

DION AND THE SIBYLS.

By Miles Gerald Keon

A CLASSIC CHRISTIAN NOVEL.

"Well may you," cried Thellus, "be filled with horror. Ah! then, when will a god descend from heaven, and give us a new world? I have one child in my home, a sweet, peaceful, natural-hearted, conscience-governed, loving little daughter. Her mother has gone away from me for ever to some world beyond death where more justice and more mercy prevail. The day when I lost her I had to fight in the arena. Eheu! She was anxious for me, she could not control her suspense; she saw the execrable Tiberius. Bah! do you think I'm afraid to speak? Of what should I be afraid? Thellus has been at the funeral of fear; yes, this many a day," continued Thellus, raising his voice; "she came to the Statilian amphitheatre against my express command; she saw the execrable Tiberius, contrary to every custom, after I had been victor in four fatal encounters, when I was worn out with fatigue, order me to meet a fresh antagonist; and looking up among the hundred thousand spectators, I beheld the sweet, loving face—I beheld the clasped and convulsive fingers. But, lo, who came forth to fight against me? Whom had the accused man provided as my next antagonist? Her only brother, poor Statius, whom Tiberius knew to be a gladiator, and whom he had thus selected for the more refined excitement of the spectators to fight against Thellus; but, above all, for his own more refined enjoyment, for the monster had tried and found my poor Alba incorruptible; and this was his revenge against a wretched gladiator and his faithful wife. Statius was no match for me; I tried to disarm him; after a while I succeeded, wounding him at the same time slightly. He fell, and his blood colored the sand. I looked to the people; they looked to Tiberius, waiting for the sign of mercy or execution. I was resolved in any case not to be the slayer of Statius.

"The prince turned up his thumb, to intimate that I was to kill my wounded opponent. The amphitheatre then rang with a woman's scream, and the people, with one impulse turned down their hands. I bore Statius in my own arms out of the arena; but when I reached home, I found my wife was near childbirth, delirious, and raving against me as the murderer of her brother. She died so, in my arms and in her brother's. She left me my poor little Prudentia, who is dearer to me than all this globe."

After taking breath, he added, quoting Paulus's words:

"But we are a gang of base-born, uneducated, and mercenary cut-throats."

"Oh! forgive, forgive, forgive my words," exclaimed Paulus, stretching out both hands toward the gladiator.

Thellus took those hands and said:

"Why, I love you, lad. I love you like a son. I am not high-born enough to be a father to the like of you; but it is not forbidden me to love a noble youth who hates baseness and is ignorant of fear. I'll tell you more; but first answer me—are you of opinion, from what has passed between us, that Thellus is an uneducated man?"

"I am afraid that you are better educated than I am."

"In any case," replied Thellus, "I am ready to confess that the qualities and virtues exercised by gladiators are exercised for a wrong purpose, and in a wrong way. But tell me, why is bread made? You will not say because bakers bake it. That would be a girl's answer; it would be saying that a thing is because it is, or is made because it is made. Why is it made? Because it is wanted. Would bakers bake it if nobody ate it? If nobody wanted to live in a house, would masons build any? or would there even be any masons? You could not, I grant, have music if there were no musicians, if none wanted music. It is the gladiator, unquestionably, who does the fighting in the arena; but if none wanted the fighting, you would have no gladiators. I

have told you how we are trepanned in helpless infancy; and not only reared, prepared, and fitted for this calling, but hopelessly unfitted for every other. We supply the spectacle—but who desires the spectacle? It is not we; we are the only sufferers by it; we detest it. But whatever in so dreadful and wicked a pastime can be noble, courageous, unselfish, heroic, we the same, we the victims, give and exhibit; and all the selfishness of it, all that is cowardly in it, all that is cruel, base, despicable, execrable, and accursed, sits on the benches, and applauds or yells in the wedges; this you, you, who go thither, and bring thither us, your victims, this you produce, this is your contribution to it. Ours is honor, valor, skill, and dauntless death; yours, inhumanity, cowardice, baseness, luxurious ease, and a safe, lazy and besotted life."

"It is true," said Paulus. "Hideous are the pleasures, detestable the glories of this gigantic empire; but unless, as you say, a God himself were to come down from heaven, how will it ever be reformed?"

"How, indeed?" answered Thellus.

Little did they dream who a certain Child in Syria was, who had then entered his eleventh year!

CHAPTER XII.

A short silence followed the concurring exclamations of Thellus and our hero, recorded in the last chapter; and then the lanista said:

"Before I leave you, I will speak one word which came of the chance of uttering while I brought you that letter, but which I would not have pronounced had I found you to be a person of a different sort. You are really Tiberius's prisoner, remember, although it is to Velleius Paterculus you have given your parole. I know, by personal experience and much observation the men and the things of which you, on the other hand, can have only a suspicion. Now, I conjecture, it is hardly for your own sake that you are in custody. Beware of what may happen to those dear to you; and as they have given no parole, send them to some place of safety, some secret place. There is no place safe in itself in the known world. Roman liberty is no more; secrecy is the sole safety remaining. Vale."

With these words the lanista departed, leaving our young friend buried in thought. As he left the court of the impluvium to seek his mother, he remarked that Claudius had returned thither, and was occupied in watering some flowers in pots at the opposite angle. "I wonder," thought he, "can that fellow have overheard Thellus?"

Other and more important matters, however, were destined to invite his attention. We have said enough to justify us in passing over with a few words every interval void of more than ordinary daily occurrences of the age and land. What has been related and described will sufficiently enable a reader of intelligence to realize the sort of life which lay before Paulus, his mother, and Agatha during the next few days passed by them together at the inn of the Hundredth Milestone.

