CHAPTER XIII.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE CAESARS AND THE DAUGHTER OF THE PEOPLE.

Whilst Metellus was narrating his story to Vibius, the divine Aurelia had given orders to send up to her the new slave she had purchased.

"I shall soon see," she thought, "whether I must sacrifice this young girl to I don't know what exigencies."

Cecilia was introduced into the cubicustical paragraph or migtress a swaited her

Cecilia was introduced into the cubiculum, where her mistress awaited her
coming. The poor child had scarcely recovered from the sofferings she had borne
during several months, and from the
cruel emotions she had felt during the act
of mancipation, which separated her forever from her father and her lover,—from
all who cared for her.

She knew not whose slave she had become; but surmised from Aurelia's magnificent cortege, and the splendors of her
house, that she must be a wealthy patrician. But she had often heard speak of
the refined barbarity of the matrons towards the unfortunate creatures who
waited upon them; and she could not
help fearing that God had destined her
for new trials. She approached Aurelia
with respectful deference, but with such
evident fear that the latter could not fall
to notice it.

to notice it.
"Come nearer," said, kindly, the noble placed so high by fate, and who was red by the appearance of the charm-creature whom fortune had made her "come, I am not a very terrible

Encouraged by the caressing tone o and she thanked God in her heart, when she saw the gentle face of Domitian's

niece.
"What is your name?" inquired the

divine Aurelia.

"Cecilia, madam," replied the young girl, humbly, but without fear this time.

"Say that you have not come here to betray me!" said Aurelia, abruptly, and looking her slave full in the face.

looking her slave full in the face.

"What do you mean, madam?" exclaimed Cecilia, who drew back involuntarily, so surprised she was at this strange question. "I, betray you?—" "Oh! I knew that could not be!" "Oh! I knew that could not be!"
said the young patrician, noticing the
spontaneous movement and evident surprise of the slave. "Let us see, however," she added, remembering the remarks of Vibius. "What did that horrible Regulus say to you when I took you
away ?"

"Regulus? ... Regulus?" re-peated Cecilia, astonished and hesitating. "Who is he?" The young girl did not know her tortur-

Regulus, who stood near the slave-deal-

er who sold you."
"Ah! . . his name is Regulus.
. . Well, madam, he told me I
should be free as soon as I would obey And what is it you must do, to obey

I must denounce my benefactors, Fla-"I must denounce my beneated."
via Domitilla and Flavius Clemens."
"Flavia Domitilla and Flavius Clemens!" cried the divine Aurelia at the

mens!" cried the divine Aurelia at the height of astonishment. "What do you say? my relations!" repeated Cecilia, with as much surprise.
"Yes, my relations! Are you not then aware that I am the emperor's niece?"
"No, madam," replied the young slave, simply.

There was a pause. The divine Aurelia was plunged in thought. She knew already that Regulus was trying to ascertain the affiliation of her family with the worship of Christ, in order, doubtless, to inform the emperor. What surprised her was the holdness of this new attempt. inform the emperor. What surprised her was the boldness of this new attempt, was the boldness of this new attempt, and the still stranger fact, that Cecilia should have such intimate acquaintance with Fiavia Domitilla and Fiavius Clemens, as to have acquired the right of styling them her benelactors.

"How did you come to know my relations?" she asked.

"Madam, previous to my misfortune I saw Flavia Domitilla every day, and I had the honor of receiving a daughter's

had the honor of receiving a daughter's welcome in the consul's house."

"Indeed! and how did this come to

happen ?"
But instead of replying to this question, Cecilia looked down, embarrassed and silent. To explain the cause of her intimacy with that noble family would be to reveal the secrets for which she had suffered all the tortures inflicted by Regulus. It is true that the divine Aurelia had spoken of her relationship with Fla-via Domitilla and Flavius Clemens; but was this sufficient for Cecilia to forget the rules of prudence which made it her duty not to divulge the names of her brethren

The divine Aurelia remarked her slave's hesitation, and felt offended; but she also suspected the motive of her sil-

Can it be that you are a Christian?" she asked, and there was a certain bitter

ness in her voice.
"Yes, madam, I am a Christian," replied Cecilia, who could not suspect what a revelation this simple word contained. "You are a Christian! Ah! I under-

stand now! But I am not an informer, cried Aurelia in a tone of reproach. Then a suspicion flashed to her mind:

"How does it happen," she added,
"that you are a slave if Flavia Domitilla "I was sold by my father, without Fla-

via Domitilla's knowledge."
"By your father!" exclaimed the divine Aurelia. "But this is dreadful!

