

## The Chronicles of Flori, the Son of David.

FROM THE DAY OF HIS DEFEAT EVEN UNTIL NOW.

(Reprinted by Request.)

And behold Flori, the son of David, drew near, and entered into the tent of his fore-fathers, and there came out to meet him his aged sire.

And Flori lifted up his voice and wept: and said unto him, "Oh my father, the sword of Arma-Geddon, the Captain of the Host, has entered into my flesh, and his words, even exceeding bitter words, into my heart, and I am sore vexed and troubled in spirit."

And his father said unto him, "Oh, my son, be not troubled in spirit, neither let thy heart be sad within thee, for thou shalt yet have dominion over this Philistine, even Arma-Geddon, the Captain of the Host."

Then was the soul of Flori comforted and he bound up his wounds, and uncovered his head to the breath of Heaven. And he said unto his slaves, which were with him in the gate to do his bidding:—"It is well; bring forth the instruments of music, even the sackbut and the psaltery, and make merry before me, and fear not."

But though he spake thus with his tongue, he hardened his heart, and took counsel with himself what he should do, saying:—"This man, even Arma-Geddon, the Centurion, the Leader of Foes and the Bearer of Brooms, shall surely die."

So he hardened his heart, and bound up his wrath within himself until the days of his fasting, even the weeks and months of the peace-offering should be fulfilled.

Now it came to pass in those days, even in the days of the peace-offerings and sacrifices, that Flori went forth from the land of his fathers, and sojourned in a foreign land.

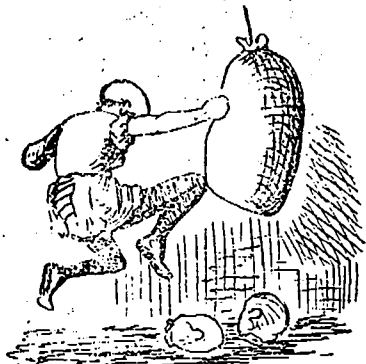
And his heart was sad within him, so he summoned unto him the wise men of the land, even the Smooth-flayers, the Bruisers and the Boxahs, and said unto them:—"Behold now is my spirit sad within me: for the Centurion, even Arma-Geddon, the Captain of the Host, hath waged war against me, a man of peace, a sculptor of images, and a lover of music and sweet sounds, and hath discomfited me."

Then the wise men of the land lifted up their voices and said unto him:—"Let not thy heart be sad within thee, neither let thy spirit mourn, for in thy land, even in the land of Jon-Lon, the King, thou hast a man of great skill in such matters, one who maketh the wounded spirit to rejoice, and grants comfort to the mourner. He will aid thee against this Philistine, and thou shalt lay him even with the dust. Yes, verily, and so shall it be unto thee."

Then was Flori exceedingly glad, and he said unto the wise men:—"Give me, I pray ye, some sign by which I shall know this wise man: lest peradventure I meet him in the way, and know him not. And they gave unto him a sign."

And Flori gave unto the wise men one shekel, for though he had many, they were very dear unto him.

So Flori departed for his own land. And behold, as he journeyed upon the great sea, he fell into a deep sleep, and he dreamed a dream: and in his dream the bags of sand which lay around him arose from the ground, and stood up before him. And he looked, and behold the bags of sand bore the likeness of the Centurion, even of Arma-Geddon. And the bag which was the head cried aloud and said unto him, "Arise, thou bag of wind, why sleepest thou?" Then Flori arose in his dream, and he smote the bags hip and thigh, until they fell, and he said run out upon the ground.



Then Flori awoke from his sleep, and continued with himself, and said unto himself, "Are not these the words of the wise men, which they spake unto me, saying: 'Thou shalt lay him even with the dust.' And he was comforted."

So Flori returned unto his own land, and he sought diligently among his kinsfolk and relations for the wise man who should aid him against the Captain of the Host; but he found him not.

Then was he grieved in spirit, saying unto himself, "Surely now have I been deceived by these men, and have given them of my wealth for naught."

And it came to pass that there was a certain slave in the land, exceeding cunning in the art of forging iron. And Flori sent unto him, saying: "Make me, even now,

iron for my rament, that I may be safe against this man who girdeth himself with a staff." And Flori was urgent, and said, "If thou dost not this thing thou shalt surely die: for art thou not a slave to do my bidding?"

And the slave made haste and drew near unto him: and it came to pass when Flori beheld him that he fell on his knees before him, and said unto him:

"Oh, my friend, live forever! For surely thou art he who shall grant me deliverance from mine enemy." And the slave said unto him, "I am he, be comforted."

Then they communed together, and took counsel respecting the death of Arma-Geddon.

Now when the weeks of fasting, and of the peace-offerings were accomplished, even in the tenth month, and on the twenty-seventh day of the month, Arma-Geddon arose early and said unto himself, "Behold the harvest is at hand: the harvest of stocks and of margins, and the season for the gathering in of shekels. Now must I hasten and get me down right early, lest they be all devoured by the bears of the street and the bulls of the corner."

