

Choice Literature.

Jovinian: or the Early Days of Papal Rome.

CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

The pontiff had been seated in conclave, and were on the point of separating, when a message was brought to Gaius. A gleam of satisfaction passed over his countenance. "Stay, father, for a few moments," he said. "A rascally slave who forsook had taken into his head to turn Christian, and to decamp, moreover, with my nephew, of whom he had charge, has been captured. I will question the vile wretch as to what has become of my youth, and failing to draw forth the information, as I think likely, we will make some sport of the slave before he is sent off to receive the punishment he merits."

The countenance of Cæus exhibited a look of disgust, as if he had no desire to be troubled in the matter, but three or four of the other pontiffs acquiescing, Gaius directed that the Numidian should be brought in. Eros soon appeared, heavily manacled, with a guard of four armed men, who watched narrowly every movement he made, and kept their weapons ready for use, as if they feared that even now he would endeavor to escape.

The prisoner advanced with an undaunted countenance, and head erect, as if perfectly fearless of the stern judges before whom he stood. In vain Gaius inquired what had become of Jovinian. Eros replied that he had parted from him outside the gates, that he had gone with a friend, and that more about him he knew not. He acknowledged without hesitation that he had sinned against his master in allowing the youth committed to his charge to depart, and that he was ready to pay the penalty of his fault. "Wretched being, you have heaped crime upon crime," exclaimed Gaius; "you have endeavored to escape from slavery, you have disobeyed my commands, and you, I understand, deny the existence of the immortal gods, and, following the example of the impious Nazarenes, refuse to worship them."

"I worship one who is willing and able to save me, who died that I might be set free, and who has forgiven me all my sins," answered the Numidian.

"What blasphemy is this you hear!" exclaimed several of the pontiffs in chorus. "He does not deny his crime, and yet talks of his sins being forgiven. Away with him. Let the cross be his doom!"

Gaius, who had no wish to lose the services of a valuable slave, pleaded that a less severe doom than death would be sufficient, and suggested that he should be subjected to the ordinary punishment inflicted on runaway slaves—that of being hung up by the hands with weights attached to his feet, exposed to the noon-day sun till he should faint from exhaustion. The other pontiffs, however, were inexorable. The slave had been brought before them for trial, and his death alone would satisfy them. Perhaps they took a secret pleasure in annoying their brother pontiff.

Cæus decided the matter, though he had apparently taken no interest in the discussion. "Let the wretch die the vilest of deaths. He has dishonored the immortal gods!" he muttered. "It may advance our cause, as it will serve to bring into contempt the name of their founder, when the Christians see a base slave suffering the death he was said to have endured."

Short time was allowed to the Numidian to prepare for his doom. He was to suffer not as a martyr, but as a runaway slave. Strictly guarded all night, he passed it in prayer and singing hymns to the Saviour he had so lately learned to love and trust. Early in the morning he was led forth to be conducted outside the city, bearing on his shoulders a heavy beam with a cross piece attached, on which his arms were to be extended till death should put an end to his sufferings.

As Eros, staggering under the heavy weight of the cross, proceeded through the streets of Rome, many there were who looked on with horror and dismay at the spectacle. Cæus, more thoughtful than Gaius, had provided a guard, for he well knew that the Christians were already sufficiently numerous and powerful to have effected a rescue should they have discovered that he was really suffering for holding to the faith of the Gospel. A crowd had collected, and was following, composed chiefly of such idlers as are invariably attracted by any spectacle, though it may even be to see a fellow-creature put to death. Gaius and some of the other pontiffs walked at some distance behind, the motives which induced them to come being in no way superior to that of the vulgar mass. The condemned slave and his guards had proceeded some way when a litter, preceded by a litter, was seen approaching. It stopped, for the crowd was too dense to allow it to pass; Eros cast up his eyes, they met those of the vestal Marcia, horror-struck at what she saw. The love of life, the dread of the torture prepared for him, prompted the condemned slave. Throwing down his burden, before his guards could stop him, he sprang towards the litter, and, clasping the vestal's feet, claimed her protection.

