

***LEW
WALLACE***

***THE PRINCE
OF INDIA***

Lew Wallace

The Prince of India

The Story of the Fall of Constantinople (Historical Novel)

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Postscripts

Rise, too, ye Shapes and Shadows of the Past
Rise from your long-forgotten graves at last
Let us behold your faces, let us hear
The words you uttered in those days of fear
Revisit your familiar haunts again
The scenes of triumph, and the scenes of pain
And leave the footprints of your bleeding feet
Once more upon the pavement of the street.

Longfellow

TO MY FATHER, DAVID WALLACE

He loved literature for the pleasures it brought him; and could I have had his counsel while composing this work, the critics would not be so terrible to me now that it is about going to press.

—The Author, Crawfordsville, Ind.

May 20, 1893

Book I.

The Earth and the Sea Are Always Giving Up Their Secrets

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Chapter I.

The Nameless Bay

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In the noon of a September day in the year of our dear Lord 1395, a merchant vessel nodded sleepily upon the gentle swells of warm water flowing in upon the Syrian coast. A modern seafarer, looking from the deck of one of the Messagerie steamers now plying the same line of trade, would regard her curiously, thankful to the calm which held her while he slaked his wonder, yet more thankful that he was not of her passage.

She could not have exceeded a hundred tons burthen. At the bow and stern she was decked, and those quarters were fairly raised. Amidship she was low and open, and pierced for twenty oars, ten to a side, all swaying listlessly from the narrow ports in which they were hung. Sometimes they knocked against each other. One sail, square and of a dingy white, drooped from a broad yard-arm, which was itself tilted, and now and then creaked against the yellow mast complainingly, unmindful of the simple tackle designed to keep it in control. A watchman crouched in the meagre shade of a fan-like structure overhanging the bow deck. The roofing and the floor, where exposed, were clean, even bright; in all other parts subject to the weather and the wash there was only the blackness of pitch. The steersman sat on a bench at the stem. Occasionally, from force of habit, he rested a hand upon the rudder-oar to be sure it was yet in reach. With exception of the two, the lookout and the steersman, all on board, officers, oarsmen, and sailors, were asleep—such confidence could a Mediterranean calm

inspire in those accustomed to life on the beautiful sea. As if Neptune never became angry there, and blowing his conch, and smiting with his trident, splashed the sky with the yeast of waves! However, in 1395 Neptune had disappeared; like the great god Pan, he was dead.

The next remarkable thing about the ship was the absence of the signs of business usual with merchantmen. There were no barrels, boxes, bales, or packages visible. Nothing indicated a cargo. In her deepest undulations the water-line was not once submerged. The leather shields of the oar-ports were high and dry. Possibly she had passengers aboard. Ah, yes! There under the awning, stretched halfway across the deck dominated by the steersman, was a group of persons all unlike seamen. Pausing to note them, we may find the motive of the voyage.

Four men composed the group. One was lying upon a pallet, asleep yet restless. A black velvet cap had slipped from his head, giving freedom to thick black hair tinged with white. Starting from the temples, a beard with scarce a suggestion of gray swept in dark waves upon the neck and throat, and even invaded the pillow. Between the hair and beard there was a narrow margin of sallow flesh for features somewhat crowded by knots of wrinkle. His body was wrapped in a loose woollen gown of brownish-black. A hand, apparently all bone, rested upon the breast, clutching a fold of the gown. The feet twitched nervously in the loosened thongs of old-fashioned sandals. Glancing at the others of the group, it was plain this sleeper was master and they his slaves. Two of them were stretched on the bare boards at the lower end of the pallet, and they were white. The third was a son of Ethiopia of unmixed blood and gigantic frame. He sat at the left of the couch, cross-legged, and, like the

rest, was in a doze; now and then, however, he raised his head, and, without fully opening his eyes, shook a fan of peacock feathers from head to foot over the recumbent figure. The two whites were clad in gowns of coarse linen belted to their waists; while, saving a cincture around his loins, the negro was naked.

There is often much personal revelation to be gleaned from the properties a man carries with him from home. Applying the rule here, by the pallet there was a walking-stick of unusual length, and severely hand-worn a little above the middle. In emergency it might have been used as a weapon. Three bundles loosely wrapped had been cast against a timber of the ship; presumably they contained the plunder of the slaves reduced to the minimum allowance of travel. But the most noticeable item was a leather roll of very ancient appearance, held by a number of broad straps deeply stamped and secured by buckles of a metal blackened like neglected silver.

