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ZENON,  
AN HISTORICAL NARRATIVE  
OF THE  
EARLY DAYS OF CHRISTIANITY.  
BY THE  
REV. RICHARD COBBOLD, A.M., R.D.,  
RECTOR OF WORTHAM;  
AUTHOR OF  
THE HISTORIES OF MARGARET CATCHPOLE,  
MARY ANNE WELLINGTON, &c.

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“ Not many mighty, not many noble, are called.”—1 COR. i. 26.

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*Second Edition.*

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## Z E N O N.

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### CHAPTER XXIV.

#### THE CONFERENCE.

ÆLIAN and Domitian held a long dispute concerning the astrologer. Managed as it was with great dexterity on the part of the subject, it answered the purpose which he had in view—namely, to get the Tyanean, who was his friend, out of the scrape into which he had brought himself, by boldly challenging the tyrant to give him a fair trial.

Ælian was a man, who, though he pandered to the taste of Domitian, had much regard

for letters, for men of piety and learning, and frequently turned away the wrath of the Emperor, by changing his views, and inducing him to forego intended severity.

“What says the astrologer to the prediction of Ascleterion? Hast thou conversed with him?”

“I have, O Emperor, and his advice to thee is such as I think calculated to destroy the prediction.”

“Ha, what does he advise? Such men, O Ælian, if their favour can be bought, are worth propitiating. Say, what antidote does he prescribe to neutralize the poison of this prediction?”

“It is a very wise and simple remedy. Stay thou at home that day; go not beyond thine own walls; admit no one to have an audience of thee; and confide thyself entirely to thy faithful servants. Have no worshippers of the

gods before thee. Let thy chamberlain be watchful, and do thou see that not even thy Prætorian band be too near thy person."

"Well, it is well advised. He does not say that these steps taken shall prevent the thing?"

"He does not say so, O Emperor ; but why recommend them at all, if not meant as a preventive?"

"He is a strange man, Ælian, and seems to defy death."

"He is a wise man, O Emperor, and is come to Rome, on purpose that all the world may hear of thy severity in putting him to death. My advice is, let him disappoint the world ; this will punish him much more than if thou didst put him to death, and will also add to thy reputation for mercy."

"He beards me even in my own palace."

"Dost thou not see his motive?"

"To provoke me to severity, that the world

may condemn me for the destruction of its most popular philosopher."

"It is even so, O Emperor. Give him a trial, and, if the world should be convinced of his guilt, thou wilt then have a fair plea for his execution ; but, if thou dost acquit him, let him depart, and the world will praise thy clemency."

The vilest men sometimes desire that the world should think well of them, though all the world knows their enormities. And even so Domitian was anxious to stand fair with posterity, though he did not shrink to exercise the most unheard-of cruelties upon Christians, Jews, and Romans. He fancied, indeed, that he enjoyed great reputation in the distant regions of his empire, and was anxious sometimes to receive foreigners with the most splendid displays of his bounty. At home, he reigned with iron terror, whatever golden

sway he might have exercised at a distance. Portentous omens were continually reaching his ears, and relating entirely to himself. The Chaldæans sent predictions to his palace. The German astrologers hesitated not to declare that his end was close at hand : one, in particular, pronounced that he would soon find that he was no god. Nothing offended his pride so much as this, and nothing proved so fully his madness ; for he put this German to death, for saying that he was no god.

Zenon had declared as much, and the Emperor had not forgotten to make great preparation for the imposing spectacle of the Circus. He had sent to all parts to purchase panthers, leopards, tigers, lions, bears, and wolves, that his people might be glutted with the sight of his inhuman sports. In the mean time, however, he was himself such a terrified spectator of coming events, that they appeared to

cast their shadows before them upon the gloomy mind and face of the tyrant. He wore a most suspicious and dejected countenance ; he could not look the most insignificant adversary in the face without a secret misgiving of some treacherous design ; and every criminal who came before him was bound, lest he should do mischief to the Emperor.

In such a state of continual terror did he live that his own household were astonished at his cowardice. He became a terror to himself and all around him. He was, to a certain degree, mad. Remorse of conscience made him such. He was so tormented with visions, that his chamberlain declared it was as bad at times to see him suffering as if he were actually in flames. At these periods, generally midnight, he would start up in a phrenzy, catch at something which he imagined he be-

held, and call out to Parthenius to stop him. At other times he would utter in his dreams the most melancholy groans, as if he was sinking beneath the weapons of murderers. Yet, when morning came, and he was convinced of his delusions, he would return to the wonted fierceness of his disposition, and endeavour by some new cruelty to efface the memory of his former deeds.

It was that morning on which he was holding his conference with Ælian, that a conversation of a deeply interesting nature was going on in the dungeon of Zenon. The philosopher, nearly one hundred years old, and the Christian in the prime of manhood, were sitting opposite to each other, upon two blocks of wood, which served them both for a table and for seats. Two men less affected by external circumstances could scarcely have been found in Rome. Yet two more deeply moved

internally, mentally, and spiritually, did not exist within the vast circumference of that city.

What light there was in the dungeon entered at an aperture far below the level of the earth. A strong iron grate, admitting light and air, rusted by time, yet strongly fixed in the stone casement, defied the attempts at escape, should any unfortunate being think himself able to tear it away. Had such been done, there was then a sudden square wall of twenty feet more, resembling a chimney, to scale before the surface of the earth could be reached ; and then the court-yard of the Prætorian guard presented a hopeless barrier to the prisoner.

But little light came streaming through the steep descent, and still less was admitted through the iron grate of the door leading into the atrium of the prison.

Neither of these men could be said to entertain for the other any very high estimation, though the common abode in which they now found themselves disposed them to be communicative.

“I have thought half the night, Zenon, of thee and thy position. Thou art now in the prime of manhood, and I am in the decline of life. The Emperor is thy senior by a few years, but, if he lives many more, he will be a scourge to thee and all the inhabitants of the earth : I cannot see where the sin would be to destroy him.”

“The sin, O philosopher, lies in thine own heart. Thou dost profess the greatest abhorrence at the sight of victims slain for idol sacrifices, and yet thou wouldst have the Emperor of Rome slain as a sacrifice to the idolatrous fancies of thine own philosophy ! Murder is contrary to God’s commands, and

the murder of a prince and a potentate of the earth, though he be a tyrant, is, on account of the powers with which he is entrusted, the greater sin."

"What! If he be a murderer himself?"

"Rome has delegated her former administration of the laws of the State to the sovereign disposition of the Emperor's will. The Senate granted supreme authority to the first of the Cæsars, and, having once given up the liberty of their own body, they have thereby enslaved the people. Hence they have made Emperors their tyrants. Few men are wise enough to govern without law, and, where people are weak enough to yield the liberty of their laws to the tyranny of one man, they must expect that he will require of them implicit obedience.

"Domitian has received such power, and is not made amenable to any laws. He is not,

therefore, to be murdered. What law is there in Rome to try him? what judge to condemn him? Before whom is he to be brought, and how is he to be punished?"

"Didst thou not own that by the laws of God he would be tried?"

"Yes; but my speech had then a reference to the Supreme Judge, and to a judicature before which every man's conscience will instantly condemn or acquit him. I was not speaking of human courts of justice, or of human laws."

"Dost thou, therefore, deem it unlawful that any man should be put to death?"

"I did not say any such thing; for, if a man will offend against the statute laws of the country in which he lives, let him be designated Christian, Jew, Greek, or Roman, let him be bond or free, such man must be amenable to the laws, in whatsoever kingdom or country he may abide."

“If then a law be made in Rome, that any one professing Christianity shall be put to death, thou wouldst consider that thou didst suffer death justly if thou becamest a Christian?”

“I should consider it my duty to do as God commanded me. If my becoming a Christian involved me in the transgression of the laws of the land I lived in, knowing, as I do, that it were better for me to obey God than man, I should not hesitate. It is even now a sin against the State to be a Christian; but it would be a sin against God not to be such, and which is greater, sin against Rome or against Rome’s Maker? The Emperor has issued a cruel edict; he has made a law against Christians. Christians must either seek another country and government, or they must abide the persecution of the Emperor.”

“And yet it is not lawful to put this Emperor to death?”

“It is not lawful, because God has commanded us to obey the powers of the kingdoms of the earth in all matters of civil jurisdiction. And where he has commanded us to submit, it were impious in us to attempt to subvert.”

“Dost thou not, therefore, sanction these wholesale murders?”

“Indeed I do not. Woe be unto him by whom such offences come! Prejudice, bigotry, passion, ignorance, jealousy, and a thousand different phantoms may conspire to deceive the Emperor into an idea that it is part of Christian ambition to obtain great temporal sway. The kingdom we seek is not of this world. The sway we would exercise is that of faith in the Word of God; and the rule we would practise is the doing unto others as we would that others should do unto us. We have no ambition to be great, and mighty, and to

lord it over the face of the earth ; but, if the Emperor be misinformed of our intentions, of our views, and hopes, we cannot help it. We dispute not his sovereignty ; we fight not against authority ; we submit ourselves to death ; but we preserve our faith and our consistency.”

“Thou art a wonderful man, Zenon ; but I cannot agree with thee in thy doctrine. I know not what thy faith may teach thee, but my philosophy will not admit the truth of thy position. Tyrants, who are amenable to no laws, ought not to have dominion over the laws. Look at Domitian ; he murders whom he will—when he will—how he will—and no one says, ‘Thou doest wrong.’”

“There thou art mistaken. We tell the Emperor that his is but a delegated authority, and that he must be accountable to the same God as we are. We submit as unto

God, though at the same time we protest against his cruelty."

"Zenon, I will put this prominent question before thee: 'Would those who rid the earth of such a tyrant as this be guilty of murder?'"

"Most undoubtedly they would."

"Then I should be a murderer were I to kill him, though I knew of his intention to slay me?"

"Indeed, thou wouldst. I know his intention to have me devoured by wild beasts; but I would not therefore slay him to escape the jaws of the lions."

"Not if thou hadst the power?"

"No."

"Then I would—old as I am—such is my abhorrence of the Emperor, that I would rid the world of him to-morrow."

"And the day after be done by as thou wouldst do to him. Thou dost deserve death

at his hands, since thou wouldst kill him thyself. Thou art guilty in thy heart of treason, and dost acknowledge it with thy lips. A Christian would do no such thing."

"Wilt thou, then, submit willingly to the lions?"

"I have already protested mine innocence; I am no transgressor of the laws, or I should suffer death justly. I should not refuse submission to condemnation, but should repent me of my treason. Domitian does me wrong—the Senate do me wrong—and they must answer the wrong that they have done."

"But surely it is not to be borne, the wrong which he hath done."

"We are born to suffering. We expect it at the hands of men; and if thou, O Apollonius, wert this instant to be exalted to the throne, I see not but that thou wouldst be as dogmatising a tyrant as the Emperor."

“I should not persecute thee.”

“I doubt it.”

“Why?”

“Because thou hast no religion—thou hast no faith in God nor man. Thou dost admit that it is lawful to destroy tyrants, and the same spirit would soon exalt thee in thine own sight to be the worst tyrant upon earth.”

“I tell thee plainly, Zenon, I think thee very obstinate.”

“And yet not half so obdurate as thyself.”

“The Emperor should not live to kill his subjects.”

“Subjects should not live to kill their rulers.”

“Thou wilt die in thine obedience.”

“Thou wilt die in thy rebellion, even before I shall see death.”

“Ha! how knowest thou that? Shall I not depart from Rome?”

“Thou shalt; and so shall I.”

“What, after the lions have eaten thee?”

“Go thy way! Go to the tribunal prepared for thee. Plead thine own cause. Thou knowest no one stronger than thyself. Thou wilt not kill the Emperor, though thou hast some knowledge of his destruction. Tell me no more—I ask nothing of thee. Thou art grown old in thine own ways. Thy maxim is, and always has been, ‘Conceal thy life, if not, conceal thy death,’ My maxim is, ‘Let all men see thy life, and let thy death be a lesson to the living.’”

Thus ended the conference between the Christian and the Infidel.

In a few minutes a notary arrived to inform Apollonius that he must leave the close and gloomy prison of the unfortunate Zenon, and again enter the more commodious and more airy apartment, in which the many prisoners of the State were confined.

He left it, with a heart as proud as Lucifer's, and as little mindful of the humble Christian who was at that very moment praying for his deliverance from sin and death. He was received with enthusiasm by the other prisoners and extolled as a deity, and this suited the pride of the presumptuous philosopher infinitely more than did the rebukes of Zenon. A philosopher is subject to vanity, and yields thereto : a Christian knows and feels that he is the same, and laments his weakness. The former is a god in his own estimation, the latter knows himself to be nothing.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

## THE TRIBUNAL.

DOMITIAN had scarcely an hour's rest the night before the trial of Apollonius. His discussions with Ælian and others were sometimes passionate in the extreme, and sometimes more reasonable. He lamented that he had summoned the Senate to observe the forms of a public tribunal. He repented that he had suffered himself to put on any such appearance of mercy, and most heartily wished that the case might prove inevitably fatal to the astrologer.

“What is the use of all these forms?” he exclaimed. “I can dispense with them: they seem only to be meant to dispute my authority. Is there any other real authority in Rome? Am not I the head, the fountain of law, and justice, and equity, throughout mine empire? Why didst thou move me, *Ælian*, to give this culprit even the chance of a trial? Bring me the depositions.”

They were placed before him, and, whilst engaged in reading them, the countenance of the tyrant assumed all that fierceness of expression for which he was so celebrated.

The public trial of *Apollonius* had been announced, and could not now be retracted. The Emperor must, therefore, as he well knew, put the best face he could upon it. Angry as he was with himself, and hating, as he most heartily did, all the astrologers in the world, he hoped that public condemnation

would fall upon this victim. He remembered with bitter feelings the taste of independence which he had met with in the trial of Zenon; and he looked fiery red at the very thought of such a show of spirit before all Rome. He could not alter his own edict, so he wisely submitted to the circumstances consequent upon it.

From the earliest dawn of day, the court was beset with people of the highest rank, anxious to obtain seats to hear and see the astrologer. If Domitian had desired to give the philosopher a triumph, he could not have gone a more direct way to grace it. The haughty and imperious monarch, the most absolute and dreaded among mortals, was to be confronted with a man, the greatest impostor, on account of the imposing form which he adopted—form of speech, form of dress, of manner, of power, and of fearlessness, which

he assumed wherever he journeyed. His fame was greater than the Emperor's; but the Emperor was in his own dominions, and the Tyanean was his prisoner. All eyes were anxious to see him.

“Damis,” said Apollonius, as he received the summons to leave the prison, “I must now go to make my defence before this tyrant. But do thou take thy departure from Rome immediately; take thou the road to Di-cæarchia\*, and go thou on foot. Salute Demetrius by the way, and then turn thou to the sea-side, where lies the Island of Calypso: there thou shalt see me.”

“What, see thee alive? and thou now going to be tried by Domitian?”

The philosopher laughed heartily, but his was the only laughter in the prison. His fellow-prisoners, who well knew the nature of

\* Puteoli.

the Roman Court, before which Apollonius had to stand, were fully convinced that it would be an impossibility for him to escape alive. He had cheered them so much with his vivacity and wisdom, that they grieved greatly to find him now standing upon the verge of such a volcanic eruption, as a fiery trial before the Emperor. They wept and kissed his hand, and in the most lugubrious accents took their leave of him, whilst he, with perfect composure, and with a cheerfulness which he had ever cultivated, told them that he should be acquitted, and that they need not mourn for him.