"It is given," she answered. "Citizens of Rome, the right is mine, as you all know, to set this criminal free. Let no man lay hands on him."

"He is free! he is free!" shouted several persons from among the crowd. "The ancient laws of Rome must be supported."

The guards and some others seemed unwilling to be disappointed of their prey, but the licitors kept them off, and some, evidently recognizing Eros as a Christian, gathering round, bore him off out of sight just as Gaius and his companions arrived on the spot. They dared not disallow the claim made by Marcia, for it had been the privilege of the vestals from time immemorial, should they meet a criminal going to execution, to demand his release, provided the encounter was accidental, and that such was the case in this instance there appeared to be no doubt.

Marcia proceeded on her way, and Gaius, who was not altogether displeased at the occurrence, as he hoped to recover his slave, returned to the college.

CHAPTER X.—THE TRIAL OF THE VESTAL.

The vestal Coelia was summoned to undergo her trial before the college of pontiffs seated in council.

She stood looking pale but undaunted in their presence. The pontiff Cæus was her judge, and at the same time one of her accusers. With the others she was not allowed to be confronted.

She acknowledged without hesitation that the sacred fire had gone out while under her charge, and she confessed her fault. She defended herself as to the holding her for a long time in conversation. She confessed also that she had been reading a book held in respect by the Nazarenes. She claimed the right of a free born Roman to peruse the work, which was one well known to be approved of by the emperor.

"You may have a right to read that or any other work, but not to imitate the principles of that accursed sect which it advocates," answered Cæus, "and that you do hold them you have acknowledged to me."

"And I pray for grace that I may hold them to the end," replied Coelia, looking the pontiff calmly in the face as she held her hands clasped hanging down before her.

"She admits that the sacred fire was extinguished in consequence of her carelessness," exclaimed Cæus, turning to the other pontiffs; "nor does she express the slightest regret at her horrible sin. One who is so terrible a crime is capable of committing any other wickedness, however odious, and that she has done so, and that she has broken her vows, has been proved by the witnesses we have examined. That she is no longer worthy of being numbered among the vestals of Rome I have already placed sufficient evidence before you."

Cæus read over the false accusations which had been brought against the vestal. "The guilty participator of her crime had escaped," he observed, "but would undoubtedly be captured." Still, from the cathi of the several witnesses—which he named—her guilt was evident.

A flush mantled on the brow of the young vestal as she heard herself accused of a crime so foreign to her nature; yet she did not quail before that of her stern judge and accuser.

"You know, and these my other judges know, that I am innocent," she said in a voice which trembled but slightly. "If I am to be put to death, I am ready to die if you have a right to destroy me; as a Roman maiden, with fame unsullied, I am guilty only of no longer believing in the goddess to whom in my childhood and ignorance my vows were made. I confess myself a Christian, and confess also that I desire to escape from longer serving the false goddess in whom you pretend to believe. But I indignantly deny the terrible accusation brought against me, which you yourself know to be utterly false."

"Away with the girl, terror has made her mad!" cried the enraged pontiff, forgetting the dignity of his position, and shaking his fists fiercely at the accused maiden.

Coelia did not reply, but raising her hands to heaven—the only time she had altered the position which she had from the first maintained—she implored that protection which is in whom she believed was able and willing to afford.

She did not deign to plead to her cruel judges. She saw clearly that, for some object of their own, they had pre-determined on her destruction. She calmly waited to hear what more they had to say.

Cæus, standing up, pronounced her doom—that which from time immemorial had been inflicted on vestals who had been guilty of breaking their vows.

Her garments—worn by the vestals—and badges of office were to be taken from her, and she was to be habited as a corpse, placed in a litter, and borne through the Forum, attended by her relatives and friends, with all the ceremony of a real funeral. Then she was to be carried to the Campus Sceleratus situated close to the Colosse Gate, just within the city walls. In this spot a small vault underground, as in other cases, would have been prepared. It would contain a couch, a lamp, and a table, with a jar of water and a small amount of food.

