(From the Catholic Mirror.)

AURELIA;

THE JEWS OF CAPENA GATE.

Freely Translated from the French of M. A. Quinton

PART SECOND. - THE SLAVE.

CHAPTER XIII. - CONTINUED.

However, you must be the same young girl of whom Vibius spoke as having been adjudicated to Regulus under Parmenon's name, and sold to me by Parmenon. Poor child-poor child !' repeated Aurelia, gaz ng with compassionate ten- lia. derness on the young slave. But why did your father sell vou? How you must hate him!

Hate him! Ob, no, madam. My father was very unhappy, and he though be was pleasing his gods.'

Your father then sacrificed you because you are a Christian? But you should have abjured your creed, and he would not have sold you!'

Doubtless, madam I could have saved myself by this means. But we should not thus ab jure our faith."

" What! even at the price of liberty?" At the price of liberty and even of life !" re-

plied Cecilia in a firm voice. Admiration was succeeding to curiosity in

Aurelia's soul. 'Your religion is then very beautiful and very true, that it should inspire such sacrifices? she

asked with emotion. Madam, when one is a Christian, one can Chear everything for the reward is above !' replied Cecilia, poiting to heaven.

'You speak like my cousin Flavia Domitilla,' remarked Aurelia, with a smile. 'She told me pathy. the same things when she sought to convert me to her faith. Do not try to conceal anything from me.3

'I know that my cousin is a Christian; I know that Flavius Clemens belongs to your religion. Yes, all this has been told me,' added the noble girl thoughfully; but I confess that I did not believe the Christians could be so faithful to their God! What surprises, me, however, is that Flavia Domitilla, should have left you in tress?" the power of that Parmenon. It seems to me she is rich enough to have satisfied the greed of of both Parmenon and Regulus.'

If she has not done so, it is because she could not,' replied the young girl who was not aware of the immense offers made by the pious matron, 'But,' she added, after a moment's reflection, 'bave you not told me that Plinythe Younger defended me in this suit? This Pliny is a great lawyer, I have heard him spoken of frequently. Do you think that a poor girl like me, that my father, who has nothing, could sion.' bave secured the services of such a defender, if some high influence had not protected us?

'That is true,' said the divine Aurelia, ' you are right. So,' she resumed, following another frain of thought, 'this man Regulus wanted you B obey him, that is, I suppose, to reveal that my relations are Christians ?

Cecilia made no reply. 'Cecilia! . . . Cecilia! do you not see that I know ail? Why again this silence? You refused to obey Regulus, did you not?

'You have said it, madam.'

But he was your master. And I am told be

he is a very wicked man.' Cecilia was again silent; but no longer from the same motive. The beroic child did not wish to make known the greatness of her sacrifice.

The divine Aurelia had a revelation of this all this poor slave must have suffered for resisting the will of a pitiless master. She walked slowly to the young girl, and pulling down the simple tunic she wore, laid bare ber bosom and sincere affection; and I also, wished to speak shoulders.

A cry of horror escaped from Aurelia's lips. proofs of the torturer's cruelty and the victim's the Christians, to claim her from your geneconstancy - spread their dark furrows in every rosity .... direction on the delicate skin of the young Christian.

The poor child hung down her head, in confusion, and dared not raise her eyes. The if to ask what the could exist between three perblushes which involuntarily covered her pale and sons differing so widely in rank and station.

sickly face, told her embarrassment. The divine Aurelia studied during an instant traces of cruel sufferings; then, unable to resist throbbing bosom.

yes, I love you; for I see it now, you have suf-lentrusted with this negotiation.

fered for the sake of those who are dear to me. and you have saved them!.... But, I swear it, your troubles are over now! I swear it by your God .... and by mine !"

And seizing Cecilia's band, she burried with her through the 'atrium.' Vibius Crispus had just come out of Cornelia's room.

" Why, Vibius - Vibius! where are you going to, my dear guardian ? cried the divine Aurelia, perceiving the unfortunate courtier who, plunged in deep thought, was crossing the atrium.-What! I need you, and you are going away.