The philosopher had confidence in Ælian ; he had confidence in his own cause ; he had confidence in himself, and these are the most wonderful advocates in the conduct of a defence, especially where there was no lack of knowledge, nor any fear whatever of judg-

ment. He took his departure with the greatest composure, as if he were only going to pay a friendly visit to the Emperor, and not like a man going to be tried for his life, and by a prejudiced judge, furious to have him convicted.

As he was journeying along, he took no notice of the throng of Romans anxious to catch a glimpse of his person. He seemed to be in free and easy conversation with the officer of the Court, speaking to him upon the forms to be gone through, the nature of his trial, and the probable strength or weakness of his accuser. The officer asked him how much water he would require for his defence, alluding to the custom of using a *clepsydra*, a sort of filtering-vessel, out of which water ran, drop by drop, and noted time like the hour-glass. The prisoner's defence was to be included in the space of time such a vessel took

to empty itself. "If," replied the philosopher, "I were to speak all that I might properly speak, not all the waters of the Tiber would be sufficient, but if only as much as I wish to do, let mine accuser fix the measure for my reply."

At the door of the tribunal they were met by an officer of the Emperor's, who said, "Apollonius, thou must strip thyself, before thou dost enter the Court."

"Am I to strip for the bath? Does the Emperor grant me that luxury?"

"No; thou must put from off thy person all thine amulets, books, and charms."

"Will not the Emperor allow me a rod, to chastise the fool's back, who put such nonsense into his head? I have no fears of an accuser who can give such absurd advice."

He entered the Court. It was fitted up with the most gorgeous taste. All the illus-

trious men of Rome attended the Emperor. He was anxious to involve the accused in treasonable and rebellious motives against the State; but the man stood erect, with a front of such intelligent contempt for the Emperor, that men were astonished at his daring; and his accuser exclaimed, "Dost thou not look upon the god of Rome in the person of the Emperor?"

The philosopher cast his eyes up to heaven, and then with ineffable contempt upon the vile flatterer, who, perceiving himself foiled, exclaimed, "Measure out now, O Emperor, the water for him, for, if this fellow is suffered to speak, without some certain limits assigned, he will suffocate us all. I have here the roll, containing the heads of the charge, to which he must answer, and reply distinctly to each and every one."

"Thou hast well spoken, Euphrates, and

thy wisdom deserves commendation. Keep thou to the four questions, which appear to me to be most applicable to the case of the astrologer, and I will pour out the water for his reply."

The first accusation which the plaintiff, or rather the public accuser, Euphrates, brought was,—That Apollonius, in his great pride and presumption, desired to be distinct, even in his outward appearance, from all other men. "Let him account for it, O Emperor," he said, "in some proper way. Is it not because he desires to eclipse thee in the estimation of men, and affects a singularity of dress, to which no man ought to aspire, unless by special leave of thee, O Emperor? Let him answer to this charge."

"Speak, Apollonius, and at once, to this accusation, which is even now so apparent to the whole Court, and let thy words be few, and to the point."

“I will do so immediately, O Emperor. It is from no affected singularity that I appear before thee and this court, wrapped in a white linen dress rather than in the tanned skins of wild animals. My dress is not made of the furs of poor harmless creatures, which must be sought for in all the regions of the earth, and put to cruel deaths to gratify the pride and vanity of men. It better agrees with my philosophy, O Emperor to be clothed in the productions of the earth, and in materials belonging to the vegetable kingdom, than in those soft furs which adorn the necks of kings. Nor do I assume any dignity over them, as Euphrates seems to insinuate, by clothing myself in this humbler garb, better adapted to my circumstances of poverty, and congenial to my mind. True philosophy, O Emperor, is above affectation, and requires no splendour of attire to set it

off. I would only ask it of thee, or of any of thy nobles, ‘Dost thou envy Apollonius his humble garments?’ If he cannot say he does, how shall my opponent’s argument stand? I have done.”

There was some applause in the court, which evidently proved that the philosopher had given his opponent a proper reply.

“Proceed,” said the Emperor to the accuser, “with thy second clause; it does appear to me to be much more weighty than the first.”

“I have heard men call Apollonius a god; I have seen him, without any modesty, receive these praises, and consequently I accuse him of assuming a power belonging only to thee, O Emperor. Let him answer to this. Why did he permit mortals to call him a god, and pay him divine honours?”

“Answer this, Apollonius.”

“I am ready so to do, O Emperor, without

any assumption of authority which can in any way interfere with thy prerogative. Did I ever permit men to offer sacrifices to me, as if I were really and truly a deity? Euphrates knows that I never did. The only sense, O Emperor, in which I have ever received homage, has been that in which all good men have received it, namely, to have their good sense and wisdom termed godlike. It has been my lot sometimes to perceive that kind treatment will effect wonders, which no violence could perform. I have seen in many animals a spirit of resistance against cruelty, even in beasts of burden a disposition not to submit to force: and I have found that kindness, patience, and gentleness, have gone further with them than the violence of brute force, and they have done their work much more willingly. In men I have perceived the same disposition, and, knowing man to be a

superiorly gifted animal, I have always found that persuasive reasoning will go further with men than driving them by force: and, in the elucidation of these doctrines, O Emperor, I have found success so crown with triumph the arguments of philosophy, that men have been carried away by their convictions and have extolled me to my face. This, O Emperor, has been the only sense in which I have accepted homage. Dost not thou bestow the same upon many, whom it is thy pleasure to exalt, and when a man's words have pleased thee, hast not thou deemed him worthy of honour; and do not thine own people praise their Emperor? Why, then, should Apollonius be thought a criminal for accepting the praises of good men? This is my reply."

"Proceed with the next."

"I have to accuse him of presumption in predicting the plague at Ephesus, and I

would ask him if it were by instinctive impulse, or mere conjecture, that he predicted it. For thou dost know, O Emperor, that he who predicts evil has often more to do with that evil than at first appears to be the case. If any man predicted thy death, O Emperor, I should think that he desired by some means to bring it about. Let him answer this : ‘ How did he know that the plague was coming upon Ephesus ? ’ ”

“ Answer, O astrologer.”

“ By living more temperately than other men, I had greater opportunities of reflecting upon the causes of human decay. I perceived, O Emperor, that it was not good for the human mind to be too much clogged by the flesh ; and that nothing so much inflated the bad humours of the flesh and corrupted the mind so forcibly as gluttonous living. A man overfed is, like any other animal, subject

to violent irritations and diseases, lusts and impurities : and, where these become prevalent in a nation, they breed some epidemic disease contagious from the corruption of the flesh. I foresaw that in Ephesus so many impurities existed, that the very air would soon be tainted with the impure exhalations from corrupt bodies, and that a plague would ensue. If it is thy desire, O Emperor, I will enumerate the several causes of pestilential diseases.”

The Emperor, excessively fearful lest some of his own vices should be conspicuously brought to light, at once professed himself satisfied as to the reasonableness of the answer he had given, and, with a hasty voice, commanded Euphrates to proceed with the next count.

“ I come now to the last accusation I have to make. On the very day that thou didst

leave thy house to go into the country, namely, on the ninth of August, thou didst sacrifice an Arcadian boy. And I would know for whom, and for what purpose, thou, the wise philosopher, to whom shedding of blood is so repulsive, didst perform such an act as this? Let him answer this."

"Now, Apollonius, what sayest thou to this?"

"If it can be proved that, upon the ninth of August, as he states, I left my house at all, then will I admit that I went into the country and offered up the sacrifice he mentions. And if I did offer such a sacrifice, I will grant that which is even more horrible and unnatural, that I even partook of human flesh upon that occasion. But, with such admissions, O Emperor, I must compel my adversary to produce the most unexceptionable witnesses, upon whose character and credit there cannot be

the slightest imputation. I challenge Euphrates to produce a man of any reputation for veracity, to say that he saw me anywhere out of my own house that day. Only let him bring one credible witness who shall say that Apollonius was seen by any one outside his own door, and I am content. Euphrates ought to have known, and I perceive by his confusion that he does know it, that the ninth of August, ay, and the day before and the day after, are with me sacred days, and that I never stir out of my own house on those days, that I neither eat nor drink, but spend them in mourning for my first benefactor. Let him produce, then, his eye-witnesses—if not, his accusations fall to the ground.”

A murmur ran through the whole tribunal, at the very reasonableness of this demand; and when they saw the evident confusion of the accuser, and that he was unable to produce

his witness, a shout of applause arose, louder than was exactly suitable to the gravity of an imperial tribunal. The Emperor himself was so forcibly and palpably convinced that every voice in that assembly was with the philosopher, that he could not help giving a verdict in his favour.

“I acquit thee, Apollonius, of the crimes laid to thy charge ; but stay thou here, as I desire to have some private conversation with thee.”

The courage of the philosopher expanded with his acquittal, and he thought this moment the most favourable to impress upon the mind of the tyrant those fears which now began to be his daily companions, as well as to convince him of the mysterious character which he possessed. Well did Apollonius know the mind of the Emperor, and how to take advantage of the time to strengthen his assumption.

“I thank thee, O King, for mine acquittal—not that I expected anything else at thy hands: but I would tell thee before my departure a few plain words which may prove profitable to thy kingdom. Thou art surrounded, O Emperor, by a band of wicked informers, by whose means thy cities are laid in ruins, the islands are filled with exiles, the continent with groans, the army with fears, and the Senate with suspicions. Listen, O Emperor, to what I have asserted—and if thou dost deem it false, send persons to secure my body, for it is impossible for thee to take my soul, for, as Homer says,

‘No deadly spear can slay the immortal man!’”

So saying, he departed from the assembly, forbidden by no man, and in the very face of the Emperor. That he acted wisely in so doing there can be no doubt; for at that

moment the Emperor, thinking that all men would give him credit for not putting him to death, offered no resistance to his departure. Apollonius, considering that, as long as he remained a prisoner after his acquittal, he did but run the risk of a new trial, thought it best quietly to depart while he could. This he also deemed the best for his friends Nerva, Rufus, and Orfitus, against whom there was not then any shadow of pretence for condemnation.

Apollonius certainly rose in the estimation of men, on account of his unflinching defence of these three innocent nobles. He was not so clear from taking part, at least a cognizant part, in the cruel death of the Emperor, though it appeared to the men of Ephesus that he had a sort of second sight in this matter.

The tribunal acquitted the astrologer, and

he left Rome, not without seeing Stephanus once more, and receiving his assurance that all the conspirators were resolved that Domitian should die on the very day and at the hour agreed upon.

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## CHAPTER XXVI.

## THE WILD BEASTS.

THE day approached for the most wonderful exhibition of wild beasts which Rome had ever witnessed. Such a programme had been issued for the day of Zenon's execution, as set all Rome in an uproar of delight. Yet what had been his offence, even supposing that he could have been proved guilty of it? A simple neglect of etiquette, in default of personal attendance upon the Emperor.

Although, on the day before the public exhibi-

tion, the body of Pavidus the herald had been found floating in the Tiber, and was reported to be so found even by the Emperor's own body-guard, no notice whatever was taken of the circumstance by the bloodthirsty and revengeful tyrant, who was determined to outdo all his former shows by this most extravagant and expensive spectacle.

Wild beasts had been purchased from every collector in Rome and in the provinces. Ships arrived bringing roaring lions, which filled the poor slaves who plied at their oars with consternation.

Monstrous elephants were conducted by night into the dens of the Amphitheatre. Huge crocodiles were brought from Egypt. Wild bulls, with wide-extended horns, savage buffaloes, the tough rhinoceros from Africa, the tiger from India, the leopard, panther, wolf, and hyena, wild dogs, wild boars, wild

horses, wild asses, stags, and every species of rare and strange beasts, which could be bought for money, were brought to the dens for public exhibition.

For seven days all the agents of the Emperor had been employed in bringing in their vast purchases to fill every den in Rome. So that, night after night, the silence and the sleepers of that city were alarmed by the roarings, screamings, yellings, barkings, bellowings, and cries of the wildest animals of creation; and all this for a day's show of ostentation, savage cruelty, and mad folly, for the people of Rome.

What will not anticipated pleasure effect to raise the popularity of a tyrant? Popular favour must be courted, and frequently at a greater expense than the favour of a prince. Yes, even the tyrant of Rome, vindictive as he was, and absolute in doing what he would,

stooped to win the plaudits of his people, not by acts of mercy, generosity, virtue, and humanity; but by savage sports, fierce games, cruel sights, and human slaughter. Not, as in this day, were rare animals collected from different regions, to fill men's minds with astonishment, and to display to them the wonderful works of God. The first man's employment, in the days of his innocence, was to give names to all the inferior creatures which God had created upon the earth. And, as far as such a collection can be brought together and offered to public view, the contemplation of these wonderful works of the Almighty must furnish subjects of instructive study, and tend to produce a more profound admiration and reverence of their Maker.

Man's whole life might indeed be occupied with this study of the marvellous things of creation, but he has also to think of the short

duration of his present existence, and to consider that he is not to perish like the beasts of the field, but to be responsible for the exercise of the talents which God has bestowed upon him. Hence his most important work is the consideration of his own soul and its salvation. Everything his eye can behold must fill him with unspeakable thoughts of the majesty of the God with whom he has to do; and Revelation only can bring that wonderful fountain of wisdom near him, and let him see how provident God has been for his soul's safety, as well as his bodily support. Oh that men loved to read their Bibles, and worshipped the true God in spirit and in truth every instant of their lives. The animals of creation would then be doubly interesting, because they would be looked upon, as they are, for man's use, and not for his abuse.

But in the days of Domitian they were col-

lected for no other purpose than to be abused ; to be made to fight with each other, and to fight with man.

Among the severe punishments to which Christians were at that time subject, that of exposure to the wild beasts of the Circus was one of the most ignominious ; and none but the vilest slaves, the worst malefactors, and the Christians, were exposed to it.

Crucifixion was a very degrading method of execution among the Roman people, who, strange to say, had much more punctilious and proud ideas of decency in the manner of their deaths than in the course and conduct of their lives. But death by wild beasts was the lowest of all deaths, and therefore those whom they considered as the meanest and basest of men, they visited with this species of persecution. So Zenon, looked upon as a degraded man, was subject to this punishment.

The morning approached. The Roman people were invited by long bills to come to the great show. They knew, by the nightly disturbances in Rome, that they should have a grand exhibition, and the bills told them that, at the conclusion, they should see the noble Christian criminal exposed to be devoured.

In the Christian quarter, where, as yet, the Church had not been totally destroyed, but, on the contrary, had been miraculously preserved, the good Bishop assembled his elders and his deacons, and called together his flock to pray for the persecuted Zenon. That fear and trembling came upon many in Rome on that day is not to be wondered at, when the fierce nature of the tyrant and his persecutions were but too well known. This fear was not felt so deeply among the Christians, as it was among the senators, patricians, and nobles of Rome. The persecuted followers of the only

perfect religion knew well the terms which they adopted in taking upon themselves to renounce Paganism, idolatry, superstition, wickedness, vice, irreligion, and cruelty.

They had seen too often the god of this world "like a rampant and a roaring lion," walking about ready to devour them, to be terrified at his extended jaws, or at the thunder of his lungs. They walked by faith, expecting only to be treated as their Lord and Master had been; and, though they courted not, with eager and fanatical zeal, a violent death, yet they so walked, that such an extreme might not come upon them suddenly or take them unawares. They counted it all honour, when they came into tribulation, unprovoked by any misconduct of their own, well knowing the patience, hope, and experience consequent upon such affliction.

