THE JEWS OF CAPENA GATE.

But the gods, as certain friends of the family ingenuously observed, had protected Cecilia. She was remarkable for her splendid beauty, and, what is better, for the charms of her intellect, her candor, and those gifts which distinguish superior natures. With exquisite good sense and rare wisdom, she had promptly understood the necessities of the solitary life to which for her bed But the gods, as certain friends of the nnderstood the necessities of the solitary life to which fate had condemned her, and she had provided for them without asking of her father efforts and sacrifices of which she knew him incapable.

Thus, she had availed herself of every opportunity of acquiring instruction; and her education, due only to her own unaided efforts and perseverance, was s complete, for a girl of her humble condi

To her care were due the comfort of her father's modest household, and the little enjoyments which Cecilius, ever miserly when useful expenses were concerned. and foolishly prodigal when he sought to gratify his desires, would have never tasted but for the tender solicitude of the

amiable child.

Cecilia's poetical soul found great charm in the graceful fictions of mythology, and she took pleasure in participating in the es of certain feasts, and in ming ing her pure voice with those of the young girls who, clad in white tunics and girls who, clad in white tunics and crowned with flowers, sang sacred hymne in the processions. But she could not understand the shameless indecency of those other ceremonies where all restraint was lost, and the gods were honored by

was lost, and the gods were honored by the most licentious revels.

On such occasions she would remain at home, thoughtful and dissatisfied; struggl-ing between the long-cherished superstitions of paganism, and the vague presenti-ment of a more perfect creed.

When her father left the treasury to fill

post of collector of the tax on Jews, moved into the house rented from Tongilianus, the undertaker of funerals in the neighborhood of Venus-Libitina's temple the quiet happiness in which she had lived was disturbed.

The exigencies of the fiscal office filled by her father were to her a source of constant regret. She mourned over the fat of those poor families pitilessly prosecuted for the least delay in the payment of the tax; and although they were Jewsdespised, odious people—she could be met frequently visiting the wretched cabins scattered about the Libitina woods and the vicinity of the Capena gate, to assist the women, children and old men who had been the victims of Cecilius's fisca

"Why did my father accept an office which compels him to make other people unhappy?" she thought, with bitterness, and she tried to persuade him to resign, at least to deal more gently with th delinquent tax-payers; but, not withstand ing her great influence over Cecilius, the latter, who could not understand that any one should feel an interest in such beg gars, was little inclined to give up a salary which was his only means of support, to stay proceedings out of mere compas

The vespillo's attentions became a new source of sorrow for Cecilia. Not that sh was unwilling to change a condition the duties of which were burdensome. Often, in her girlish dreams, she had thought of some loved companion, whose life she would embellish with her tender care; would embelish with her tender care, more than once she had prayed to her favorite divinities for that unknown being, whom she artlessly hoped to see appear suddenly before her.

But the much-desired apparition was anything but charming under the coarse features and the mounting togs of our

and the mourning toga of ou friend Gurges. Cecilia, at first, had not taken the slightest notice of the enamored vespillo; and when he had grown bold enough to avow his love, her delicate and refined nature revolted at the very thought of a marriage which she deemeded im-

An incident occurred, meanwhile, which, changing her whole life, filled her heart, and gave a new direction to the vague thoughts that had so often dis-

vague thoughts that had turbed her peace of mind.

In one of her rambles in the Jewish
In one of her rambles in the Jewish quarter, she had met a poor old woman bed-ridden by disease, and wanting the most common necessaries of life. The kind young girl was deeply moved; and, obeying the generous impulses of her heart, she had become a devoted nurse to the old Jewess, bringing her medicine and food, and ministering daily to her

One evening she was seated by the sick woman's bedsice, holding her withered hand in hers, and talking hopefully of the improvement she had found in her condition, when a voice, trembling with emotion, uttered these words close to her

ear,—
"May Heaven bless you, O gentle maiden, who have taken care of my mother and have relieved her whilst her have taken care of my on was away!

son was away!"

The young girl turned her head. A young man wearing the sagum, or military cloak, with the breastplate, the buckler and shining helmet, was bend-

ing over her. Cecilia started, and could not restrain a cry. She averted her eyes, and stood, blushing, and trying to collect her thoughts. She could not realize the im-

port of the stranger's words.

