

martyrs, should be guarded from the profanation of curious sightseers and sneering infidels. The Podium ran the whole round of the arena, above which it was raised to the height of about eight feet. It was composed of marble flags solidly fixed in the walls, and of columns resembling pilasters. It was surmounted with a heavy spiked iron railing that projected over the arena. When making the round of the arena the visitor sees at determined distances large openings made in the base of the Podium and enclosed with iron bars. These were the Carceres in which were encaged the beasts destined to take part in the games. The iron doors enabled the "bestiarii" to enrage the wild beasts to the required degree of frenzy.

On the Podium was found the Pavilion of the Emperor. On the right and left were disposed the seats of the pretors, of the vestal virgins and of the curial authorities. Behind the imperial pavilion, the seats ascended in the form of a horse-shoe. These tiers of seats were separated by corridors, and they increased in dimension as they arose, so as to form compartments, whence they derived the name Cunei. The first fourteen tiers of seats were reserved for the senate, the magistracy and the ambassadors; the others were occupied by citizens. The upper tiers of seats were reserved for the Roman matrons, whence they might obtain a view of the spectators as well as of the combatants. From its lofty pinnacle this brilliant cincture contemplated the animated Coliseum of Rome's stupendous theatre.

Lest the odor of blood might be too offensive for the bestialized nostril of the depraved audience, the sweet scent of saffron and balm was showered on the spectators by a system of tubes rising from the podium to the terrace. The remains of these tubes are still found. The terrace formed a large esplanade, bordered with a parapeted gallery, and was capable of accommodating twelve thousand people. From this terrace were worked the immense mechanical contrivances by which the velarium was brought into position. The velarium was an awning of gold stellated purple, and covered the whole amphitheatre, to which it gave the appearance of a tent. Its utility is self-

evident and gives us an insight into Roman views of comfort.

The Coliseum was capable of seating eighty-seven thousand spectators, and if we add the twelve thousand finding place on the terrace, we have the astounding total of almost one hundred thousand spectators, assisting at the celebration and games of Pagan Rome. Such are the bare architectural lines of the Coliseum. What must have been the sight when the Roman sun flooded with its golden light the dazzling surface of the Velarium? What must have been the effect of its marble, walls and pavements. See the artistic glitter of these masterpieces of Grecian and Roman sculpture. Ask not the cost of such a monument. Cassiodorus says it was a river of gold. And oh! how many rivers of tears! of blood!

Now you know the Coliseum as a monument. Would you know the Pagan world of which it is the epitome? Go back to the 20th Dec. of the eleventh year of the reign of Trajan. The Romans are celebrating the feasts of the close of the year. Contemplate the spectacle. The Velarium undulates in the breeze above; the roar of the wild beasts causes the vast pile to tremble below. The pretor advances to his seat on the podium; for the Emperor is on an expedition in the East. He is followed by the vestals draped in white and by the senate cloaked in white and gold. Eighty-seven thousand spectators fill the steps of the Amphitheatre. Twelve thousand swarm on the terrace; the matrons and their daughters are all there together in their grandeur. Suddenly the tumult ceases; silence reigns supreme. The priest of Jupiter Latiaris approaches the altar and seizes the knife: the human victim is immolated: the people applaud: Jupiter is propitiated: the games may now commence.

Through the Capitoline portal, a mournful procession wends its way. They are the "venatores" armed to fight the wild beasts, they are the "bestiarii" destined to become their food. They are of all ages and classes, from the delicate fragile child to the grey-haired tottering old man, from the fugitive slave to the despairing captive of war. They pass around the arena, they approach the Emperor's throne, they bow down to the earth and salute him,