

# The Wheat of Christ.

(By Milton E. Smith in Rosary Magazine.)

## TIBERTIUS AND DEMAS

The shades of evening were slowly falling upon the seven-hilled city of Rome, wrapping its columns and arches in a sombre mantle. The lingering rays of departing day seemed unwilling to leave the city to the guardianship of night, as though fearing that the scenes which had transpired within its gates since the rising of the sun upon the Capitolium would be surprised in barbarity during the reign of darkness; for it was gala day in Rome, and the blood of three hundred members of the human family had been spilled to make a holiday for the people. The Emperor Domitian had been to the amphitheatre to witness the tragic death of two hundred barbarians and of one hundred Christians. Of the former, two were selected to fight with each other until one of the contestants was slain, after which the victor met a new foe and fought until death relieved him of his misery. The Christians were torn to pieces by wild beasts, brought from the East and kept unfed in the Vivarium to render them more like the brutes for whose amusements they were brought to Rome—for the beasts of the Imperial City were not less cruel than those of the jungle.

The chariots of the nobles, drawn by white ponies or great Idumean horses crowded the Via Sacra, where the pedestrians might have been numbered by thousands. The golden chariot of Domitian had passed on its way to the Palatine, the people greeting him with loud shouts of "Hail, Divine Emperor! Hail, son of the gods!" when two young men emerged from the crowded street into a tampon and stopped before a beautiful Grecian fountain.

"What thinkest thou, Tibertius, of the scenes in the amphitheatre of day?" asked Demas, the younger of the two. "To me there is something unworthy in the association of Romans with these feasts, where helpless human beings are slaughtered or made to kill each other. How much better it would be to enlist the stalwart gladiators and send them with our legions to conquer our enemies. I believe in giving every man a chance especially when it is for our own good. I fear we have fallen on evil times, and that the gods may avenge our wrong-doing by halting our armies in their victorious career. I shall never go to the amphitheatre again when such bloody exhibitions are to be given."

"Demas, my friend, thou must not play with fire or thou wilt be burned," replied Tibertius confidentially. "Knowest thou not that thy words are treasonable? To dare predict defeat for our legions is a crime Domitian never pardons. I will not deny that I was a little disgusted to-day, not at the contests for the gladiators were given an opportunity to defend themselves—but to see misguided women and children fed to the beasts because in their fanaticism they refused to sacrifice to the gods. However, I shall not remain away from the games on account of their folly. We cannot afford to absent ourselves when the Emperor desires our presence at the amphitheatre. It is dangerous not to be seen there."

"Enough of this, Tibertius," replied Demas, with a gesture of impatience. "But tell me what ails thee—for thou dost not seem to be thyself of late. What cloud hath come over thy life, my friend? With thy villa, one of the most beautiful in Rome, thy thousand slaves—some of them the daughters of kings—and thy rank in the Pretorian Guards near the august person of the Emperor, thou shouldst enjoy a day of perpetual sunshine. As for myself, I have no clouds in my life, and yet my house is but a shadow compared to thy villa, which is all a noble Roman could desire. Tell me what disturbs thy peace and I will make an offering to the goddess of chance, the good Fortuna, who put away her wings when she came to Rome, that we might know she would never leave us. She will bring back the sunshine

means of two moles enclosing a basin two miles in circumference. Here was the villa of Marcella, the wife of Verus, a distinguished general serving with Agricola in Britain. She retired to Antium when Titus, styled "delicieux humani generis," was murdered, it was suspected, by Domitian.

It was a glorious day in early autumn, and the Villa Antium, with its artificial lakes, beautiful statues and rare plants, presented a scene of loveliness worthy of its noble occupants. Marcella was sitting within an arbor formed by vines that gracefully twined around marble pillars, uniting at the top in a canopy of green interspersed with crimson berries. On a low stool by her feet sat Lavonica. The face of the matron denoted anxiety, which seemed to increase as she read the letter she held in her hand, which had just arrived from Rome. Lavonica noticed that her mother was disturbed, but tried to conceal her suspicion by working industriously on a piece of lace she was making out of Egyptian thread. In a few moments her anxiety was relieved when her mother said:

"My daughter, I have a letter from Tibertius. He is sad because he did not receive the usual cordial welcome on his last visit to Antium. I regret that he seemeth to be deeply interested in thee. I like not to refuse him permission to make us another visit, yet I can do nothing to encourage the addresses of a pagan, nor do I feel justified in telling him the reason of my opposition. For myself I fear nothing, and would gladly welcome a martyr's crown. But I tremble for thee, and as Tibertius hath threatened to force thee to become his wife, he may betray our secret before receiving permission, and should he be pardoned for my presumption, I have grown sadly weary of Rome, but I know that I shall soon regain my lost cheerfulness in the company of those I so highly appreciate."

