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## THE QUEEN SEMIRAMIS.

'Of all my wives,' said King Ninus to Semiramis, 'it is you I love best. None have charms and graces like you, and for you I would willingly resign them all.'

'Let the King consider well what he says,' replied Semiramis. 'What if I were to take him at his word!'

'Do so replied the Monarch; while beloved by you, I am indifferent to others.'

'So, then, if I asked it,' said Semiramis, 'you would banish all your other wives and love me alone? I should be alone your consort the partaker of your power and Queen of Assyria?'

'Queen of Assyria! Are you not so already,' said Ninus, 'since you reign by your beauty over its King?'

'No—no,' answered his lovely mistress; 'I am at present only a slave whom you love. I reign not; I merely charm. When I give an order, you are consulted before I am obeyed.'

'And to reign then you think so great a pleasure?'

'Yes, to one who has never experienced it?'

'And do you wish, then, to experience it? Would you like to reign a few days in my place?'

'Take care, O King! do not offer too much.'

'No, I repeat it,' said the captivated monarch. 'Would you like for one whole day to be sovereign mistress of Assyria? If you would I consent to it.'

'And will all which I command then be executed?'

'Yes; I will resign to you, for one entire day, my power and my golden sceptre.'

'And when shall this be?'

'To-morrow, if you like.'

'I do,' said Semiramis; and she let her head fall upon the shoulder of the king, like a beautiful woman asking pardon for some caprice which has been yielded to.

The next morning Semiramis called her women, and commanded them to dress her magnificently. On her head she wore a crown of precious stones, and appeared thus before Ninus, who, enchanted with her beauty, ordered all the officers of the palace to assemble in the state chamber, and his golden sceptre to be brought from the treasury. He then entered the chamber, leading Semiramis by the hand. All prostrated themselves before the aspect of the King, who conducted Semiramis to the throne, & seated her upon it. Then ordering the whole assembly to rise, he announced to the court that they were to obey, during the whole day Semiramis as himself. So saying, he took up the golden sceptre, and placed it in the hands of Semiramis.

'Queen,' said he, 'I commit to you the emblem of sacred power; take it, and command with sovereign authority. All here are your slaves, and I myself am nothing more than your servant the whole of this day. Whoever shall be remiss in executing your orders, let him be punished as if he had disobeyed the commands of the king.'

Having thus spoken, the King knelt down before Semiramis, who gave him with a smile her hand to kiss. The courtiers then passed in succession, each making oath to execute blindly the orders of Semiramis. When the ceremony was finished, the king made her his compliments, and asked how she had managed to go through with it with so grave and majestic an air.

'While they were promising to obey me,' said Semiramis, 'I was thinking what I should command each of them to do. I have but one day of power, and I will employ it well.'

The King laughed at this reply. Semiramis appeared more piquante and amiable than ever.

'Let us see,' said Ninus, 'how you will continue your part. By what orders will you begin?'

'Let the secretary of the King approach my throne,' said Semiramis, in a loud voice. The secretary approached; two slaves placed a little table before him.

'Write,' said Semiramis: 'Under penalty of death, the governor of the citadel of Babylon is ordered to yield up the command of the citadel to him who shall bear to him this order.' Fold this order, seal it with the King's seal, and deliver to me this decree. Write now, 'Under penalty of death, the governor of the slaves of the palace shall resign the command of the slaves into the hands of the person who shall present to him this order.' Fold it, seal it with the King's seal, and deliver to me this decree. Write again: 'Under penalty of death, the general of the army encamped under the walls of Babylon is ordered to resign the command of the army to him who

shall be the bearer of this order.' Fold, seal, and deliver this decree to me.'

She took three orders thus dictated, and put them in her bosom. The whole court was struck with consternation; the King himself was surprised.

'Listen,' said Semiramis. 'In two hours hence let all the officers of the State come and offer me presents, as is the custom on the accession of new princes, and let a festival be prepared for this evening. Now let all depart. Let my faithful servant Ninus alone remain. I have to consult him upon affairs of State.'

When all the rest had gone out—'You see,' said Semiramis, 'that I know how to play the queen.' Ninus laughed.

My beautiful queen,' said he, 'you play your part to astonishment. But if your servant would dare to question you what would you do with the orders you have dictated?'

'I should be no longer queen were I obliged to give account of my actions. Nevertheless, this was my motive. I have a vengeance to execute against the three officers whom these orders menace.'

'Vengeance, and wherefore?'

'The first, the governor of the citadel, is one-eyed, and frightens me every time I meet him; the second, the chief of the slaves, I hate because he threatens me with rivals; the third, the general of the army, deprives me too often of your company; you are constantly in the camp.'