Of course Paulus detailed to his

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mother what he had observed or heard, especially Thellus's warning. Further, he propounded thereon his own conclusions. The family thought it well to summon Crispina and Crispus to a council; and it was finally resolved that Aglais should at once write to her brother-in-law, Marcus Aemilius Lepidus, the ex-triumvir, and ask a temporary home under his roof for herself and Agatha, with their female slave Melena. Old Philip and Paulus could remain at the inn for some time longer. Agatha, Paulus, and the worthy couple who kept the inn consulted together, carrying their conferences rather far into the night, when the business of the hostelry was over, upon the question what would be the best course to pursue should the triumvir, from timidity or any other motive, refuse shelter to his brother's widow and child? During these conferences Agatha and Benigna went to sit apart, each engaged in some kind of needlework. It did not seem to the little court-

To be continued.

TIME TABLES

Canadian Pacific

Lv.	EAST	Ar.
Imp. Lim.	Selkirk, Port Portage, Fort William, Port Arthur, Toronto, Detroit, Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Montreal, Quebec, New York, Boston, Portland, St. John, Halifax.....daily	Imp. Lim.
6 45	Molson, Buchan, Milner, Lac du Bonnet.....Wed.	21 10
7 00	Selkirk, Molson, Rat Portage and intermediate points.....daily except Sunday	19 30
8 00	Keewatin, Rat Portage, during July and August.....Sat. only.....Mon. only	18 30
13 30	Keewatin, Rat Portage, Fort William, Port Arthur, Toronto, Detroit, Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Montreal, Quebec, New York, Boston, Portland, St. John, Halifax, and all points east.....daily	12 00
Tr'ns Pass.		Tr'ns Pass.
20 00		8 30
WEST		
7 45	Portage la Prairie, Gladstone, Neepawa, Minnedosa, Yorkton, and intermediate points.....daily except Sun. Morris, Winkler, Morden, Manitou, Pilot Mound, Crystal City, Killarney, Boissevain, Deloraine, and intermediate points.....daily ex Sun	18 40
8 50	Portage la Prairie, MacGregor, Carberry, Brandon, Oak Lake, Virden, Elkhorn, Moosomin, Regina, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat, Calgary, Banff, Revelstoke, and all points on Pacific Coast; Lethbridge, McLeod, Fernie, and all points in East and West	17 00
9 20	Kootenay.....daily	19 00
9 40	Headingley, Carman, Holland, Cypress River, Glenboro, Souris and intermediate points.....daily except Sun.	15 20
16 40	Portage la Prairie, Carberry, Brandon, and intermediate points.....daily ex Sun	12 20
Imp. Lim.	Portage la Prairie, Brandon, Broadview, Regina, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat, Calgary, Banff, Revelstoke, and all points on Pacific Coast and in East and West	Imp. Lim.
22 00	Kootenay.....daily	5 55
NORTH		
16 00	Stony Mountain, Stonewall, Balmoral, Teulon.....daily except Sunday	10 20
18 15	Middlechurch, Parkdale, Victoria Park, Lower Fort Garry, West Selkirk, Clendeboye, Netley, and Winnipeg Beach.....Tues., Thurs., Sat. Mon., Wed., Fri.....	9 45
17 15	Winnipeg Beach.....Mon., Wed., Fri. Tues., Thurs., Sat.....	8 45
SOUTH		
14 00	Morris, Greta, Grafton, Grand Forks, Crookston, Fargo, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, Chicago, and all points south.....daily	13 4
15 45	St. Norbert, Carey, Arnaud, Dominion City, Emerson.....daily except Sunday	10 45

Canadian Northern

Lv.	EAST	Ar.
10 20	"Winnipeg to Fort Frances." St. Anne, Giroux, Warroad, Beaudette, Rainy River, Pinewood, Emo, Fort Frances.....daily except Sun.....	16 25
8 05	"Fort Frances to Port Arthur." Mine Centre, Atikokan, Stanley Jct., Fort William, Port Arthur.....Mon., Wed., Fri. Tues., Thurs., Sat.....	21 05
SOUTH		
17 20	Twin City Express between Winnipeg, Minneapolis and St. Paul, 14hrs. 20min., via Can. Nor. and Great Nor. Rys. Morris, Emerson, St. Vincent, Crookston, Fergus Falls, Sank Centre, St. Cloud, Elk River, Minneapolis, St. Paul.....daily	10 10
13 45	Minneapolis and St. Paul Express via Can. Nor. and Nor. Pac. Rys. Morris, St. Jean, Lethelier, Emerson, Pembina, Grafton, Grand Forks, Crookston, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, The Superiors.....daily	13 30
WEST		
10 45	Headingley, Eli, Portage la Prairie, Gladstone, Dauphin, and all intermediate points.....Tues., Thurs., Sat. Mon., Wed., Fri.....	18 15
10 45	Headingley, Eli, Portage la Prairie, Neepawa, Dauphin, and all intermediate points.....Mon., Wed., Fri.....	16 15
10 45	Gilbert Plains, Grand View, Kamsack, and intermediate points.....Tues., Thurs., Sat. Mon., Wed., Fri.....	16 15
10 45	Sifton, Minitonas, Swan River, and all intermediate points.....Wed., Thurs., Sat. Mon., Wed., Fri.....	16 15
10 45	Bowman, Birch River, Erwood and intermediate points.....Wed. Mon.....	16 15
10 45	Fork River, Winnipegosis Fri., Sat.....Sat., Tues.	16 15
7 00	Oak Bluff, Carman, Leary's and intermediate points.....Mon., Wed., Fri.....	17 50
11 05	St. Norbert, Morris, Roland, Wawanesa, Brandon, Hartney, and intermediate points.....daily except Sun.....	16 30