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(From the Catholic Mirror.)

AURELIA;

THE JEWS OF CAPENA GATE.

Freely Translated from the French of M. A. Quinton

PART FIRST. - THE INFORMER.

CHAPTER III .- (CONTINUED.)

The vestals, six in number, were chosen from among young girls between six and ten years of age, and remained during thirty years attached to the temple. During the first ten years they studied the rites and ceremonies; during the second period of ten years, they practiced, and during the third they taught.

The vestal who, surviving the trials of this long service, and hecame the most ancient, was styled the Grand-Vestal or 'Vestalia-Maxima:' she was distinguished from her five companions by greater bonors and higher prerogatives. But. ber responsibility increased with her elevation. and she had often to bear alone the cruel punishments awarded for faults committed by other vestals.

Such was the case with Cornelia; she had attained the supreme rank of Grand-Vestal, but had soon become apprized of its perils.

She had suffered the chastisement of slaves! The Sacred Fire having been extinguished through the neglect of one of the priestesses, Helvius Agrippa, Domitian's substitute in the pontificate, bad made her responsible for this fault which was considered a most unbappy omen, and the proud patrician girl was subjected, like the viest of slaves, to the tortures of flagellation.

Shame, even more than physical pain had made her seriously ill; and being authorized, according to custom, to withdraw to a private house during her sickness, she had left momentarily the 'Atrium Regium,' for the roof of her dear Aurelia who, at the age of twelve years, as fixed by the Roman law, had had to leave the temple of Vesta.

This necessary digression being ended, we shall now resume the thread of our story.

The curtain of Aurelia's apartment was drawn aside, and an old man of small stature, with a smiliog and pleasant countenance, entered, bowing to the young girl with every demonstration of respect. He wore the 'laticlave,' indicating the rank of senator. It was Vibius Crispus. Aurelia's guardian, whom she had sent for.

It was he who incurred the displeasure of Domitian by an impudent joke preserved by history. The emperor had a curious habit of transfixing fites with the point of his style. On one occasion, somebody baving asked Vibius if the emperor was alone:

'Certainly,' replied the waggish old man. there is not even a fly with him?

Domitian was furious when he heard of this. but the astute old courtier managed so well that he outlived his master's anger, and even retained his favor, since he remained the divine Aurelia's

' My august ward has sent for her old guardian,' he remarked, saluting her with micgled familiarity and respect. 'Can I have the happiness of doing anything for her?"

'Yes, my dear guardian. I wish you to accompany me to the nortico of Pompey.

But, exclaimed Vibius, who had had time to notice the sad expression of the young girl's face, there is something else, for, by Jupiter, I believe you are weeping. Come, my dear ward, what is the matter with you? Speak, I beseech you! Your unworthy guardian may, perhaps, bring back a smile on that charming

'Oh! my dear Vibius, I am indeed very unhappy! The state of my poor Cornelia saddens me; and then---'

'Then !' 'I am very guilty . . . Read this let-

And she handed to Vibius a sheet of papyrus such as was manufactured in Rome since Claudius' time, and which was as white as our best

The letter was from Flavia Domitilla (not the Flavia wite of Clemens) and written on that very morning to her young cousin, Aurelia. It ran thus:

Flavia Domitilla to Aurelia-Flavia-Domi tilla, greeting:

Dear Cousin,-We have just now learned that you have caused your bair dresser, Doris, to be put to death. Undoubtedly, the laws of Rome gave you this right; but you must be beautiful face bathed in tears, was in her guaraware that few citizens, avail themselves of it, dian's arms. unless, indeed, they are entirely pitiless, and it is

your aunt, think that it is very unfortunate that proach myself with.

the betrothed of their son could be guilty of such an abuse of power.

'According to our religion, it is a crime to take the life of a fellow-being; and our slaves, although they owe us obedience and respect, are our brothers, being the children of the same

' See, dear cousin, if such a religion is not greater and more beautiful than that which teaches the master to look upon those unfortunates as so many vile animals.