The attention of a close observer would have been attracted to this parcel, not so much by its antique showing, as by the grip with which its owner clung to it with his right hand. Even in sleep he held it of infinite consequence. It could not have contained coin or any bulky matter. Possibly the man was on some special commission, with his credentials in the old roll. Ay, who was he?

Thus started, the observer would have bent himself to study of the face; and immediately something would have suggested that while the stranger was of this period of the world he did not belong to it. Such were the magicians of the story-loving Al-Raschid. Or he was of the type Rabbinical that sat with Caiphas in judgment upon the gentle Nazarene. Only the centuries could have evolved the apparition. Who was he?

In the course of half an hour the man stirred, raised his head, looked hurriedly at his attendants, then at the parts of the ship in view, then at the steersman still dozing by the rudder; then he sat up, and brought the roll to his lap, whereat the rigor of his expression relaxed. The parcel was safe! And the conditions about him were as they should be!

He next set about undoing the buckles of his treasure. The long fingers were expert; but just when the roll was ready to open he lifted his face, and fixed his eyes upon the section of blue expanse outside the edge of the awning, and dropped into thought. And straightway it was settled that he was not a diplomatist or a statesman or a man of business of any kind. The reflection which occupied him had nothing to do with intrigues or statecraft; its centre was in his heart as the look proved. So, in tender moods, a father gazes upon his child, a husband at the beloved wife, restfully, lovingly.

And that moment the observer, continuing his study, would have forgotten the parcel, the white slaves, the gigantic negro, the self-willed hair and beard of pride—the face alone would have held him. The countenance of the Sphinx has no beauty now; and standing before it, we feel no stir of the admiration always a certificate that what we are beholding is charming out of the common lines; yet we are drawn to it irresistibly, and by a wish vague, foolish—so foolish we would hesitate long before putting it in words to be heard by our best lover—a wish that the monster would tell us all about itself. The feeling awakened by the face of the traveller would have been similar, for it was distinctly Israelitish, with exaggerated eyes set deeply in cavernous hollows—a mobile mask, in fact, concealing a life in some way unlike other lives. Unlike? That was the very attraction. If the man would only speak, what a tale he could unfold!

But he did not speak. Indeed, he seemed to have regarded speech a weakness to be fortified against. Putting the pleasant thought aside, he opened the roll, and with exceeding tenderness of touch brought forth a sheet of vellum dry to brittleness, and yellow as a faded sycamore leaf. There were lines upon it as of a geometrical drawing, and an inscription in strange characters. He bent over the chart, if such it may be called, eagerly, and read it through; then, with a satisfied expression, he folded it back into the cover, rebuckled the straps, and placed the parcel under the pillow. Evidently the business drawing him was proceeding as he would have had it. Next he woke the negro with a touch. The black in salute bent his body forward, and raised his hands palm out, the thumbs at the forehead. Attention singularly intense settled upon his countenance; he appeared to listen with his soul. It was time for speech, yet the master merely pointed to one of the sleepers. The watchful negro caught the idea, and going to the man, aroused him, then resumed his place and posture by the pallet. The action revealed his proportions. He looked as if he could have lifted the gates of Gaza, and borne them easily away; and to the strength there were superadded the grace, suppleness, and softness of motion of a cat. One could not have helped thinking the slave might have all the elements to make him a superior agent in fields of bad as well as good.

The second slave arose, and waited respectfully. It would have been difficult to determine his nationality. He had the lean face, the high nose, sallow complexion, and low stature of an Armenian. His countenance was pleasant and intelligent. In addressing him, the master made signs with hand and finger; and they appeared sufficient, for the servant walked away quickly as if on an errand. A short

time, and he came back bringing a companion of the genus sailor, very red-faced, heavily built, stupid, his rolling gait unrelieved by a suggestion of good manners. Taking position before the black-gowned personage, his feet wide apart, the mariner said:

“You sent for me?”

The question was couched in Byzantine Greek.

“Yes,” the passenger replied, in the same tongue, though with better accent. “Where are we?”