They did not suffer then for themselves that

degrading fear which the nobles of the city felt, when summoned to the spectacle of the Amphitheatre. Romans felt that if Zenon, for the mere form and ceremony of indifference to the Emperor's summons, was about to be exposed as the vilest malefactor, their own nobility would be little protection to them, if they should show any slight to the Imperial mandate, which was posted in all parts of the city, together with the most flaming description of the exhibition:—

The Emperor Domitian  
and  
The Gods Above  
invite all Rome to the Amphitheatre  
of  
Vespasian.  
Romans attend the Summons!  
This day:  
Nonæ iii  
Sept.

## Grand Exhibitions.

## PART I.

## THE HUNTERS.

Wild Boar Hunt. The Etrurian Wild Boars will be seen in their lairs in the midst of the Arena. Natives only of the hills will be permitted to engage them. One hundred appointed hunters will be employed. The boars' heads will be redeemed by the Emperor, but the carcasses will be the property of the hunters.

Five hundred boars will be let loose from the dens.

Then will be the Stag Hunt, in which none but the swift of foot and strong of limb can possibly prevail. Natives alone of Rome will be permitted to engage in this sport. The same number of animals and the same number of hunters. The stags taken to be the property of the captors and their friends.

Then will be the Hare Hunt, in which dogs will be permitted to pursue them, but no man to carry any weapon.

One thousand Hares and Conies to be turned out for the hunt. None but rustics to engage in the pursuit.

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## PART II.

### COMBATS OF WILD BEASTS.

The Arena will be parted for the Combats into Four Spaces.

Twelve Lions against Twelve Tigers—separate combats. Ten Bulls against Ten Lions—separate combats.

Four huge Rhinoceroses against four male Elephants. Four white Roman Bulls against four Buffaloes. Bears will be matched with Wolves, Leopards with Wild Dogs, Panthers with Jackals. Strange animals to be let loose.

## PART III.

## MEN AND BEASTS.

Men to combat with the conquering Beasts. Prizes to be given by the Emperor to the successful destroyers. No prize to be given to him who does not slay his beast.

N.B. The Elephants not to be destroyed, but to be secured. Twenty men to one elephant. All the famous combatants in Rome secured for this fight.

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## PART IV.

## THE CRIMINALS.

The destruction of Criminals by wild beasts, famished for the express purpose. The arena to be cleared.

To conclude with the destruction of Zenon, the Christian Senator, who despised the Emperor.

N.B. Zenon, being a noble, will be permitted to defend himself against a lion, a tiger, a wolf, a bear, an hyena, a wild bull, and a panther.

The Sea Monsters on a future day—at the Naumachia.

Long life to the Emperor.

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Such was the announcement posted in every public place in Rome, on the morning preceding the appointed day. Each part had an immense picture of the representation to be seen, so that all might imbibe a desire to see the show.

Nothing else was talked of in Rome; and the very man who, but a few days before, had been so unpopular as to be execrated by many, was now extolled to the skies for his public spirit, wonderful liberality, and desire to make the Roman people happy.

Yet how had he obtained the riches which he thus squandered away but by robbery and fraud, cruelty and death, confiscation and condemnation? The people only saw the surface of these things. They knew nothing of the secret dealings which enabled the tyrant to be so profuse in his pleasures. But were they pleasures? Did they bring him any ease from the torments which began to rack him? No, they did not.

He might like to hear the wonderful and magnificent generosity of the Emperor extolled. It might flatter his vanity to know that he had procured for Rome such a supply of entertainment, but the worm of conscience worked his way through the crown on the imperial head, and even through the gold-scaled breastplate which he had on; and made a strange coward of this monarch. Yet all the soothsayers pronounced it a lucky day, portended that it

should add to his honour, and be the means of securing the affections and interest of all the people of Rome.

But phantoms torment the wicked, day and night, in sunshine or in storm. Amidst the liveliest, noisiest, and most boisterous scene of mirth, care, like the Egyptian skeleton in the festive halls of that nation, brooded in horrid triumph over the soul of Domitian. No quiet could disperse it, nor any tumult drown it. He believed no one—he dreaded all men; he became a spectacle of terror to those around him, and, to himself, if left to himself, the most terrible of all tormentors.

Yet this man had caused all life and animation to run through Rome, and, perhaps, was the only one who had no anticipated satisfaction in the coming sight. Yes, there was one thing satisfactory,—he should, by Zenon's death, assert his own dignity, and

afford a terrible example to his nobles. He regretted in some measure that he had not kept Apollonius for the arena ; but congratulated himself, too, upon his clemency, and thought that, if any prophesied his ruin, him he would cause in the same manner to be destroyed.

The augurs did not alter their former declarations. Apollonius, strong in his convictions of the success of Stephanus, had inspirited the band of determined regicides by his approbation. Cunningly, carefully, yet mysteriously, he had promised them success, and enjoined the strictest secrecy, upon which depended the issue of the event.

He had left Rome, and was found by Damis at the place appointed, having travelled one night and one day, with the assistance of his friend Ælian, who had previously despatched relays of horses along the road to Puteoli,

under pretence of some government despatch relative to the provision of corn for the granaries in Rome. Still, even from Damis, Apollonius kept the conspiracy secret.

The proud Domitian, while filling Rome with the ostentation of his savage pageant, though he was himself miserable, little thought of the sedition then brooding in his own palace.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

## THE HUNTERS.

## PART I.

THE seventh day came, ushered into the faithful Zenon's dungeon with no unusual increase of external light, but with a degree of internal satisfaction which a Christian only can experience. He looked upon it as the day of his liberation from the body, from the sins of a guilty world, the corruptions of human nature, the persecutions of Domitian.

Whilst Rome was filled with the imaginary

terrors of his destruction, he alone was full of the joy of his liberation. True, many tears were shed that day in Rome—tears of affection, of real suffering, for the loss of a good man, a sincere friend, a faithful presbyter, an active, virtuous, humble pastor. The prayers of faith were offered up for him, that his strength might not fail him in the hour of his trial, but that, having done all that he could on earth to promote the glory of God, he might stand firm, girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, to confront the Emperor on his throne, the Roman people in their savage spectacles, and the wild beasts of the arena in their rage.

Nor was Zenon unmindful of his duties. He had felt, with the arrival of that day, the arrival of more than his wonted satisfaction. He who had comforted Flavius Clemens and Nicomedes, now received the greatest consola-

tion. Prayer and praise struggled for the ascendancy in his soul—prayer for the Church on earth, for the members thereof in Rome, and even for the people who knew not God—prayer for the long dark years of his own guilt and hostility to God—for his mother, if then alive (for he had heard nothing of her since the day of the execution in his prison)—for all those driven into banishment, and especially for his dear friends, Flavia Domitilla and Flaminia Domitiana—for the distant churches of Asia, and for the conversion of Britain.

For a time he seemed to dwell with devout fervour upon his mother-land. “Preserve her, O Lord, from idolatry ; let not cruelty reign in her, but let thy Word of Truth flourish among her people, and thy Church, planted in her soil, take deep root in the hearts of Britons ! Let her be as zealous for thy glory, as Romans are for the extension of their empire !

Let her become the servant of nations, and the instrument to awaken thine ancient people, that faith, returning from the West, may glorify the East, and all the world acknowledge the truth of Jesus Christ; that the Light which now lightens the Gentiles may be the glory of thy people Israel!"

Then followed his strain of praise and thankfulness for the inward mercies manifested to him; for the great honour conferred upon him, that he might be deemed worthy of punishment for the truth's sake. Too great joy was this for utterance: the spirit within him was animated beyond all language, and he seemed to himself to be lifted as it were out of this world, and to dwell in a flood of indescribable glory. He was carried into no ecstatic or extravagant gestures. His countenance alone betrayed the angelic motions of his heart, as he knelt at the gloomy window

of his dungeon, and imbibed a light within, above the light of the sun, which made his prison happier than a palace.

The happiest man in Rome that day was the persecuted Zenon. Transient was the joy of every other man : permanent and solid was his. Had the Emperor but known the pleasure which his fiery edict then gave the Christian prisoner, he would never have permitted it to be carried into execution. But tyrants judge only from their own hearts, and, as Domitian could conceive no greater horror than the wild beasts of the arena, so he conceived that they must have the same terrors for Zenon. Domitian knew not what it was to be a Christian.

The seventh day arrived. Heralds summoned Rome to the great, the recently finished Amphitheatre of Vespasian, now called the Coliseum. The usual flood of people poured

into that circumference, beneath which, in lofty dungeons, roared the terrified animals prepared for the exhibition. Sights! sights! what will not a people do for sights! There might be a few reflecting beings in that vast concourse, who thought of the natural dignity of man and sighed to see the prostitution of his soul to such enormities.

A Juvenal, a Martial, a Claudian, might write; but they would make little impression where a vitiated taste was encouraged by the high, only for the purpose of acquiring and establishing their individual popularity.

The reader has had his mind directed to the assembling in the Amphitheatre for a gladiatorial exhibition, in an early chapter of this work. It would be tedious to repeat the progress of the people of Rome to their appointed seats. Let the curtain of his imagination be at once drawn up, and let him

see a novel sight in the centre of that arena — an artificial forest—huge trees transplanted in full foliage, and fixed in the sand by vast diagonal blocks of wood and stone—brush-wood, or thick coverts of underwood, arranged with mounds of turf, to represent the wild fortresses of the animals, dens for the savage beasts; and rocks of stone covered with moss, taken from some ancient spot, and brought hither even from the site of Tarquinia, to grace the hunting-ground of the theatre.

Everything looked like nature, though but the work of Roman artists. So admirably, however, had every thing been contrived, that a stranger to these scenes, (and many such were then in Rome,) would have supposed that these things actually grew there, and that the Amphitheatre was built around them, instead of their being placed there by man's ingenuity. The quick removal of these mas-

sive works was perhaps as great a wonder as the collection of animals to that quarter.

Long and loud were the deafening shouts for the great artist of the theatre, who, amidst the applauses of the Roman people, received from the Emperor the crown of honour, which adorned his brow for the remainder of the day; and with it was bestowed the purse of gold, as a reward for his well-constructed deception.

This scene of the forest called forth the first burst of admiration from the people of Rome; and, as a scenic portraiture of real life, would vie with the painted and picturesque representations of modern days, in what is now called the Coliseum, in the Regent's Park. The natural breeze here actually made the trees move, and, from whatever point the forest was viewed, the deception was so complete, that no one could know the

delusion behind the scenes. After a full burst of cymbals and trumpets, the keepers of the different dens might be seen at their respective posts beneath the podium, but over the vast doorways of the dens, all with eyes intent upon the signal from the Emperor.

It was given by the letting a napkin fall as usual, and in an instant the dens of the wild boars flew open, and out rushed these tusked monsters, with their bristles raised, and in another moment proved themselves to be gregarious, by their collecting together in herds, sometimes of fifty, thirty, ten, and twenty. Five hundred of these were driven out of their dens, and came grunting and staggering into the arena. The *vox populi*, in bursts of joy, threw the boars into the most grotesque attitudes, which only increased the noisy delight of the people. These, in their turn, struck terror into the grim inhabitants of

the arena, and drove them into the shades of the forest.

Here and there, some resolute and fiery monster seemed to lord it over another, and to pursue him into the lairs. In another place might be seen the spectacle of the whetting of the tusks, or sharpening them against the trunk of a tree. A few, indifferent to the shouts, rolled themselves in the sand, as if they had been in their native plains.

When quiet began to reign, and the people to look for the coming action, the trumpets again sounded, and the hundred hunters entered with their spears, nets, axes, ropes, and swords, and, marching all in one body to the front of the Emperor's pavilion, bent the knee and bowed the head, in token of reverence to his dignity. Did he feel even then like a god! Base mortal, in that vast amphitheatre there was not a man, no not a beast so much in

terror as he was internally, though he then assumed the fearless exterior of the mighty Emperor. He waved his hand, and the hunters rose, dividing into four bodies of five-and-twenty: they proceeded at once to the work of slaughter. They drove out the monsters from the thickets, pursued them, keeping in a compact body, with pointed spears, forming a glittering, formidable barrier against an attack.

Singly, they soon dispatched many, but at times, when the death-cry of the boar was heard, the danger was imminent, for then, rushing from all parts, might be seen the enraged herd hastening to the rescue of their dying brother. Then quickly had two bands to form a square and prevent the fierce rush of the angry beasts. Sometimes the squares would be broken by the sudden shock of the herd. Then woe to him whose agility could not accomplish the feat of avoiding the light-

ning of the boar's eye, and the sudden rip of his tusk.

If once the hunter fell, nothing could save him from the rend. All the hunters were bound to assist each other; and the great interest of the sport was the rescue and delivery of the wounded into the hands of the surgeons, who had regularly-appointed places for the reception of those who had been disabled.

Sometimes it became a matter of doubt whether the boars themselves would not be the conquerors, though every man was an accomplished hunter, an adept at slaughter, and trained in a wilder school than the arena of the Amphitheatre.

Various single combats afforded great entertainment. When a boar was driven from the wood, and surrounded at the side of the theatre, the hunter's great skill would be displayed by the use of his well-trained spear.

He would approach the boar, and the animal would rush upon him : his spear would perhaps be shivered in his hand, and it would seem that the monster must disable him.

But when the animal was in the act of rushing at him, and turning his head on one side to pierce him with his tusk, the hunter would spring into the air, leaping directly over the boar, who, plunging his head into the sand, foiled by meeting no resistance to his thrust, would roll over and expose his body to the sword of his antagonist. Twice had this scene been enacted, to the mingled terror and delight of the spectators. Other acts of equal skill and daring were exhibited, in forcing the beasts from their lairs.

Sometimes the nets were fixed in front of a portion of the wood, and the boars driven into them. Entangling themselves, they thus became an easy prey to the spoiler. At others

they were provoked by wounds to rush out upon their foes, to their own immediate destruction.

The decapitation of the boars was performed with great dexterity, each head being borne to the sand before the throne, and the teller pronouncing the number to the Emperor.

As the boars diminished, it frequently happened that the hunters also become exhausted. But the whole five hundred must be killed, or not one would be paid for, and the hunters were disgraced. The searching after the hidden remnant became always the more intensely interesting, as the time allowed for the spectacle began to draw to a close. Efforts, however, became the greater as difficulties increased, and the last one always provoked the greatest excitement, coming as it did, with very few drops of time to spare.

In this instance the hunters were successful,

and though their ranks were considerably thinned, yet, kneeling behind the boar's heads, they pointed to their triumph, and received the *missilia* of the Emperor, entitling them to their *spolia opima*. The spoliarium, indeed, was full of carcasses, yet these, in an incredibly short period, were removed either to the shambles, or to the houses of citizens, as the purchaser or friends of the respective hunters had orders to take them away.

The moment the hunters were dismissed, the attendants of the arena, in bands appointed, soon smoothed and watered the sand again, repaired the broken fragments of the caves, and made way for the herd of antlers to come upon the plain.

Fine deer, the largest and noblest which could be obtained, bounded over the sand, their lofty antlers exhibiting a formidable front to the hunters. One hundred Roman

youths, of various ranks, were permitted to show their skill in this species of public enterprise. Fathers of patrician blood beheld with pride the spirit of their sons upon this occasion, and it became a favourite opportunity for young men of the grandest mould to show off their frames, as well as their dexterity in this sport.

There was some degree of elegance also in the very dress and accoutrements of these hunters. Each carried a bow and quiver, as well as a cord and a sword. These men were permitted to make their obeisance to the Emperor without kneeling, being all free men, and many of them wearing rings on their fingers, and armlets, as badges of their equestrian order. They were hailed with animation by the nobles of Rome, and marked with that peculiar honour from the Emperor, his rising to acknowledge their salute. None others were permitted to rise.

