

against the Gaul vanished from their hearts. At the cost of his blood, he had filled their purses. The voices of the public were divided. On the upper seats, half the signs were for death and half for mercy; but the retiarius looked only at the box of Caesar and the Vestals, waiting for what they would decide. To the misfortune of the fallen gladiator, Nero did not like him, for at the last games before the fire he had bet against the Gaul, and had lost considerable sums to Licinus; hence he thrust his hand out of the podium, and turned his thumb towards the earth. The Vestals supported the sign at once. Calendio knelt on the breast of the Gaul, drew a short knife from his belt, pushed apart the armour around the neck of his opponent, and drove the three-edged blade into his throat to the handle."

The third quotation shows the wavering Emperor finally deciding for mercy (p. 501, chapter 65): "Then the enthusiasm of the multitude passed everything seen in the circus before. The crowd stamped and howled. Voices for mercy grew simply terrible . . . but Caesar halted and hesitated . . . self-love would not let him yield to the wish of the multitude, and still he did not dare to oppose it through his inborn cowardice. So he gazed around to see if among the Augustians he could not find *fingers turned down in sign of death*. But Petronius *held up his hand*, and looked almost challengingly in Nero's face. Vestinius, superstitious, but inclined to enthusiasm, gave a sign for mercy also. So did Scevinus, the Senator, and many others . . . Nero understood that to oppose longer was simply dangerous . . . He looked once more at Subrius Flavius; at Scevinus, the Centurion, a relative of the Senator; at the soldiers; and, seeing everywhere frowning brows, moved faces, and eyes fixed on him, *he gave the sign for mercy*."

Although the opinion of the popular novelist cannot, in many cases, be regarded as authoritative, still, in a comprehensive survey, the inclusion of novelists who write for the young, and are widely read by them, may not be without point. In *Berie, the Briton; a Story of the Roman Invasion*, by Henty, is to be found the following (p. 218): "Were you a gladiator once, asked Berie? Certainly, I was, answered Scopus, and so were all the Masters of the Schools . . . I was ten years in the arena and fought thirty-five battles. In thirty I was victorious, in the other five I was defeated; but, as I was a favourite, and always made a good fight, *the thumbs were turned up*, which, as you know, *is the signal for mercy*."

And again, at page 263, we read: "So tremendous was the blow that Lupus fell an inert mass upon the ground . . . Scopus