

DION AND THE SIBYLS.

By Miles Gerald Keon

A CLASSIC CHRISTIAN NOVEL.

CHAPTER X—Continued.

At this moment Agatha, who was opposite the outer door of the embowered landing, leading down by a flight of stairs into the garden, through the other arbor before mentioned, suddenly exclaimed, "There's Benigna walking in the garden with a man!"

They all looked, and saw Benigna and a young man, wearing a brown tunic and slippers, in a distant alley of fig-trees, talking earnestly as they strolled together. Crispina smiled and said, "I must really tell you that my Benigna's betrothed lover came here unexpectedly at daybreak. He has obtained a week's holiday, and will spend it, he vows, in the inn. We have had to use some skill, I promise you, in finding room for him. He is to sleep in a big trunk with the lid off, stowed away in the angle of a corridor behind a curtain. He is a very good and well-instructed youth, knows Greek, and is severely worked as one of the secretaries of Tiberius Caesar, whose slave he is, as I think Benigna has mentioned to my little Lady Agatha yesterday."

"When is the marriage of dear Benigna to take place?" asked Agatha.

"Of course the poor young man," replied Crispina, "cannot marry until he gets his freedom. Whenever Tiberius Caesar allows him to shave his head, and put on the pileus, (cap of liberty,) we shall have a merry wedding."

"What sort of master is Tiberius Caesar?" asked Paulus.

The landlady said she was thankful, she did not personally know him; but she had never heard any complaint of him made by Claudius, her future son-in-law.

"Your future son-in-law, Claudius!" exclaimed Agatha in amazement. "Then it was your future son-in-law who had something to say to that Dame Plancia, with the pale face and black eyebrows?"

"Not that I know of, my little lady," returned the hostess.

"Ah! but he had, though," persisted Agatha. "He came to the arbor door, and distinctly stated, with a low bow, that he had commands for that lady; and then she said from whom; and he said, my name is Claudius; that is what he said; and then she jumped up in a remarkable fluster and went into the house, and he followed her. But then why she should jump up in a fluster, because a slave said his name was Claudius, I can't imagine," concluded Agatha, pondering.

The hostess looked surprised.

"I think it could not be because a slave's name was Claudius," she said, "nor do I understand it."

"Is that your demon-seeing dame, Agatha?" asked Paulus, stretching himself; "for I have a notion that when I parried the fellow's blow who wanted to cut me down in so cowardly a fashion, you know—"

"Yes."

"There was a female scream; do you remember it?"

"Yes."

"Well, I have been thinking the woman who screamed was a woman whom your description of that fierce dame in the arbor exactly fits. If so, she was in the train of Tiberius, and of those ladies of whom our good hostess has just given us such an interesting genealogical and matrimonial account."

"Then perhaps the commands for Plancia were from Tiberius Caesar," quoth Agatha.

Crispina shook her head, but appeared a little serious. A short silence followed. Paulus broke it by asking the landlady to get a letter forwarded for him to the military tribune, Velleius Paterculus, at Formiae. "I wish," he said, "to take advantage of the delay in the emperor's visit, and to see the country, to fish in the river, to move about far and near; provided Paterculus, to whom I have given

a promise to report myself, has no objection."

The hostess brought him some liviana, or second-class paper, the best she had, some cuttle-fish ink, and a reed pen, told him to write his letter, and undertook to transmit it at once by a runner belonging to the hostelry. She then left the room.

CHAPTER XI.

The letter was sent, and in the course of the forenoon, the tabellarius, or letter-carrier of the inn, returned from Formiae. Crispina brought him to Paulus, who was in an avenue of the garden watching some players as they contested a game of quoits or discus. This avenue connected the garden proper with the open country westward, terminating in a cross-hedge of myrtle, through which a little wicket or trellis gate opened. "The man has brought no letter back," the hostess said, signing at the same time to the messenger to deliver the particulars of his errand.

He had found the tribune, he said, and had given him the letter and asked for an answer. The tribune was at the moment inspecting a body of troops. He read the note, however, and immediately took out of his belt both his stylus and pugillaria, or hand-tablets; when the praetorian prefect Sejanus, happening to pass, entered into conversation with him, and the messenger then saw Velleius Paterculus hand to Sejanus Paulus's letter. After reading it, the general gave it back, said something in Greek, and went away. The tribune thereupon told the bearer that he would send an answer during the day by a messenger of his own. Paulus thanked the man, who then withdrew.