It was then that the monarch selected as his champion the most graceful or most favoured youth to be commander of the party ; the master stag, as he was called, among the hunters. As the Emperor was never supposed to know any personally, it was thought that he was generally very impartial in his choice. If he really had no favourite, it was considered that, from that day forward, if the master distinguished himself, he was sure of promotion in the army, navy, or Senate of Rome. No man, however, of inert habits would ever become a candidate for this honour, and hence it was, that the master hunter generally distinguished himself in after life in the position to which his good fortune and skill had raised him.

The honour fell this day on Maximus Venator, a young man as distinguished for his prowess as for his learning, generosity, and

usefulness in the affairs of the State during the reign of Trajan, as the younger Pliny, his friend, was for his classical latinity.

The hunters followed their leader, they pursued the stags, drew their bows with elegance of gesture, as if they had studied it from Etruscan Vases, and sent their formidable showers of arrows with murderous aim. The stags were soon driven from the narrow coverts, the glens not being impervious, nor the coverts thick enough to obscure their antlers. The slaughter of these timid animals was quicker than that of the boars, but sometimes not less dangerous. The herd, pent up, would occasionally make a desperate rush: no bold front of the hunter could withstand them. The judgment of the commander or master was then visible.

When the leader of the stags, some mighty antlered champion, whose size or daring gave

him, by tacit consent, the pre-eminence, chose to make a stand, the herd, like good soldiers, understood the manœuvre of their leader. Desperate to act, when once the master stag was resolved to rush, not a single antler refused to follow in succession.

It was just such a moment which Maximus Venator distinctly perceived must come. The stags had been penned in, nearly opposite to the Emperor. One hundred of them were enclosed in a semicircle of hunters, towards the middle of which arc stood Venator. He saw the master stag preparing for his rush, and twice had he come with a feint towards him. At last, with one consent, the whole herd seemed to turn, and say "Lead on," and the master stag made his rush at Venator, who knew well that he could not resist him.

He therefore threw himself on his back,

dislodged his quiver, and the master stag flew over him with a bound, followed in quick succession by every one of the herd. Then was the uncommon skill of the hunter displayed ; for, quietly drawing his bow, as he lay on his back, he distinguished himself above all, by taking a flying aim, under his game, which never failed to bring down a buck, with the arrow in his heart. The peculiar skill of this feat consisted in never raising himself so as to afford a mark for the antlers to pierce him, but shooting the stag as he flew over him. The only object of the animals was to escape, which, when the opening presented itself over the body of the prostrate leader, they took advantage of, by leaping over the seemingly lifeless body of Venator.

In due time, with some few casualties, this portion of the spectacle was brought to an end, and the honours of the Circus were conferred upon the chief hunter.

Next succeeded the more lively, stirring, and animated sight of dogs and men hunting the thousand hares and rabbits through the arena. Unarmed and swift of foot, these country people afforded excellent sport to the citizens. To see them pursue the creatures now upon the plain, sometimes stooping down, as the dogs drove the hare towards one of them, and as the animal sprang, catching her in his arms, or, if he missed her, rolling over on the sand. Various were the exciting incidents of this sport, though no particular danger awaited any of the rustics. The very tongue in which they spake, the clumsy attitudes they exhibited, and the clownish joy with which they held up their unfortunate victims before they strangled them, all added to the mirth of the Amphitheatre; and, when the first part of the entertainment closed, the shouts of "Long life to the Emperor!" reite-

rated from every quarter, told him that, however much he might fear the seditious, yet at that moment none could be more popular than Domitian.

One thousand head of wild game were secured, and the rustics, delighted with their success, carried away their tiny spoils, to dispose of them at the best market they could find. So ended the first part, after four hours' unabated excitement, in which the spirits of the Roman people suffered no fatigue.

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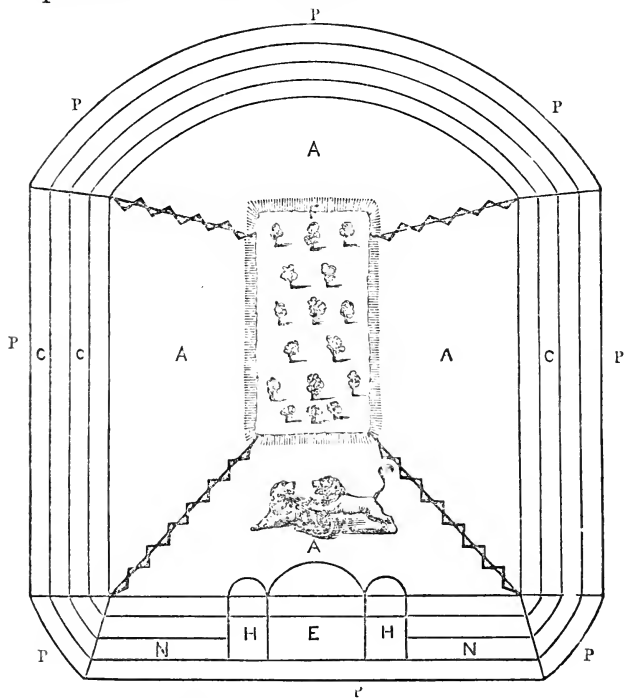
## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## COMBATS OF WILD BEASTS.

## PART II.

THE barriers were now brought forward. A vast circular one encompassed the forest, so as to prevent the wild beasts from taking refuge therein, and sufficiently lofty to prevent their escape; the sides were made perfectly smooth: they were like huge folding doors, and stood in zig-zag form, like the folds of a large screen, with strong iron bars to prevent their closing, and to keep them firm in their position.

The Arena was divided in this form into four vast spaces, and so arranged that all the spectators could behold the contest.



A. The Arena.

E. The seat of the Emperor and favoured guests.

H. The Heralds and Trumpeters.

N. The nobles of Rome.

C. The Freeman and Citizens.

P. The Populace.

F. The Forest.

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G

To see what the united strength of Roman muscles could effect, was a wonderful part of the exhibition. The skill with which these barriers were carried, or rather dragged on low trucks, by naked hands and feet, and then raised, unfolded, locked, secured, and fastened, was, to the intelligent mind, an object of as great interest as the combats. There was not a stone, a tree, a mound, a bar, which was not brought into that area by manual labour; nor was there one which was not removed before the last scene, with a rapidity and judgment which showed more of the greatness of Roman powers in the concentration of a united force, than any other efforts on the arena.

There is always great excitement in the preparation for any great work of public entertainment. Men keep observing and closely watching, step by step, how a thing is done, and experience great satisfaction in beholding

its completion. What then is the joy of bringing a great mental work, which has cost a man the labour of the whole period of his youthful vigour, to a conclusion?

Carry, reader, your thoughts a little higher, and think what is the joy of a good man's life when he can say, after a career of arduous indefatigable struggle with himself and all kinds of evil: "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all those who love his appearing\*."

Carry your thoughts a great step higher, and think of the joy of those bright beings who inhabit eternity, when they beheld the stupendous work of the Almighty Creator in finishing the construction of this earth; "when

\* 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy\*.”

Carry them now to the height, my Christian readers, and think of His holy joy, who upon the cross proclaimed the mighty work of man's redemption from the foundation of the world to the end thereof, in these words: “It is finished!” Think of the joy of angels, over the truly converted sinner. Think of the resurrection of the just; of your own hope therein—and say, my friends, if the prospect of arriving at that place where God shall wipe away all tears, in which there shall be no more sorrow, nor weeping, nor death, be not one more animating than all the treasures of the earth and the crowns of kings.

Must you be recalled a moment from those scenes of faith to those of earth! O may it be only to exalt your views the higher by the

\* Job xxxviii. 7.

comparison, or rather the contrast, between earthly and heavenly things !

Romans did enjoy the preparations for the coming combats. Every countenance, save the Emperor's, seemed to exhibit that species of animation which anticipated pleasure excites. The barriers were up. They were tried with great force, to see if they could be overturned. The work of the artist was perfect of its kind, and he received the meed of praise which was his due.

The stern Domitian, having been some time in a reverie from the accusations of his conscience and the fears which they raised, for a guilty conscience needs no visible accuser, was roused from his stupor by the herald pronouncing : " The barriers are up."

" Sound then the trumpets, and let the sports begin."

In a moment there was a terrific roar

from the mouths of four lions which came forth from their dens, hearing and expecting to see each other, and whose their disappointment, occasioned by the barriers, only increased their fury. Four majestic male lions stalked along the arena, their manes and tails erect, and their large black-fringed yellow eyes, set in a circle of the softest white, upon the tawny ground of the hide, exhibited a truly monarchical appearance. They lashed their sides with their huge black tufted tails, cast their orbs up at the people, opened their deep throats, and seemed to roar aloud, "Are we not kings?" It was no pigmy roar they gave, such as may be heard in our modern menageries, but such as could be heard not only in the Amphitheatre but to the distant walls of Rome.

Intense silence pervaded the people, who themselves, like ancient lions, when stirred up, could utter the fiercest war-cry. The royal

brutes were answered by others of their own species from within the caverned dens of the arena. The trumpets again sounded, and four tigers alighted upon the sand of the four compartments separated for the combat. The breathless anxiety of the people was now universally observed, as these handsome but terrific creatures of the African and Indian wolds eyed each other with astonishment.

In the compartment of the Emperor and the nobles the grandest scene was exhibited; for the tiger, not with his usual sneaking and slinking caution, which he generally showed in creeping round the sides of the compartment, at once boldly confronted the king of beasts. The lion stood with tail as straight and stiff as that of a well-trained pointer dog when he has found a covey of partridges. His head was raised, his mane moved up with all the stateliness of the peacock's expanding tail, and

he looked the very personification of brutal contempt.

Slowly, softly, elegantly, yet artfully, moved the supple-jointed tiger towards the stiff lion. His tail was upon the sand, sweeping with rapid brushes the glittering, sparkling particles which shone in the sun like diamonds, and evidently proving that he was angry to see an antagonist possessor of the plain. He was in size equal to the lion, and was the only tiger of the four then upon the arena who commenced the attack. "I'm ready for thee," the stiff and stately lion seemed to say. "I'm coming," also seemed to say the tiger.

At the distance of about three yards the tiger paused, bent his head to the ground, set out his broad feet, and for a moment ceased to lash his tail. All this while the dignified lion kept his grave face fixed upon him. He moved not a muscle; his attitude was that of

a soldier in the squares of Waterloo, prepared for his antagonist, whilst the tiger looked in vain for the advantage which his imposing advance might hope to create. He did not, however, prepare to spring, without the full intention of so doing, as the next moment proved.

He flew directly at the head of his antagonist, who, receiving his fixed claws in his face, merely shook his majestic skull, and the tiger lay prostrate before him, but the blood streamed down his kingly brow, and shewed that a lion is not invulnerable. He bounded upon the body of the prostrate tiger and seized him by the throat; but here the supple beast beneath him had a singular advantage while upon his back, which the feline species only possess, namely, that of ripping open the bowels of an animal above, with the hind claws. Instantly the tiger effected this with

the most surprising rend, shewing that his hind claws, when aided by the bend of his spine, could do that which neither his teeth nor his fore feet could perform. The tiger's hind paws were literally buried in the entrails of the lion, who, in the fury of his suffering, smashed the jaws of the tiger in his dental grasp. The fallen beast could bite no more, but he struck the lion with his fore paws, tearing him from mane to ears. Yet even then neither would yield his grasp, till exhausted nature proved that both must die.

The tiger first extended his limbs, and the royal beast, finding no resistance, relaxed his hold and walked some paces on the sand, dragging his entrails after him. He suffered severely, turned his bold head to his sides, tried to roar, but his voice was faint—his hind quarters first became paralyzed and useless, and the poor brute, prostrate on the sand, at

length exhibited a mournful spectacle of dying grandeur.

He lay looking at the Emperor's pavilion, feeble, harmless, and even meek, seeming to say, as the film of death spread over his eyes, "We all must die." The tiger was dead—and the lion died, and their bodies were dragged forward to the front of the throne, measured from tip to tip, and their lengths reported to the Emperor.

A shout of admiration burst from the nobles at this well-contested and fatal battle, whilst the populace at another quarter, indignant at the cowardice of a tiger which submitted to be killed without a blow, execrated with screams of disappointment the speedy termination of the struggle.

In the two side compartments the lions prevailed, killing their antagonists by dint of personal prowess, but both had severe

battles to go through before they conquered. They were easily enticed by food into their dens, glad to rest from the exertions of the arena.

Four more beasts succeeded, twice more in the same compartments, with similar adversaries. At the end of the lion fights, it was found that seven tigers were killed and six lions, so that each side had nearly equal success in these combats, which afforded great amusement to the people.

Every change brought additional excitement. The bulls and lions came next, in which, strange to say, the result was exactly equal, five lions and five bulls proving victorious. This greatly delighted the people.

But the next fight, on account of its extraordinary nature, proved most attractive. Four huge elephants were goaded on to the arena ; their actions were permitted to be seen for

some time, before the rhinoceroses were introduced. It was curious to see these huge creatures winding their trunks together above the barriers, which may be supposed to have been strong indeed, when two elephants could not get together for them. To see them roll their ponderous carcasses on the sand, cast up the dust with their feet, make great wallowing-places with their tusks and trunks, as if they would bury themselves, walk round the Amphitheatre, lifting their probosces to obtain if they could some food, until the trumpets sounded, and out rushed the elephant's bitterest foe, the scaly rhinoceros—was a sight of savage joy.

With a loud snort they rushed at once impetuously on their bulky adversaries, and set the people in an uproar of delight. They stopped not to look defiance, but with a bold, forward, restless impetuosity ran to the battle. Clumsy

and awkward as the rhinoceros is in his appearance, he is far quicker in his motions than the elephant. He is also bolder, fiercer, and more determinately savage. He will destroy anything and everything with life that he can come at ; at least, he will attempt it, and die or conquer in the contest.

His single horn, planted at the extremity of his frontal bone, almost at the nose, is surrounded by muscles of the strongest kind, and with it he can overturn almost incredibly such opposing masses as no other beast can cope with. The elephant has tusks more formidable, but they break sooner than the short thick horn of the rhinoceros.

In the contest on the arena, the thrusts of the one-horned foe quickly tore great seams in the thick hide of the elephant, and roused his mighty wrath into murderous vengeance. Two such enraged monsters opposed to each

other seemed to shake the very fabric of the amphitheatre. They came with such powerful shocks against the barriers, that men trembled lest they should give way: and, at one time, when the huge elephant ran his long tusks through the body of his opponent, and pressed him against the enclosure with all his force, it did seem as if the whole would be overturned. More blood was spilt in these four encounters than in any of the preceding, for it was extremely difficult in such tough-hided creatures to pierce a vital part. A rhinoceros will never flee from any animal. His strength is such that he will fight, though his skin be pierced, and even his body if not mortally, until his life-blood has run out. His blows are like the rapid strokes of the husbandman's flail, when he is threshing out the corn; and, should he get under the body of the elephant in one of his stoops, such is his strength that

he will fairly lift the monster from the sand and overturn him with a jerk. This is his aim; and, if successful, so slow is the elephant in rising, that his body is pierced vitally before he can recover his feet.

In the Emperor's compartment, after a most violent contest, such was the unfortunate overthrow of the finest elephant on the arena, and which had cost the tyrant an enormous sum.

In the other divisions, the fight was equally severe and bloody; but the elephants were victorious. When the beasts, exhausted by loss of blood, had fallen, then was seen the trampling to pieces of their vanquished foes. The elephants, enraged, would crush their heads by trampling on them after they were dead, piercing them through and through, thus showing their savage joy at the victory. The rhinoceros, on the contrary, touched not his antagonist when he had once dispatched him. He

left him, and immediately turned his attention to the rubbing of his wounds against the barrier, as if he would fill up the holes with the oil of his greasy hide.

