

6970 Central av.
Lemon Grove, Calif.

Jan. 6

1950

My dear Laura Gilpin :-

Grace sent me my handsomest
Christmas present — your book.

It is a masterpiece of varied skills
and immense devotion. A luxury for
me — such wealth of glorious photographs;
ample & yet succinct literary text; such
encyclopaedic scope — a classic on the
subject. I'm proud to own a copy.

In my browsing about my library room
in Santa Fe, I chanced on the Herodotus
excerpt — which I have amused myself
by repeating on enclosed pages. It interested
me because I found the final form of the
paragraph so ^{appropriate} fine (or so rare in its
literary form on a public building) that its
prose source I recorded. Analogously,

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I remembered how Bach took the
melodies of his contemporary Germany,
and provided polyphonic-harmony that left
them so gem-like that they have
since been called "Bach-Chords".
What genius this is! Our modern
musicians often are so fearful of
writing a lovely melody that will
~~be~~ welcome to a stunted world
that a resort to accumulated dissonance
is our heritage.

My best wishes to you, always

Your friend

Frederick Alexander

In the inscription carved over
entrance to Pennsylvania R.R. Station
N.Y.C.

"Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat,
nor gloom of night stays these couriers
from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

Herodotus

Translator: George Rawlinson

Everyman's Library Vol. 406

(Vol. II of Herodotus) Page 251

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98. Nothing mortal travels so fast as these

Persian messengers. The entire plan is a Persian
invention; and this is the method of it. Along
the whole line of road there are men (they say)
stationed with horses, in number equal to the
number of days which the journey takes,
allowing a man and horse to each day; and these
men will not be hindered from accomplishing
at their best speed the distance which they have
to go, either by snow, or rain, or heat, or by the
darkness of night. The first rider delivers
his despatch to the second, and the second passes
it to the third; and so it is borne from hand to
hand along the whole line, like the light

in the torch-race, which the Greeks celebrate to Vulcan. The Persians give the riding post in this manner, the name of "Angarum".

"Footnote: Probably in the time of Herodotus swift camels were employed in the postal service of the Persian Empire." [for the verb see Matt. v. 41, of Esther viii 10. — E. H. ^{ἀρραπεύειν} B."]

E. H. B. = E. H. Blakeney.
Editor

Via:

~~J. O.~~