Vibius bestened to cast off the anxious thoughts which clouded his brow, and turned, smiling with paternal fondness:

'Am I not always at the command of my august ward? he said, approaching respectfully. 'Follow me, my dear Vibius,' replied Aure-

And still helding Cecilia's band, she went, followed by Vibius, to the room where Cornelia and Metellus Celer were still conversing.

'Here is,' she cried, as they entered, 'the young girl I purchased to-day. I have interrogated her, and you will see whether she is a spy sent by Regulus.'

Still under the impression of the compassionate emotion which had filled her naturally generous heart at the discovery of Cecilia's sufferings, Aurelia made a passionate parrative of what had nassed between her and the young slave, and asked her horrified bearers what they thought of the poor child.

The Grand Vestal's only reply was to draw the bashful young Christian to her and kiss her forehead.

Neuber Vibius Crispus, nor Metellus Celer expressed any surprise at the admiration shown by Aurelia for her humble slave, or at the tender caresses lavished upon ter by the Grand-Vestal, whose eyes were filled with tears of sym

My dear Vibius,' resumed the divine Aure-lia, 'this is not all: I want to give Cecilia her freedom. She was not born to be my slave, and I would reproach myself if I kept her away from ber friends. Moreover, it is a gift I wish to make to my cousin, Flavia Domitilla.'

Certainly, my dear ward; but this is no easy matter....

Wby so, if you please. Am I not the mis-

' Yes and no, divine Aurelia.' 'What do you mean, Vibius?'

'Why, first, there is the Æia Sentia law, which does not permit masters under twenty there is Regulus ....'

'Regulus ! again that name !' exclaimed Aurelia impatiently.

'Yes, Regulus, who could again lay his hand on this young girl, if she were bet free in viola. tion of the clause which prohibits her manumis-

' Very well,' said the divice Aurelia tronically, this man Regulus will prove more powerful than I. who am the betrothed of V spasian, the cæsar and future emperor of the Romans! .... You are speaking in jest, guardian!

Vibius Crispus did not have time to frame an acswer. As the young girl pronounced her cousin's name, a slave appeared at the door, and, bowing low, announced in a loud voice : 'The Casar Vespasian.'

The young man entered, accompanied by a stranger whose venerable and holy features inspired respect.

'Ah! my dear cousin, how happy I am to see you,' exclaimed the artless Aurelia, springing into Vespasian's arms. 'It is so long since I have had this happiness. Vibius can tell you that I went to day to Pompey's portico in the Christian feeling of generosity. She understood bope of seeing you, . . . . for no other motive .-I wish so much to speak to you.

'Indeed, dear cousin,' replied the young man, who returned Aurelia's caresses, with marks of to you. ... I come to see you concerning to seize an opportunity which might not present this child,' he added, pointing to Cecilia; 'I Long scars, scarcely healed - the hideous come, accompanied by the Supreme Pontiff of

> 'Ab!' exclaimed simultaneously Aurelia and her guests, their looks wandering from Cecilia to

Aurelia, although better informed of certain circumstances which enabled her to understand, embarrassment in which she was, how to prothis candid physiognomy, upon which the virginal to a certain extent, this unexpected reclamation, ceed. graces of her own age were blended with the waited anxiously for her cousin to explain his connection with it. Knowing that Cecilia was her emotion, and following the impulse of her a Christian and protected by her relatious, she heart, she threw herself, all in tears, in Cecilia's would have felt no surprise had Flavia Domitilla arms, and pressed her young slave lovingly on her come to claim her; but not being aware that, like all his family, her betrothed, Vespasian, had You see, Cecilia, cried the amiable girl, for embraced the religion of Christ, she could not young relation that, the Christians being brogetful of her patrician pride, 'I love you! Oh comprehend the motives for which he had been there, we owe our first care to those who suffer. the silent attention of his hearers, and you, my

the reader on this subject.