Ah! I remember now, it was written or the ticket of sale that you are of free con-"Yes, madam."

"And your father sold you! A father may then sell his daughter?"

may then sell his daughter?"

may then sell his daughter?"

"It seems so, madam, since the judges have declared that it could be done."

"The judges! What! judges have said this? But were you not defended by Pliny-the-Younger?" asked Aurelia, remembering what Vibius had said.

"I do not know, madam. I know that I was brought before the Pretor, that I saw there my father, my betrothed, and

I was brought certified, my betrothed, and other friends who claimed me. I know also, that this man you call Regulus, came to tell me, some time after, that came to tell me, some time after, there was no hope for me, and I was really his slave. But whether or not I was defended by Pliny-the Younger, I

"However, you must be the same young girl of whom Vibius spoke as hav.

Parmenon's name, and sold to me by Parmenon's name, and sold to me by Parmenon! Poor child! Poor child!" repeated Aurelia, gazing with compassionate tenderness on the young slave. "But why did your father sell you? How you must hate him!"

"But why did your father sell you? How you must hate him!"

"Hate him! Oh! no, madam! My father was very unhappy, and he thought he 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 abjure our faith?"

"What! even at the price of liberty?"

"At the price of liberty, and even of life!" replied Cecilia in a firm voice.

Admiration was succeeding to curiosity in Aurelia's soul.

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 the reward is can bear everything, for the reward is above!" replied Cecilia, pointing to

You speak like my cousin Flavia Do-

heaven.

"You speak like my cousin Flavia Domitilla," remarked Aurelia, with a smile.

"She told me the same things when she sought to convert me to her faith. Do not try to conceal anything from me."

"I know that my 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 thoughtfully; "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 the power of that Parmenon. It seems to me she is rich enough to have satisfied the greed of both Parmenon and Regulus."

"If she has not done so, it is because she could not," replied the young girl,

"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, "have you not told me that Pliny-the-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 have 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 re-

"That is true!" said the divine Arrelia, "you are right. So," she resumed, following another train of thought, "this man Regulus wanted you to 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 all? Why again this silence? You refused to obey Regulus, did you not?"

You have said it, madam."

"You have said it, madam."
"But he was your master. And I am
told he is a very wicked man."
Cecilia was again silent; but no longer
from the same motive. The heroic child
did not wish to make known the great-

ness of her sacrifice.

The divine Aurelia had a revelation of The divine Aurelia had a revelation of this Christian feeling of generosity. She understood all this poor slave must have suffered for resisting the will of a pittless master. She walked slowly to the young girl, and pulling down the simple tunic she wore, laid bare her bosom and shoulders. shoulders.

A cry of horror escaped from Aurelia's

lips.
Long scars, scarcely healed—the hideous proofs of the torturer's cruelty and the victim's constancy—spread their dark furrows in every direction on the delicate

furrows in every direction on the detactors skin of the young Christian.

The poor child hung down her head, in confusion, and dared not raise her eyes. The blushes which involuntarily covered her pale and sickly face, told her em-

barrassment.
The divine Aurelia studied during ar instant this candid physiognomy, upon which the virginal graces of her own age were blended with the traces of cruel sofferings; then, unable to resist her emotion, and following the impulse of her heart, she threw herself, all in tears, in

"Why, Vibius! Vibius! where are you going to, my dear guardian?" cried the divine Aurelia, perceiving the unfortunate 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 hastened to cast off the auxious thoughts which clouded his brow, and

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

Aurelia.

And still holding Cecilia's hand, she

went, followed by Vibius, to the room where Cornelia and Metellus Celer were "Here is," she cried, as they entered,

"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 filed her naturally generous heart at the discovery of Cecilia's sufferings, Aurelia made a passionate narrative of what had passed between her and the young slave, and asked her horrified hearers what they

thought of the poor child.

