cases it is obtained from streams, and in the others from wells, and the returns thus far have in all cases paid a large rate of interest on the investment.

The question of small plants and their erection and equipment has been well worked out, and one capable of furnishing water for from 6 to 8 acres can be erected and equipped for from \$400 to \$500, depending on the location of the land in reference to situation of the water—that is, whether the point to which the water is to be raised be high or low. This does seem a relatively high initial cost as compared with that of canals and ditches or even of storage, but as used in intensive practice and for crops of a high commercial value these plants do return a large profit on the investment. The information thus far gathered indicates that irrigation is desirable in the humid districts, and that small plants, while relatively expensive, are practicable and result in greatly reducing the effects of a deficiency in rainfall.

Care of Trees from the Nursery.

Whether purchased direct from the growers, or ordered through agents, care should be taken that the roots of the trees are not exposed to the action of the sun and dry winds. The practice of many farmers of placing the bundles in their wagons and driving home without taking any pains to cover them to prevent the drying of the roots has undoubtedly caused the loss of thousands of nursery trees. Wet straw and blankets should always be provided when notice has been received that the agent from whom the trees have been ordered is to make a delivery, and, as soon as possible, the trees should be either planted or heeled in. When received in the fall, unless one has a cellar, where the temperature can be kept just above the freezing point, in which they may be placed with their roots in the soil, it will be desirable to heel in the trees in some well-drained spot, where there will be no danger from standing water. A trench should be dug a foot or so in depth and about three feet wide, in which the trees should be placed with the tops inclined toward the south at an angle of about twenty-five or thirty degrees from the horizontal. The bundles should be opened and the soil thoroughly worked among the roots and pressed about them. It is always advisable to have the trunk and greater part of the branches covered, especially in the case of peach and other tender fruits, and whenever fruits have not been thoroughly ripened. Care should be taken to have no straw or rubbish about the trees, but it is a good plan to use evergreen boughs to break the sun's rays and prevent the alternate freezing and thawing, as well as the rapid thawing of the trees after a severe cold spell. A trench should always be dug to carry off any surface water about the trees.—Michigan Bulletin.

The Hawaii Experiment Station.

A United States Experiment Station is in process of being established on the Island of Oahu, one of the Hawaiian group. The piece of land to be used begins in the suburbs of Honolulu, and is at that end only 100 feet above the sea. It rises gradually for a distance of two miles, and is at that distance 1,400 feet above sea level. The lower slope is densely covered with thickets of native growth, but the upper third is covered with a planted forest of Australian Eucalyptus, Acacia and Grevilla species. The buildings are now being erected. One of the important lines to be taken up is that of the production of hay-making grasses. All hay is now imported and retails at \$27 per ton in Honolulu. Another line to be followed will be an attempt to ensile the tops of the sugar cane. At the present time all of this material is dried and burned. The cultivation of citrus fruits will also begin, in an attempt to give the natives some product they can export at a profit. Poultry culture will also be investigated and stimulated. At present there is a troublesome disease among fowls that makes it difficult to raise chickens. As a consequence fowl meat and eggs are very high.

Fruit Notes.

Peaches in many parts of Ohio are about half their usual size and unpalatable. Pears are reported a large crop in Jefferson and Harrison counties, Ohio. The prospects for peaches and grapes in New York state continue favorable but pears will be scarce. Illinois fruit prospects are poor. All kinds of tree fruits are scarce in New Jersey except peaches. Aphides are so numerous in Gloucester county that some fields of cantaloupe have been entirely destroyed. California reports state that deciduous fruits are of good quality but the yield is below the average. Good rains have caused improvement in late peaches and apples in eastern Kansas.