Had the Pontifex Maximus been in Rome it would have been his duty to take a chief part in the ceremony. Having lifted up his hand, he would have opened the litter, led forth the culprit, and placed her on the steps of the ladder by which she would be compelled to descend to the subterranean cell, and he would there have delivered her over to the common executioner and his assistants. They would lead her down into her living tomb, draw up the ladder, and then fill in the passage to the vault with earth so as to make the surface level with the surrounding ground.

Here the hapless vestal, deprived of all marks of respect ordinarily paid to the spirits of the departed, would be left to perish miserably by starvation, should terror not have previously deprived her of life.

Such was the doom pronounced on Coelia.

She heard it unmoved, and walked with unflinching steps between two of the officers of the pontiff, to be delivered back to Fausta, the Vestalis Maxima, who was in waiting to receive her. Not an expression of pity escaped the lips of the old vestal, although the knew as well as Cæus that Coelia was innocent of the graver crime of which she was charged. But her heart had become hardened and scathed; not a grain of sympathy for her fellow creatures remained in her bosom.

She believed she was acting in a way pleasing to the goddesses she served, and she would have been ready to sacrifice her nearest relatives, if by so doing she would have advanced the cause of idolatry. She was aware that she no longer retained the affection of any of the vestals under her charge. Harsh and irritable, she ruled them with a rod of iron; and believed that the service of the temple had never been so faithfully performed as it was since she became its principal priestess. Fausta has since had countless imitators, most of whom have been as completely deceived as she was.

Coelia was conducted back to the cell in which she had before been confined, beneath the floor of the temple, where only the coarsest viands were allowed her to sustain nature. She was guarded night

and day by twelve vestals, who were directed to summon assistance should they require it. Cæus was satisfied that the death of the vestal would prove to the multitude that the ancient religion of Rome was still paramount, notwithstanding the predictions of the emperor in favor of Christianity, and the privileges he was inclined to grant to the Nazarenes. He, therefore, hardened his heart against all feeling of pity at the terrible fate about to be inflicted on the innocent maiden, and now prepared, with the energy of his nature, to make arrangements for the grand procession which was about to take place, and which he had resolved should precede the cruel ceremony on which he had determined. He was well aware that the Emperor Constantine would forbid so barbarous an act, but as he was engaged in the East in building his new city it was impossible for him to hear of it for a long time to come, and, although when he became cognizant of what had occurred, he would undoubtedly blame the pontiffs, Cæus believed that he and the other members of the college had yet sufficient influence in Rome to set even Augustus himself at defiance.

The day broke bright and beautiful. All the altars in the temples, and the shrines in the streets, were gaily decorated with wreaths and flowers; while banners and gaily-colored cloths were hung out from the windows, or over the walls of the private houses, in the streets through which the procession was to pass. As usual, numbers of religious mendicants—members of a brotherhood devoted to begging—with huge stochols on their backs, and figures of gods or demi-gods in their hands, were on foot, eager to collect contributions from the multitude assembled on the occasion. The members of several other heathen brotherhoods also might have been seen hurrying through the city, to take their part in the spectacle.

Now the procession streamed forth from the temple of Flora, which formed one of a line of magnificent temples, extending from the Flavian amphitheatre to the north of the Palatine and Capitoline hills, that of Rome and Venus being the most easterly, and nearest to the amphitheatre. As it appeared shouts of joy and applause were raised by the multitude. There had been no lack of persons ready to perform the duty of carrying the banners and figures of the gods and the goddesses. Cæus had also secured the assistance of as large a number of the female part of the population as he could collect, for he believed that could he keep them attached to the old faith, there would be less danger of their husbands becoming its opponents. Some hundreds of dames and damsels dressed in white, their heads adorned with glittering jewels and bright wreaths, streamed forth from the temple, scattering handfuls of flowers before and around them. Bands of musicians performed their most lively airs suited to the occasion; vast numbers of young children dressed also in white, with floral ornaments, chanted at intervals hymns in honor of the goddess. Priests also, of numerous temples, with shorn crowns, were there, carrying banners or figures of the gods they served, or sacred relics. The heathen magistrates and officers of state had willingly consented to attend and exhibit themselves in the procession, although the Christians had universally refused, under any pretence, to take a part in the idolatrous performance. Cæus—as he watched the pageant winding its enormous length along the streets, the banners and gilded statues glittering in the sun, before he took his accustomed place with his brother pontiffs—felt satisfied that the larger portion of the population of Rome still sided with them.