“But for this calm we should be at Sidon. The lookout reports the mountains in view.”

The passenger reflected a moment, then asked, “Resorting to the oars, when can we reach the city?”

“By midnight.”

“Very well. Listen now.”

The speaker’s manner changed; fixing his big eyes upon the sailor’s lesser orbs, he continued:

“A few stadia north of Sidon there is what may be called a bay. It is about four miles across. Two little rivers empty into it, one on each side. Near the middle of the bend of the shore there is a well of sweet water, with flow enough to support a few villagers and their camels. Do you know the bay?”

The skipper would have become familiar.

“You are well acquainted with this coast,” he said.

“Do you know of such a bay?” the passenger repeated.

“I have heard of it.”

“Could you find it at night?”

“I believe so.”

“That is enough. Take me into the bay, and land me at midnight. I will not go to the city. Get out all the oars now. At the proper time I will tell you what further I wish. Remember

I am to be set ashore at midnight at a place which I will show you."

The directions though few were clear. Having given them, the passenger signed the negro to fan him, and stretched himself upon the pallet; and thenceforth there was no longer a question who was in control. It became the more interesting, however, to know the object of the landing at midnight on the shore of a lonesome unnamed bay.

Chapter II.

The Midnight Landing

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The skipper predicted like a prophet. The ship was in the bay, and it was midnight or nearly so; for certain stars had climbed into certain quarters of the sky, and after their fashion were striking the hour.

The passenger was pleased.

“You have done well,” he said to the mariner. “Be silent now, and get close in shore. There are no breakers. Have the small boat ready, and do not let the anchors go.”

The calm still prevailed, and the swells of the sea were scarce perceptible. Under the gentlest impulse of the oars the little vessel drifted broadside on until the keel touched the sands. At the same instant the small boat appeared. The skipper reported to the passenger. Going to each of the slaves, the latter signed them to descend. The negro swung himself down like a monkey, and received the baggage, which, besides the bundles already mentioned, consisted of some tools, notably a pick, a shovel, and a stout crowbar. An empty water-skin was also sent down, followed by a basket suggestive of food. Then the passenger, with a foot over the side of the vessel, gave his final directions.

“You will run now,” he said to the skipper, who, to his credit, had thus far asked no questions, “down to the city, and lie there to-morrow, and to-morrow night. Attract little notice as possible. It is not necessary to pass the gate. Put out in time to be here at sunrise. I will be waiting for you. Day after to-morrow at sunrise— remember.”

“But if you should not be here?” asked the sailor, thinking of extreme probabilities.

“Then wait for me,” was the answer.

The passenger, in turn, descended to the boat, and was caught in the arms of the black, and seated carefully as he had been a child. In brief time the party was ashore, and the boat returning to the ship; a little later, the ship withdrew to where the night effectually curtained the deep.

The stay on the shore was long enough to apportion the baggage amongst the slaves. The master then led the way. Crossing the road running from Sidon along the coast to the up-country, they came to the foothills of the mountain, all without habitation.

Later they came upon signs of ancient life in splendor—broken columns, and here and there Corinthian capitals in marble discolored and sunk deeply in sand and mould. The patches of white on them had a ghastly glimmer in the starlight. They were approaching the site of an old city, a suburb probably of Palæ-Tyre when she was one of the spectacles of the world, sitting by the sea to rule it regally far and wide.

On further a small stream, one of those emptying into the bay, had ploughed a ravine for itself across the route the party was pursuing. Descending to the water, a halt was made to drink, and fill the water-skin, which the negro took on his shoulder.

On further there was another ancient site strewn with fragments indicative of a cemetery. Hewn stones were frequent, and mixed with them were occasional entablatures and vases from which the ages had not yet entirely worn the fine chiselling. At length an immense uncovered sarcophagus barred the way. The master stopped by it to study the heavens; when he found the north star, he gave

the signal to his followers, and moved under the trail of the steadfast beacon.

They came to a rising ground more definitely marked by sarcophagi hewn from the solid rock, and covered by lids of such weight and solidity that a number of them had never been disturbed. Doubtless the dead within were lying as they had been left—but when, and by whom? What disclosures there will be when at last the end is trumpeted in!