"Thou art welcome, noble Tibertius," said Marcella coldly. "and it is our hope that thy visit may dispel all traces of sadness from thy heart. As thou hast travelled far, thou needest rest. Sembar will show thee to the cubiculum."

Tibertius followed the steward to his apartment, and the ladies separated, after a whispered conversation regarding the manner in which he should be entertained during his sojourn at the villa.

Tibertius did not tarry long in his cubiculum, but, after a bath, passed out of the atrium and walked through the grounds in the direction of the house of a freedman who was chief gardener of the estate. He soon reached an opening where the old man was directing the cultivation of a garden. Here he paused and asked:

"Necissus, hast thou forgotten thy benefactor?"

The old man frowned heavily as he replied: "I could not forget thee, did I so wish."

"Hast thou been faithful to thy promise made when I had thy brother liberated? If not, it will go hard with thee, for thou hast been reported as a bribe and freebooter."

"Necissus keeps his promise, and will serve thee master," replied the Greek doggedly, turning to the men he was directing. Tibertius, angry at the man's indifference, exclaimed: "By the gods, if thou dost not change thy insolent manner I will have the punished as thou deservest. Thou knowest what brings me to Antium, and yet thou dar'st to turn from me when I am here to learn what thou hast discovered. Tell me at once whether thou hast any evidence against these new enemies of the Empire?"

"Noble blood flows through the veins of Necissus," replied the Greek boldly, "although he was once a slave. He has feeling, and needest not threats to make him faithful to thee, who hast him in his power. Come with me where there are no ears to hear what thou alone must hear and I will tell thee much."

Tibertius followed the old man into a near-by house: when the door had been closed, Necissus said: "At this hour a Christian, a priest is in the villa where thou art a guest. To-morrow morning the herald sacrifice of a child will be celebrated in the crypt. Dost thou need any further proof of the sincerity of Necissus? Now," he added threateningly, "what would the Emperor think did he know that one of the officers of his household was stopping in a Christian house with a priest of that sect? Or if he should be told that an officer of the Pretorian Guard seeketh to marry a Christian lady?"

"If thou dost not hold thy tongue, by the gods, I'll have thee in the Tullianum before the next festival. Darest thou threaten me, thou wretch?"

"Necissus makes no threats unless he is threatened, then he sings as thou. But we must be friends, for we are in each other's power. Be true to him and Necissus will help thee."

"Enough of this. Now tell me how thou knowest there is a Christian priest at the villa."

"My daughter Sylvia is Lavonica's maid. She is a Christian, and is foolish enough to think I am one. She must be spared, let come what will to the others, but when the time comes she will be of good use to us. Art thou now satisfied?"

"Yes, thou hast done well and here are a hundred sesteria for thee to purchase a peplum for the wedding of Sylvia."

Tibertius returned to the villa satisfied that he had Marcella in his power and could force her to consent to his marriage with her daughter. As he walked slowly through the park he thought that the hour of his triumph was fast drawing near. "The thought," he said to himself, "that I, the noble Tibertius, have been denied permission to address the one I love better than I do all the gods combined, is sufficient to make me

truth, we should strive to remove the obstacles that prevent others from accepting it."

Whilst the priest was speaking a servant announced that a visitor had entered the atrium, and that he had sent his respects to the noble ladies, saying he was Tibertius from Rome. This announcement brought the color to the cheek of Lavonica, while her mother grew pale. Turning to the priest, Marcella said: "This young man, who is an officer of the Pretorian Guard, wrote for permission to visit us, but before I had time to reply he has come in person. I fear his presence forbodes evil, for he is very close to the Emperor, and of course an enemy of the Christians. What dost thou advise?"

"It is a very difficult question," replied the priest thoughtfully. "Whilst we may not hide our light under a bushel, neither must we rush heedlessly into danger. He may come as a spy, or he may have another motive, which God forbid." As he said this he turned to Lavonica, as though he had read a secret in the telltale blush that came to her cheek when the arrival of the young man was announced. "My child," he added, "remember the value of prudence, and be not misled by the polished manner and the flattering words of this young man. Forget not that thou art a Christian and that he is a pagan. Pray for him, but keep thy heart free."