Gaius alone, as he walked along, muttered not a few expressions of discontent. "To say the least of it these processions are a bore," he grumbled. "They may please the mob, but sensible men ridicule them; and we who superintend them, and have thus to parade through the streets, have become the laughing stock of all the wise men and philosophers. It will in no way benefit us, notwithstanding the trouble we take in the matter; how completely I have failed of convincing my young nephew of the advisability of the worship of the immortal gods, his running away and refusing to return is strong evidence. As to putting to death this poor girl Coelia I do not half like it. The emperor will visit us with his anger should her Christian friends prove her innocence, as they are sure to attempt doing. They are wonderfully active in defending their own friends when they can do so by means of the law, without having recourse to force. This may be on account of their mean and timid spirits, though it is said that they fight well in battle, and that the emperor places great dependence on their courage and fidelity. Well, well, 'Times change and we must change with them,' as one of our poets sings; but for my part I would rather have retained our old-fashioned ways. What was endured so long must be the best. The oldest religion cannot but be the right one, as all events most suited to the multitude, while it has not failed to bring a copious revenue into our coffers, and that after all is the matter of chief consequence to us. All the accounts, however, which come from Byzantium show that Augustus is becoming more and more inclined to favor these Christians. I wish that Cæus had not been so obstinate, and would at once have consented to abandon our falling cause."

When passing close to the Arch of Constantine, which had been erected after the visit of the emperor to Rome, close to the Flavian amphitheatre, he glanced up to it with a look of contempt. "What can be expected of our Romans now-a-days, when the whole architectural talent of our city can only produce a monstrosity like that!" he observed to a brother pontiff walking next to him. "The times are changed, and we must change with them," he repeated, "if we wish to retain our position."

The other pontiff only shook his head, and groaned.

CHAPTER XI.—RELEASED.

As the procession moved along towards the Sacra Via, Gaius observed a number of persons of a better class standing aloof, and watching the procession with looks far removed from admiration. Although the

most earnest Christians kept away from such exhibitions, he observed several people of good position whom he knew to have embraced the new faith, while there were others, among whom he recognized a poet, an architect, a sculptor, two or three philosophers, and some other men of intellect, who, although not Christians, he knew well had no belief in the immortal gods of Rome, and were wont to look with most supreme contempt on spectacles such as that in which he was taking a part.

"These they stand, sneering at us," he muttered; "perhaps they come to look as they believe to be for the last time at our gods and goddesses parading our city; but they are mistaken, they will hold their places still in the faith and affection of the people albeit they may be habited in some different garments."

Now and then the eye of Gaius caught that of some young gallant, who nodded to him familiarly, and smiled at his evident annoyance as he endeavored to keep up his dignity. The procession moved along towards the Capitoline Hill, on which stood the great temple of Jupiter, where the chief ceremonies of the day were to be performed. The people waved garlands, and shouted, the more devout prostrating themselves before the statues as they passed along, until the hill was gained. Cæus had taken care to have a large number of animals ready for the sacrifice, so that the people might not be stunted in their expected portions of meat. He well knew that they chiefly valued these ceremonies for the food they were certain to obtain after them.

The procession once more filed off through the street, depositing the figures of the gods and goddesses in their respective temples and shrines; but the business of the day was not over. Cæus and his brother pontiffs had undertaken to superintend a ceremony of a very different character.

On arriving at the temple of Vesta they there found Fausta prepared for the part she was to play. Within the court was seen a litter closely covered in, borne by men with shrouded faces, and habited in dark robes. Its appearance was lugubrious in the extreme.

"Have you prepared the guilty creature for her just doom?" asked Cæus of the Vestalis Maxima.

"She waits you in her cell," answered Fausta, "but you have not as yet inflicted the scourging, which, according to the ancient custom, she should suffer."