We pray to God that He may pardon and enlighten you.'

Vibius Crispus, baving read this letter, was seized with a fit of laughter. This selfish and corrupt old man, one of the representatives of a decrepid and heartless society could find only a subject for mirth in those simple and dignified remarks.

However, as this irony might be construed as a want of respect for his august ward, he apologized and asked:

Are these reproaches and singular counsels the cause of your sadness, divine Aurelia?'

'Yes, I must confess it, dear guardian, I have been deeply moved by this letter; the more so as I had already said to myself almost the same things.

So you think that a master bas not over his slaves the right you have exercised.

'No, Vibius. But the treatment was so crue! . . It is true that I had not given such orders, and it is a misfortune if my hairdresser succumbed. . . . But this mislor-tune, I am charged with it. What will my What will my cousin Vespasian think of it?

'Ah! my dear and divine ward,' said Vibius, smiling, and looking at the blushing young girl; licate fabric, and her flexible waist concealed by ah! you are afraid of appearing too barsh in the eyes of the dear betrothed, and of displeasing him! Very well! at least this is a motive. And this is why we wish to go Pompey's portico, where the young cousin walks every afternoon with his tator.

"Vibius! Vibius! you are very wicked!-Yes, I want to see my cousin, but it is to explain to him . . to excuse . .?

'And what need have you of excuses? 1 was present the other day at Founia's tiolet .-Her waiting maids were around her, their shoulders bare down to the waist; and I can asof them was guilty of carelessness. Do you tbick that Fauci of a hair dresser?

And as the young girl remained thoughtful and silent, Vibrus continued:

For, having forgotten a towel. Ogulnia's bathing attendant was tortured with blades of brass brought to a red heat. Medullina. that fair and gentle girl, moderates the unbearable chattering of her chamber-maids by sticking into their arms the long pins with which she fastens her hair. Has anybody ever accused these matrons of being pitiless? As for me. I am of Pliny the-Younger's opinion-and surely, no one will accuse him of cruelty toward his slaves : speaking of the tragical end of Sargius Macedo, would perish! Rome, my dear ward, contains two hundred thousand citizens and two millions of slaves; will your cousic Flavia-Domitilla tell me how they can be kept down, unless it is by the terror of punishment?

Vibius Crispus might have multiplied indefinitely his examples, without obtaining a word from Aurelia. It was easy to perceive that remorse had entered her young beart, disposed to feelings of goodness and humanity, and that the pitiless arguments of Vibius worried her.

He understood this, and changed adroitly the conversation:

'I know somebody,' he said, 'who would pay large price for the letter you have shown me." And who is it, if you please?' interrupted

Aurelia. ' Marcus Regulus.' Marcus Regulus ! why so, guardian ?' Because he would find in this letter a proof

Flavius Clemens, his wife, and your cousin

Flavia-Dometilla are Christians. 'And what would be the result?' Aurelia bastily inquired. The result? I don't know! But in the

Emperor Nero's time, it happened more than around the interior courts shaded by plane trees once, that we strolled in his gardens, lighted by and embellished with statues and fountains .-Christians whom they burnt in the guise of torches, with tunics prepared with sulphur and rosin. Perhaps the Emperor Domitian would like to enjoy one of these agreeable spectacles.'

With one bound, the divine Aurelia, her and conversation.

Oh! my guardian, oh! my dear Vibius, Your uncle Clemens, and Favia Domitilla, Her death was just, and I have nothing to re-

Vibrus could not understand. He received immense multitude, and had sought in vain the slaves, who nevertheless here the stinging cuts his ward's caresses like one who knows not what only person she wished to see. t do. or what to think.