The old woman had risen from her bed, and clasped the young man in her

"It is my son," she cried: "my son, who has been returned to me! Oh! yes, dear Olinthus, well may you bless this young girl; for, but for her kinduess, you

would not have found your mother Suddenly, the sound of grave voices,

These voices, coming from under ground, Seemed to ascend to heaven.
Olinthus remained thoughtful. A struggle was taking place within him. Turn-

gie was taking pace with the holy mysteries have begun, and you are worthy of entering in the assembly of the faithful. Mother, I will soon return. I am going to ask God to repay our debt of gratitude to this young girl."

Cocilia was astonished, but she felt

that, far from having anything to fear, she could have full confidence in the

will be directly in their midst. Fear nothing."

Cecilia descended until, at the bottom of the steps, her eyes were suddenly dazzled by a bright light.

She had reached the sacred precinct. It was the crypt of the ancient temple of the Muses, which the Christians had discovered, and in which they assembled to praise God, to listen to the instructions of the pontiffs, and to celebrate the Holy Sacrifices.

By the light of the lamps which hung from the ceiling, Celilia saw a numerous crowd, kneeling, and singing the hymna she had heard from above.

To the left were the women; Olinthus led Cecilia among them, and crossed over to the right, where the men were pray The women gave Cecilia the kiss of

At the further end of the crypt, on little higher ground, was a table around which stood the pontifis clad in flowing white garments. Upon the table was a cross, a few candles made of the pure small loaves of bread, and vases

containing wine. The songs ceased, and a deep silence reigned. A venerable old man stepped forward, near the table, and beckoned to he others to sit down. He wore a white

the others to sit down. He wore a write garment like the other pontiffs, but with some mark of distinction, to show that he was the first among them.

The old man commenced by inviting the people to elevate their minds towards God, and when the crowd had replied

"Amen," he said,—
"My brethren, we have received a let-ter from John, the only one of Christ's apostles who still lives. He advises us

that he will soon be among us."

A suppressed exclamation from all these men and women showed with what

oy this news was received.
"My brethren," resumed the old man,
the beloved disciple, in his letter, sents you but one recommendation: Charity in Jesus Christ, the love of justice. Love ye one another, have together but one heart and one soul, and you will fulfil the law. Such are the words by which, in ending his letter, he confirms you in the faith of the Word of Life. Yes, my brethfaith of the Word of Life. 1es, my breth-ren, love ye one another in poverty, in misfortune, in suffering; let each of you sustain the weak, comfort the afflicted, relieve the poor, and he shall live! And now," added the venerable speaker, "let the new catechumens be brought for-

ward."

Four persons, a man, a woman, and two youths were brought forward and conducted to the priest. It could be easily seen that the four belonged to the same family.

"Flavius Clemens," said the old man, addressing he who appeared the chief of

addressing he who appeared the chief of this family, "one of our sisters in Jesus Christ, your aunt Flavia Domitilla, has informed us that you wished to be received in the grace and faith of the true God, together with your wife and your two sons. Do you, do they persist in this receiving "" esolution?

"Yes, Anacletus," replied Flavius Cle-

"Yes, Anacietus," replied Flavius Clemens; and those who were with him repeated, "We persist!"

"Flavius, you are great before the world, and, with your wife, the nearest relative of the emperor. Your two sons are Crearrs, that is, destined to rule the universe. This greatness these left. universe. This greatness, these lofty hopes, you may have to sacrifice them to your new faith. Will you do it, and will these children do it?"

"We will!" cried the four neophytes

with one voice.
"Will you give up even your lives?" again asked the Pontiff.

"Even our lives!" they responded, with holy enthusiasm.

Anacletus made the sign of the cross

on the forehead of the neophytes, and went through the ceremony of the imposi-tion of hands, to receive them as catechu-mens. He then informed them that before they could be admitted to the baptism of the faithful, they must be in-structed in all the mysteries, and live in the strict practice of all the precepts

religion of Christ.
Then addressing the people: "My brethren," said the Pontiff, "recollect yourselves! Now is the time of the Holy Communion! We are going to break the Bread of Life and to drink the chalice of

salvation. All the Christians prostrated them selves, touching the ground with their

The priest raised his hands; he then elevated the vases containing the wine and pronounced certain words, in a low voice, which did not reach Cecilia's ears. voice, which did not reach Cectina's ears.
Then, those who surrounded the Pontiff, that is, the deacons, went amidst the
faithful, who received from their hands
fragments of the consecrated bread, and
drank from the same chalices.

After this distribution, they gave each other the kiss of peace, and remained plunged in religious ecstasy.