Excitement prevailed long with the elephant, but it was soon over with the rhinoceros, who could easily be induced to follow a bundle of wet grass and rushes, which were thrown to him, and drawn along the sand to his den.

This sport gave great satisfaction to the spectators; nor less did the match between the Roman bulls and the wild buffaloes, in which the manœuvres of butting, running at each other, and retiring backwards to rush upon one another with renewed fury, were fiery and animated sights. The superior size and strength of the Roman white bull, and his greater weight, gave him considerable advantage, and in all four spaces he was victorious. This was looked upon as a favouring omen

from the gods above that Rome should conquer Africa.

The contest of bears and wolves succeeded, and afforded great amusement from the grotesque attitudes into which the bears were forced by the attacks of the wolves; but in general the wolf was squeezed to death by his antagonist.

The Indian wild dogs next pursued the flying leopards, who in vain attempted to ascend the sides of the barriers, and were at last fairly brought to bay by these strange brown dogs, who had no sooner conquered than they devoured the animal, fighting with each other for the morsels.

The jackals were not as successful with the panthers, who killed them very quickly with the blows which they gave with their paws, whenever they advanced; till panthers and jackals had to be driven into their dens, because they would fight no longer.

Lastly came the exhibition of rare animals, admirable for their strangeness, elegance or beauty—quaggas, zebras, giraffes, elks, unicorns, hippopotami, succeeded by ostriches, pelicans, eagles, and, if we may believe historians, a nondescript animal, said now never to have existed—a dodo. And so closed the second portion of the shows.

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

MEN AND BEASTS—CRIMINALS AND ZENON.

## PART III.

THE Roman character is naturally fond of excess: excess of ardour, excess of enterprise in love, lust, ambition, or warfare; excess in poetry or prose; excess in admiration, either in their shows, triumphs, or sacrifices; excess in devotion or superstition; excess in severity; excess in cruelty; excess in sculpture, in funerals, marriages, dedications, pomps, pageant-tries, mournings, or rejoicings. In nothing,

however, were they more excessive than their gladiatorial combats with the wild beasts of the arena. It became, at the time when Domitian's pageants were most frequent, a matter of such perfect science, that schools were formed for training young men to fight with beasts, preparatory to their public contest; so that the young nobles knew for the most part exactly how any wild beast should be killed, and could expatiate in society very eloquently upon the sport they had enjoyed in the schools.

Shame to say it, such, likewise was the bloody taste of the Emperor, that even females were encouraged to show their bravery by this species of savage exhibition; and she who could best wield the club against a beast could win the especial notice of Domitian. On this day no females were permitted to fight: though many were the women who longed to exhibit their masculine, not feminine, prowess.

It was philosophically, or rather physically, argued, as many horrible things are in this day, that it was actually necessary to encourage these things to keep up the savage, or, as they termed it, manly spirit, of the Roman youth.

At the same time it was overlooked that these combats produced great extravagance, and led to the ruin of thousands. Pleasures always lead to ruin. They are the most expensive of all habits, and, when indulged in, not as recreations but as the whole business of life, by many who have wealth and time to squander, they often degrade the dignity of the human mind, and fill it with ferocity instead of generosity. Men of pleasure make a business of it. If they read, it is only for the pleasure of the moment, to forget all instruction in the next game. So was it in Rome. Many a man was reduced to beggary or to slavery by

play. Ay, what he at first deemed pleasure he found at last his ruin.

In those days, when the creditor could obtain nothing else, he had the power to sell the debtor for a slave. Some men of princely fortune, who gave public entertainments of gladiators, were reduced to prize-fighters themselves. And in the very show which the Emperor was then giving, there were no fewer than twelve young men who had enjoyed Equestrian rank candidates for the degraded prizes of the combats with wild beasts.

One hundred hired gladiators were to contend ; some singly, others by pairs, others by fours, sixes, and eights, according to the number of wild animals to be let out at once, only so that every man should be matched with a beast at the onset. He who slew his beast was expected to remain with his companions, and only to attack another beast when it had

proved victorious over a man; so that it sometimes happened that one man had to contend with several beasts.

This happened only where a band of young men ventured, without previous instruction in the schools, to come at once into the arena. In general they were experienced hands; and particularly on this occasion the most expert *bestiarii*, or gladiators with beasts, were secured. Fifty lions were killed that day before the Roman people, whilst only two men were conquered.

It gave great pleasure to the mass to see the men with their different weapons engaging lions, bears, wolves, and tigers. Some afforded excellent sport by the very stout resistance which they made; and, when a bear had succeeded in clasping his antagonist, so as to lay him dead upon the arena, the height of savage joy was manifested in the applause of the bear,

in the same way as, in modern days, at the bull-fights in Spain.

The last combat of the arena was the most singular, and at the same time the most dangerous—the provoking of an elephant to rage. Brought as he was to Rome in subjection to man, he was hardly to be called a wild beast, and only when he was exposed to the ferocity of the rhinoceros was he easily roused to be formidable.

Twenty men, however, were to provoke this noble animal to wrath. Into the common people's compartment a very tame elephant had been introduced, one which was not originally intended for the games, but had been purchased immediately to supply the place of the one which the rhinoceros had killed. He was so well known to Rome, that he went by the name of Romulus, and was caressed by the citizens as he used to take his rounds with his

keeper through the streets. This animal, strange to say, was much more ferocious when provoked, than those more recently brought from India. He was not expected to afford any sport, and entered the arena with his human-looking eye, as calm as if he were then going his rounds through the city. His keeper was not allowed to be with him, but retired the moment he was ushered into the arena.

He walked quietly round, gazing calmly and innocently at the multitude, as if he knew many faces there ; and many there knew him, and were surprised, and not very much pleased, to recognise him. Even Romans had their attachments to beasts, and, as they had great affection for tame ones, they could not bear to see this fine fellow, who had become familiar to them, provoked by cruelty to wrath. A murmur ran through the multitude. "Let Romulus alone," cried one. "He is a Roman,"

exclaimed another. "Don't touch him, gladiators," said a third. "He is one of the genii of Rome;" "He's a brother;" "I love Romulus;" "Let him be led out." Even these sayings were heard: "Death to the man who provokes him!" "Kill the gladiators, Romulus!" "Crush them to atoms, if they pierce thee!"

Such a sound of discontent reached the ears of the Emperor that he sent the chief master of the games to know what disturbed the people. He was informed that they did not like the elephant selected to be enraged. "Then tell them," said the Emperor, "to depart from their seats." This was a bold stroke for Domitian, and it succeeded; for the people, more desirous to see the last savage spectacle than any other—namely, the destruction of the criminals—kept their seats, and were silent.

Romulus, however, provoked by the treatment

he received, one piercing him with a spear, another striking with a sword, others throwing stones at his trunk, and dust in his eyes, at last became so furious that, after looking most plaintively for his keeper, and not seeing him, he rushed upon the men with a rage ten times more boiling than if he never had been tamed. So sometimes the sweetest and most subdued tempers will, by unexpected provocation from those they love best, burst forth into the more excessive anger. Always, be it observed, however—always the more sorrowful afterwards, because it makes them so very unhappy to have been provoked to anger.

Romulus, in his rage, seized one of the gladiators with his trunk, lifted him up into the air, and dashed him down again with such force that he killed the man in an instant, and immediately set his ponderous feet upon his chest and body and crushed him,

as the foot of an ox would a toad. Another man he pierced with his tusks, and pinned him to the sand, and, whilst kneeling down in this act, ropes were coiled round his hind legs, and then run through a large iron ring, like the ring of a modern anchor, such as we see fixed in the stone piers of some seaport town. The iron was fixed in the sides of the amphitheatre for this and other purposes.

Two men were thus killed before Romulus could be secured, and, when he rose, and found himself shackled, and received the taunts of his conquerors, his rage was one of the most frightful of spectacles. In vain he endeavoured to disentangle himself: the harder he pulled, the tighter he drew the rope round his enlarged and horn-hidden foot. If the rope had broken, he would have killed them all, but he was secured. Fierce as he was, the entrance of his keeper into the arena was the

most painful sight for men of true feeling to witness. How the poor beast moaned! how he besought his protector to release him! which he dared not do, until the trumpets announced the Emperor's satisfaction. It was painful to witness it. But the moment came. The keeper besought the gladiators to move out of the arena, or he would be sure to kill them. After they were gone, the keeper cut his cords, and set him at liberty, not without some terror for his own safety; but he quietly fondled the man, showed him great affection, and set him on his back; but he never forgave the Roman people. His keeper never dared let him walk the streets again, but departed with him from Rome to some distant province. The elephants were with great difficulty removed alive, after affording the greatest sport. And now came the last part of the performance—the criminals.

## PART IV.

## THE CRIMINALS.

THE anticipated delight of everything preceding this moment was nothing to be compared to the then expected horrors of the Roman populace. But this expectation was observed to be accompanied by silence—silence, yea, even by pallid faces. In this respect the Romans were more decent in their behaviour than the multitudes who throng the spaces opposite to our public gaols, when a criminal is to be executed in a Christian country. Yet this silence was produced in those heathens at a sport, a something to entertain, to amuse, and to enliven them.

Death, as a spectacle, is not more remarkable in one creature than in another. There is to be seen, undoubtedly, a violent distortion where a violent death is inflicted. Animals

naturally fly from another of their own species when seized with the agonies of death. In a herd of wild beasts this is often witnessed : the poor creature about to die retires from his companions ; they do not interfere with him, but keep at a respectful distance, as if he were no longer to be their associate. They have no pleasure in witnessing the death-pangs of their brother brute.

But man, the highest, the only rational being placed by God on this earth, has a strange, morbid desire to witness the death of a criminal about to be executed. The more terrible and severe that death, the more inviting the spectacle. In Rome this event was heightened by the very ferocity of the death to which the criminals were to be exposed. The most ferocious beasts, which had been kept in a state of hunger for several days, until they became ravenous, were to be introduced before

the people, and the eight criminals to be devoured were to be thrown down from the podium upon the sand, four at a time. Poor wretches ! they were led by their guards to the appointed spots of the amphitheatre, and had the terror of beholding the lions, with their famished jaws, anxiously expecting their food. The signal was given, and in an instant four human beings were hurled down to their rapacity.

Intense was the interest of the Romans at that moment—no pity, no prayer, no feeling. There was, however, no brutal laughter, such as is sometimes exhibited at the execution of criminals in a Christian land, none of that low ribaldry and reckless heartlessness which is so disgusting to the thoughtful. A stern sense of horror pervaded the people, as they saw the criminals torn limb by limb by the famished monsters. Men looked at each

other, and could not help shuddering at the dreadful termination of such bloody scenes. Yet no man cried shame! no man uttered an exclamation; but the growlings of the lions, and the shrieks of the victims could be heard in all parts of the amphitheatre.

This horrid spectacle was twice exhibited, the first time with lions, the second with wolves, four to each man. As these poor creatures stood upon the podium, a few big drops of rain came splashing upon the stones—an indication of a coming shower. But as the Emperor himself was desirous of seeing vengeance carried into execution upon Zenon, and was fearful lest it should be prevented, he ordered the awnings to be immediately spread out from the lofty heights, that he and his nobles might not be disappointed of the only execution which for their sakes he desired to behold. The last four criminals were therefore quickly

hurried into eternity, and their bodies very soon devoured.

The barriers were ordered to be removed, that the Christian Zenon might be led round the amphitheatre, a public spectacle of the Emperor's vengeance. The huge barriers were soon plucked up and removed, all but the central one, which surrounded the deceitful forest.

During the removal of these barriers the rain came on faster. A low rumbling sound of distant thunder gradually came sweeping over the seven hills. The Romans saw a gathering storm, and, always superstitious, they took it as an indication of the anger of their gods against the faithless Christian noble now to be devoured. Domitian began to be restless, as the blackening clouds portended a terrific storm. His face, always red, became more inflamed, as he urged the hundreds of

slaves of the Circus to remove the barriers. He seemed determined, however, to brave the elements, though the flashes of lightning dazzled the eyes of every spectator.

Oh, vengeance is very sweet ! very sweet to a cruel man ; and to be dealt out to a Christian, nothing could be more sweet to mortal inhumanity. Whether the Romans thought that Christians had less feeling than brutes, certain it is that they were much more merciful to the beasts than to them. The persecutions of the tyrant had driven hundreds of Christians to hide themselves in the honeycomb-like pits which surrounded and even intersected the city. Sand had been dug out of the hills to fill the various amphitheatres and places of public games, and to make that species of concrete then so celebrated for its quick and durable solidity. Immense quarries also existed at that day : some were worked

out, and became hiding-places for robbers; but now the Christians who had fled from Domitian took up their abode therein, and became better acquainted with their intricate windings than any other persons in Rome.

The Church had that day fled into these fastnesses, and there exercised the duties of prayer for Zenon, free from the dreaded massacre of the tyrant. They were likewise free from any terror of the storm which then hung over the walls of devoted Rome. It came on with thunderings and lightnings the most incessant. But the guilty Emperor, though truly confounded, with impious daring exclaimed, "Let Jove strike whom he will!"

The barriers, however, were cleared, the trumpeters sounded their long and final blast, and Zenon, between a band of Roman soldiers, was conducted into the Circus. He was naked, save a band round his loins, having a

shield to cover himself, and a sword to defend his body. In these his trust was but small, but on the God who gave him strength he knew that he could rely ; and in Him did he put his trust, repeatedly saying, "Thy will, O Lord, not mine, be done!"

Though the thunder rolled in the most overpowering crashes, and war seemed to be in the elements above him, his soul pierced through the murky darkness of the air, and rested in faith above the heavens.

The Roman soldiers who guarded him and conducted his steps round the arena, had every instant to start and turn their stern faces upon their prisoner. Not a feature there was in the slightest degree altered. There was calm prayer of the spirit piercing the skies and asking for help ; there was perfect composure which no storms could disturb ; there was perfect faith, which seemed to say : "I am

ready to stand or fall as Thou, O Lord, seest best, only let me glorify Thy Name, and be Thou my defender!"

His guards stopped opposite to the Emperor, and a herald's voice from the pavilion exclaimed, "Bow down to the Emperor, the God of Rome!" All heard the command, for there was a lull in the heavens at the moment, and all heard the reply: "Christ is the True God, and the Emperor and all men should bow before Him."

At that moment Domitian rose: it was thought that he was going to order his head to be cut off. In another he was thunder-struck, for such a crash ensued as seemed to split the fabric of Vespasian to the very foundation, and a stream of lightning burst upon the central forest, and all Rome beheld it in a blaze. But who dared retire without the Emperor's signal? It was the grandest sight

of that day, to see those trees shivered to shreds, and the barriers and frame-work, underwood and canes, in one chaos of smoke and fire. Consternation sat on every brow but Zenon's, and him nothing could discompose.

The haughty Emperor hid his face, but, as if ashamed of his timidity, gave orders for the Christian to be left alone. Glad were the guards to depart, and there stood Zenon unmoved, though the fire was burning up the forest, and his enemies still anticipated his destruction. The order was given for the lion to come forth, and forth he came, amidst the roar of the heavens, which completely drowned his puny attempts. His roar was scarcely heard. The mighty monarch of the sand was terrified at the conflagration, shook fearfully at the tempest, and, with his mane and tail low and drenched, he slunk timidly from the man who confronted him.

Zenon, however, stirred not a step to attack him. He did but look stedfastly at him, as he crept round and round, seeking for his open den to plunge into the darkness thereof. That den was opened, and the beast permitted to take shelter from the storm.