'My dear ward,' be said at last, 'your affection honors and touches me. But tell me, how could my words bring this change?---

'Oh ! Vibius, Doris had written to Regulus. Her letter was intercepted Cornelia and Metellus Celer were so indignant at this, that they ordered her punishment '

What were the contents of that letter? First, Doris informed Regulus that Celer visits Cornelia almost every day."

'This is a grave matter for your friend, my dear ward; I begin to understand.... And tben ?

'Then, she positively accused my relatives, Flavius Clemens and the two Flavias Domitillas of being Christians, and related their attempts to convert me.'

'It is very lucky, dear ward,' said Vibius, interrupting Aurelia, 'that Doris' letter should have been intercepted. You are right, she deserved death, for Regulus would have made a detestable use of that letter. But the emperor is absent, I am informed of the facts, and there is nothing to fear until he returns; we shall seet then, how to prevent the misfortunes tha, threaten Dry your tears, divine Aurelia, and let us start for Pompey's portico. Your Numidian horsemen are ready, and when I arrived they could scarcely restrain their impatient steeds. Let us go !' and Vibius clapped bis hands as a signal to the escort.

The young girl's sadness bad vanished, and ber face had resumed its wonted serenity.

When she appeared in the atrium, her graceful features veiled in a diaphanous tissue of dethe fold of her 'stole' and her wide 'palla,' every one was ready.

Sixteen slaves surrounded the rich litter with purple cushions. They were Ethiopians of the deepest black, clad in snow white tunics, and wore silver bracelets on their wrists and ankles. Near them stood the indispensable crowd of hand-maids, receiving the instructions of Aure-

ha's nurse. These women were provided with the numerous elegant trifles, without which a fashionable lady, in those days, could not have hazarded themselves in the streets. Parasols to protect the sure you the whip did not remain idle when any face; large fans of peacock feathers; balls of And turning to unknown: crystal or yellow amber, which were rolled in the hands to prevent their sweating; tame snakes of a peculiar small specie, and of icy coldness, which were used-living necklaces,-to keep the throat cool, were among the inventions of fashion that our lady readers would have examined with the greatest cursosity and astonishment.

Fifty Numidian borsemen, clad in brilliant lacernas' or military coats, were to precede and follow the litter, to keep the crowd off.

Aurelia baving taken her place on the soft cushions, Vibius gave the signal, and eight Ethiopians lifted the magnificent litter.

The distance from the Palatine to Pompey's portico, was quite long, and the cortege was fully an hour going over it. Arrived at the enheaten to death by his family, he remarked that trance of the portico, Aurelia stepped out of her masters should make themselves feared, else all litter, and entered, followed by Vibius, her nu se and ber female attendants.

CHAPTER IV .- A SEAVE MARKET.

The Forum and the Campus Martius were not only the centres of the political life of the Romans, but the spots where the greatest magnificences of the capital of the world were accumulated. There were to be found its finest monuments and most sumptuous porticos; its wealthiest temples and most elegant walks; its most fashionable shops or taverns; all the enjoyments and seductions offered to the idle and purposeless existence of its most illustrious citizens.

Modern art never could imitate the wonderful splendor of some of the edifices contained in the Campus Martius. Among these marvels were the portices or covered walks supported by pillars of magnificent architecture. Pompey's portico, a vast parallelogram of 570 Roman feet in length, and a width of 350 feet, was the he has been seeking everywhere . . . that largest and most pleasant of these walks, being connected with the 'Hecatonstylon."

It was the habitual resort of the aristocratic society of Rome, which thronged daily the wide space between the three hundred pillars of red granite forming a double range of galleries The interior of these galleries were ornamented with paintings from the great Greek masters; whilst on the exterior, marble seats secured to the walls, afforded the visitors facilities for rest

When Aurelia entered Pompey's portico, the crowd gave way, with respect, and gazed upon her with curiosity mingled with interest and sosad that a young girl of your age should be put sound girl, what good your words licitude. Every one knew this young girl as the paraded in front of the platform, addressing the have done me! Doris was an infamous wretch! emperor's nearest relation; and no one was igno- crowd and praising his human merchandize. The immediately. This was the distripens, the indicates the immediately. rant of the high destinies which awaited ber.