"We will omit it in her case," answered Cæus, with whom his brother pontiffs had previously pleaded, even their minds revolting at causing one so young and innocent to suffer such degradation. "It would of necessity have to be inflicted in private; therefore, no one will know whether or not she has suffered. No object, therefore, will be gained," observed Cæus.

"Are you in these days thus to neglect our ancient customs?" exclaimed Fausta. "That she is young and beautiful is no reason why she should escape the punishment which is her due."

The pontiff made no reply; perhaps even he discerned the love of cruelty which the remark of the ancient priestess exhibited.

"I am thankful I have not to submit to the discipline which the old virgin is inclined to inflict on her disciples," muttered Gaius. "I would as lief see a tigress deprived of her cubs placed in charge of a flock of sheep, as a band of young maidens given to the custody of a bitter old woman like Fausta. If they were not inclined to act naughtily before, they would be driven to do so, in very despair, when subject to her tender mercies."

"We can delay no longer," said Cæus to the older vestal; "let the criminal be brought forth and placed in the litter."

His orders were obeyed. After a short interval a figure, closely veiled, in coarse attire, was conducted forth, and unresistingly placed in the litter. Cæus then gave the word to the bearers and attendants to move on. Fausta and three other vestals accompanied the funeral procession, but no weeping relatives and friends—as in most instances would have been the case—followed Coelia. She was alone in the world, without loving kindred. Her maternal relations were far away with the armies of the emperor, and her mother, sisters and female connections, had been removed by death since she, in her extreme youth, had been dedicated by her heathen father to the service of the goddess.

She was thus considered a fit victim, whose barbarous fate there was no one to revenge. Marcia had spoken of her as her sister, but she was a sister only of the affections. Slowly the mournful procession moved on, and a stranger would have supposed that a corpse was being borne to the funeral pile, but those who watched at a distance knew well—from the direction it was taking to the Campus Sceleratus—that there was a terrible fate prepared for the occupant of the litter. Such a spectacle had not been for a long time seen in Rome, and did not fail to attract a large number of the population.

Gaius, who was looking about him, remarked amongst the crowd a considerable number of persons whom he knew to be Christians, who walked along with sad and averted looks. Some he recognized as presbyters and deacons, and other officers of the Christian church. He felt no little surprise at seeing them, he even fancied that he saw the Christian bishop, but as his costume differed but slightly from the rest of the people, he was uncertain that such was the case. He did not feel altogether satisfied about the matter, but still, as they were unarmed, he believed that even should they feel inclined to rescue the doomed vestal they would not make any attempt. "What can it mean?" said he to himself. "I wish that Cæus had left the matter alone; it is my belief that you shall gain nothing by the death of this young creature, and we shall have much greater difficulty hereafter when we pretend to turn Christians in persuading these presbyters and others that we are in earnest. However, it is too late now to expostulate with him. Cæus is a man who having once determined on carrying out an object is not to be deterred from it."

(To be continued.)

SIXTY-TWO Associations will be represented at the fifth annual convention of the Y.M.C.A. at Champaign, Ill., Sept. 6-9.

Scientific and Useful.

CREAM COOKIES.

One egg, one large cup sugar, one cup of cream, one half cup of flour, half a teaspoonful of soda, flour enough to roll.

WHIPS.

Beat the whites of four eggs to a froth; take a pint and a half of good cream, sweetened by fine white sugar; beat well together, flavor with wine, lemon, almond, and serve in small glasses.

INDIAN CAKE.

Two cups sour milk, two tablespoon good molasses or sugar, one teaspoon soda, a little salt, half-cup flour and Indian meal to make a very thin batter. An egg improves it. Bake a nice brown.

NUT CAKE.

Two cups sugar, one cup butter, three cups flour, one cup cold water, four eggs, one teaspoonful soda, two teaspoonfuls cream tartar, two cups kernels hickory nuts, carefully picked out and added last of all.

GLOSS ON SHIRT BOSOMS.

Take two ounces of fine white gum arabic powder, put in a pitcher, and pour on it one pint of boiling water, cover it and let it stand all night. In the morning pour it carefully from the dregs into a bottle; use one tablespoonful to a pint of starch made in the usual manner; use a polishing iron also.