No sound was heard except the whis ering of prayers and the smothered sighs which accompany tears of emotion.

Cecilia could not understand what she saw · she felt, however, that an import

religious act was being accom plished.

A deacon effered her some of the bread and wine of which all the women around her had partaken. She declined, for she felt that she was not worthy of touching the sacred food, or of wetting her lips in

the blessed cup.

The deacon, surprised at her refusal, inquired whether she was not one of the faithful.

faithful.

She replied that she was the daughter of Cecilius.

A subdued rumor among those who heard the answer, expressed the surprise it caused. No one could understand how it caused. No one could understand now she had penetrated into the assembly of

the saints. the saints.

The deacon hastened to inform the Pontiff, who raised his voice to ask if any one had infringed the rules of the mysteries by bringing this heathen to witess them.
Olinthus came forward.

Olinthus came forward.

"This young girl," he said, "is the same who, for some time past, has been visiting our poor homes, to relieve our brethren's sorrows, and to dry their tears. To her, my mother,—poor old Eutychia,—owes her life; and, when, but a while see I found her pear my mother's hed. o ask God to repay our debt of gratitude to this young girl."

Cecilia was astonished, but she felt hat, far from having anything to fear, he could have full confidence in the coung soldier. She put her little hand in feith."

—owes her fite; and, when, but while ago, I found her near my mother's bedside, it seemed to me that God inspired me to lead her to Him. She is already our sister by her charity; and I feel confident that she will soon be so by her

she could have full confidence in the young soldier. She put her little hand in his, and followed him.

After walking some distance in the dark, they came to the head of a subterranean flight of steps.

"Take care," said Olinthus to the young girl, "my brethren are there; you

An aged woman then approached Ce-

An aged woman then approached Cecilia.

"Child," she said, "you are worthy of knowing the God we serve; He visited you, when he gave you compassion and love for those who suffer. Come with me, I shall teach you His law."

The language of this venerable woman was gentle and caressing; her words went to Cecilia's heart.

The mysterious being over, the crowd retired slowly, and Cecilia followed the poor woman, who held her affectionately by the hand. The amiable girl felt as if she were dreaming; she could not fathom the meaning of all she had heard and seen. But her heart was deeply moved, and ineffable thoughts filled her mind.

She seemed to recognize those words of peace, union and love to which she had listened,—her truth-seeking soul had

istened,-her truth-seeking soul had lisped them long ago; those sacred songs had for her a meaning; she understood hose men and women, now silent and collected, then uniting their voices in prayer; they honored divinity better than all those she had seen daily in the cere-monies of her pagan creed, and in the emples of Rome. Then, that consular citizen, that illus

nnen, that consular citizen, that illus-trious matron, those two young men, pro-claimed Cesars—all those worldly honors despised, and death preferred to life—had filled her soul with admiration and aston-ishment.

ishment.

They had reached another part of the crypt and a new spectacle offered itself to Cecilia's eyes.

"Take a seat by me, my dear child,"

said her aged companion.

Two long tables, placed parallel, ran nearly the whole length of the subterranean room. They were covered with the simplest articles of food; bread, eggs, mik, a few dishes of meat, and fruit.

milk, a few dishes of meat, and fruit.

The men went to one of the tables, over which the Pontiff who had celebrated the mysteries presided, seated on a stool a little higher than the rest.

The old Jewess who accompanied Cecilia, took a similar seat of honor at the head of the women's table.

The Pontiff stood up and blessed the food, and all proceeded to eat. The conversation, carried on in a low voice, became general, and characterized by a came general, and characterized by a friendly effusion mingled with reserve. "These are our agape, or feasts of charty," remarked the old woman to

we have them always after the Holy Mysteries, in order to tighten the bonds that unite us, and to remind us that pernitted pleasures, or necessary pain, a nust be in common between us."
Cecilia noticed that this old woman

who spoke to her with the tenderness of a mother, was the recipient of great marks of respect from all those present. Even the pontiff had bowed low when Even the point has she passed near him.

It was, also, with no little astonishment that she saw Flavius Clemens and his two sons waiting humbly on the men, him wife and another matron, whilst his wife and ano whose appearance indicated her high rank, filled the same office at the women' She remembered the Saturnalia where the masters became the servant of their slaves, and the Matronalia, dur-ing which the Roman ladies abdicated, temporarly, their pride, to become de pendent on their inferiors; but she had

pendent on their interiors; but she had never heard that the consuls and their wives, and the heirs to the empire, had ever submitted to such trials.