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

Neither 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 her by the Graud Vestal, whose eyes were filled with tears of symittee.

pathy.
"My dear Vibius," resumed the divine "My dear vibius," resumed the divine Aurelia, "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 her friends. Moreover, it is a gift I wish to make to my cousin, Flavia Domitilla."

"Certainly, my dear ward; but this is no case, watter."

no easy matter."
"Why so, if you please? Am I not the

mistress? Yes and no, divine Aurelia."

"What do you mean, Vibius?"
"Why, first, there is the Ælia Sentia

law, which does not permit masters under twenty years of age to liberate their slaves; and, then, there is is Regu-

"Regulus! again that name!" exclaimed Aurelia, impatiently.
"Yes, Regulus, who could again lay his hand on this young girl, if she were set free in violation of the clause which prohibits her manumission."
"Very well," eaid the divine Aurelia ironically, "this man Regulus will prove more powerful than I, who am the beauty of Vernaian, the crease and again that name!"

peared at the door, and, sowing town in mounced in a loud voice,—
"The Cæsar 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 Aurelies swinging into Vespasian's arms. "It lia, 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 portice in the house

is so long since I have had this happiness. Vibius can tell you that I went to-day to Pompey's portice in the hope of meeting you . . . for no other motive. I wished so much to speak to you!"

"Indeed, dear cousin," replied the young man, who returned Aurelia's caresses with marks of sincere affection," and I, also, wished to speak to you! . . . I come to see you concerning this child," he added, pointing to Cecilia; "I come, accompanied by the Supreme Pontiff of the Christians, to claim her from your generosity."

"Ah!" exclaimed simultaneously Au "Ah!" exclaimed simultaneously Aurelia and her guests, their looks wandering from Cecilia to the pontiff, and from the latter to Vespasian, as if to ask what tie could exist between three persons differing so widely in rank and station.

Aurelia, although better informed of certain circumstances which enabled her to understand, to a certain extent, this unexpected reclamation, waited anxious-

nons, she would have felt no surprise had Flavia Domitilla come to claim her; but not being aware that, like all his family, her betrothed, Vespasian, had embraced the religion of Christ, she could not comthe religion of Christ, she could not com-prehend the motives for which he had been intrusted with this negotiation. And, in fact, we owe some explana-tions to the reader on this subject.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHRISTIAN PRIEST AND THE PAGAN VIR GIN.

Young Flavius, the son of Flavius Cle mens and Flavia Domitilla, and named Vespasian by Domitian, when the latter raised him and his brother to the dignity f Casars, was a little older than the ivine Aurelia, for he was in his eight-

eenth year. He was a hopeful youth, with a noble He was a hopeful youth, with a noble, proud, and impetuous disposition, and withal gifted with rare modesty and moderation. Quintilian, the learned tutor of the two young princes, took much pains to form their minds, and in Veepasian, especially, he had found a ready and willing pupil. This young Caesar had devoted himself principally to the study of elequence; notwitstanding the high rank to which he was destined, his ambition was to excel in this most difficult of sciences, which the Romans held

cult 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 he had succeeded in gaining Domitian's sffection, 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 citizens, enjoying merely the honor due to their rank; the emperor, therefore, was

heart, she threw herself, all in tears, in Cecilia's arms, and pressed her young slave lovingly on her throbbing bosom.

"You see, Cecilia," cried the amiable girl, forgetful of her patrician pride, "I love you! Oh yes, I love you! for, I see it now, you have suffered 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 hand, she hurried with her through the atrium. Vibius Crispus had just come out of Cornelia's room. virtue. Aurelia looked upon ner high rank as the greatest of privileges, and her vanity did not always preserve her from the little weaknesses which generally accompany this secret infirmity of the most amiable minds. Dazzled by the prospect of the honors which awaited her, she ften gave way to the capricious independ

ence of supreme power.