On further, but still connected with the once magnificent funeral site, they encountered a wall many feet thick, and shortway beyond it, on the mountain's side, there were two arches of a bridge of which all else had been broken down; and these two had never spanned anything more substantial than the air. Strange structure for such a locality! Obviously the highway which once ran over it had begun in the city the better to communicate with the cemetery through which the party had just passed. So much was of easy understanding; but where was the other terminus? At sight of the arches the master drew a long breath of relief. They were the friends for whom he had been searching.

Nevertheless, without stopping, he led down into a hollow on all sides sheltered from view; and there the unloading took place. The tools and bundles were thrown down by a rock, and preparations made for the remainder of the night. The pallet was spread for the master. The basket gave up its contents, and the party refreshed themselves and slept the sleep of the weary.

The secluded bivouac was kept the next day. Only the master went forth in the afternoon. Climbing the mountain, he found the line in continuation of the bridge; a task the two arches serving as a base made comparatively easy. He

stood then upon a bench or terrace cumbered with rocks, and so broad that few persons casually looking would have suspected it artificial. Facing fully about from the piers, he walked forward following the terrace which at places was out of line, and piled with debris tumbled from the mountain on the right hand side; in a few minutes that silent guide turned with an easy curve and disappeared in what had yet the appearance hardly distinguishable of an area wrenched with enormous labor from a low cliff of solid brown limestone.

The visitor scanned the place again and again; then he said aloud:

“No one has been here since”—

The sentence was left unfinished.

That he could thus identify the spot, and with such certainty pass upon it in relation to a former period, proved he had been there before.

Rocks, earth, and bushes filled the space. Picking footway through, he examined the face of the cliff then in front of him, lingering longest on the heap of breakage forming a bank over the meeting line of area and hill.

“Yes,” he repeated, this time with undisguised satisfaction, “no one has been here since”—

Again the sentence was unfinished.

He ascended the bank next, and removed some of the stones at the top. A carved line in low relief on the face of the rock was directly exposed; seeing it he smiled, and replaced the stones, and descending, went back to the terrace, and thence to the slaves in bivouac.

From one of the packages he had two iron lamps of old Roman style brought out, and supplied with oil and wicks; then, as if everything necessary to his project was done, he

took to the pallet. Some goats had come to the place in his absence, but no living creature else.

After nightfall the master woke the slaves, and made final preparation for the venture upon which he had come. The tools he gave to one man, the lamps to another, and the water-skin to the negro. Then he led out of the hollow, and up the mountain to the terrace visited in the afternoon; nor did he pause in the area mentioned as the abrupt terminus of the highway over the skeleton piers. He climbed the bank of stones covering the foot of the cliff up to the precise spot at which his reconnoissance had ended.

Directly the slaves were removing the bank at the top; not a difficult task since they had only to roll the loose stones down a convenient grade. They worked industriously. At length—in half an hour probably—an opening into the cliff was discovered. The cavity, small at first, rapidly enlarged, until it gave assurance of a doorway of immense proportions. When the enlargement sufficed for his admission, the master stayed the work, and passed in. The slaves followed. The interior descent offered a grade corresponding with that of the bank outside—another bank, in fact, of like composition, but more difficult to pass on account of the darkness.

With his foot the leading adventurer felt the way down to a floor; and when his assistants came to him, he took from a pocket in his gown a small case filled with a chemical powder which he poured at his feet; then he produced a flint and steel, and struck them together. Some sparks dropped upon the powder. Instantly a flame arose and filled the place with a ruddy illumination. Lighting the lamps by the flame, the party looked around them, the slaves with simple wonder.

They were in a vault—a burial vault of great antiquity. Either it was an imitation of like chambers in Egypt, or they were imitations of it. The excavation had been done with chisels. The walls were niched, giving them an appearance of panelling, and over each of the niches there had been an inscription in raised letters, now mostly defaced. The floor was a confusion of fragments knocked from sarcophagi, which, massive as they were, had been tilted, overturned, uncovered, mutilated, and robbed. Useless to inquire whose the vandalism. It may have been of Chaldeans of the time of Almanezor, or of the Greeks who marched with Alexander, or of Egyptians who were seldom regardful of the dead of the peoples they overthrew as they were of their own, or of Saracens, thrice conquerors along the Syrian coast, or of Christians. Few of the Crusaders were like St. Louis.