The old Jewess seemed to read her young companion's thoughts.

"My dear child," she said, "among us the greatest must yield to the smallest.

the greatest must yield to the smallest. Our God humbles the mighty and exalts the weak. It is because I am the weakest and poorest of all, that they do me honor. They also respect in me the daughter of the apostle whom Christ made the corner-stone of His Church. I am Petronilla, the daughter of Peter, the Chief of the Apostles, who was chosen because he was only an humble fisherman. cause he was only an humble fisherman. Some day you will understand all these Some day you will understand all these things, my child. Remember my name, and whenever you feel the wish, come to

me, for I love you."

"And now," she added, "I shall put you under the care of this natron, who faith.

"And now," she added, "I shall put this noble family embraced the true faith. will take you to your father's house, for t is late, and we are going to separate." What was Cecilia's astonishment, when Petronilla beckoned to Flavia Domitila, and placed her, the humble plebeian girl, under the care of the emperor's cousin!

She left the crypt with Flavius Clemens, the two young Cæsars, and that other matron whose imposing mien had At a hundred paces from the entrance

to the cave, litters were in waiting. The torches of the runners lighted the darktorches of the runners lighted the dark-ness of Libitina's woods; and the slaves hastened to execute the orders of their

Here, all the apparel of power, all the splendors of wealth! And, but an instant ago, poverty, abasement, equality with the humblest! Well might the bashful and artless girl believe herself fascinated

and arties girl below the hydrogen with me into this litter," said the unknown matron.

And, as Cecilia hesitated, scarcely believing that this invitation could be intended for her, the matron added,—

"What, my child, are you so proud that

you refuse Flavia Domitilla?" "Are you, then, also a relation of the emperor?" the young girl asked, with a

vely curiosity.
"Yes, dear child," replied Flavia, smil-

"Yes, dear child," replied Flavia, Smit-ing at her eagerness. "Come, get in; we shall soon make each other's acquaint-ance."

Cecilia obeyed. The cortege moved, and was not long reaching her father's residence. Cecilius was very uneasy, not knowing what had become of his daughter. But when he saw her return in such illustrious company, and when Fla-vius Clemens had spoken a few words to vius Clemens had spoken a few words to him, he was so delighted that he thanked all the gods he knew by name, and forgot to question his daughter as to the cause of her delay. With the protection of these great people, his fortune was assured! Sleep did not visit Cecilia's eyes dur-ing that night. What she had witnessed and heard on that eventful evening, filled

and heard on that eventful evening, filled and confused her mind.

> CHAPTER III. CHRISTIAN ESPOUSALS.

Cecilia on the following days returned frequently to see Petronilla, the holy woman, whom she soon learned to love dearly, and to whose teachings, lavished with inexhaustible solicitude, she listened

with increasing interest.

She also often saw Eutychia, who called her daughter, and Olinthus, who gave her the sweet name of sister, and had long conversations with them. They continued Petronilla's work by teaching her the religion of Christ, and fortifying her in her nascent faith.

With such teachers, and under the ir

the such exactors, and under the in-fluence of such examples, the pure-mind-ed girl could not be long in renouncing the lying fictions which she already secretly despised, and which she now re-jected with horror. In a few months she became truly a Christian in heart, aspir-ing only to the grace of baptism, and rapi-in joys as sweet as they were new to her in joys as sweet as they were new to her.

What a blessing," she would exclaim,
"that I should at last see the truth, I,
who have been so long without knowing
it, and who yet sought it with all my

soull?

She had become the darling child of
this whole poor tribe of exiles; all knew
her, and surrounded her with marks of the liveliest affection.

It seemed as though these poor peop

vied in repaying in love for the daughter the miseries and sorrows caused by the father. For Cecilius, who was not awar of the tie existing between his daughte and the Jews, was as pitilessly exacting as ever, and continued to spread desola

tion and ruin in the poor colony.