'My cousin is not here,' she exclaimed with

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vexation. 'It is true, august ward,' replied Vibius; 'I

But I must see Vespasion,' said Aurelia; 'I wish to speak to him by all means, and you know that my uncle and aunt do not receive me | crowd, although, from the black African to the any longer.

You can write to him, my dear ward. Besides, I shall arrange an interview. But for the present, you must seek some diversion, and think no more of things that grieve you. Do you not sale, when Aurelia's escort loomed in the dislike the sight of this portico, of the elegant society which fills it? I will call your escort if you desire, and we shall go to the Appian way?' Oh! what fine vases and magnificent things!

exclaimed the young girl, interrupting Vibius, and exclaimed, addressing his assistant. stopping before a tavern in which a man clad in a strange and fantastic tunic, stood by a table to the public gaze the least valuable slaves. covered with objects of art.

Will the niece of the Emperor Domitian, the divine Aurelia, permit me to offer ber whatever may please her in this tavern ?' said an individual who suddenly approached the young girl.

'Who are you?' asked Aurelia somewhat

'I come from the countries of Aurora,' replied the unknown, bowing respectfully; with this man and these murrhine vases, which I intend offering the Emperor Domitian. He will, doubtless, be pleased that his piece should select . .

'I accept, I accept !' cried the delighted young girl, extending her hands toward two amphoræ of admirable design.

But, she added, these vases must be worth considerable sum, and I wish to pay for them. Will you appraise them, my dear Vibius?

'A friend of mine,' said Vibius, recently bought a cup of myrrh for seventy talents! it was larger than these two vases put together, but I must say that it was not of such fine make. nor had it the three colors, so precious in the eyes of lovers of the fine arts, and which are perfect in these vases.'

Then, you will send this tavern-master one bundred and forty talents this very day, provided, my dear guardian, that you authorize this folly of your ward; but those vases are so beautiful!

'What is your name?'

'Apollonius of Thyana, madam.'

'What! can you be this Apollonius, who has filled Rome with reports of his prodigies?

' Yes, madam,' replied the philosopher, bowing again with still more deference : 'and I cannot admit that the emperor's niece should pay me for the very unworthy present which I am but too happy to offer her.'

'Very well,' replied the proud young patrician girl, but the emperor's niece cannot be under obligations to Appollonius. The vases shall remain here, or they shall be paid for, in money or otherwise. What is it you wish?

An audience from the emperor, on his re-

This favor was so great that an enormous price was paid for it. It could be looked upon as a liberal compensation for the richest present. Aurelia hesitated a little.

'You shall have your audience,' she said at last; 'bowever, it is my pleasure that in ex change for these two murrhine vases, you shall accept from me two Cornthian cups, which will be sent to your tavern to-day.'

Appollonius bowed for the third time without making any reply. When he looked up, the divine Aurelia was already some steps off. Two of her hand-maids carried the murrhine vases. When she reached the Peristyle, Aurelia

found ber litter and ber attendants. 'Let us return by the way of the 'Villa nub-

lice." said she to Vibius; "I wish to see if the onyx and myrrh vases which are sold there can compare with mine. The 'Villa publica' was an immense bazzar

where Rome displayed all the treasures of her commercial wealth, and where, also, the shame of her pitiless civilization could be seen in all its said to Vibius: nakedness. Aurelia's wishes were orders for Vibius; he

commanded the escort to take the way to the Villa publica.'

When they reached Flaminius' circus, an unexpected sight attracted Aurelia's attention, and she ordered her escort to balt.