This reply, in which caprice and flattery were mingled, enchanted Ninus.

'Good,' said he, laughing. 'Here are the three first officers of the empire dismissed for very sufficient reasons.'

The gentlemen of the court now came to present their gifts to the queen. Some gave precious stones, others, of lower rank, flowers and fruits, and the slaves, having nothing to give, gave nothing. Among these last were three young brothers, who had come from the Caucasus with Semiramis and had rescued the caravan, in which the women were, from an enormous tiger, when they passed the throne.

'And you,' said she to the three brothers, 'have you no presents to make your queen?'

'No other replied the first, Zophire, 'than my life to defend her.'

None other,' replied the second, Artaban, 'than my sable against her enemies.'

'None other,' replied the third Assar, 'than the respect and admiration which her presence inspires.'

'Slaves,' said Semiramis, 'it is you who have made me the most valuable presents of the whole court, and I will not be ungrateful. You who have offered me your sword against my enemies, take this order, carry it to the general of the army encamped under the walls of Babylon, give it to him, and see what he will do for you—You who have offered me your life for my defence, take this order to the governor of the citadel, and see what he will do for you. And you, who offer me the respect and admiration which my presence inspires, take this order to the commandant of the palace, and see what will be the result.'

Never had Semiramis displayed so much gayety, so much folly and so much grace, and never was Ninus so captivated. Nor were her charms lessened in his eyes, when a slave, not having executed properly an insignificant order, she commanded his head to be struck off, which was immediately done.

Without bestowing a thought on this trivial matter, Ninus still continued to converse with Semiramis till the evening and the fete arrived. When she entered the saloon which had been prepared for the occasion, a slave brought her a plate in which was the head of the decapitated eunuch.

'This well,' said she, after having examined it. 'Place it on a stake in the court of the palace, that all may see it, and be you there on the spot to proclaim to every one, that the man to whom this head belonged lived three hours ago, but that having disobeyed my will, his head was separated from his body.'

The fete was magnificent; a sumptuous banquet was prepared in the gardens, and Semiramis received the homage of all with a grace and majesty perfectly regal; she continually turned to, and conversed with Ninus, rendering him the most distinguished honor. 'You are,' said she, 'a foreign king come to visit me in my palace; I must make your visit agreeable to you.'

Shortly after, the banquet was served. Semiramis confounded and reversed all ranks. Ninus was placed at the bottom of the table. He was the first to laugh at this caprice: and the court, following his

example, allowed themselves to be placed, without murmuring, according to the will of the queen. She seated near herself the three brothers from the Caucasus.

'Are my orders executed?' she demanded of them.

'Yes,' they replied.

The fete was very gay. A slave having, by the force of habit, served the king first, Semiramis had him beaten with rods. His cries mingled with the laughter of the guests. Every one was inclined to merriment. It was a comedy, in which each played his part. Toward the end of the repast, when wine had added to the general gayety, Semiramis rose from her elevated seat, and said—'My lords, the treasurer of the empire has read me a list of those who this morning have brought me their gifts of congratulation on my joyful accession to the throne. One grandee alone of the court has failed to bring his gift.'

'Who is it?' cried Ninus. 'He must be punished severely.'

'It is you yourself, my lord—you who speak. What have you given to the queen this morning?'

Ninus rose, and came with a smiling countenance to whisper something in the ear of the queen. 'The queen is insulted by her servant,' exclaimed Semiramis.

'I embrace your knees to obtain my pardon. Pardon me, beautiful queen,' said he, 'pardon me.' And he added, in a lower tone, 'I would that this fete were finished.'

'You wish, then, that I should abdicate?' said Semiramis. 'But no—I have still two hours to reign; and at the same time she withdrew her hand, which the king was covering with kisses. 'I pardon not,' said she, in a loud voice, 'Such an insult on the part of a slave. Slave, prepare thyself to die.'

'Silly child that thou art,' said Ninus, still on his knees: 'yet I give way to thy folly; but patience, thy reign will soon be over.'

'You will not, then be angry,' said she, in a whisper, 'at something I am going to order at this moment?'

'No,' said he.

'Slave,' said she aloud, 'seize this man—that Ninus.'

Ninus, smiling, put himself into the hands of the slaves.

'Take him out of the saloon, lead him into the court of the seraglio, prepare everything for his death, and await my orders.'

The slaves obeyed, and Ninus followed them, laughing, into the court of the seraglio. They passed by the dead of the disobeying eunuch. Then Semiramis placed herself on a balcony. Ninus had suffered his hands to be tied.