He then went into the crypt that had been converted into a chapel for the few Christians of the neighborhood. Tibertius entered the triclinium and greeted the ladies cordially, saying:

"So great was my desire to see thee, noble Marcella, and thee, noble Lavonica, that I have ventured to come before receiving permission, and now here to be pardoned for my presumption. I have grown sadly weary of Rome, but I know that I shall soon regain my lost cheerfulness in the company of those I so highly appreciate."

"Thou art welcome, noble Tibertius," said Marcella coldly. "and it is our hope that thy visit may dispel all traces of sadness from thy heart. As thou hast travelled far, thou needest rest. Sembar will show thee to the cubiculum."

Tibertius followed the steward to his apartment, and the ladies separated, after a whispered conversation regarding the manner in which he should be entertained during his sojourn at the villa.

Tibertius did not tarry long in his cubiculum, but, after a bath, passed out of the atrium and walked through the grounds in the direction of the house of a freedman who was chief gardener of the estate. He soon reached an opening where the old man was directing the cultivation of a garden. Here he paused and asked:

"Necissus, hast thou forgotten thy benefactor?"

The old man frowned heavily as he replied: "I could not forget thee, did I so wish."

"Hast thou been faithful to thy promise made when I had thy brother liberated? If not, it will go hard with thee, for thou hast been reported as a bribe and freebooter."

"Necissus keeps his promise, and will serve thee master," replied the Greek doggedly, turning to the men he was directing. Tibertius, angry at the man's indifference, exclaimed: "By the gods, if thou dost not change thy insolent manner I will have the punished as thou deservest. Thou knowest what brings me to Antium, and yet thou dar'st to turn from me when I am here to learn what thou hast discovered. Tell me at once whether thou hast any evidence against these new enemies of the Empire?"

"Noble blood flows through the veins of Necissus," replied the Greek boldly, "although he was once a slave. He has feeling, and needest not threats to make him faithful to thee, who hast him in his power. Come with me where there are no ears to hear what thou alone must hear and I will tell thee much."

Tibertius followed the old man into a near-by house: when the door had been closed, Necissus said: "At this hour a Christian, a priest is in the villa where thou art a guest. To-morrow morning the herald sacrifice of a child will be celebrated in the crypt. Dost thou need any further proof of the sincerity of Necissus? Now," he added threateningly, "what would the Emperor think did he know that one of the officers of his household was stopping in a Christian house with a priest of that sect? Or if he should be told that an officer of the Pretorian Guard seeketh to marry a Christian lady?"

"If thou dost not hold thy tongue, by the gods, I'll have thee in the Tullianum before the next festival. Darest thou threaten me, thou wretch?"

"Necissus makes no threats unless he is threatened, then he sings as thou. But we must be friends, for we are in each other's power. Be true to him and Necissus will help thee."

"Enough of this. Now tell me how thou knowest there is a Christian priest at the villa."

"My daughter Sylvia is Lavonica's maid. She is a Christian, and is foolish enough to think I am one. She must be spared, let come what will to the others, but when the time comes she will be of good use to us. Art thou now satisfied?"

"Yes, thou hast done well and here are a hundred sesteria for thee to purchase a peplum for the wedding of Sylvia."

Tibertius returned to the villa satisfied that he had Marcella in his power and could force her to consent to his marriage with her daughter. As he walked slowly through the park he thought that the hour of his triumph was fast drawing near. "The thought," he said to himself, "that I, the noble Tibertius, have been denied permission to address the one I love better than I do all the gods combined, is sufficient to make me

M. J. Morrison. J. Hatchett  
**MORRISON & HATCHETT**  
Advocates, Barristers, Solicitors.  
5th Floor, Banque du Peuple Chambers,  
97 ST. JAMES STREET.  
Phone Main 3114.

Hon. Sir Alexandre Lacoste, K.C.  
**KAVANAGH, LAJOIE & LACOSTE**  
ADVOCATES, SOLICITORS, ETC.  
7 PLACE D'ARMES  
H. J. KAVANAGH, K.C. PAUL LACOSTE, LL.B.  
H. GERIN-LAJOIE, K.C. JULES MATHIEU, LL.B.