Cecilia was deeply moved by the tenderness with which all greeted her. If she understood that Christianity dictated this pardon and forgetting of injuries caused by her family, she felt still more the power of that charity which inspire the power of that charity which inspired love by way of retailation. She saw that this virtue, completely unknown to those with whom she had lived hitherto, was the life-giving principle of the little society into which chance, or rather Divine Providence, had suddenly thrown

As Petronilla had told her on the occa-As l'etronilla had told her on the occasion of the agapæ, joys and sorrows were in common between these Christians so truly united, so thoroughly imbued with brotherly love. Whatever one of them possessed was the property of all; and however small and insignificant the offering it was received with gratitude and ing, it was received with gratitude, and the blessing of God was invoked on the giver. These men and women cared not for riches or for the comforts they bring,

but despised and rejected them, Cecilia, the humble girl, soon became intimate guest of the noble Flavius family. Flavia Domitilla had distin-guished her, and had asked Petronilla to confide her to her care. The venerable daughter of the Apostle had the more willingly consented as Cecilia would find in Flavia Domitilla's house the example the greatest virtues, and the bes

This illustrious matron, whom the Church counts among the most sainted virgins who lived in those early ages, was then leading in Rome, and not far from the imperial palace, a life of admirable charity and self-sacrifice.

Her mother, whose name has not been preserved in history was sistent of the country of

preserved in history, was a sister of Clemens. She was nearly related to the Emperor Domitian, for she was the grand-daughter of Sabinus Major, Ves-

pasian's elder brother.
This Sabinus Major was the first who ounder, according to Suetonius, was a bscure undertaker of public works. He was Prefect of the city when he was killed, during a riot incited by the Vitellius party. Tacitus, who relates his death, says that he had commanded the armies of Rome during thirty-five years, under the emperors Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius

The infuriated mob set fire to the Capi tol where somins and his fainty had sought an asylum, and massacred them. One child only escaped from this butch-ery. This was Flavia Domitilla, who owed her lise to the courage and devo-tion of two Christian slaves, Nereus and Achileus-who both suffered martyrdom,

subsequently with their mistress.

Flavia Domitilla, placed by these me in a Christian family, lived with them several years, and embraced their faith. When more propitious times came, she was sought and claimed by her uncle, the consul Flavius Clemens, and went to live

been restored to her, she devoted her abundant means to relieving the poor and onsoling the unfortunate. She gave the consoling the unfortunate. She gave the example of all the Christian works performed in the midst of wealth and worldly greatness, with that humble spirit and sublime devotion which have found imitatresses, even in our days, among women of the highest rank.

Cecilia, conducted by Petronilla, went

every day to Flavia Domitilla's house where she associated herself to the prac tice of virtues which she had never be-fore suspected. She brought to this pious task the enthusiasm of a neophyte, who found in her own heart the liveliest sym-

pathy for those who suffer.
Garges, who for some time past had
commenced persecuting the young girl
with his love, and who felt a certain uneasiness at her frequent absence from home, was far from suspecting how she employed her time. It will be easily understood why Cecilia had little time to think of the vespillo, and why she ha

not hastened to give the favorable answer to his suit, with the hope of which her father had so long lured Gurges. Moreover—shall we say it? another thought was gradually absorbing the maiden's mind; a new feeling had grown side by side with her new faith,—foreign to it and yet arising from it. This feeling caused her much anxiety, for she feared that it was distracting her thoughts from

The poor child loved Olinthus. For several days she had avoided meeting him, hoping thus to recover her peace of mind; but absence seemed only to increase the feeling which filled her heart and mastered her will.

The motherless girl resolved to consult her two benefactrees. Petronilla, who

The motherless girl resolved to consult her two benefactreees, Petronilla, who loved her as her child, and Flavia Domitilla, who treated her like a sister. She knelt, one day, before these two holy women, and having, artlessly, and amidst many tears, unveiled the troubled state of her heart, asked them if she was still worthy of being a Christian.

Petronilla and Flavia Domitilla, these two vigins so pure both, and yet so diff-

two virgins so pure both, and yet so different—the one still bright with the bloom of youth, the other with the snow-white locks of venerable old age-looked at

each other with a sweet smile.

"Child," said Petronilla, in a tone of gentle authority, "do you place Olinthus before God, in your thoughts, or God before Olinthus "I do not know," faltered the young girl; "the faith of God is dear me; but, at the same time, Olinthus's income.

Olinthus, or to give him up for God, what would you do, my daughter?" Petronilla asked, with still more authority.
"Even if the sacrifice should kill me,

O mother, I feel that nothing could ever O mother, I feel that nothing could ever make me renounce Jesus Christ!"
"Child, your love is permitted, for it is pure and innocent. Let peace descend into your young heart. With us, marriage is holy, and we had already thought of it for our Cacilia."
"Can it has true Patronilla? What.