CHAPTER XIV .- THE CHRISTIAN PRIEST AND THE PAGAN VIRG'N.

Young Flavius, the son of Flavius Clemens and Flavia Domitilla, and named Vespasian by Domitian when the latter raised him and his older than the divine Aurelia, for he was in his eighteenth year.

and impetuous disposition, and withal gifted with you think, pious matron, that this contrast will often heard of this ridiculous worship. rare modesty and moderation. Quintilian, the learned tutor of the two young princes, took much pains to form their minds, and in Vespasian, especially, he had found a ready and willing pupil. This young Cæsar had devoted himself principally to the study of eloquence; notwithstanding the high rank to which he was destined, his am bition was to excel in this most difficult of sciences which the Romans held in such high esteem.

The young man had perfectly understood that he must strive to acquire distinction without awakening the jealous suspicions of the emperor, and he had sought it in the study of letters. By this prudent course be had succeeded in gaining Domitian's affection, so far, at least, as the latter's nature was susceptible of feeling love .-The two brothers would have been well satisfied to live like simple citizens, enjoying merely the honor due to their rank ; the emperor, therefore, was satisfied with his choice which disarmed other ambitions, and be continued to show his nephews much favor.

Vespasian and Aurelia loved each other from childhood, and they had been betrothed even before Domitian had made any dispositions to leave the empire to the sons of Flavius Clemens These two lovers, equally gifted by nature, were of totally different characters. Vespasian, as we have said, had that pride common to all Ro man patricians, but tempered by a greatness of mind which made it a lofty virtue. Aurelia looked upon her high rank as the greatest of privileges, and her vanity did not always preserve her from the weaknesses which generally accompany this secret infirmity of the most bonors which awaited her, she often gave way sible !.... to the capricious independence of supreme

Flavia Domitilla, whose ardent zeal had met with so much success among the members of her family, had sought to convert her young cousin to the religion of Christ: but Christianity and years of age to liberate their slaves; and, then, the emoire were so incompatible at that time. that the young patrician who saw in a change of for me, I cannot understand anything about it, rejected with supreme contempt the overtures made by the pious matron.

Things had gone so far, that it was deemed expedient to conceal from the divine Aurelia the fact that her betrothed had deserted the creed of which the emperors were sovereign pontiffs, for fear that her regrets and complaints should reach Domitian's ears. The imperious and frivolous girl, who loved her kindred with the passionate affection of a generous heart, had, however, sought to punish them for their repeated attempts to convert her, and we have already learned from Palæstrion's conversation with Regulus, that for some time past, she had ceased holding intercourse with them.

But now she had bought Cecilia; the good news reached Flavia Domitilla, who hailed it as a happy omen. Yet, how could she see the young patrician after their quarrel? How could Aurelia be asked in the name of Christ, whom she had refused to know, to give up a young girl whom her vanity would doubtless counsel her to

It was difficult for Flavia Domitilla and Flavius Clemens, who knew nothing of the secret dispositions of Aurelia, to intervene personally in this circumstance. And yet, it was important itself again.

As they were discussing anxiously this question Vespasian came up with Clemens, the Christian Bishop, who had become the successor of Peter, Anacletus having recently died. Clemens was apparently connected with the imperial family. the Pontiff, and from the latter to Vespasian, as We merely mention the fact-it adds nothing to can easily satisfy his curiosity. Let him come bis merits or his virtues.

The young caesar and the pontifi learned from our secrets. Flavia Domitilla what had occurred, and the

But, said Vespasian, Aurelia cannot be angry with me.

hooves use to claim ber, and to show to your designs of our enemies.

may at last be moved.

CHRONICLE

'You will probably meet the Grand Vestal there, remarked Flavia Domitilla. I know us. and we are even accused of the most horrible time past.

Well,' replied the priest, with a smile, the Grand-Vestal will know that the pontiff of the brother to the dignity of Cæsars, was a little Christians watches over the virgins confided to his care, not to chastise them as Helvius Agrippa does, but to return them to freedom and happi-He was a hopeful youth, with a noble, proud, ness when they have fallen into slavery. Do be useless ?"

