

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN, VOL. IV

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The dawn in Britain, Vol. IV by Charles M. Doughty

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CHARLES M. DOUGHTY

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The Dawn in Britain

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'TRAVELS IN ARABIA DESERTA'

VOLUME IV



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BOOK XIII

O if my temples were distain'd with wine,
And girt in girlonds of wilde yvie twine,
How could I reare the Muse on stately stage,
And teach her tread aloft in buskin fine,
With quaint Bellona in her equipage!

EDMUND SPENSER,

The Shepherds Calendar; October.

ARGUMENT

BRITONS' first battle with the Romans. Bodva, war-fury, incites Trugon, an archer, to shoot at Togodumnos. The warlord is wounded; Britons withdraw them to deep woods. The king's last behest and burial. The Britons' host remove, at sunrising. Caratacus, now arrived, is saluted Lord-of-war! Strife, among his captains. Britons send back, to bury their dead. Fugitives bring word, that Calleva was taken by the Romans!

Britons march. Caratacus communes, in the way, with his chief captains. Segontorix, that night, harries the Romans' *castra*. Aulus, at dawn, sends forth his legions. Vespasian is hardly saved, by his son, Titus. Aulus blows repair. Belerions now arrive, and the Silures and Demetans. The warlord, again, leads forth the Britons' army. Till noon, they expect battle. Then comes Thorolf, with his Almain bands! Story of the overthrow of Varus' legions.

Thorolf now proffers himself, to fight, singly, with chief captains of the Romans. Then Moelmabon's four sons fence the Almain ethling, with their strong warriors. Certain Roman Gauls, having Aulus' license, go forth, to chastise those insolent Almans. They are four hundred men; which array them, in four bands. They choose one Bassus their captain. Bassus is slain; and Merion and Ferriog, sons of Moelmabon, fall. Aulus now recalls those Roman Gauls. Waterers of Roman camp, are surprised and slain. Atrebat's course again, by night, the legions' *castra*. At new day, legionaries clamour

THE DAWN IN BRITAIN

to battle. Britons, enranged in arms, chant war-songs of bard Carvilios. The battle joined. Bodvocos is taken. Caratacus sends chariots, to fall on the hindward of the Romans. Aulus, again, sounds recall. Segontorix, a third time, (now with Camog and Morfran,) courses the legions' night-camps.

Nemeton stirs new strife, among the Britons' dukes. Segontorix, with his Atrebats, withdraw from king Caratacus. An ancient druid arrives, bearing grave word of Mona's oracle. Melyn, warrior-bard, sings of heroes dead. Britons, by night-time, pass over Thames. King Caradoc, now, divides his war-chariots into four courses. Ordovices, with their war-renowned king, Kynan, the Hammeraxe, arrive.

Aulus marches to the conquest of Corinium. Beichiad's chariots assail the marching legions. The Briton dune. Bodvocos, by command of Aulus, is set forth, in the sight of his citizens, which look from the wall. Caer Corinium is taken. In night-tempest, certain of Beichiad's charioteers entered, secretly, in the conquered town, fire the first house-eaves. Those assay, then, to save Bodvocos: but are met with, by the watch, and slain. King Bodvocos' head is impaled, in sight of all the Britons!