OATMEAL GRUEL.

Mix a dessert spoonful of fine oatmeal or patent groats with two tablespoonfuls of cold water, and boil for ten minutes, stirring frequently. For a richer gruel, two tablespoonfuls of groats in a quart of water for an hour. Strain through a sieve; stir in a piece of butter as large as a walnut, and some sugar, nutmeg or ginger.

BAKED INDIAN PUDDING.

One cupful "granulated" yellow meal one half cupful wheat flour; mix with these enough cold water to thoroughly moisten; stir into one pint of boiling milk; put into a pudding-dish, add a small piece of butter, one tablespoonful sugar, one pint cold milk, salt and ginger to taste; bake three hours. The "granulated" is by far better than the fine-ground meal.

CURLING A SWITCH OF NATURAL HAIR.

Comb it out nicely and oil it; roll tightly on muslin rags, four of them, fastened by a string; boil for half an hour in soap-suds; sponge them, and set to dry in any warm place, still leaving them done up; allow a full week for drying; longer would be better; separate and brush carefully on a curling stick without wetting.

PLAIN MINCE-MEAT.

Procure a good piece of meat without bone, and cover with boiling water; let simmer until tender and the water nearly exhausted, do not let it brown; wash cold mince fine, rejecting all fat; save the water, and when cold, take the fat from it and put the water on the meat. To one bowlful of meat add two bowlfuls minced, juicy apples, one bowlful raisins, one-half bowlful currants, and one teaspoonful minced nut; sugar and spice to taste; a pinch of salt, and cider sufficient to moisten.

NOODLE SOUP.

Three hours before dinner, take three eggs and a teaspoonful of salt; mix with enough flour to make a stiff dough; beat well with a rolling-pin, use more the better; cut into four pieces and roll each as thin as possible; keep on rolling till the dough is thin as paper; spread on a paper to dry, but do not leave until so dry as to break when rolled into long rolls to eat. With a sharp knife, slice into rings no thicker than a broom splint; spread out to dry, shaking them out well. Fifteen minutes before dinner, shake them lightly into five quarts of liquor in which a chicken or a piece of nice fresh beef has been cooked; the broth having been well skimmed, salt to taste, and add a cup of sweet milk or cream, and a pinch of parsley or saffron if liked; boil up two or three times and serve.

REMEDY FOR BURNS.

Dr. R. H. Alcott writes to the London Times: "The late lamentable accident on board the *Thunderer*, at Portsmouth, recalls to my recollection a remedy for burns or scalds, which was suggested to me some years ago by Lord Ebury. As an old medical man, and from personal observation, I can vouch for its efficacy, and, in the absence of professional assistance, the application may prove of inestimable value. The remedy is simply this: 'The common whitening of commerce, reduced by cold water to the consistence of cream, is to be spread on a light linen rag, and the whole burned surface instantly covered, and thus excluded from the action of the air. The ease it affords is instantaneous, and it only requires to be kept moist by subsequent occasional sprinkling of cold water.'

HINT TO BUTTER MAKERS.

It has been found that the quicker milk is cooled after milking, and while yet quite warm, the faster the cream will rise, and for the reason that, water being a better conductor of heat than oil and expanding faster and more in proportion to the amount of caloric received, and shrinking in the same proportion, it thus follows that the lower we cool to a certain point and the more dense we have the water, the butter-globules remaining nearly of the same density as at first, the sooner they will rise to the surface. For instance, we will take any amount of milk as soon as milked, and after cooling it immediately down to thirty-five degrees turn it into glass vessels eight or ten or twenty inches deep, and we will see by the results that the cream will all rise in from three to four hours; and, further, the quantity of cream thrown up, will be more than can be obtained by any other method which I have tried. And, again, butter made from milk that is thoroughly cooled immediately after milking is of far superior flavor to butter made in the ordinary way.

BALTIMORE is constructing a tunnel seven miles long, and twelve feet in diameter, in its endeavor to get a supply of pure water.