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 Caristianity and the emission of the course of the cours or christ, but Christianity and the em-pire were so incompatible at that time, that the patrician girl, who saw in a change of religion the ruin of her mag-nificent hopes, had rejected with supreme ontempt the overtures made by

Things had gone so far, that it was deemed expedient to conceal from the divine Aurelia the fact that her betrothed ad deserted the creed of which the em had deserted the creed of which the em-perors were sovereign pontiffs, for feat that her regrets and complaints should reach Domitian's ears. The imperious and frivolous girl, who loved her kindred with the presentation of a general with the passionate affection of a gener ous heart, had, however, sought to pun ish them for their repeated attempts to convert her; and we have already learned from Pa'estrion's conversation with Regulus, that, for some time past, she had ceased holding intercourse with

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 beasked 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 keep? 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 to seize an opportunity which might not present it-

having recently died. Clemens, it is said, was connected with the imperial family. We merely mention the fact,—it adds nothing to his merit or his virtues.

The young Casar and the Pontiff learned from Flavia Domitilla what had occurred, the embarrassment in which she was, and how to proceed. "But," said Vespasian, "Aurelia can-not be angry with me."

not be angry with me."

"Cecilia is our child," added Clemens, who knew the young girl, and had been informed how she had glorified the name of Christ. "It behooves me to claim her, and to show to your young relation that, the Christians being brothers, we owe our first care to those who suffer. God will inspire me the words I must speak, and perhaps this child, so rebellious to divine grace, may at last be moved."

"You will probably meet the Graud Vestal there," remarked Flavia Domitilla." I know that she has been living with Aurelia for some time past."

"I know that she has been living with Aurelia for some time past,"
"Well," replied the priest, with a smile, "the Grand Vestal will learn that the Pontiff of the Coristians watches over the virgins confided to his care, not to chastise them as Helvius Agrippa does, but to return them to freedom and happiness when they have fallen into slavery. Do you think, pious matron, that this contrast

they have fallen into slavery. Do you think, pious matron, that this contrast will be useless?"

So it happened that Vespasian and Ciemens made their appearance in the Grand Vestal's apartment, at Aurelia's, when they were the least expected.

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

aurena's eyes the desire that he should explain his demand, resumed,—
"Yes, my dear Aurelia, our relation, Flavia Domitilla, whose envoys we are, hopes that she will obtain from you the release of this young girl, her sister in the faith of Christs."

release of this youngain, her before faith of Christ."

"Madam," added the Pontiff, in a gentle and penetrating voice, "I am the first pastor of an unhappy and desolate flock, and when one of my lambs groans and suffers, I run to save it. This is 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 Domitilla that 1, 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—"I have forestalled her wishes,

and here, in this very room, as you came "That is true," said Vibius, the Vestal

"Yes, madam," added Cecilia, softly,
"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 Aureis, stopping the words of thanks on the young man's lips, "wait! This is certainly what I wanted and what I still wish, but it seems that it is not possible."

"How is that!" exclaimed together the Pontif and the young Casar, with undis-guised anxiety; for they knew what obstacles had prevented Cecilia's deliver-ance, and they were fearful of new diffi-

ance, and they were tearned of new drain culties.

"Here is Vibius, my guardian, who will try to explain the matter to you," replied Aurelia. "As for me, I cannot understand anything about it," she added, all her impatience returning at the thought of this opposition to her will.

Vibius Crispus gave, in a few words, the two reasons which, in his opinion, might defeat the generous intentions of his august ward.

his august ward.

"Are these the only obstacles?" remarked Clemens. "It seems to me that, marked Clemens. "It seems to be easily with prudence, they might be easily

sworn the ruin of my relations, and who spies their secrets. And Cecilia, 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, gazug with emotion on the young Christian who had twice suffered for His name. "My daughter, you are great among us, for I see the halo of the marticle crown already on your brow. among us, for I see the halo 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!"

"Oh, dear Aurelia," said the young Cesar, pressing her hand, "thanks! a thousand thanks in the name of all that are dear to ma."

"Madam," resumed Clemens "you said that Regulus wishes to know who we are. Regulus can easily satisfy his curiosity. Let him come to me and I will reveal to him what he styles our

"Yet, my lord," said Aurelia, "you praised Cecilia because she refused to " 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 liberty, refused to betray at the price of liberty, refused to betray the price of liberty. her brethren when some danger existed.

but I do not believe that the knowledge of our secrets could serve the

designs of our enemies.

"Madam," continued the Pontiff, remarking the silent attention of his hearers, "and you, my lords, let me tell you what are these Christians and their mystatus what are these christians and their mystatus when the second s serve the hatred which people bear us!
"The strangest slanders are circulated."

against us, and we are even accused of the most horrible crimes. The least preju-diced 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 were heard and

ass or a nog: Are not these," he added, addressing Vibius and Metellus, "the stories you have heard?"