'Hasten to the fortress, Zopire; you to the camp, Artaban; Assar, do you secure all the gates in the palace.'

These orders were given in a whisper, and executed immediately.

'Beautiful queen,' said Ninus, laughing, 'this comedy only wants its denouement; pray let it be a prompt one.'

'I will,' said Semiramis. 'Slave, recollect the eunuch—strife!'

They struck. Ninus had hardly time to utter a cry, when his head fell upon the pavement; the smile was still upon his lips.

'Now I am queen of Assyria!' exclaimed Semiramis, 'and perish every one, like the eunuch and like Ninus, who dare disobey my orders.'

## A MONSTER TREE.

A California correspondent of the *Selma Gazette*, (Joseph J. Wallis) says that Col. Temple Tebbets, formerly of Lewiston Falls, Main, cut a tree of the Redwood species in California, which was two hundred and fifty four feet high, and measured at the top two feet in diameter, and at the butt twelve feet in diameter. The tree was worked in to lumber one hundred and forty feet from the butt where it measured five feet in diameter. There were made from this giant of the forest 110,000 shingles, 6000 clapboards, 4000 three by four joists, twenty-two feet long; and were left at a moderate calculation, from seventy to eighty cords of wood. The clapboards were sold for \$50 per thousand, the shingles for \$35 per thousand, the joists for \$375 per thousand, and the remaining part of the tree would readily sell in this city, for firewood, at \$40 per cord; thus at a moderate calculation, there was derived from the working of this mammoth dweller of the primeval forest the neat little sum of \$11,350.

It is said that Prof. Webster will be hung.

**SELF-MADE MEN.**—Columbus was a weaver. Franklin a journeyman printer. Sextus V. was employed in herding swine. Ferguson and Burns were ploughmen.—Esop was a slave. Hogarth was an engraver on pewter pots. Ben Johnson was a brick-layer. Porson was the son of a parish clerk. Akenside was the son of a butcher—so was Wolsey. Cervantes was a common soldier. Halley was the son of a soap boiler. Arkwright was a baker. Belzoni was the son of a barber. Blackstone and Southey were the sons of linen drapers. Crabbe was a fisherman's son. Keats the son of a livery-stable keeper. Buchanan was a farmer. Captain Cook began his career as a cabin boy. Hayden was the son of a poor wheelwright. Hogg was a shepherd.

## RECIPROCITY OF SENTIMENT.

'Mrs. Smith, said Brown to her next door neighbor, lately, 'your Sal makes a common practice of throwin' her slops right in front of my door, and I don't like it.'

'Well Mrs. Brown, since you have spoken about it, I must say that your Bill does more than that; he chucks dirty water in my Sal's face, and even tore her dress a few days ago.'

'Well dear knows, Mrs. Smith, you needn't say nothin' about my Bill, for your Sal is the worst child in the neighborhood; all the neighbors say so, and what all say must be so.'

All the neighbors says, does they? and what does they say about your Sal, I'd like to know? Take care, Mrs. Brown, don't put me in a passion, or I'll say more than you'd like to hear. People that lives in glass houses oughtn't to throw stones.'

'Say what you please, Mrs. Smith, but take care and don't violate the law, or I'll put you where the dogs won't bite you.'

'Ah! you will, will you? you dirty huzzy? you put a decent woman in prison, will you? better take care you don't get there yourself; it's where you ought to have been, long ago, if what every body says is true.'

'There, I'll make you prove that—I'll make you prove that—yes I will. Sal, get my bonnet and shawl. I'll see if there's no justice for me? and Mrs. Smith hastened off to a Magistrate to get a warrant for Mrs. Brown. The magistrate and the constable were the only persons who made any thing by the operation. These scenes are of every day occurrence.'

**Dying Expressions.** Don't Give up the ship.—Lawrence.

I'll be damned if I don't believe I'm dying.—Chancellor Thurlow.

Don't let that awkward squad fire over my grave.—Burns.

Raise me up that I may behold the sun.—Schiller.

Po, nonsense, don't talk to me of Christ.—Paine.

See how calm a christian can die.—Aldison.

Blessed be God; all is well.—Risdon R. Darricot.

Kiss me, Hardy.—Nelson.

I have got the victory, and Christ is holding out both hands to receive me.—Rutherford.

Let him fear death who must pass from this death to a second death.—Cyprian.

I am not afraid to look death in the face. I can can say, death where is thy sting?—Death cannot hurt.—John Dodd.