On a high platform erected in the centre of a tavern already known to us, stood a number of half naked wretches, men and women, boys and dred thousand sestertii. My lord, do you angirls, all wearing a label or ticket tied to their thorize the nurchase? neck, and a white woolen cap or a crown of foliage on their heads. It was a slave market.

mate conversation with Marcus Regulus, without objection and called for the bibripensia With a single glance, Aurelia had scanned the time to time to the shoulders of the trembling trons.

for the second will be a sound

of the lash without even a groan of pain.

Look at that! How docile they are !' cried Parmenon triumphantly. 'A master can chastise them at his pleasure. No revolt, no fatiguhad forgotten that his tutor has recently lost his zens, buy, buy! The 'libripens' is not far, and eight thousand sestertu are no great sum.

But no nurchases came out of the compact fair young daughter of Gaul, there was there an assortment of colors, ages and sexes, to suit the most fastidious.

Parmenon was despairing of effecting a single tance. He concluded that some wealthy citizen was approaching, and his face became radiant with hope.

Bring out the slaves from the interior!' he

The custom with slave traders, was to expose whilst those of greater value, whom the perfection of their form or the talents they possessed fitted for the higher duties of body servants, were cared for in an interior apartment, and only brought out on great occasions.

At Parmenon's command a new lot of slaves ascended the platform. A thrill of admiration went through the crowd. Here was a splendid collection.

One young girl, particularly, attracted the ad. miring gaze of all. Her graceful form was protected by a few strips of coarse cloth, and her beautiful hair fell loose over her shoulders, covering her to the waist.

Like her companions, she wore the ticket of sale, but with this difference: it set forth that she was of free condition, and could never be affranchised. Her misfortune was then to be

Nevertheless, her face turned up towards heaven, expressed a divine feeling of resignation. Silent tears which did not belie her courage, rolled slowly over her delicate and blushing cheeke.

This young girl was Cecilia-the victim of Marcus Regulus.

When she appeared on the platform, three cries were heard:

First, a cry of despair from her father, almost convulsed with grief.

Secondly, a cry of rage, resembling a threat, proffered by a young man, Cecilia's betrothed who struggled to reach the platform, but was held back by his friends.

The third cry was a sublime exclamation, a supreme invitation to fortitude and hone:

Courage! Cecilia, said this voice, courage! Think of God for whom thou sufferest persecution, think of Christ, His Son, who will be the reward!

She who spoke these strange words-heard for the first time in Rome and in a slave market -was an old woman almost an octogenarian, who crouched at the foot of the platform. She had cried 'courage,' and yet she wept. The resignation of the soul cannot control the tortures of the heart.

Cecilia had heard the three cries, her eyes searched the crowd, and she found a smile for the three persons who watched over her.

She also remarked a man who, springing for. ward from his place of concealment behind a pillar, whence he had observed with anxiety the proceedings we have described, hastened to speak to Parmenon. It was Marcus Regulus. 'Take care !' he said burriedly to the slave

trader; 'they want to get Cecilia away from you! Here is the divine Aurelia, the niece of the emperor, coming with her escort. You must induce her to stop and to buy the girl. A hundred thousand sestertii will not frighten her ! Parmenon's eyes closed as if dazzled by the

mere thought of so much gold. Then he drew himself up proudly and stepped forward. The wretch was intoxicated with avaricious 107 and

It was at this moment Aurelia bade her escort stop. She saw Cecilia, read the label, and

Guardian, I like the looks of this young girl. I wish to purchase her, ask that man what price he holds her at. She will replace Doris.'

Parmenon had heard her words. With one bound he was near Vibius.

'From any other purchaser, I would want two hundred thousand sestertis, but to the divine Aureli, the august niece of our master, the Empsror Domitian. I shall sell this slave for one hun-

Vibrus was the model of guardians : he looked at his ward, and interpreting rightly her winning Parmenon, whom we have seen in such inti-smile, as a prayer, the worthy senator violded

wretch held a long whip, which he applied from dispensable accessory, to all sales and mancipa-