Next came the tiger, but he was more cowardly than the lion ; he ran like a terrified cat from the mouth of a dog, and, when farthest off Zenon, could not be compelled to approach him on either side of the theatre. A den had to be opened for him where he stood, which the very next elemental crash induced him to enter. The wolf, the bear, the hyæna, and the panther were each in turn terror-stricken, nor made the slightest attack upon Zenon.

The wild bull alone seemed to show the least disposition to annoy him, and then it was more on account of his standing in his way

when he scoured the arena. He was as much terrified as the other animals. He certainly pawed the earth and rushed, with his head touching the sand, at the undisturbed Christian, who, with perfect ease, and, seemingly almost without exertion, pierced the spinal marrow in his neck, and the unwieldy beast rolled dead upon the ground. Saving the wild roar of the elements above, nothing could equal the uproar of the people. Domitian's fiery face glared amidst the pallid visages of his nobles, as, conscious of Zenon's triumph, he looked more fierce on all men, because he had been thwarted in his trial, and was now actually defeated by his own sentence. Impartiality before his senators he never cared to show, and he was in the act of meditating in what method he should best take vengeance upon Zenon, when the height of the storm at one blow spent its fury upon the amphitheatre.

The lightning rent a chasm in the walls, and such a shriek arose from the people, some of whom were killed by the flash, that Domitian himself fled from the scene, leaving all to follow his example without one sound of trumpet, or any order whatever concerning the prisoner. There was now a general rush to see who should escape first. Guards, soldiers, citizens, priests, consuls, tribunes, nobles, and people, all fled from the fury of the storm ; some were trampled, others terrified to death ; and others fell victims to private quarrels, even at the moment of so appalling a tempest.

Zenon alone, on his knees, in that vast and forsaken arena, returned thanks to God for his protection ! He walked through the public entrance, and there he met a friend—a Christian brother who had risked the danger of detection—he cast a senator's cloak round his naked body, and led him in haste from the

eyes of men into the body of the Church under ground. He was just in time for his escape, for a band of soldiers returned to take him, but Zenon was no more to be found.

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## CHAPTER XXX.

## SLAVERY.

BANISHMENT for the offence of Christianity was in that day severe indeed. It was bad enough for political offences; but degraded senators, or rejected soldiers, went into this state without the restrictions and cruelties which more heinous crimes demanded.

Voluntary exile some endured, rather than submit to tyranny, or to the system of espionage which disgraced the Senate of Rome. More frequently, however, the malice of Domitian

drove even the nobles from their homes, to seek peace in a foreign land.

So suspicious and so jealous was this wicked man, that even the humble Nerva, who succeeded him, was compelled to avoid the stern and cruel visage of the man whose station he respected, but whose crimes he abhorred. Orfitus and Rufus were banished, not with confiscation of property, but with loss of dignity. Long was the catalogue of the unfortunates who fell under his displeasure, and suffered innocently for the gratification of a tyrant's spleen.

When it is considered that the *amor patriæ* of the Romans was scarcely ever surpassed by any nation on earth, not even by the nations of Judea; that, from the plebeian blacksmith to the magnificent Emperor, but one glory seemed to swell the hearts of all, namely, the glory of their country; when we know that

this principle was instilled from childhood, nurtured by education, fostered and cheered by example, and made to be the happiness of life, —we may readily suppose that to be banished from that country, either by the power of self-conviction or by the mandate of the Emperor, carried with it a grief of heart not easily to be defined.

In these banishments, their griefs were often increased by the remembrance of past splendour, frequently by the ingratitude of rulers, and the changes to which all political affairs are subject. Severe as their sufferings were, they were borne with a fortitude equalled only by the strength and endurance of their powerful minds.

For heinous state offences, banishment assumed a form of terrible infliction proportionate to the crime of which the culprit was found guilty. The desecration of the temples

of the gods was visited with the most severe penalty; regicide, parricide, fratricide, if brought home to the criminal, called aloud for the utmost vengeance; but the great frequently got off, by reason of their employing eloquent pleaders, whilst a poor man would be sure to meet with condemnation. Many were the victims accused of insurrection in the days of Domitian: upon the slightest pretence, and upon the mere evidence of a suborned witness, they were sentenced to banishment.

To be a Christian was considered something so heinous that death in the most cruel form, or banishment, with confiscation of property, loss of station, and abject slavery for life, was frequently the punishment. Yet never was it proved, in a single instance, that rebellion or violence was resorted to by any of those who were called to worship God in spirit and in truth.

No fault could be found with the converts to Christianity, either in their morals, their words, their behaviour, or their conduct. No faults, even according to the strict code of Roman law, could they be charged with. Yet they were accused of every species of crime, too incredible to men now to be believed, from which they most simply and admirably defended themselves.

Their notions of an invisible God were scouted by the Romans, and their faith designated as folly and superstition even by the most enlightened, who, while they carried the Emperor's mandates into execution, acknowledged that the only fault which the Christians had was an obstinacy and pertinacity in their persuasion, which not even death could destroy. How strange that such enlightened men should never give them credit for truth, though they failed not to acknowledge their sincerity !

Nothing exasperates a tyrant more than to meet with the rebuke of truth. He can bear perhaps a flattering opposition; but to be told honestly that he is a worm—a most insignificant worm—a mere instrument in the hands too often of the vilest men; but still that he is made to do the will of wisdom whether he would or not, is something he cannot brook.

Domitian had heard of John the beloved Christian Bishop, and had him sent to Rome, examined him himself, and met with his answer, which so infuriated him that, in the presence of all his senators, he cast him into a cauldron of boiling oil: but He who said of him that his testimony should remain until He came again, suffered not the oil to touch a single pore of his skin, reserving him for a future work of glory not then performed.

It is supposed, as before stated, that Domitian, unable to withstand the testimony of so

evident a miracle, and yet unwilling to have the slightest mercy upon him, chose to inflict the penalty of banishment, because he considered it a more certain though less noble death. Vain fool—as if He who could cool the boiling oil, could not release from banishment! Short-sighted monarch, thy cruelties were severe, but they could not hurt the soul! Thine own boiling heart endured ten thousand times the scorching agonies of wickedness, even then in thy thirst for vengeance, when in the flesh—what dost thou now endure in anticipated condemnation? What? no pen of fire can describe it.

But John was banished to Patmos, there to work on that inhospitable rock, amidst the felons of Rome or Ephesus, some of whom felt it to be a greater honour so to work in the chains of slavery with him than to be free in the iniquity of their lives. But not

the highest grace, the most abundant gifts which that grace bestowed, could free the possessor from the chains of persecution. From morn to night did this inspired, this educated, this beloved disciple of the Lord of heaven and earth, toil in his banishment among the most degraded of the Roman felons.

There he laboured in bearing burdens of earth, or water, to the city: and whilst he walked bare-footed on that rocky soil, he could behold in spirit the destruction of the Roman empire, the conversion of her Emperors, the struggle against internal foes, the rise of the Christian Church upon the seven hills, the rage and fury of Satan within the very pale of the apostolic see—worse, ten thousand times worse than all the fury even of that wicked Emperor in whose reign he was then suffering—his final overthrow, the con-

version of the world, and his Master's glorious second coming.

So true is it that God never more enlightens his servants on earth than when they find all the world set against them.

The persecution of John in the island of Patmos, his banishment, his sufferings there, were all surmounted, to the world's enlightenment, by the grace of God. But woe to them by whom the offences came, woe to the persecutors, though the faithful suffered! Though good came out of their evil doings, it came not of them, but of Him only, whose province it is to bring good out of evil to his own honour.

But as Patmos was the scene of banishment for male Christians, felons, and slaves, so Pontia and Pandataria, islands belonging to Rome, were the places of banishment for female Christians and slaves. Prayers were

offered up continually for those who, for the word of truth's sake, were banished to these islands. None returned in the days of Domitian to speak of the horrors of their banishment, nor, until the death of the tyrant and the recall of those unfortunate victims of his rage, was the severity of their treatment known.

Flavia Domitilla and Flaminia Domitiana left Rome on the same day that Apollonius entered it. They were conducted to Puteoli, as it is now called, and were thence shipped for their respective destinations. The same ship took them both to Pontia, and not until they arrived at that island did they experience the extreme cruelty of Domitian.

They had so long lived together, so long loved each other, and were so closely united by one common faith, one common suffering, that, whilst they were together, even their

deplorable change was not felt so severely. They had been converted on the same day—they had visited in company the same prisoner in his cell, and the same bishop of the Church. They had been baptized together, persecuted, condemned, and banished ; but, while they were in each other's society, each lessened the other's sufferings by the cheerful example which they mutually afforded.

Oh ! the depths of Christian love ! to see two sisters of that blessed company striving each to soften the other's chains, though both were enduring hard privations, what can equal the sight, save the love of that God who calls them his friends and cheers them in their distress !

They did not believe that Domitian's cruelty could be so refined, whatever his threats had been, until the moment of separation came. They had entered the calm waters of Pontia,

and the lofty prow with its eagle beak, was then propelled only by the labour of slaves at the oar. The sail was furled as they approached the landing-place, and the guard informed them that twelve prisoners were to land. The Roman deputy stood upon a point jutting out from a dull, dark, dreary edifice, which was built upon a ledge of rock, and served for the double purpose of a watch-tower and a receptacle for mariners, foreigners, slaves, or rovers.

The vessel was moored close against this desolate-looking place, and the deputy came on board to inspect the written parchment which Palinurus, the Roman Gubernator, then tendered to him. How anxious did those Christian sisters look, first at each other, then at the desolate island of Pontia, which seemed to have no inhabitants, no groves, no towns, no dwelling-places! Stern, too, and savage seemed the expression of the iron-covered

soldier, who was reading that list of names which was to determine their cruel separation.

“Thou hast here, I see, two prisoners of distinction, Flavia Domitilla and Flaminia Domitiana—which are they? This account states that they are Christians, that their crime is contumelious conduct towards the wife of the Emperor, insidious connivance with the Christians of Rome to overthrow the established religion, and an obstinate adherence to the dogmas of this new sect. The letter from the Secretary of State further declares that one is married and the other single: that Flavius Clemens, the late husband of one, has already suffered death in the dungeon as a traitor, and that both these prisoners, rejoicing in his death, do therefore set a bad example in Rome. For this cause they are banished. I would ask, which are these prisoners?”

These two Roman ladies, with their hair already shorn close to their heads, and dressed in coarse clothing, deprived even of their sandals, were led forward bound by the arm together. Happy for them had even that bond not been severed! Yet they thought that they were about to receive some relaxation of their affliction, when the deputy exclaimed, "Sever their bonds!"

For the first moment, a rapture of joy caused them to embrace each other, as if under the impression that their sentence was about to be commuted. Tears fell from their eyes, and rolled warmly down each other's necks: and the deputy, stern as he was, perceived that hope, an undefined hope, seemed to be expressed in their countenances. He hesitated a moment; he even exhibited a momentary weakness, as if his hand, his broad, hard, sword-hand trembled; and that pause con-

veyed a terror into the hearts of those very quick and sensitive sufferers.

“Speak, Roman,” said the matron, “speak, I conjure thee! Why dost thou pause? Is joy or sorrow, pleasure or pain, hope or fear, struggling in thine heart and making thee sensible of humanity? say at once, what dost thou read? Is it death or life? is it liberty or confinement? We are ready, Flaminia, are we not, to live or die together?”

“Lady, for such I perceive thou art, though in a slave’s attire, and noble, as this writing tells, I fear thou art not prepared with fortitude to hear the latter part of my instructions.”

“Say what they are. Mercy, benevolence, pity, would, indeed, confound me, so unexpected are they from Rome! No, Roman, no! The country we have left speaks not of pity. Ties are already severed there. The

priests of Jupiter suffer not the Emperor to shew pity to Christians. I will sooner think yon inhospitable-looking shore should smile like Italia, than that Domitian can have mercy upon us. Say at once then, generous soldier, if thou hast a mother, a wife, or a child, I conjure thee by all the ties of domestic kindred, speak at once !”

“I perceive, lady, by the latter part of that speech, that thou art thinking only of a united slavery. I grieve to see you both so deeply attached. My orders are as follows: ‘Take Flavia Domitilla under thy charge, and leave Flaminia Domitiana to pursue her course to Pandataria.’”

This was, indeed, too much for these wretched ladies. They fell into each other’s arms with hearts completely broken. They had cheerfully borne the confiscation of their property; they had cheerfully given up their

house, home, kindred, and connexions, and, with their superior fortitude, they had set bright examples of Christian faith—but for a moment their faith, which had hitherto been so lively within them, was, as it were, dead. Nature had received an unexpected shock, to which death would seem to have been preferable.

The Roman deputy, stern of features and of commanding stature, a man of some education, a lover of morality, true and faithful to nature's best feelings, though at that time unacquainted with the faith of Christianity, had the good sense to exercise the judgment and discretion of sound wisdom, and to exert no sudden force of cruelty. He had delivered his instructions in the ear of those who, he well knew, if they were the high-bred Roman ladies he took them for, would appreciate the force of his duty and revive to submission. He

silently, therefore, and even mournfully, awaited the recovery of those unhappy beings whom it was his orders, but not his pleasure, to separate. He not only observed a compassionate silence, but he commanded the same in all on board.

He was not deceived in his expectations. He knew what Roman virtues were, and how powerfully youth was trained to subdue itself. He knew not what Christian support was, and how victorious Faith could be over every trial. This he had yet to learn, and a severe, a wonderful lesson it was.

Domitilla was the first to revive and to recover her speech. Her first act was prayer. Reader, hast thou ever felt the support of prayer, not formal, studied expression of public prayer, but fervent, silent, upward prayer for help in the agony of the heart, when severe unexpected sorrows press thee down to the

very depths of woe? Oh! if thou hast, thou canst form a correct idea of the feelings of the Roman lady and the pious Christian, when, recovering from the distraction of her natural feelings, she found herself, as it were, alone with her God. All on board that vessel looked at her with deep emotion, as they heard her exclaim, "O Lord, help us! Lord, deliver us! O God, our Saviour, support us!" Then, turning to her sorrowing friend, she added, "Flaminia, God's will be done! The worst is over. We must part in person, never in spirit. Come, my friend; come, revive; let us hope our banishment may not be for ever. Something whispers me, even in this extremity, 'Despair not! This thy trial will soon be over. I will give thee strength to bear it.' Flaminia, pray for me, I will pray for thee. There, there! The tyrant's orders must be obeyed, and we must shew to these poor creatures around us

that it is for Christ's sake we bear up against these things. Cheer up, my dear sister, cheer up: look not at me so mournfully. Go; go into the cabin, there continue in prayer, and thou wilt see that God will yet bring us together again before many days! Farewell!"

"Dearest Flavia, thou dost recall my spirit to me; but groaning deeply for thy loss. Thou hast been more than sister; thou hast been a mother. This is indeed life's severest blow, but God's will be done. Oh yes, it is for good. I feel it ordered, on purpose that nothing on this earth may be considered mine. I give thee up; I give thee up. Go, go. Farewell! One kiss! Farewell!"

And the dear friends clasped each other, whilst the most hardened offenders in that vessel wept.

The Christians rejoiced, for they saw a trial of faith such as spake the truth of their reli-

gion, and they responded "Amen!" to the fervent prayers of the parting friends.

Flaminia retired; and the noble Christian lady, thanking the deputy for his generous forbearance, followed him silently, with eleven other sufferers, into that gloomy dungeon whence few that once entered ever escaped alive. Painful was the brand on the forehead which those fair features then received, according to the custom of the times, and meant as a disgrace, but felt by many Christians as an honour—the brand of a cross upon the brow, to designate the crime for which they were punished.