Oh, When will this good hour come?—When shall I be dissolved? When shall I be with Christ?—Robert Bolton.

John Bunyan's last words were: Weep not for me, but for yourselves. I go to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who no doubt will receive, though a sinner, through the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, where I hope we shall ere long meet, to sing the new song and remain happy forever, in the world without end. Amen.

Richard Baxter said to his brethren who were confronting him in his last moments, 'I have pains, there is no arguing against sense; but I have peace. I have peace.'

'Crown me with flowers,' said Mirabeau, on his death bed, 'intoxicate me with your perfumes, me die lit with the sound of delicious music.' Not one word of God, or of his soul!

Look at Madam Roland, strong woman in the revolution—upon the car that carries her to death. Not one glance to heaven; only an exclamation for the earth she leaves, 'O, Liberty.'

Approach the prison door of the Girondines; their last night is a banquet, and their last hymn is the *Marsellise*.

Follow Camille Desmoulis to punishment; a cold and indecent pleasnary at the tribunal; one long imprecation on the road to the guillotine! those are the last thoughts of this dying man, about to appear on high!

Listen to Danton upon the platform of the scaffold, one step from God and immortality: 'I have enjoyed much: let me go to sleep,' he says—then to the executioner. 'You will show my head to the people. It is worth while!'

## DIGNITY OF LITERATURE.

Under this head a letter appears in the *Morning Chronicle*, from the author of 'Pendennis,' containing an elaborate defence against a charge made by that journal and reiterated in the *Examiner*, of last week, which says of a particular character of the above work, that it 'is a caricature such as Mr Thackeray too often condescends to, and which might even have passed as the sarcastic suggestion of a useful truth, (to wit, that there are quacks and imposters in the author's calling as well as in every other,) if the writer had less frequently indulged a disposition to pay court to the non-literary class by disparaging his literary fellow-laborers.'

To this charge Mr. Thackeray replies—'I no more plead guilty than I should think Fielding would have done if he had been accused of a design to bring the church into contempt by Parson Trulliber; and, permit me to say, that before you deliver sentence it would be as well if you had waited to hear the whole of the argument. Who knows what is coming in the future numbers of the work which has incurred your displeasure and the *Examiner's*, and you in accusing me of prejudice, and the *Examiner* (alas!) of swindling and flattering the public, have not been premature?—Time and the hour may solve this mystery, for which the candid reader is referred to our next.'

Mr. Thackeray concludes his very clever epistle as follows:—'Instead of accusing the public of prosecuting and disparaging us as a class, it seems to me that men of letters had best silently assume that they are as good as any other gentlemen; nor raise piteous controversies upon a question which all people of sense must take to be settled. If I sit at your table, I suppose that I am my neighbors equal, as that he is mine. If I begin straightway with a protest of 'Sir, I am a literary man, but I would have you to know that I am as good as you,' which of us is it that questions the dignity of the literary profession, my neighbor, who would like to eat his soup in quiet, or the man of letters who commences the argument?—And I hope that the comic writer, because he describes one author as improvident, and another as a parasite, may not only be guiltless of a desire to vilify his profession, but may really have its honor at heart. If there are no spendthrifts or parasites among us, the satire becomes unjust; but if such exist, or have existed, they are as good subjects for comedy as men of other callings. I never heard that the Bar felt itself aggrieved because *Punch* choose to describe Mr Dunup's notorious state of insolvency, or that the picture of Stiggins, in 'Pickwick,' was intended as an insult on all Dissenters; or that all the attorneys in the empire were indignant at the famous history of the firm of 'Quirk, Gammon and Snap.' Are we to be passed over because we are faultless, or because we cannot afford to be laughed at?'

'And if every character in the story is to represent a class, not an individual—if every bad figure is to have its obliged contrast of a good one, and a balance of vice and virtue is to be struck—novels, I think, would become impossible, and they would be intolerably stupid and unnatural; and there would be a lamentable end of writers and readers of such compositions.'

**'THE TRUE DEMOCRATIC DOCTRINE.'**

We alluded in our last issue to some of the remarkable doings of the *Loco Focos* in their late 'harmonious' meeting in this City. It will not be forgotten that the 'Standard' asserted that the resolutions, offered by Mr. Shepard, 'embodied the true Democratic doctrine'—that they presented the glass by which all young Scientists of the true Democratic stock must hereafter dress themselves. Now the question will naturally arise in the mind of every one, what is that 'true Democratic doctrine?' As defined by one of the resolutions, if we have been correctly informed, the true Democratic doctrine upon the subject of Internal Improvement is, that the Representative elect shall give no vote