So he went forth from his tent, and journeyed through the land of the *Black-Gregor* to that of the *Shimmering-Sun*. And as he journeyed he thought not of Flori, the son of David, but he said unto himself, "Oh, self, live forever! Thou art mighty in warfare, and comely in person. The strong men and the fair maidens bow down unto thee, and thy name is of great report in the land."

But as he thus communed with himself a great noise smote the air, and a mighty voice, as of thunder, said unto him:

"Art thou he who girdeth himself with a stick?" Then the knees of Arma-Geddon smote together, and he



quaked with fear, and trembled exceedingly; so that his staff, which was in his hand, fell upon the ground. For he knew that the voice was the voice of the bag of wind even of Flori, the son of David.

Then the wise man, even the forger of iron, upon whom Flori leant, said unto him, "Be mindful of a dream, and smite him, for I am with thee, so that thou shalt prevail, and he shall surely die."

So Flori fell upon him and smote him, so that he fell, and the blood, even the blood of the Centurion, Arma-Geddon, flowed out upon the ground. Then Flori smote him again and again, and buffeted him, until the words of the wise men, which they spake unto him were fulfilled.

And Arma-Geddon, the Centurion, the mighty man of valor, the Commander of Foes, and the Leader of many, lay humbled in the dust, wallowing in his own gore. And he groined in spirit and cried aloud, saying:—"It is enough, go hence from my sight, and mock not the voice of my groaning."

But Flori said unto him: "If thou wert a man, then wouldst thou do battle as a man; but behold now art thou but a child, even a mere babe before me." And he smote him upon the right cheek and upon the left, and reviled him with exceeding bitter words.

Then spake the wise man, even the cunning forger of iron, unto Flori, saying: "Let us go hence, it is enough." So they mounted into the chariot and departed. But the wise man took with him the staff of Arma-Geddon, which was in his hand, saying unto himself, "It is a token of remembrance for them that shall do likewise."

And Flori returned unto his own tent, and they prepared a great feast and made merry. For they said now is the house of David exalted above its fellows. For we have smitten our enemy and laid him even with the dust. So they feasted and made merry, even until the eleventh hour. But on the morrow there was silence in the house of David, for the heads of the people were sore amazed and very heavy.

But Arma-Geddon lay within his tent, sick unto death, and troubled in his heart. And he called unto him the wise men of the land: the Physicians, the Scribes, and the Counsellors. And they took counsel together for many days.

Then one of them, a Counsellor, mighty with his tongue, and cunning withal, but of short stature, said unto them: "How long shall this man trouble us? For he is a noisy and a turbulent fellow, and no man's life is safe while he is abroad."

So they took Flori, the son of David, and cast him into prison, and made his feet fast in the stocks.

And it was a custom in those parts to do unto prisoners, even as they did in the days of Samson, to take their strength from them: but, though they searched dili-

gently from morning until evening, they touched not a hair of his head. For it was not.



Then was there mourning in the house of David, and a great cry went abroad in the land, for they said, "Where is the wise man, the mighty Counsellor who shall deliver us?" And one said unto them, "Fear not, for I will bring unto you him of whom ye speak. And I could he brought unto him Gublimus, the son of Hastings, a mighty Counsellor, a man of stately carriage, and comely in looks, who spake words as sweet as honey, yet were they sharp as barbed arrows."

And he said unto them, "Be of good cheer, fear not, for I will deliver him." And they took comfort, and gave unto him many shekels. And the number of the shekels which they gave unto him was so great that they filled even the whole car in which he rode.

In those days there ruled over the city a mighty judge, Sagud, the son of Galix, and when all these things were made known unto him he summoned before him Flori, the son of David, and a great multitude, even the whole city. And when they were all assembled together, even the Counsellors, the Scribes, the Physicians, the Smooth-flayers, the Bruisers, and the Boxahs, they wrangled and strove with each other for many days, respecting Flori, the son of David, and Arma-Geddon, whom he slew: and there was strife in the city, and between the Bruisers and the Boxahs.

Then stood up the Counsellors, four in number: He, who was short in stature, yet cunning with his tongue; Gublimus, the son of Hastings, whose words were as honey on his lips, yet full of venom in his heart; Alderic, the son of Joseph, the spokesman of the great king; and another, who is surmamed the mellifluous; and there stood so before the people those who were to give testimony in the matter, four score and ten in number.

And they all shouted and harangued together in the Court which is called Small-don during many days.

And on the third day, even at the eleventh hour of the night, the people shouted with a loud voice and said: "Let Flori, the son of David, be exalted in the land, for he hath done good and not evil before us, and hath cast down the mighty, the proud, and him of high stomach, even Arma-Geddon, the Leader of Danes and the Bearer of Brooms."

So they broke the bonds of Flori, the son of David, and set him free; but the great Judge, even Asgud, the son of Galix, said unto him, "Be thou henceforward careful in thy doings, oh, thou son of David; and that thou mayest remember these days, I command thee to cast into the treasury of the great king two mites."

So Flori, the son of David, triumphed in the land; and Arma-Geddon, the Centurion, went mourning many days, seeking rest but finding none.

Now the rest of the acts of Flori, the son of David, and the oaths which he swore, are they not written in the books of the Upper Ten, as a remembrance against him unto this day.

[Toronto (Canada) Globe.]

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