The calm dignity of this Christian lady gave much support to her fellow prisoners; and her God, in whom she trusted, gave her grace in the eyes of her guard, so that, instead of heavy chains, the lightest were put upon her, and, as far as it was consistent with Roman discipline,

the severity of her task, that of smoothing and polishing stones, for the temple of Diana, was mitigated.

But it was a change indeed for a Roman noble's wife, a relation of the Emperor's, and one who had known the luxuries of life, now to feel all at once its hardships. The Christian spirit, however, was wonderfully sustained in these bodily distresses, and never did she sigh for any other freedom than that by which she hoped to gain the crown of immortal glory.

Far away sailed the vessel of Dicæarchia, or Puteoli, towards the less desolate shore of Pandataria. Here the slaves were employed in carrying jars of water from the wells into the great reservoirs of the town; for luxury had reached the soft climate of this island, and hundreds of families from Rome, Naples, and Palermo came to enjoy the fancied pleasure of the zephyrs of Pandataria.

That which was counted a luxury by the great was considered a punishment by the slaves. The air of this island might be balmy to those who had their liberty, and could enjoy their baths, their rambles, and their voices: but to the poor female slaves, bare-footed and bare-headed, with an iron girdle round their bodies, and linked together by a chain uniting them into companies of scores, and permitted only to sing, this abode formed a mournful contrast to the freedom of the liberated and the ease of the luxurious!

One happiness attended Flaminia Domitiana even in this otherwise melancholy exile, that every one of the score with whom she was linked was branded with the mark of the cross. Oh luxury! oh mercy! oh unspeakable joy! how often is the intended punishment blunted by the goodness of God! That very act, which was considered one of marked

detestation and disgrace, by those who inflicted it, became a source of the most unfeigned thankfulness.

Twenty Christians, with the seal of the cross upon their foreheads, and meant to be thereby most signally punished, who worked together, walked together, were chained together, despised together, even slept together in the same cell, were united by such a bond of love as to make even the chains of their slavery delightful. They loved each other, they relieved each other, they soothed each other, they prayed, sang, rejoiced together, and, strange to say, though their diet was the coarsest, their work the hardest, their sleep the shortest, they each confessed that never were they happier in their lives, and could never have supposed that banishment could have had such enjoyment.

It was a singular, and, to many, no unplea-

sing sound, to hear the morning hymn of these devoted female Christians, as, linked together, they carried their first pitchers on their heads to the public baths.

THE CHRISTIANS' SONG, OR HYMN.

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Lord Jehovah ! light of glory,  
Hear the song we sing before Thee,  
With the morning we adore Thee,  
Lord Jehovah, King of kings.

Hail, Jehovah ! hear our sighing,  
On Thy love our souls relying,  
We the chains of death defying,  
Sing to Thee, O King of kings.

Thou the burthen of our weeping,  
Art in love our sorrows steeping,  
We the joys of life are reaping,  
Serving Thee, O King of kings.

Help us, Lord, to be united,  
Let not love or life be blighted,  
See thine handmaids, Lord, requited,  
As Thou art the King of kings.

Let the word by Thee be spoken,  
And Thy lightning be the token,  
That our chains shall not be broken,  
But by Thee, O King of kings.

Set us free, yet never parted,  
Keep us faithful, constant-hearted,  
As together we have smarted,  
So we bless Thee, King of kings.

As in sorrow, chain'd together,  
Bound with strong and iron tether,  
We do toil through wind and weather,  
Keep us faithful, King of kings.

So our hearts before Thee bringing,  
We rejoice with joyful singing,  
Whilst to Thee our souls are clinging,  
Lord Jehovah, King of kings.

It was sweet to hear the voices of twenty women, united by one common chain, singing this choral hymn, as they journeyed every morning from the valley of the wells, to the high city gates. Many were softened by their

harmony to pity their condition : but the brand of the cross would make them shudder for the supposed iniquity thereof, and turn away their faces from such a proscribed race.

Domitilla and Domitiana endured the severity of their banishment until the death of their relative changed the face of affairs in Rome, and the persecuted Christians of Patmos, Pontia, and Pandataria, were set at liberty.

That event drew on, as will be seen hereafter. Meanwhile, Christian readers, reflect upon this wonderful maxim, that, “As thy day is, so shall thy strength be.”

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

## DOMITIAN'S END.

IN the secret caves of the Esquiline hill, which was then burrowed like a honeycomb, the persecuted Christians found an asylum from the rage of Domitian ; and, though he employed soldiers, and offered rewards for the capture of Zenon ; though he inflicted tortures upon some individuals whom he secured as they were conveying food to the pits ; yet he never could discover his retreat.

His rage became the more inflamed day

after day. He ordered the pits' mouths to be filled up, but he knew not their long and tortuous windings, nor their secret recesses. Superstition prevented any long and united search, and the fears of some magnified the extent of these subterranean passages, and caused them to be represented as the very entrances to the infernal regions.

All that a cruel tyrant could do, he did to destroy the Church of God in Rome. He could not do it ; it was in his heart, but not within the power of his hand.

His own destruction approached. The fated day of dread, predicted by the murdered Ascleterion, arrived, and as it arrived, so did the fears of the tyrant increase. He remembered the advice of Apollonius : "Keep within thy house. See no one but thine own household." His foes — his bitterest foes — were those of his own household. There was a hell

in his breast from which no solitude could free him.

His chamberlain Parthenius approached him with trembling ; but to him he revealed the secret dread which oppressed him. He was a decided fatalist, an awful spectacle of superstition. The day before, he had been filled with the terrible prognostications of approaching death, and as nothing quivers more tremulously than a guilty soul, so did this tyrant exhibit more than the incessant vibrations of the aspen leaf, when he said to Parthenius : “ To-morrow some fatal thing shall be performed, which shall furnish a topic of conversation for the whole world.”

The night preceding his death was singularly portentous, and not unlike those two preceding terrible ones when he murdered Ascleterion and destined Zenon to be devoured. That very night, he was in such ter-

rors as to cause the deepest anxiety to his household. No doubt he was mad, but his madness had sufficient method in it, to leave him conscious of the deeds which he committed. His dreams so terrified him that night, and the thunder so disturbed him, that he leaped out of his bed and called for Parthenius.

“Send,” he exclaimed, “send instantly for Germanus, the astrologer. I must know of him what all these fiery omens portend.”

The German was soon in his house, and, before his servants, he began this interrogation.

“Say, O astrologer, what do these dreadful signs portend?”

“The heavens are on fire, O Emperor, and the earth is troubled. Rome shall feel the wrath from above, and strange changes are portended.”

“How do these things happen?”

“Not by chance, O Emperor. They are sure indications of disaster.”

“It is not a common thunderstorm that shall make Domitian tremble.”

“It is not a common flash that shall make the eagle blink ; but he does blink. He is scared from Rome, and must take his flight ! He will hover for a little while, he will drop his pinions and fall !”

“How, slave, darest thou to declare the death of the Emperor ?”

“Changes, such as are now taking place, do not come to pass without changes of men, as well as of things. If States fall, great men fall with them ; and, if great men fall, then be assured the gods are angry. Rome is changing, and thou, O Emperor, must have thy day ; and this may be thy last.”

“Away with him, Parthenius ! Away with

him ! this hour shall be *his* last !” And the poor astrologer was hurried to his death that very day, and the monarch’s fears increased.

“Parthenius : let those beautiful peaches which have been sent me from the East, be prepared for my repast to-morrow, *if it should be my good fortune to see another morrow.*”

“Why not, O Emperor ? what should prevent it ?”

“What, indeed, Parthenius ? I know not what ; but I have strange forebodings. This is a fatal day—a fatal night. I shall be glad when the midnight watch is over. Thou hast been a faithful servant, Parthenius ; thou wouldst not like to see thy master dead ?”

“Why does my master speak so gloomily ? The clouds are even now dispersing ; let them not oppress thy spirit.”

“Something weighs heavy here, Parthenius, I cannot disperse it. I feel it heavier than

lead, and not to be melted, even by thy friendship."

"My friendship would still thy pangs. Fear not the forebodings of the astrologers, but look well to the advice of Apollonius."

"See thou keep good watch, Parthenius. Let my palace gates be closed; let not a dog approach the walls; let my body-guard be stationed within the courts. Parthenius, listen! Send the Empress Domitia into the country. Send her to one of my seats in Etruria. I have some suspicions that all is not right with her. I am afraid of her. She is too fond—too loving—too warm—too particular in her attentions. Go and do as I command."

Again the restless Emperor tossed himself upon his couch, and rolled his gigantic form against the dragon's tail. No books gave him pleasure; nothing amused or comforted

him ; all seemed vacant blackness of terror. He heard unusual knockings at his gates, yet no guard answered from within. More than once he called out, "Who is there?" and no one gave reply. The very stillness of his palace seemed to cause insufferable agony. Gladly would he have had Actors to divert his mind, but he thought of the words of Apollonius.

Parthenius returned. With him he tried to converse upon his family affairs, but his face, generally so resolute and fierce, was pale, attenuated, and marked with such lines of suffering, that it was mournful to look at them.

"Parthenius," he said, "I hear such strange noises, that it seems to me as if Rome was in uproar."

"There is no noise, O Emperor!"

"Hark ! I hear a shout. The people are enraged. They will break down the palace

walls. O Parthenius, what a woe it seems to be an Emperor !”

“How would the Senators of Rome joy to see thee suffering ! Rouse thyself, O mighty monarch, and be not so dispirited. Thine enemies would pity thee !”

“And well they might ; but, if my fortune revives, if Pallas do not desert me this night, never shall September come in its usual rotation without the establishment of Saturnalia on this day for ever. I will soon see how the Senate can change their countenances. O Parthenius, Parthenius, I do remember Zenon, Flavius Clemens, Nicomedes, and others, and they seem to call for vengeance. Death seems to stare me in the face, and yet my frame is vigorous ! Am I Domitian ? am I that monarch at whose voice Romans trembled ? am I the man who presided over the Circus, whom all men feared, whom none ventured to

address but in the language of worship ? O Parthenius ! I am fallen indeed. I am a miserable wretch, a forlorn object, a desolate, unhappy, despicable man—I fear the coming of my end.”

“This is but the phantom of the moment. To-morrow’s dawn will soon dispel the gloom which hovers over thee. Thy guard is watchful—have no fears. To-morrow’s dawn ! and years of hope shall invigorate thy frame.”

“To-morrow’s dawn ! to-morrow’s dawn ! Yes, Parthenius, if I ever see the sun shining on these palace walls again, then—Hark ! I heard some one call—I am sure I did ! It was the voice of a female—there ! ’Tis Flavia Domitilla ! See—she is without !”

“Without, indeed, O Emperor ! Yes, she is indeed without ! I put thy signet to the wax, I saw her take her departure. The

Deputy of Pontia holds her in the chains of slavery. She is without thine hearing."

"I tell thee solemnly, I heard, I hear, her voice. She is talking in the ante-chamber, and her cousin Flaminia is with her. Instantly go and see. I would not have them here this day, no, not for the wealth of Rome. Go and see."

The chamberlain did as he was bidden, but there he beheld only his friend Stephanus.

"Hush! hush! Stephanus! a whisper only! The tyrant is in terrors. It were an easy thing to murder him this hour—but better wait till midnight."

"Yes, better wait—and better to deceive him, move all his dials forward, that, one hour before the true midnight, even when he thinks the joyous midnight come, that may be his last."

"How is the dagger?"

“Firmly fixed in this wool-bound arm !  
Hast thou removed his sword ?”

“’Tis taken from the scabbard.”

“And his daggers ?”

“They are fixed so tight with cooled cement  
no force can extract them. How are our  
friends ?”

“All stanch to aid me. But thou, Parthenius, must be his conductor. Thou must lead him forth into the audience-chamber ; in the gallery there, my help will be at hand.”

“Is thy hand firm ?”

“Firm against the tyrant ? Yes. Rome shall be liberated, or Stephanus shall die.”

“So shall Parthenius.”

“So will Clodianus, Maximus, Saturius, and others, sworn to succeed or perish.”

“Well, I must contrive it. The tyrant is a coward, and is dying ten thousand deaths

before his time. Thou never didst behold such a miserable spectacle of depression as this wicked monarch now exhibits. He is full of startling convictions. I am here this moment to see if his two royal relatives, those virtuous ladies who were an ornament to his court, be not conversing in this very room. Thou must therefore depart—I will be very wary. He is in such a state of prostration that a child might kill him.”

“The easier work for me. Farewell, Parthenius; the gods favour our enterprise for the good of mankind.”

“Farewell.”

What a spectacle for reflection were the various inmates of the palace of the once haughty Domitian! The monarch was a prisoner within his own walls, expecting death, yet without the least knowledge of the manner in which it was to be inflicted. The

household of the tyrant were all sworn to murder him an hour before midnight—and Stephanus, the steward of that household, was to strike the first blow. So well had they conducted their plans that not a word of betrayal escaped the lips of a single conspirator. They were one and all animated with the same determined purpose.

Did any one in that gorgeous palace utter a prayer? The temples were all closed that day in Rome, and men feared that something dreadful was about to happen. No one could obtain access to the Emperor. It was given out that he had made a vow to see no one, until the morning watch of the morrow; then all might see him. Little did he conceive how all men would look upon him on that morrow.

No one could be happy in the palace. The only happy people in Rome were the

Christians, then living under ground, and rejoicing in their persecution. What a strange contrast between Zenon and Domitian!—the one a slave, though reclining on his gold-fringed couch; the other a free man, though at that moment dividing his bread with the afflicted. Whilst Domitian was groaning with all the terrors of an imaginary death, Zenon and his friends were rejoicing with humble joy that they were accounted worthy for the truth's sake to suffer tribulation.

The day passed on. The tyrant neither ate nor drank—no music came before him—his speech failed him—his very knees bent and trembled beneath his weight, and he retired to his couch for the night, first charging Parthenius not to leave him alone.

“Are my household stirring?” asked the monarch; “are they at their posts?”

“They are all watching: none repose—nay, none recline.”

“Tis well, Parthenius, let them watch till midnight. I will endeavour to obtain some sleep. Oh, that I could forget this day, and blot it out from the kalendar! Leave me not alone.”

The tyrant lay upon his couch, but did not undress himself. His worn-out restless spirit had fatigued his frame, but his sleep was momentary. Every minute he started from his slumber, and caught at some phantom of his conscience, as a mind over-wrought with study, or a poor author reposing after too severe mental exertion, perhaps smarting under the lash of an unfeeling critic, with feverish anxiety acting upon unstrung nerves, starts in his half-refreshing sleep, and sinks down to start again.

So did Domitian every moment start from his couch, and look wildly at his chamberlain. Oh, the horrid spectacle of this death-tor-

mented monster of iniquity! Could his countenance have been painted, there is not in the whole compass of civilized life—not in the wide range of lunatic asylums throughout all countries—a face which would express the horror of that monarch's aspect, as, with increasing dread he continued asking, at each successive start, the hour of the night. So great were his fears, as the fated hour approached, that he made his chamberlain summon his attendants; and, whether shame or confidence produced a change, he certainly fell into a more protracted doze before them. It is said that the vilest criminal sleeps sounder a few hours before his execution than he does for nights before it. Domitian slept, and, when he awoke, eagerly exclaimed, "What is the hour?"

"'Tis midnight, O Emperor."

"Then all danger is departed. Rome, thou

art still mine own. Parthenius, brave Parthenius, my dreams of terror have passed away! Slaves, prepare my bath. Come, Parthenius, take off these heavy burdens: bring me my lighter robes, I shall enjoy my bath."