Metellus and Vibius replied that they had often heard of this ridiculous worship. ship. "Do they not allege that, in our as

semblies, a young child, covered with flur in order to deceive the eye and to disguise the horror of the crime, is put to opportunity which might not present 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 disguise the horror of the crime, is put to death by other children trained to inflict secret wounds? and that the priest disquise the horror of the crime, is put to death by other children trained to inflict secret wounds? and that the priest disquise the horror of the crime, is put to death by other children trained to inflict secret wounds? and palpitating limbs among the Christians, who drink of this blood and eat of this flesh, swearing by

elect? excitation of the series of divine love? Ah! is it not eviteries of divine love? Ah! ceremonies and calumniated the mysteries of divine love? Ah! is it not evident that these accusations are an excuse for those feasts of the Good Goddees, from which the Vestals withdrew horrified; for those abominations of the Quinquatria of Minerva; for those human eacrifices of Jupiter-Latiarus and of the days of Mars and Ballona; for those impious conjurations when cups of blood are drunk with enthusiasm; for those detestable religious feasts where the fiesh 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 saintly animation, "yes, the cross is the great symbol and the sacred sign of the redemption we have come to announce! This surprises you? Oh! I can understand that it should! Rome cannot so suddenly lower her pride before the hated instru-

you? On: I can understand that it should! Rome cannot so suddenly lower her pride before the hated instrument of the slave's punishment! She must fear that which is the hope of those who suffer and the condensations. 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 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 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 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 Clamens. "all the

strange bitterness.

"Here are," resumed Clemens, "all the mysteries of Christianity! Here is what I am charged to teacn my brethren in our holy assemblies! Here is what I can reveal to Regulus, if he wishes to know what there places among us! Do you think, vest to Regulus, if he wishes to know what takes places among us! Do you think, my lords, that our religion is a cloak for fearful crimes, and that we can have much to fear from this man's denunciations. And as no reply was made, he pro

eeded:
"At all events, we know how to suffer "At all events, we know how to suffer! Persecutions may afflict us; we shall accept them, glorifying God's holy name, and forgiving our enemies. Vibius, you have seen, in Nero's time, that Christians do not fear tortures; and this young girl has proved what strength is found in the spirit of God! Doubless, 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 understand; 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 much courage and so great a contempt for life could be metin men guilty of the atrocities we have been accused of committing. Blood, if it is shed, will testify to the sanc-

guardian, vou will call immediately on Piny-the-Younger, in my name.

But there is something still more serious!

And without observing her hearer's astonishment, she added,—

"My dear Vespasian, do you know why l 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 second. would be complied with immediately.

"Good-by, dear Veepasian," said the
young girl to her betrothed, who was
following Clemens. "Will not my rela-

following Clemens. "Will not my relations consent to come here?"
"Dear Aurelia," exclaimed the young man, "my father, my mother, Flavia Domitilla, all those who love you will be filled with joy! And I will rejoice too, for your heart sympathizes with ours. You will tee us again soon!"
"Oh!" sighed the young girl, as she gazed pensively on the retreating form of her betrothed; but she added not a word to this exclamation coming from the depth of her troubled heart. depth of her troubled heart. TO BE CONTINUED

THE RULE OF CONSCIENCE.

The primary moral law is the Divine

reason or the will of God establishing a certain order of things, and command ing man to maintain it, and forbidding him to disturb it. There is, however a secondary rule of morals, which prac tically makes known and applies the primary law of morality. This is right reason in man, judging of the lawfulness of each particular act under the circumstances of the case. This rule is called Conscience. It is only through conscience that the moral law is brought home to the rational creature and proposed to him as binding under pain of sin.

Conscience is not of itself a law unto It only binds us in so far as it makes known to us, and applies the eternal law of God in each particular case. The conscience enlightened by knowledge of the law and prudently guarded from error, is a safe guide. What it forbids we must avoid, what it commands we must do, but we are not bound to do all that it approves .-Catholic Columbian.

It is not to attain a higher place in glory that the precepts of brotherly love must be observed: they are necessary for barely entering the kingdom of heaven.—Cardinal Wiseman.