But of all this the master took no notice. With him it was right that the vault should look the wreck it was. Careless of inscriptions, indifferent to carving, his eyes ran rapidly along the foot of the northern wall until they came to a sarcophagus of green marble. Thither he proceeded. He laid his hand upon the half-turned lid, and observing that the back of the great box—if such it may be termed—was against the wall, he said again:

“No one has been here since”—

And again the sentence was left unfinished.

Forthwith he became all energy. The negro brought the crowbar, and, by direction, set it under the edge of the sarcophagus, which he held raised while the master blocked it at the bottom with a stone chip. Another bite, and a larger chip was inserted. Good hold being thus had, a vase was placed for fulcrum; after which, at every downward pressure of the iron, the ponderous coffin swung round a little to the

left. Slowly and with labor the movement was continued until the space behind was uncovered.

By this time the lamps had become the dependencies for light. With his in hand, the master stooped and inspected the exposed wall. Involuntarily the slaves bent forward and looked, but saw nothing different from the general surface in that quarter. The master beckoned the negro, and touching a stone not wider than his three fingers, but reddish in hue, and looking like mere chinking lodged in an accidental crevice, signed him to strike it with the end of the bar. Once — twice—the stone refused to stir; with the third blow it was driven in out of sight, and, being followed vigorously, was heard to drop on the other side. The wall thereupon, to the height of the sarcophagus and the width of a broad door, broke, and appeared about to tumble down.

When the dust cleared away, there was a crevice unseen before, and wide enough to admit a hand. The reader must remember there were masons in the old time who amused themselves applying their mathematics to such puzzles. Here obviously the intention had been to screen an entrance to an adjoining chamber, and the key to the design had been the sliver of red granite first displaced.

A little patient use then of hand and bar enabled the workman to take out the first large block of the combination. That the master numbered with chalk, and had carefully set aside. A second block was taken out, numbered, and set aside; finally the screen was demolished, and the way stood open.

Chapter III.

The Hidden Treasure

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The slaves looked dubiously at the dusty aperture, which held out no invitation to them; the master, however, drew his robe closer about him, and stooping went in, lamp in hand. They then followed.

An ascending passage, low but of ample width, received them. It too had been chiselled from the solid rock. The wheel marks of the cars used in the work were still on the floor. The walls were bare but smoothly dressed. Altogether the interest here lay in expectation of what was to come; and possibly it was that which made the countenance of the master look so grave and absorbed. He certainly was not listening to the discordant echoes roused as he advanced.

The ascent was easy. Twenty-five or thirty steps brought them to the end of the passage.

They then entered a spacious chamber circular and domed. The light of the lamps was not enough to redeem the ceiling from obscurity; yet the master led without pause to a sarcophagus standing under the centre of the dome, and when he was come there everything else was forgotten by him.

The receptacle of the dead thus discovered had been hewn from the rock, and was of unusual proportions. Standing broadside to the entrance, it was the height of an ordinary man, and twice as long as high. The exterior had been polished smoothly as the material would allow; otherwise it was of absolute plainness, looking not unlike a dark brown box. The lid was a slab of the finest white

marble carved into a perfect model of Solomon's Temple. While the master surveyed the lid he was visibly affected. He passed the lamp over it slowly, letting the light fall into the courts of the famous building; in like manner he illuminated the corridors, and the tabernacle; and, as he did so, his features trembled and his eyes were suffused. He walked around the exquisite representation several times, pausing now and then to blow away the dust that had in places accumulated upon it. He noticed the effect of the transparent whiteness in the chamber; so in its day the original had lit up the surrounding world. Undoubtedly the model had peculiar hold upon his feelings.

But shaking the weakness off he after a while addressed himself to work. He had the negro thrust the edge of the bar under the lid, and raise it gently. Having thoughtfully provided himself in the antechamber with pieces of stone for the purpose, he placed one of them so as to hold the vantage gained. Slowly, then, by working at the ends alternately, the immense slab was turned upon its centre; slowly the hollow of the coffin was flooded with light; slowly, and with seeming reluctance, it gave up its secrets.