Bell Telephone Main 433  
**JOHN P. WHELAN**  
ADVOCATE AND SOLICITOR  
93 ST. FRANCIS XAVIER ST.  
Montreal.

Telephone Main 279.  
**MULLIN & MATHIEU**  
ADVOCATES  
Room 16, City and District Savings Bank  
Chambers,  
180 St. James St., Montreal.

C. A. BARNARD CASIMIR DESSAULLES  
**BARNARD & DESSAULLES**  
ADVOCATES  
Savings Bank Building, 160 St. James  
Bell Telephone Main 1699.

**Atwater & Duclos**  
ADVOCATES  
Guardian Building, 180 St. James St.  
A. W. ATWATER, K.C. C. A. DUCLOS, K.C.  
J. E. COVIL.

**GOWIN, LEMIEUX, MURPHY & BERARD**  
BARRISTERS, SOLICITORS, ETC.  
Hon. Lomer Gouin, K.C., Hon. R. Lemieux, K.C.  
D. R. Murphy, K.C. L. R. Berard, K.C.  
J. O. Drouin, K.C. E. Brassard, LL.B.  
New York Life Building.

T. Brossard, K.C. H. A. Cholette, LL.B.  
Thomas M. Tansy, R.C.L.  
**BROSSARD, CHOLETTE & TANSEY**  
Advocates, Barristers and Solicitors.  
Phone Main 1199 160 ST. JAMES ST.  
Guardian Bldg.

Tel. Bell Main 2784.  
**CODERRE & CEDRAS**  
ADVOCATES  
8 Place d'Armes Hill,  
Montreal Street Railway Bldg.  
EVENING OFFICE:  
253 Notre Dame Street West,  
53 Church Street Verdun.

**FRANK E. MCKENNA**  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
Royal Insurance Building  
Montreal.  
STUART, COX & MCKENNA. Main 2874

Bell Tel. Main 3302, Night and day service.  
**Conroy Bros.**  
193 CENTRE STREET  
Practical Plumbers, Gas and Steamfitters.  
Estimates Given.  
Jobbing Promptly Attended To

**Lawrence Riley**  
PLASTERER  
Successor to John Riley. Established in 1860.  
Plain and Ornamental Plastering. Repairs of  
all kinds promptly attended to.  
15 Paris Street, Point St. Charles.

seek the ruin of the proud Marcella. But I need not go so far, for she will yield when she discovers I have sufficient evidence to send her to the amphitheatre. I shall surely win Lavonica, and with her great estate: She loves me I know, but will not disobey her mother. Should all else fail, then the mother must be sacrificed and Verus disgraced. Poor foolish Demas thinks I need the air of the country, little dreaming what it is I am planning. He thinks my fortune ample to keep up my house, when, in fact, unless it is increased I shall be as poor as he, and that would be death for one of my tastes. That Greek is a sardonic villain and knows that my head would not be too firmly attached to my body did Domitian know that I sought to wed a Christian. But she will not be Christian long, once she is in my power."

The following day Tibertius was delighted to learn that Marcella was compelled to make a short trip to Ostia and that Lavonica would be left at home with her maid and servants. Her mother warned her not to give Tibertius an opportunity to converse with her when Sylvia was not present, and to treat him only with the respect due to one in his position—a member of the Emperor's household. Marcella feared that Lavonica really loved the young pagan, but she was satisfied that on no consideration would she marry an unbeliever. It was, however, with reluctance that she left home while he was there, but she went to Ostia, at the request of the Pope on important business requiring immediate attention.

Tibertius gave credit to the goddess Venus for what he regarded as a great favor; for he hoped during the absence of Marcella from home to win Lavonica's promise to become his wife. The morning of Marcella's departure he arose at an early hour and remained until near noon in the bath. When he came from the hands of the epilatores, his body had been anointed with delicate perfumes and his toga had been draped in statue-like folds by the vestipala, as befitted a supper for the hand of the beautiful Lavonica.

While walking in the lawn he saw a marble-grotto of rare architectural design, and went at once to admire it. As he approached the beautiful structure he heard voices, and paused until he recognized the voice of Sylvia, who was reading for her Mistress from the "Iliad." He entered the grotto beneath a low Gothic arch and was in the presence of Lavonica and Sylvia. Making a low bow, he said:

"A thousand pardons, my noble Lavonica, for intruding upon thee. I announced, I permitted my curiosity to run away with my prudence, and

## Synopsis of Canadian North-West HOMESTEAD REGULATIONS

ANY numbered section of Dominion Land in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, excepting 8 and 28, not reserved, may be homesteaded by any person who is the sole head of a family, or any male over 18 years of age, to the extent of one-quarter section of 160 acres, more or less. Entry must be made personally at the local land office for the district in which the land is situated. Entry by proxy may, however, be made on certain conditions by the father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister of an intending homesteader.