So it bannened that Vespasian and Clemens made their appearance in the Grand-Vestal's ceive the eye and to disguise the borror of the apartments, at Auselia's, when they were the crime, is put to death by other children trained least expected.

A silent pause had followed Vespasian's words. The young casar reading in Aurelia's eyes the desire that he should explain his demand, re-

' Yes, my dear Aurelia, our relation, Flavia Domitilia, whose envoys we are, hopes that she will obtain from you the release of this young gul, her sister in the faith of Christ.' · Madam, added the pontiff, in a gentle and

penetrating voice. 'I am the first pastor of an unbappy and desolate flock, and when one of my sheep groans and suffers, I run to save ber. This s why I have come to you! .....

'My dear Vespasian, and you my lord,' replied Aurelia, anxious to show her good dispositions. you will tell Flavia Domitilla that I, whom she accuses of having no pity?—and she showed the letter received that day, and with which we have already made the reader acquainted - 1 have forestalled her wishes, and here, in this very room, as you came in, I was proposing to emancipate Cecilia.?

'That is true,' said Vibius, the Vestal and Merelius Coler.

'Yes, madam,' added Cecilia softly, 'yes, I attest it also; you wanted to return me to my friends. Ah! I shall never forget it?

'Wait, dear Vespasian.' resumed Aurelia, stopping the words of thanks on the young man's lips, wait. This is certainly what I wanted and amiable minds. Dazzled by the prospect of the what I still wish, but it seems that it is not pos-

> new difficulties. Here is Vibius, my guardian, who will try to

> explain the matter to you, replied Aurelia. 'As thought of this opposition to her will. Vibius Crispus gave, in a few words, the two

> reasons which, in his oninion, might defeat the generous intentions of his august ward. 'Are these the only obstacles?' remarked

Clemens. 'It seems to me that, with prudence, they might be easily overcome? 'That's it! that's it!' exclaimed Aurelia im-

petuously. 'Vibius, my dear guardian, you will call ichmediately on Pliny the Younger, in my name .... But there is something still more serious!.... And without observing her hearer's astonish-

ment, she added:

'My dear Vespasian, do you know why I wish this young girl to be free? Ah, it is because there exists an infamous wretch, one named Regulus, who has sworn the ruin of my relations. and who spies their secrets. And Cecilia, who could have gained her freedom by denouncing them as Christians preferred to submit to the most cruel treatment rather than obey that man.

' Glory to God!' exclaimed the Pontiff gazing with emotion on the young Christian who had twice suffered for His name. 'My daughter. you are great among us, for I see the balo of the martyr's crown already on your brow. Blessed be you!... And you also, madam, since your heart is noble enough to understand and reward this courage.'

'O dear Aurelia," said the young Czesar, pressing her band, 'thanks, a thousand thanks in the name of all that are dear to me.'

"Madam," resumed Clemens, 'you said that to me and I will reveal to him what he etyles

'Yet, my lord,' said Aurelia, 'you praised Cecilia because she refused to speak.

. Have you not said, madam, that they wanted her to betray your relations? I have justly admired this young girl who, at the price of liber-Cecilia is our child,' added Clemens, wto ty, refused to betray her brethren when some knew the young girl, and had been informed how danger existed .... but I do not believe that Blood, if it is shed, will testify to the sanctity of she had glorified the name of Christ. It he the knowledge of our secrets could serve the our morals; it will become the fruitful germ

"Madam," continued the Pontiff, remarking spring forth."

And, in fact, we owe some explanations to perhaps this child, so rebellious to divine grace, and their mysteries, and you will say whether we deserve the hatred which people bear us.

The strangest clanders are circulated against that she has been living with Aurelia for some crimes. The least prejudiced believe that our religion is vain and indecent, and I have heard, among other absurdities, that they laugh at our veneration for the consecrated head of an ass or a hog. Are not these, he added, addressing Vibius and Metellus, the stories you have beard?