"Can it be true, Petronilla? What,

"Can it be true, Petronilla? What, Olinthus ..."
"Olinthus loves you, and Eutychia wants you to be her daughter. We shall arrange this matter."
"But what will my father say? How can I hope that he will consent?"
"Do you think," said Flavia Domitilla, "that if I undertake to gain his consent, Caedling will regist long?"

Cecilius will resist long?"
"Child," said Petronilla, "see how zentle and easy to bear is the yoke of the God we have taught you to serve! He has His virgins, loved flowers, born of His breath; but near these, in His love, there breath; but near these, in his love, there is a place for the young spouse, for whom He reserves the same glorious palms, if she walks in the innocence and purity of His faith. Rise, my daughter, and hope in His faith and hope large in the large in the loss.

The infinite goodness is cooling was radiant. Her tears had ceased to flow, and her heart opened itself with delight to the promised happipiness which she could now enjoy without remorse. There could be no great obstacle to her marriage. Why should Cecilius refuse his consent? He had accepted Garges; Olinthus was certainly preferable to the vespillo. Olinthus had an important grade in the Roman army. He was a primipilaris, and had recently n His infinite goodness! He was a primipilaris, and had recently distinguished himself in the war against

the Dacians.

He had saved a legion from an ambusi where it would have been cut to pieces. Severely wounded in this encounter, he had been able to continue the campaign with Domitian, and had obtained a further. with Domitian, and had obtained a fur-lough. He had just returned to Rome when he met Cecilia at his mother's bed-side. He could not see this beautiful girl, so gentle, and so devoted to Entychia, without being drawn to her by the most tender affection. This feeling had taken a deeper root in his heart when he had seen Cecilia receiving instruction from Petronilla, and embracing his faith with Petronilla, and embracing his faith with

Cecilia having become a Christian Cectifa naving Decome a cond be his companion for life, and Olinthus blessed God for the treasures or grace, virtue, and candor with which He had endowed the gentle maiden. He had confided to Petronilla his projects and his hopes, and implored her to undertake their realization. Petronilla, assisted by Flavia Domitilla

was preparing to smooth down the obstacles which might be in the way of these young people. Flavia intended to give Cecilia a dower that would secure them She proposed also to overcome the pos-sible repugnance of Cecilius, by the offer of a sum of money that would make him independent to his collectorship. There was little doubt of his acquiescing on

doubt of his acquiescing on those conditions.

The two holy women considered the happiness of these children as secured.

In the early times of the Church, marriage was always preceded by the cere-mony of the espousals. This was done in a very simple manner: the future consorts having obtained the authorization of the Bishop, exchanged a solemn promise in presence of some holy and venerable

Petronilla received the mutual promise of the two lovers. Taking Cecilia's hand, she placed it in Olinthus's, and told "You are betrothed; love you each

other in Jesus Christ, and wait patiently, in retreat and silence, the day when He will be pleased to bless your union." According to the custom of those days, Olinthus placed on Cecilia's finger a ring, the pledge of his promise, upon which was engraved a symbolic sign,—a dove, image of the parity of her who was to be his companion.

The marriage was to take place after

first obtain the consent of Cecinus. It was necessary, besides, that Cecinia should prepare to be baptized, for the Pontiff could not bless her marriage until she would have become, through this first sacrament, the child of the true God. The news of the contemplated marri-

The news of the contemplated marriage caused a general rejoicing among the poor Jews to whom Cecilia was so dear. It was like a family festival promised to those hearts which thrilled with the same joys,—like a light from Heaven, piercing the dark cloud that hung over their heads. But these dreams of happiness were

soon to vanish. Gurges, the unfortunate vespillo, discovered, in the manner we have related, that the young girl was a Jewes, and preferred a Jew to him.

Cacilina learned that his dead of the control Cecilius learned that his daughter was a Christian.

a Christian.

Marcus Relugus, concealed in Entrapeles's shop, overheard the barber's conversation with Garges.

And, finally, Cecilia, instead of marry-

And, finally, Cecina, Instead of marrying Olinthus, was sold in a slave-market.

How did all this happen?

Was Olinthus, whom we have seen
boiling with rage at the foot of the platform on which stood his weeping betrothed, doomed to lose her on earth to
find her only in eternity?

