

The Roman Empire had been overrun by many savage nations of the stock we call Teutonic. There were Saxons and Angles, as we all know, in Britain. There were Burgundians in the northwest of Gaul, Goths in the south, Franks in the middle, but they had for the most part not wrought as terrible havoc among the inhabitants as had been the case in England. The Goths and Burgundians had been Christians before they came into the country, and they respected the Roman bishops and even the magistrates; and the Franks were converted not long after they had settled upon the banks of the Seine and Loire.

Most of the towns and cities had strong walls, and these wild men were like the Scot who said he had rather hear the lark sing than the mouse squeak. They did not interfere with the old inhabitants of these fortresses, except now and then to demand sums of money or jewels from them; and the inhabitants all held themselves tributary to the Roman Empire, but were able to govern themselves. Often they made their bishop their governor, and they generally chose one who was able to act as a statesman and manage their affairs with the barbarians. Gregory, the grandfather of Attalus, had been an excellent magistrate or senator, as the office was then called, Augustodunum or Autun. After his wife died he took holy orders, and wished to live a retired life; but the men of Langres, knowing him to be as able and experienced as he was good and holy, elected him to be their bishop, and besought him with tears to accept the office and become their protector.

Thither, then, he moved, after his consecration, with his son Tetricus and his little orphan grandson Attalus. It was a large household, for Gregory was a rich man, and used hospitality freely, though he lived sparingly himself. This kitchen of his—a place very unlike modern kitchens—was a low room fitted throughout with tiles, and with a charcoal stove full of pigeon-holes, one row of them holding the hot embers, those above the food that was to be cooked. A table was at hand on which some cold meats were laid, and there were shelves holding the various utensils.

Just at present there was a pause in the operations, during which Leo stood listening to and sometimes prompting his young master. They were a great contrast. Attalus has a fair skin, rosy cheeks like a girl's, delicate features, and dark eyes, but his hair, cut short in Roman fashion, was light. Leo, on the other hand, had the very blackest and crispest of hair, and great eyes of the darkest hue with bluish whites, and not only his cheeks, but his bare arms and legs were browned as if stained. His features were, however, straight and well formed, and if the blood of a colored race mingled with his it was probably Moorish, and

not negro. He had been born a slave in the family of Gregory, and had been always happy and contented in his lot, for Christianity had much softened the life of servitude, especially with a good master. Leo's father and mother had been lawfully married in church, and always treated kindly and honorably, waited upon like relations through their old age, and buried with all the honors due to Christians, and he, being always intelligent, had early made himself useful and respected in the house; but he had in his youth preferred activity to learning, though since his master had become a bishop, and moved to Langres, keeping his house full of priests, clerks, and the like, Leo had been seized with the ambition to become a scholar, and took every opportunity of picking up what learning he could from Attalus or any other of his housemates.

Supper was, however, near at hand. It might have been called dinner, for it was the only meal to which the household sat down in full order, and it took place at about five o'clock. Snatches of food were taken at other times of the day, and more luxurious households had a regular dinner at twelve, but Bishop Gregory hardly ever ate until the evening, and then he kept open house. So Leo began in haste to take his meats out of their holes and to dish up.

Philetus' voice was also heard calling for Attalus, who had to hasten away to repeat his lesson, not sorry that Leo had insured his learning it.

Philetus was waiting in the court, which was turfed over, though the turf was much burned up by the sun. There was a fountain in the middle, and a colonnade of circular pillars and curiously carved capitals all round the sides, making a cloister, paved with beautiful glazed tiles, forming an intricate pattern in red and yellow. There were benches, stools, chairs and tables in the cloister, for except in the depth of winter it was the common resort of the house, and it served as Attalus' schoolroom.

Philetus was a deacon, a Greek, as might be seen by his clearly defined features. He was not young, and had been cast about a good deal in the world. He had lived through the sack of many cities, and could speak many languages besides the Greek in which he had been educated at Lyons, and thus he had been fitted, so far as acquirements went, to be the tutor of the young Attalus.

"Come, sir, I see you have been wasting your time in gluttony in the kitchen as usual," he exclaimed.

By way of answer, Attalus began to gabble off his lines headlong without a single error.

"Come, sir, this will not do. Let me hear them slowly, and with the right accent."

"Are not you disappointed of your box on the ear? I see your fist doubled." And away