Metellus and Vibius replied that they had

Do they not allege that, in our assemblies, a young child, covered with flour to order to deto inflict secret wounds; and that the priest divides the bleeding and palpitating limbs among the Christians who drink of this blood and eat of this fl-sh, swearing by this abominable pact mutual fidelity and eternal silence?

'Yes,' replied Vibius Crispus and Metellus Celer. Such are the accusations brought against the Christians.'

· O religion of Christ! O holy repasts of my bretbren! O assemblies of the elect! exclaimed the Pontiff, why have error and falsenout disfigured our sacred ceremonies and calumniated the mysteries of divine love? Ab, is it not evident that these accusations are an excuse for those feasts of the Good Goddess, from which the Vestals withdraw horrified; for those abominations of the 'Quinquatria' of Minerva; for those human sacrifices of Jupiter Latiarus and of the days of Mars and Bellona; for these impious conjurations when cups of blood are drunk with enthusiasm; for those detestable religious feasts where the flesh of human victims is partaken of as a wholesome and agreeable food!....

But, my lord,' remarked Vibius, interrupting the Pontiff, you honor the cross. It is, they affirm, the sign and foundation of your creed.

Vibius, who could say nothing to contradict facts too patent to be denied, had found this grave objection.

'Yes, we honor the cross,' replied the priest, with respectful and sainted animation, 'yes the cross is the great symbol and the sacred sign of the redemption we have come to sonounce. --'How is that,' exclaimed together the pontiff This surprises you? On, I can understand that and the young Cmar, with undisguised anxiety; it should. Rome cannot so suddenly lower her for they knew what obstacles had prevented pride before the hated ins rument of the slave's Cecilia's deliverance, and they were tearful of punishment. She must fear that which is the hope of those who suffer, and the condemnation of those who oppose. But the times have commenced when the cross shall speak to the world of charity and justice, of truth and love, of the religion the ruin of her magnificent hopes, had she added, all her impatience returning at the strength and wisdom which are unknown to it. The cross will teach the world that all men are brothers, by the spectacle of a God suffering ignominious death to save alike the master and the slave. It will cause to bud forth, everywhere, holiness of life, and that voluntary chastity, the glory of our virgins, which Rome could never obtain from the unhappy victims, torn since childhood from the joys of the family and condemned to an unwilling sacrifice, except through the terror of the most fearful punishment.

This allusion to the fate of the Grand-Vestal -so transparent and rendered so solemn by her present circumstances-caused those who listened to the pontiff's words to shudder with painful emotion,

Cornelia raised her eyes, so expressively sad, to the speaker, and as her glance met that of the priest, beaming with loving compassion, her features expressed a strange bitterness.

' Here are,' resumed Cirmens, 'all the mysteries of Christianity. Here is what I am charged to teach my brethren in our holy assemblies. Here is what I can reveal to Regulus, if he wishes to know what takes place among us. Do you think, my lords, that our religion is a cloak for fearful crimes, and that we can have much to lear from this man's denunciations?

And, as no reply was made, he proceeded:

At all events, we know how to suffer. Persecutions may affict us; we shall accept them, glorifying God's boly name, and forgiving our enemies. Vibius, you have seen, in Nero's time, that Christians do not fear tortures; and this Regulus wishes to know who we are. Regulus young girl has proved what strength is found in the spirit of God! Doubtless, hearts will still remain closed, for a long time, against the thoughts of mercy, the words of love, the principles of justice which our brethren alone can un derstand; but, at least, when they will have seen the Christians die, they will find it difficult to believe that so much courage and so great a contempt for life could be met in men guilty of the atrocities we have been accused of committing. from which thousands of new Christians will

'My lord,' said Aurelis, deeply moved, 'I God will inspire me the words I must speak, and lords, let me tell you what are these Christians want Cecilia to be in your midst, to-morrow.