In strong contrast to the plainness of the exterior, the interior of the sarcophagus was lined with plates and panels of gold, on which there were cartoons chased and beaten in, representing ships, and tall trees, doubtless cedars of Lebanon, and masons at work, and two men armed and in royal robes greeting each other with clasped hands; and so beautiful were the cartoons that the eccentric medalleur, Cellini, would have studied them long, if not enviously. Yet he who now peered into the receptacle scarcely glanced at them.

On a stone chair seated was the mummy of a man with a crown upon its head, and over its body, for the most part

covering the linen wrappings, was a robe of threads of gold in ample arrangement. The hands rested on the lap; in one was a sceptre; the other held an inscribed silver tablet. There were rings plain, and rings with jewels in setting, circling the fingers and thumbs; the ears, ankles, even the great toes, were ornamented in like manner. At the feet a sword of the fashion of a cimeter had been laid. The blade was in its scabbard, but the scabbard was a mass of jewels, and the handle a flaming ruby. The belt was webbed with pearls and glistening brilliants. Under the sword were the instruments sacred then and ever since to Master Masons—a square, a gavel, a plummet, and an inscribing compass.

The man had been a king—so much the first glance proclaimed. With him, as with his royal brethren from the tombs along the Nile, death had asserted itself triumphantly over the embalmer. The cheeks were shrivelled and mouldy; across the forehead the skin was drawn tight; the temples were hollows rimmed abruptly with the frontal bones; the eyes, pits partially filled with dried ointments of a bituminous color. The monarch had yielded his life in its full ripeness, for the white hair and beard still adhered in stiffened plaits to the skull, cheeks, and chin. The nose alone was natural; it stood up thin and hooked, like the beak of an eagle.

At sight of the figure thus caparisoned and maintaining its seat in an attitude of calm composure the slaves drew back startled. The negro dropped his iron bar, making the chamber ring with a dissonant clangor.

Around the mummy in careful arrangement were vessels heaped with coins and pearls and precious stones, cut and ready for the goldsmith. Indeed, the whole inner space of the sarcophagus was set with basins and urns, each in itself a work of high art; and if their contents were to be judged

by what appeared overflowing them, they all held precious stones of every variety. The corners had been draped with cloths of gold and cloths embroidered with pearls, some of which were now falling to pieces of their own weight.

We know that kings and queens are but men and women subject to the same passions of common people; that they are generous or sordid according to their natures; that there have been misers amongst them; but this one—did he imagine he could carry his amassments with him out of the world? Had he so loved the gems in his life as to dream he could illumine his tomb with them? If so, O royal idiot!

The master, when an opening had been made sufficiently wide by turning the lid upon the edge of the sarcophagus, took off his sandals, gave a foot to one of his slaves, and swung himself into the interior. The lamp was then given him, and he surveyed the wealth and splendor as the king might never again. And as the king in his day had said with exultation, Lo! it is all mine, the intruder now asserted title.

Unable, had he so wished, to carry the whole collection off, he looked around upon this and upon that, determining where to begin. Conscious he had nothing to fear, and least of all from the owner in the chair, he was slow and deliberate. From his robe he drew a number of bags of coarse hempen cloth, and a broad white napkin. The latter he spread upon the floor, first removing several of the urns to obtain space; then he emptied one of the vessels upon it, and from the sparkling and varicolored heap before him proceeded to make selection.

His judgment was excellent, sure and swift. Not seldom he put the large stones aside, giving preference to color and lustre. Those chosen he dropped into a bag. When the lot was gone through, he returned the rejected to the vessel, placing it back exactly in its place. Then he betook himself

to another of the vessels, and then another, until, in course of a couple of hours, he had made choice from the collection, and filled nine bags, and tied them securely.

Greatly relieved, he arose, rubbed the benumbed joints of his limbs awhile, then passed the packages out to the slaves. The occupation had been wearisome and tensive; but it was finished, and he would now retire. He lingered to give a last look at the interior, muttering the sentence again, and leaving it unfinished as before:

“No one has been here since”—

From the face of the king, his eyes fell to the silver tablet in the nerveless hand. Moving closer, and holding the lamp in convenient position, he knelt and read the inscription.

I

“There is but one God, and he was from the beginning, and will be without end.

II

“In my lifetime, I prepared this vault and tomb to receive my body, and keep it safely; yet it may be visited, for the earth and sea are always giving up their secrets.