Our hero, who had prepared his fishing-tackle, a portion of which he had in his hand, remarked that it was vexatious to lose so fine and favorable a day. "Moreover, why should I be a prisoner?" he suddenly exclaimed. "I have a triple right to my personal liberty, as Roman citizen, knight, and noble. And what have I done to forfeit it? What have I done except parry the blow of an assassin whom I neither injured nor provoked?"

"Hush!" murmured Crispina; and just then Cneius Piso, having a bandage round his head, and leaning on the arm of Plancia, was seen passing into the inn before them from another part of the garden.

The landlady stood still a moment, till the two figures had disappeared when she said, with a slight motion of the thumb in the direction of Piso, "He reports himself quite well now except for a headache. He and his lady leave us in an hour for Rome, and I hope I may say both vale and salve. You ask what you have done. Have you not come to Italy to claim rights which are indisputable?"

"Is that reason?"

"It is a thousand reasons, and another thousand, too. Alas! do not deceive yourself, as your namesake and cousin did, about the character of the world."

At the door of the inn they separated, she to attend to the multifarious business of her household, and he to loiter purposelessly. After a little reflection, he went quite through the house by the impluvium and the central corridor beyond it, and looked into the public room, or atrium. At one table a couple of centurions sat playing dice with the tesserae, and shouting the names of half a dozen gods and goddesses, as their luck fluctuated. At another table a powerfully built, dark, middle-aged man, having a long, ruddy beard streaked with gray, upon whom Asiatic slaves waited, was taking a traveler's repast; his slaves helping him to costly wine, which he drank with a grimace of dissatisfaction, but in formidable quantities. Other groups were dotted round the large

apartment. In order not to draw needless notice, for all eyes turned to him for a moment, except those of the two dice-throwing and bel-lowing centurions, Paulus seated himself behind an unoccupied table near the door. While idly watching the scenes around him, he thought he heard his name pronounced in the passage outside. He listened, but the noise in the room made him uncertain, and the voice outside was already less audible, as of one who had passed the door while speaking.

Presently he heard, in a much louder tone, the words, "Why, it is not our carriage, after all. Let us return and wait where we can sit down." And the speaker again passed the public room, coming back, apparently, from the porch.

Paulus happened to be sitting close to the door, which was open; a curtain, as was common, hanging over the entrance. This time, in spite of the noise in the dieta, a word or two, and a name, though not his own, struck him. He fancied some one said, "No harm to her; but still, not the brother—the sister, my trusty Claudius."

Where had Paulus heard those tones before? In itself, what he had overheard was a sufficiently harmless fragment of a sentence. Nevertheless, Paulus rose, left his table, lifted aside the door-curtain, and went into the corridor, where he saw Cneius Piso and Plancia, with their backs to him, walking toward the end of the passage opposite the porch, but he nearly stumbled against a young man going the other way. This person, who was good-looking, in both senses of the word, wore the sober-colored exomis, or tunic, the long hair, and the slippers of a slave. He had in his right hand a stylus; in his left, tablets of citron-wood, open and covered with blue wax, on which he was reading, with his head bent, some note which he had made there.

"It is my fault, noble sir," said he; "I was stooping over these and did not observe you; I beg you to pardon my awkwardness." And he bowed with an air of humility.

"It is I, rather, who am to blame," said Paulus, scanning steadily the features of the slave, who had made his apology with a look of alarm, and in exaggerated accents of deprecation.

Shortly after this incident, while Paulus, who had not returned to the atrium, was leaning dreamily over the balustrade of the inn's central court, and watching the fountain in the impluvium there, he was struck heavily on the shoulder from behind by an open hand. Turning round slowly, he beheld a man in the very prime of life, who was entirely a stranger to him.

"I was told I should find you here, excellent sir," said the stranger.