Or would God, in His justice, give him
healt the innecent maiden who

back the innocent maiden who had invoked his name, and for whose deliverance two sublime virgins implored him; Petronilla, the daughter of Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and Flavia Domitilla, the angel of virtue and love, who laid at his angel of virtue and love, who laid at his feet the worldly treasures of human great ess and wealth?

TO BE CONTINUED.

NAPOLEON AS A CATECHIST.

Some thirty years ago the Arch bishop of Bordeaux, being at Aix-les-Bains, was called to visit a dying woman, the daughter of a general that had become celebrated in the wars of the First Empire. The venerable prelate was moved even to tears in listening to the dying woman speak of relig ion, for she spoke as few can do. And having asked her who had instructed her so perfectly, he received the follow-

ing answer:
"Monseigneur, under God I owe my "I do not know," faltered the young girl; "the faith of God is dear me; but, at the same time, Olinthus's image is always in my heart."

"And if you were given the alternative to renounce your faith in order to follow

hand he said to me: 'My child, you are a pretty girl now and you will be still more beautiful in a few years; nevertheless, these advantages of yours will expose you to great dangers in the world. And how can you overcome those dangers unless you have a large fund of religion? Unfortunately, your mamma cares but little about re ligion, and your papa still less, there-fore, I will fulfil the obligation that rests on them ; come to-morrow and I

will give you your first lesson. "For two consecutive years, and several times each week, I was taught my catechism by the Emperor. time he made me read a lesson out loud and then he explained it to me. When I was beginning my thirteenth year, His Majesty said to me: 'I think you are now well enough instructed. You should soon receive your first Communion. I will have a priest come from France who will prepare you for that great action and will prepare me for death.' And he kept his promise."

CHARITABLE THOUGHTS.

It seems strange that there should be so little charitable thought in the world when one considers how much of it nearly every one requires to pal liate his wrong doings. When a man or woman is accused of sin the natural impulse is to censure before waiting for proof that the individual is guilty and without any consideration of mitigating circumstances. The jury of public opinion acts upon a different principle from that required to be ob-

served by the legal jury. An accusation having been made and supported by ex parte testimony, the accused is assumed to be guilty, and required, if he would be acquitted, to prove his innocence. He is, more over, subjected to a further injustice His denial, disproof, or defence will re ceive much less attention than the accusation. Years afterwards it will be remembered that he was accused by people who can not recall to memory the conclusion of the case. " something wrong " about him; that is never forgotten, and he is left, long after his innocence may have been proved, with that vague smirch upon

is reputation. But assumuing guilt to have been proved or acknowledged, there is abundant room for charitable thought to find out reason and excuse for the wrong doing, or, if not excuse, rational explanation of its causes. It is quite the fashion for people to demand justice upon offenders, though if justice should be done they would not 'scape whipping. It seems, indeed, as me who are most severe adopt an austere behavior to divert suspicion

from themselves. The number of wrong doers in the world is vastly greater than the small number constituting the criminal class. t is the wrong doers not yet so much addicted to bad ways as to with criminals who need the charitable thought and help of their neighbors. They may have been sorely tempted or have sinned in a moment of sudden passion, to be deeply repented thereafter: they may have good disposition, good intentions, but be easily tray and just as easily led aright. For all such wrong doers the kindly sympathy and encouragement stronger and better men and women is needed to reclaim them and help them

to a better life. Only those who have suffered temptation can fully realize the strength of a brief delay. Flavia Domitilla must the excuses that may be offered by first obtain the consent of Cecilius. It are anxious to amend their ways. The descent from strict virtue or uprightness is usually by a grade so gentle as to be unnoticed until exposure and disgrace bring forcibly to view the length of the way. No man or woman properly trained and of good name plunges into vice and wrecks reputa tion and character in a day. Nor will any man or woman so well trained as to feel disgrace refuse the charitable. kindly effosts of others toward reclam-Too often, however, they meet ation only with stern looks and rebukes from Pharisees, and are driven to further wrong-doing, until it becomes too late

o save them from a criminal career. The gravest offenses may be pardoned when followed by sincere pentance and an amended life, yet here is little disposition to excuse ial faults under the same conditions. Many people who should from their training, standing and reputation do otherwise, seem to gloat over the disgrace or downfall of others, accept the nerest rumor of such a thing as truth, ignore denials, help to spread scandal, remely difficult for their unfortunate or guilty fellow to recover his stand-

ing.
In contrast with these are good people who charitably seek to suppress scandal, to remove temptations, and help their fellow-men to better lives. They, too, love purity, honesty, justice, but they are charitable in their thoughts and seek to do the deeds of mercy. They are slow to believe wrong of one who has hitherto been of good repute; they are ready to listen to explanations that may help to excuse; they welcome signs of repent-ance and gladly assist the sinner to re-

cover his good name. It is needless to argue that they follow the right course. The state-ment, divorced of personal application appeals to the heart of minded people as that which is dictated by wordly morality as well as religious teaching.—Catholic Columbian.