III

“Therefore, O Stranger, first to find me, know thou!

“That in all my days I kept intercourse with Solomon, King of the Jews, wisest of men, and the richest and greatest. As is known, he set about building a house to his Lord God, resolved that there should be nothing like it in the world, nothing so spacious, so enriched, so perfect in

proportions, so in all things becoming the glory of his God. In sympathy with him I gave him of the skill of my people, workers in brass, and silver, and gold, and products of the quarries; and in their ships my sailors brought him the yield of mines from the ends of the earth. At last the house was finished; then he sent me the model of the house, and the coins, and cloths of gold and pearl, and the precious stones, and the vessels holding them, and the other things of value here. And if, O Stranger, thou dost wonder at the greatness of the gift, know thou that it was but a small part of what remained unto him of like kind, for he was master of the earth, and of everything belonging to it which might be of service to him, even the elements and their subtleties.

IV

“Nor think, O Stranger, that I have taken the wealth into the tomb with me, imagining it can serve me in the next life. I store it here because I love him who gave it to me, and am jealous of his love; and that is all.

V

“So thou wilt use the wealth in ways pleasing in the sight of the Lord God of Solomon, my royal friend, take thou of it in welcome. There is no God but his God!

“Thus say I—
Hiram, King of Tyre.”

“Rest thou thy soul, O wisest of pagan kings,” said the master, rising. “Being the first to find thee here, and basing my title to thy wealth on that circumstance, I will use it in a way pleasing in the sight of the Lord God of Solomon. Verily, verily, there is no God but his God!”

This, then, was the business that brought the man to the tomb of the king whose glory was to have been the friend of Solomon. Pondering the idea, we begin to realize how vast the latter's fame was; and it ceases to be matter, of wonder that his contemporaries, even the most royal, could have been jealous of his love.

Not only have we the man's business, but it is finished; and judging from the satisfaction discernible on his face as he raised the lamp and turned to depart, the result must have been according to his best hope. He took off his robe, and tossed it to his slaves; then he laid a hand upon the edge of the sarcophagus preparatory to climbing out. At the moment, while giving a last look about him, an emerald, smoothly cut, and of great size, larger indeed than a full-grown pomegranate, caught his eyes in its place loose upon the floor. He turned back, and taking it up, examined it carefully; while thus engaged his glance dropped to the sword almost at his feet. The sparkle of the brilliants, and the fire-flame of the great ruby in the grip, drew him irresistibly, and he stood considering.

Directly he spoke in a low voice:

"No one has been here since"—

He hesitated—glanced hurriedly around to again assure himself it was not possible to be overheard—then finished the sentence:

"No one has been here *since I came a thousand years ago.*"

At the words so strange, so inexplicable upon any theory of nature and common experience, the lamp shook in his hand. Involuntarily he shrank from the admission, though to himself. But recovering, he repeated:

"Since I came a thousand years ago."

Then he added more firmly:

“But the earth and the sea are always giving up their secrets. So saith the good King Hiram; and since I am a witness proving the wisdom of the speech, I at least must believe him. Wherefore it is for me to govern myself as if another will shortly follow me. The saying of the king is an injunction.”

With that, he turned the glittering sword over and over admiringly. Loath to let it go, he drew the blade partly from the scabbard, and its clearness had the depth peculiar to the sky between stars at night.

“Is there anything it will not buy,” he continued, reflectively. “What king could refuse a sword once Solomon’s? I will take it.”

Thereupon he passed both the emerald and the sword out to the slaves, whom he presently joined.

The conviction, but a moment before expressed, that another would follow him to the tomb of the venerated Tyrian, was not strong enough to hinder the master from attempting to hide every sign which might aid in the discovery. The negro, under his direction, returned the lid exactly to its former fitting place on the sarcophagus; the emerald and the sword he wrapped in his gown; the bags and the tools were counted and distributed among the slaves for easy carriage. Lamp in hand, he then walked around to see that nothing was left behind. Incidentally he even surveyed the brown walls and the dim dome overhead. Having reached the certainty that everything was in its former state, he waved his hand, and with one long look backward at the model, ghostly beautiful in its shining white transparency, he led the way to the passage of entrance, leaving the king to his solitude and stately sleep, unmindful of the visitation and the despoilment.