Paulus took in, at a glance, his dress and general appearance. He had a thick brown beard, neatly trimmed, and open, daring, large blue eyes, in which there was nothing whatever sullen or morose; yet a sort of wildness and fierceness, with a slight but constant gleam of vigilance, if not subtlety. On the whole, his face was handsome; it was conspicuously manly, and, perhaps, somewhat obdurate and pitiless.

His stature was good without being very lofty. He had broad shoulders, rather long, sinewy arms, a deep chest, and, altogether, a figure and person not lacking any token of agility, but more indicative of huge strength.

He wore sandals, the laces of which crossed each other up his mighty legs, which were otherwise bare, and a white woollen diphera covered his shoulders, and was belted round his waist.

(To be Continued.)

You May Have Kidney Trouble

If your back aches and you suffer from dragging pains it is an evidence of diseased kidneys. Get Ferrozone at once and take it regularly. Ferrozone makes kidney sufferers feel better at once. "I was bothered a great deal with my kidneys last year," writes S. G. Denton of Everett, "but got quick relief from Ferrozone. My trouble manifested itself by pain in the back, dull heavy feeling and constant headache. I quite recovered after using a few boxes of Ferrozone which has given me more strength and better health than I ever had before. I can recommend Ferrozone as a positive cure." Price 60c. at all druggists.

TO EVERY SUBSCRIBER

New and Old

Who will send us One New Subscriber and 25 cents we will send them the

Family Herald and Weekly Star
FOR ONE YEAR

Together with the following beautiful premiums.

Two Beautiful Colored Pictures . . .

"HEART BROKEN"
and
"HARD TO CHOOSE"

Each 22 x 28 inches, in 11 delicate tints,

AND

A Large Colored Map of the Dominion of Canada
(22 x 28 inches), with Special Maps for
Each Province and for the United States.

The two pictures to be given are typical bits of child life. The prevailing note in each is—as it should be—bubbling enjoyment of the moment, with just a touch of one of the evanescent shadows of childhood to throw the gay colors into relief. They will please and charm upon any wall where they may hang, bringing to one an inner smile of the soul even on the darkest day. For what can shed more happiness abroad than the happiness of children?

One of the pictures is called

"Heart Broken"

We will not let the reader into the secret of what has happened, but one of the merry little companions of the woeful little maid who has broken her heart is laughing already, and the other hardly knows what has happened. Cut flowers nod reassuringly at them, and a bright bit of verdure covered wall stands in the background. There is something piquantly Watteauesque about one of the petite figures, suggesting just a touch of French influence on the artist.

The other picture presents another of the tremendous perplexities of childhood. It is called

"Hard to Choose"

As in the other picture, we will not give away the point made by the artists before the recipients analyze it for themselves. Again there are three happy girls in the picture, caught in a moment of pause in the midst of limitless hours of play. One of the little maids still holds in her arms the toy horse with which she has been playing. Flowers and butterflies color the background of this, and an arbour and a quaint old table replace the wall.

The two pictures together will people any room with six happy little girls, so glad to be alive, so care-free, so content through the sunny hours amidst their flowers and butterflies, that they must brighten the house like the throwing open of shutters on a sunny morning.

Quick Reference Map of The Dominion of Canada

SPECIALLY PREPARED

The map of the Dominion of Canada will fill a long felt want. It has been prepared specially for the Family Herald and Weekly Star, and is right up-to-date. It is printed on a sheet 22 x 28 inches, each province in a different color; it shows the adjacent portions of the United States, the exact location of the towns, villages, etc., all railroad routes, including the new G. T. Pacific. It gives the population according to the very latest census, of all small and large places in Canada. With the Dominion maps will be enlarged provincial maps, that appeal to subscribers in each province, as follows:

For Subscribers in Man., N.W.T. & B.C.

With the Dominion Map will be found an enlarged map of Canada's Great West beyond the Lakes, right up-to-date complete information regarding location and situation of all towns and villages in the Western Provinces.

The Family Herald and Weekly Star is too well known to need description. It is the greatest Family and Agricultural paper in Canada. Its regular subscription price is \$1.00 per year, and you can't get it anywhere else for less except from us, and we will give it to you for

Only 25 Cents

Any one of the premiums are worth more than that alone

Address your orders to—

The Business Manager

P.O. BOX 617

Northwest Review