There is an old French prover The best prayers are those which are said with one's night cap on "—the last as we kneel at our bedside at night, the first on rising in

this abominable pact mutual fidelity and eternal silence?"

"Yes," replied Vibius Crispus and Metallus Celer; "such are the accusations brought against the Christians."

"O religion of Christ! O holy repasts, of my brethren! O assemblies of the elect!" exclaimed the Pontiff," why have error and falsehood disfigured our sacred coremonies and calumnized the mysinfluence. There is no more prolific source of delusion and superstitious quackery than the wild and incoherent utterances, and even blasphemous pre-tensions, of the ambitions and deluded upstarts who claim to be under the special influence of the divine Spirit. There is a natural love of the myster-

ious-a hankering, if we may so express ourselves—after the supernatural, in the human breast, which, unless it be properly instructed, controlled and directed, is bound to lead to the most disastrous intellectual and moral onsequences.
It is a notorious fact that every en-

thusiast, every inventor of a new gospel, every originator of a new sect claims to be under the influence and special guidance of the divine Spirit, and it is their apparent sincerity and earnestness, and their professions of high spirituality and even sanctity, that attract the crowd of followers. The doctrine is not of so much importance. They may give utterance to the wildest theories, the most absurd statements—absurd as those, for instance, of the so-called Christian scientists, whose originator, in her confused, presumptuous and blasphemous utter-ances, is as far as possible from the true teachings of Christianity, and whose followers profess to perform miracles of healing through faith while the unhappy victims are dying under their hands, but it makes no difference with the mass of their followers. delusion, whatever it may be, has taken fast hold of their minds. The pretence of divine influence has captivated them, and you might as well undertake to stop a hurricane by blowing against it as to reason these people

Now, it is evident that there must be some sure test of the genuiness of spiritual influence. There is no more portant injunction than that of the apostle St. John in his first epistle (iv. 1:) "Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits if they be of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world." 'Try the spirits." It is perfectly absurd, on the very face of it, to believe the professions of every wild enthusiast simply because he or she pretends to be under the influence of the Spirit. But how shall we try the spirits—how test their claims to divine inspiration? We answer, by an appeal to Divine truth. The apostle St.
John, in the chapter above alluded to,
gives as a test the orthodox doctrine of Jesus — the Incarnation. "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that dissolveth Jesus is not

Heretical delusion has always been characterized by dissolving Jesus—that is, by denying either His human—ity or His divinity. "We are of God." saith the same apostle (verse 6): "He that knoweth God heareth us. He that is not of God heareth us not." It is the hearing, that is, the obeying, of the apostolic doctrine that is the true test and where shall we find the apos-tolic doctrine but in the holy, Catholic and apostolic Church which Christ Himself founded, and which has continued to teach and maintain the true apostolic doctrine, especially of the Incarnation, from His day, till the present time? And this, 'said the beloved disciple, alluding to the "dissolving of Christ,"
"is antiChrist, of whom you have heard that he cometh, and he is now Yes, and that is the anti Christ that the Church has always had to contend

against. Against that anti-Christ, fortified at times with all the powers of the world, the flesh and the devil, did the holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church fight many a fierce and long-contested battle. Nor is that anticontested battle. Nor is that anti-Christ—that old enemy of mankind dead. He is alive and doing battle in our own day. He has drawn away millions of unhappy souls from the true faith of Jesus, and he is busy in deluding them with all sorts of hallucinations fulfilling to the letter the prediction of St. Peter: "There shall be among you lying teachers who shall bring in sects of perdition, even deny. ing the Lord Who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction Many shall follow their riotousness revised- 'their lascivious doings' through whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of and through coveteousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you. Yes, the "merchandise" motive is a very pow-erful one, especially with the leaders who, generally, have an eye to the main chance and are careful, in their benevolent operations, to look out well for number one. But the end is fear-ful: "Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their perdidition (King James, 'their damna-tion') siumbereth not.—Sacred Heart

Review. PAUL BOURGET A CATHOLIC.

Paul Bourget, the noted French author, who made a tour of this country a few years ago, has become a Catholic. Catholicism was the faith of his childhood, and he announces that he will revise his books and strike oat all the anti-religious passages. is a marked tendency toward Catholicism in its devotional form among French literary men, who are forsaking materialism and atheism for spiritual belief. The movement in France is described as similar to the Faber movement in England some years ago.