MARK WINSTON, POSTAL CLERK.

BY HOMER MARCELLUS PRICE.

In the early eighties I was a railway postal clerk on one of the principal lines of the South. I was a "helper," and had as "clerk in charge" a man older than myself. How much older I never knew, for that was one of his tender points. The family Bible and the Blue Bock at Washington only could give information about his age However, he was old enough to have received a Yankee ballet square in the face at Chickamauga, and it had left a deep scar on his face. He was, and is, one of the few absolutely true men to be met in a lifetime. His name here will be Mark Winston, but my old friend, now in the superintendent's office, signs a different one to the month-

ly pay roll. We left our eastern terminus one night with a very light mail. We were running on the through southern fast mail and made few stops, as most of our exchanges were made by the 'catcher" service. Our distribution soon finished, we lit our pipes, and Mark commenced a war story. That story was never finished, for it was interrupted at the next stop by the en trance of two post office inspectors We were much surprised at their busi ness when we learned they were going to "block the mails," to test—let u call him-Ben Craig.

Ben was a postal clerk running o a small line connecting our throug train with another trunk road fift miles south of us. His point of connec tion with our line lay some forty mile further on, and he made the trip ever night. He handled considerable mai as this was our outlet for New Orlean Blocking the mails means the placing of any number of decoy or te

letters in the ordinary mail. The letters contain marked money, as have been previously post mark along the line, from which they a supposed to have originated. Of cour all points of irregularity are careful covered. The decoys are placed i discriminately through the mail th the clerk suspected of dishone At the terminus of his r the mail is hastily examined by an i spector, when the clerk is not prese nd if any of the decoy letters are m sing the clerk is arrested and search for the marked money. The we "test" is now used instead of "deco but I use the latter word because of universal employment at the time t incident occurred. "Test" is rea the better word, for there is no ef made to decoy clerks; but they fall fall they must, by handling no uni ally tempting mail. When depre tions occur in the dispatch of any tain mail, one clerk after anothe tested until all employes handling mail have been tried, unless some fellow is apprehended before the te It is, therefore, simp completed. test, as much to ascertain if a cler honest as it is to catch a thief.

plaint about letters to the Louis state lottery being rifled. The gambling institution was then run t full blast in the Crescent city, the mails had not yet been denied a means of communication. postal car in the South was burd with its mail, and money was sen ordinary letters by the thousands any employe had a drop of dish blood in his veins here was a ch for it to be made manifest. Mail inating on and coming over our had, it appeared, been made the s prey of some dishonest clerk. we were informed, had been ed thoroughly and given a " The same has been don the line running into New Or and each clerk had stood the Every one that could p this mail had been tested except and it was clear that Uncle San cret service men expected that n close inspection case No. 7312

The decoy letters were put

mail we were to turn over to B

noticed how sober was Winsto

clerk in charge, as he went to t

We all knew there was much

door and looked out for some the peaceful scenes of hill and forest and field, as they swept by pale moonlight. Above the r the train came only the occasion of an awakened farm dog or th tle of an engine as it approac country lanes. Suddenly Mark and said rather cynically, I th "I wonder if every man doe his price? I don't usually th but if Ben Craig has received sold out I'm not so sure. You be certain of your man, gent he said to the two secret servi 'and I own the evidence is Still I've known that boy while, and it's hard to believ thief. He has been poor en be one, but I haven't always that poverty and dishonesty When he first came gether. When he first came tanooga to go into the service stitute, he didn't have a this sickly wife and a pretty near baby girl. 'Subbing' is a poor business to make a living and it was much worse in the and it was much worse in tho especially at Chattanooga.

make a few dollars only we clerk laid off, and that of thought too much of the dollar to lay off for anythin death or a broken leg."

Here Wineton told a story

"nearness," as he called it, the old timers on the Atlan and finally came back to Ba That fellow was as poor s shell Baptist church mouse, I The only thing in the world h the way of collateral was som a busted iron mine in Alab tried to sell this to me is h