The homesteader is required to perform the conditions connected therewith under one of the following plans:

(1) At least six months' residence upon and cultivation of the land in each year for three years.  
(2) If the father (or mother, if the father is deceased) of the homesteader resides upon a farm in the vicinity of the land entered for, the requirements as to residence may be satisfied by such person residing with the father or mother.  
(3) If the settler has his permanent residence upon farming lands owned by him in the vicinity of his homestead the requirements as to residence may be satisfied by residence upon said land.

Six months' notice in writing should be given the Commissioner of Dominion Lands at Ottawa of intention to apply for patent.  
W. W. CORY,  
Deputy Minister of the Interior.  
N.B.—Unauthorized publication of this advertisement will not be paid for.

## TRULY A STRUGGLING MISSION

In The Diocese of Northampton, FAKENHAM, NORFOLK, ENGLAND.

This Mission of St. Anthony of Padua was started by me nearly three years ago by command of the late Bishop of Northampton.

I had then, and I have now, no Church, no Presbytery, no Dominican Grant, no Endowment (except Hope). I am still obliged to say Mass and give Benediction in a mean upper room. Yet, such as it is, this is the sole outpost of Catholicism in a division of the County of Norfolk measuring 35 x 20 miles. The weekly offerings of the congregation are necessarily small. We must have outside help for the present, or haul down the flag.

The generosity of the Catholic Public has enabled us to secure a valuable site for Church and Presbytery. We have money in hand towards the cost of building, but the Bishop will not allow us to go into debt.

I am most grateful to those who have helped us, and trust they will continue their charity. To those who have not helped I would say: "For the sake of the Cause give something, if only a little!" It is easier and more pleasant to give than to beg. Speed the glad hour when I need no longer plead for a permanent home for the Blessed Sacrament.

FATHER H. W. GRAY.

Catholic Mission, Fakenham, Norfolk, Eng.  
P.S.—I will gratefully and promptly acknowledge the smallest donation, and send with my acknowledgments a beautiful picture of the Sacred Heart and St. Anthony.

(EPISCOPAL AUTHORIZATION)

Dear Father Gray,  
You have fully accounted for the aims which you have received, and you have placed them securely in the names of Diocesan Trustees. Your efforts have gone far towards providing what is necessary for the establishment of a permanent Mission at Fakenham. I authorize you to continue to solicit alms for this object until, in my judgment, it has been fully attained.  
Yours faithfully in Christ,  
F. W. KEATING,  
Bishop of Northampton

## SPECIAL OFFER

During the Month of September, 1908, or until our stock is exhausted.

FREE: Along with the regular premium we will give One Glass Fruit Bowl on Stand to every one returning more than 3 Dozen 6 lb. empty XXX Self-Raising Flour Bags, and for less than 3 Dozen 6lb. Bags one medalion (picture.)

**Brodie & Harvie**  
14 and 16 Bleury St., Montreal

perceiving this lovely grotto, fit for a home of the gods, I entered, supposing it to be vacant. I will at once withdraw, unless thou wilt permit me to linger by thy side for a moment, I, too, am a lover of old Homer and would be delighted to listen to the fair Sylvia while she reads from his masterpiece. Will thou not permit me to share thy pleasure?"

"Thou art welcome, noble Tibertius," said Lavonica, blushing. "I regret that my noble mother was compelled to go away whilst thou art our guest, but she will return speedily. Be seated, and Sylvia will, if it pleases thee, continue her reading. It is our chief pleasure here in the silence of Antium."

(To be continued.)

**The Mutual Life ASSURANCE CO. OF CANADA**

"Few as good, none better"

- It issues every desirable style of policy.
- Its policy conditions are liberal.
- Its cash and paid-up values are generous.
- Its funds are safely and profitably invested.
- Its dividends to policyholders expand yearly.
- It has no stockholders to absorb its surplus.
- No other Company has as low an expense rate.
- It holds ample Assets and full legal Reserves.
- Automatically extended insurance is provided for.

HEAD OFFICE - WATERLOO, Ont.