There are no pockets in shrouds. -Chinese Saying.

JULY 7, 1900.

THE VILLAGE CONCERT.

An Ambitious Affair That Surprise

By Rev. P. A. Sheehan. "My New Curate. Late one evening in November a deputation waited on me. It consisted of the doctor, the schoolmaster and one or two young fellows, generally distinguished by their vocal powers at the tinguished by their vocal powers at the public house, when they were asked for "their fisht and their song." The doctor opened negotiations. I have a great regard for the doctor and he knows it. He is a fine young fellow, a great student, and good and kind to the poor.

Well, the doctor knew how much appreciated him. He was not nervous, therefore, in broaching the subject. have come to see you, sir, about a concert. what?" I asked.

"A concert," he replied, in a little huff. "They have concerts every winter at Labbawally, and at Balreddon, and even at Moydore; and why shouldn't we? I thought a little.

"I was always under the impression, I said, "that a concert meant ongers."
"Of course," they replied.
"Well, and where are you to get singers here? Are you going to import again those delectable harridons that

illustrated the genius of Verdi with rather rancous voices a few weeks ago?"
"Certainly not, sir," they replied, in much indignation. "The boys here can do a little in that way; and we can get up a chorus among the school chil-

iren and-and-And the doctor himself will do his share," said one of the deputation, share," said one or the deputation, coming to the aid of the modest doctor.
"And then," I said, "you must have a plane to accompany you, unless it is to be all in the style of the come-

all-yeen's.
"Oh. 'twill be something beyond that," said the doctor. "I think you'l be surprised, sir."
"And what might the object of the

concert be?" I asked.
"Of course, the poor," they all shout
ed in chorus. "Wait, your reverence," said one diplomatist, "till you
see all we'll give you for the poor a Christmas. Visions of warm blankets for Nelly Purceil, and Mag Grady; visions o warm socks for my little children ; vis

timber; visions of vast chests of te and mountains of current cake swar before my imagination; and I coul Boys, ye have my blessing. "Thank your reverence, said the

ions of tons of coal and cartloads o

"For what?" I said. "If we have to subscribe, what is the mea ing of the concert?"

"Ah, but you know, sir, there as

preliminary expenses—getting must people to help us there."

This meant the usual guinea.

course they got it. The evening of the concert cam and I was very reluctant to leave a armchair and the fire and the slipped And now that my curate and I had a to work steadily at our Greek autho to show the Bishop we could do son thing. I put aside my Homer w regret and faced the frost of Nove ber. The concert was held in the store down by the creek; and shivered at the thought of two ha in that dreary room, with the winds open and a sea draught sweep; through. To my intense surpris-gave up my ticket to a well-dres young man with a basket of flower his buttonhole, and I passed int hall where the light blinder me,

turned toward me. And there we great shout of cheering; and I off my great coat and I was glad I There was a stage in front, cov with plants and carpeted; an grand plano peeped out from a fo of shrubs and palms; and la twinkled everywhere; and I begs think it was all a dream, when Campion came over and said she so glad I had come, etc., an

was dazed at the multitude of f

whispered:
"Funderstand all now when the little witch that has made

transformation."
Father Letheby sat by me, quie demure as usual. Presently there a great stir at the end of the room, and I looked around cautio for we were all so grand, I felt I s be dignified indeed.

"Who are these gentry comin the centre of the hall?" I whisp for a grand procession was stres "Gentry?" he said, "why, the the performers." They were just ing-dainty little maidens, in

from the bows in their wavy and locks down to their white shoes they carried bouquets, and a sub sence of a thousand odors filled th 'Visitors at the Great House whispered. "Not at all," he cried, impati "They are our own children. Mollie Lennon, the smith's day and there's Anna Logan, whose sells you the mackerel; and Tessie Navin and Maude Ke

"Who's that grand young with her hair done up like the girls of Tanagra?" I gasped.
"Why, that's Alice Moyla

"Good heavens!" was all ! say. And the doctor sailed in rt, all in swallow-tails and fronts, their hair plastered d curled, like the fiddlers in an

monitress