The tyrant perceived not the deception. It was the fated hour, the one he had so dreaded, which, as he thought, was past and never could return. He threw off his ornamental stout leathern breast-plate, and his heavy gold-adorned vest, and assumed a light robe of silk, with loose sandals. He laid by his arms, and naked, save his light-textured bath-robe, with a countenance as changed as the sun when mists are cleared away, he prepared to follow Parthenius to the bath.

That wary chamberlain led the way, but, as he did so, he misled the monarch, both by words and steps, to the death he had almost forgotten.

“Now the danger is all past, O Emperor, I may at once declare to thee, that Stephanus has been waiting in the audience-chamber for these two hours, to unfold to thee a conspiracy he has discovered, which requires thy most prompt and instant attention. Though the astrologers may lie, thy faithful servants would not suffer thee to be deceived; and, before thou goest to enjoy thy bath, it would be well to despatch thy steward upon this important business, so that, whilst thou swimmest in the tepid water, thine enemies may find confusion in their councils.”

“It is well proposed, good Parthenius; the gods will reward thy care. Lead on to the audience-hall; Domitian’s foes shall know their downfall.”

Parthenius led the haughty monarch on, as the evil spirit leads a proud man, like a bull, to the slaughter. They arrived at the audience-

chamber : there stood Stephanus, having caused the lamps to be lighted, anticipating the coming of the Emperor. Lowly he bowed, whilst in his hand he held a roll, with names inscribed thereon, of the least suspected nobles of the land, though headed by the well-known candidates for the empire, Nerva, Orfitus, and Rufus.

“ Brave Stephanus, I perceive that thy wound is not yet healed, but I hope thou dost not feel any evil consequences beyond the slight irritation of the canine teeth : thy vigilance, I hear, is exemplary. What hast thou there ? ”

“ I have a strange and damning list of conspirators, O Emperor, who are sworn by all the gods to thy destruction. I was myself invited to join their company, I know not wherefore, unless, O Emperor, some words of thy displeasure may have reached their ears.

One actually told me that I was doomed to death."

The Emperor started with unfeigned astonishment, for he thought of the black book, and of the name of Stephanus.

"I feigned belief: I even joined their band, and thus became acquainted with all the secrets of their movements. More, O Emperor, I was furnished with this list, which I now present, as containing the exact state of their numbers and the force they can summon to thine overthrow."

He then presented the list. The astonished Emperor, amazed at the extent of the intended rebellion, was lost in the thought of the timely discovery of it, and was meditating on the best method for the final destruction of his enemies, when the cunning Stephanus drew his dagger from his arm, and, whilst the tyrant was pondering over the list, cogitating

his future proceedings, and even praising in his heart the vigilance of his steward—that artful and desperate man plunged his dagger up to its hilt into the abdomen of the Emperor. Domitian was a powerful man. The roll was in an instant cast aside, and the traitor grasped in his powerful clutches. It took but an instant to hurl him to the ground, and to cry aloud for help. The charmed dagger would have been of little avail, had no other help been at hand. The struggle was severe for a moment between Domitian and Stephanus. A second blow the traitor could not give; but he was supported by Parthenius, who, together with Clodianus and the other conspirators, soon put an end to the struggles of the tyrant. Piercing him through and through with their swords, they left him weltering in his blood upon the richly-tesseled pavement of his own hall.

So fell the haughtiest tyrant that the Roman Empire had yet known—a man refined in barbarity, and justly styled the living Demon by all who knew him; a bad man, a false friend, a cruel foe, and a detested sovereign.

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

## UNIVERSAL JOY.

WHAT a spectacle did the dead tyrant present as he lay upon that pavement, without one single hand to help him ! His countenance was terrific in death, for he was a man of such sinister expression when alive, that, dying as he did, in violent convulsions, it could not be expected that his face should exhibit the placidity of peace. It was more that disgusting look of a dead wild cat, with his lips drawn back, exhibiting a row of furious

gnashing teeth, with eyes unclosed and staring, as if life was not extinct. Men who have seen an animal of the feline race after it has been shot, or destroyed violently, may form some idea of the red-headed tyrant who lay unpitied on the earth.

That very night Apollonius was lecturing in the theatre at Ephesus. It was brilliantly illuminated, and branches of trees festooned with lamps hung in all parts, and formed a high and circling bower over the head of the venerable lecturer. Ephesus was astonished at his eloquence. He seemed like a man under the most powerful excitement of supernatural inspiration, and, as he led his auditory on, conversing most minutely concerning the antiquities of Egypt, the religion of the Egyptians, their knowledge, and their acquaintance with the occult sciences, he passed to the nations of Etruria, and with a fervour of devo-

tion proved to them that all the elegancies of Greece were posterior to the refinement of the Etruscans. He apostrophized, in the very language of the lost race, those sons of Diana of Ephesus ; and, speaking of their delusions, he said : “ This people will revive from the dead, when Rome shall value peace beyond the arts of war.” But he had scarcely entered upon the hour before the midnight gong of Ephesus should sound from the lofty temple, when he suddenly lowered his voice, lifted up his head, as if in the attitude of contemplating the stars, and, all at once changing the theme of his discourse, he exclaimed, as if he saw the act of which he was speaking : “ Courage, brave Stephanus ! Courage ! Strike the tyrant home ! Ephesians, all is well ! The tyrant Domitian is no more.”

This was a bold stroke of confidence in the completion of his own plans, which, if suc-

cessful, would, he knew, raise him to the very pinnacle of glory among men, and probably cause him, in the expression of that universal joy, which he was sure must be felt, to be deified as something greater than the greatest man who ever lived upon the face of the earth. He had kept his own counsel well. To no being had he revealed the plot, and so unaffected, so sudden, was the transition from the most entertaining and minute description of the tombs of Etruria and the elegance of her people, that there were many who thought that the philosopher was suddenly deprived of reason.

But he was the same calm common man in a moment ; and then it was thought that this effusion was but a momentary aberration of intellect. When, however, the singular announcement made in the theatre was confirmed by couriers from Rome, nothing could

equal the enthusiasm of the Ephesians, who assembled, and in the most flattering terms voted that divine honours should be paid to Apollonius, for he could see at once into the counsels of the gods.

Whilst this piece of theatrical deception was practising at Ephesus, all Rome was rejoicing in the death of the tyrant. Never was there a period of such universal joy as was then spread through every house in Rome. The Senate assembled in haste ; the slaves of the dead Emperor would not touch his body, but some actually spat in his face, as a mark of their utter detestation. Men came to look at the spectacle, as they would assemble to look at a monster when he is chained and cannot hurt them. Had not some of his Prætorian band prevented the entrance of the rabble, not a vestige of the monarch would have remained. Men would have torn him limb from

limb and have scattered his flesh in morsels to the dogs of Rome.

As it was, nothing could exceed the joy of the Senate. How are men's tongues loosed when a tyrant's hands are tied ! The degraded and lately trembling senators, bold now in their bravery over the dead, vented their rage in every possible epithet of opprobrium upon his memory. No language could adequately express the contemptuous outpourings of the overjoyed Senate. How did they congratulate each other upon their release, as if they had been so long imprisoned, or afflicted with some disease from which they were now liberated. A wise man had long declared, though the senators knew him not, that, "When the wicked rise, men hide themselves ; but, when they perish, the righteous increase\*;" and "When it goeth well with the righteous, the

\* Proverbs.

city rejoiceth ; and when the wicked perish there is shouting\*.”

Shouting enough there was in Rome on that day. It was a joyous day, though no public shows of triumph attracted the eyes of men. But all felt, save some superstitious priests of Jupiter, that the gods had been just in the destruction of the tyrant.

Could Domitian have conceived the indignation of all men, he would perhaps have altered his course ; for there is nothing that wicked men of his stamp feel more forcibly than the detestation of the human race. Could he have seen the destruction of all his statues, images, escutcheons, and works in which he had prided himself, and upon which he had bestowed so much wealth which he had seized, he would indeed have gone raving mad. But this was nothing compared with

\* Proverbs.

the solemn decree of the Senate : “That no more honour should be shewn at his funeral than was allowed to a common criminal ; that all his inscriptions should be totally erased ; that his name should be struck out of the registers of fame, and his memory abolished for ever.”

When a people like the Romans, who through life accounted no man happy who could not command a splendid funeral, could issue such a decree against their dead Emperor, there must have been cause, indeed, for joy that they were free from his tyranny. Political joy, however, was but transient compared with the respiration of the entombed Christians, who came forth from their hiding-places to behold again the summer sun of Italy, amidst the universal joy of their countrymen.

Few were there in Rome of any note whom

the vile tyrant had not in some way persecuted ; few families of Christians who had not felt the cruelty of his iron sway : and when these beheld some of their members coming forth from the pits alive, they almost thought that a resurrection had taken place.

It was not long before the Senate chose a successor. Cocceius Nerva, celebrated for the sweetness of his temper, the justness of his life, and the generosity of his disposition, was well adapted, at this critical juncture, to form a contrast with the late Emperor. The eyes of Romans had been long turned towards him, even in the life-time of Domitian, and it was no small wisdom which enabled him to enjoy popularity, and yet escape the inhuman outrages which the tyrant seldom failed to inflict on those whom his people loved.

He ascended the throne amidst the general rejoicings of the Senate and the people, and

his very first act produced universal satisfaction throughout Rome and her provinces. It was the removal of those odious restrictions against the Christians, which had driven them to hide themselves from the faces of men, and permission to perform their unostentatious worship free from the terrors of persecution. He issued a general proclamation that all Christians might return from banishment, and enjoy the full and free exercise of their religion, without molestation.

There never was an Emperor of Rome who had the lives, liberties, and happiness of his subjects so much at heart as the good Nerva. He detested public executions, and hated cruelty in all its shapes. He solemnly swore that no senator of Rome should, by his commandment, be put to death, though guilty of ever so great personal offence to himself.

This promise he observed, even towards those

whom he knew to be personally hostile to himself. Finding two senators very malignant and traitorous against him, he sent for them, and took them with him to the public theatre, and placed one on his right hand and the other on his left. He did this to let them know that he was well acquainted with their designs; and to let all Rome see that he was not afraid of their treachery.

Mild and amiable as he was, he yet had such a horror of the injustice of murderers, that all those men who had conspired against their masters, and, by false accusations before the Emperor Domitian, had caused them to be put to death, merely to gratify that tyrant's thirst for gold—they he spared not, but, viewing them as the most wicked men on earth, he inflicted on them the just punishment of their crimes. Though he resolved that offences against himself should not be punished with

death; yet upon traitors to their masters, men who would murder their employers, he exercised the sword of justice, deeming it his duty.

The distant provinces rejoiced; the islands were made glad; the prisoners heard the sound of liberty, and universal happiness was diffused over the Roman Empire.

In the island of Pandataria, this joy was expressed by the poor Christian converts with the most unfeigned thankfulness. The singers, with their pitchers on their heads, were proceeding up the long ascent from the plain, when a trumpet announced the arrival of a royal ship. The same prow which brought the captive Domitiana brought the news of Domitian's death, the succession of Nerva, and the joyful tidings of pardon and freedom to the chained females, whose toils had been borne with a patience and resignation which no strength of their own could have supported.

What numbers now assembled on that height to witness their liberation! The noble and youthful lady was particularly mentioned in the despatch, and the Governor was ordered to pay her marked attention.

“I am enjoined by these presents, most noble lady, not only to set thee at liberty, but to grant thee whatever thou dost require within the province of my jurisdiction in this island. Whatever, therefore, thou dost demand of me, that am I bound to supply.”

Then the true nobility of the Christian spirit burst forth from the lips of the liberated Christian lady.

“God be praised first,” she exclaimed, “for this unexpected, unmerited mercy! And thanks be to the reigning Emperor, for being the cheerful instrument in his hand, willing that all men should be benefited by his conscientious discharge of duty! I thank thee

also, not so much for the preference thou hast shown me above these, my dear companions, but for the opportunity thou hast now afforded me of making a request, which, if they approve, it will give me the greatest happiness. They are all Romans, virtuous Romans. Some have lost fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, friends, and companions, in the cruel persecutions of my late relative. I am not satisfied with being liberated and exalted above those with whom I have served in chains, and found to be my faithful and dear sisters. Free I understand they all now are, through the mandate of the Emperor; but my name only is mentioned as worthy of honour, and I am not more worthy than these, my dear fellow-labourers and blessed companions. My request, therefore, is, that we be all put on board the same ship, and provided with the same accommodation; that you permit us to proceed to

the island of Pontia together, there to receive other liberated Christian sisters, and sail thence to Rome."

"Most noble lady, the vessel is ordered to proceed thither, and to take thee to join thy friend and relative, Flavia Domitilla: but as regards these, my orders are, that they return if they please, or rest where they are, at Government charges."

"I thought that thine orders specifically mentioned that my requests were to be attended to. Therefore did I make this application."

"It shall be fully granted as thou dost require, only permit me to conduct thee to my dwelling."

"I will not be conducted alone. These are my friends, and if thou wouldst entertain me, receive us all, or let us all return to the place whence we came. And this I pray thee to

allow us to do, at all events, before we assemble for embarkation.”

“Lady, thou art noble indeed. Thy wishes shall be attended to. Christians, you are all free.”

The only thing that was painful was the unexpected, undesired homage of the heart which her fellow-prisoners were anxious to pay her; for, perceiving that she had never presumed over them, by mentioning her relationship to Domitian or her Roman nobility, during her captivity, they admired the Christian love which would not permit her, even when acknowledged by authority, to assume the superiority of her rank. But the same quiet, truthful dignity, so simple and unostentatious, was manifested in the treatment of her now more than ever attached companions. She led them back to the humble dwelling which they had occupied in their slavery, and there

they made the house of their common adversity the house of their united prayer and thanksgiving for their unexpected deliverance. Oh the depth of Christian love, of the real communion of saints in the days of early devotion! The same communion exists in these days with all brothers and sisters in Christ who worship God in spirit and in truth.

But what a scene of Christian piety was this! How beautiful its humility! What a contrast with the world of pride, yea, even with the splendid houses built to the Majesty of God! Though Christians now serve their God without molestation, pride has walked into the congregation and divided the rich and poor, notwithstanding the warning of the Apostle James. "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring,

in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, ‘Sit thou here in a good place:’ and say unto the poor, ‘Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:’ are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?”

Though this passage has an undoubted reference to those matters and causes which were brought under the cognizance of the early Christians, and which the Apostle Paul touches upon when he says, “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints\*?” Yet, if impartiality is to be shown in the courts of justice, and a rich and a poor man are to be served alike, without distinction of rank, surely, in the public assemblies before God, who is no respecter of persons, we should each

\* 1 Cor. vi.

of us be so humble in spirit as not to exalt ourselves over our poorer Christian brother.

In the world, in the conduct of temporal affairs, distinctions must be observed. Crowns and badges of authority must distinguish princes and potentates from their people; but as little as possible in the Church of God, in the house of prayer, should these things be seen. Yet they are most woefully present everywhere. Affliction only will rectify these evils, for men will not learn wisdom without visitations.

Affliction, one common affliction, that of slavery and banishment, united the sisters of sorrow in the island of Pandataria: faith knitted their bonds in the hour of persecution, and faith would not suffer them to be severed when freedom arrived. Yet it was a noble sight to see how the Christian lady would not be exalted, and yet she was ele-

vated with holy joy at the strength given her to resist the temptation of the world. The lesson which banishment had taught her was not lost upon her, and in the lowly prison-house did these sisters join in sweet communion, prayer, and thanksgiving. After their devotions were ended, they greeted one another with the holy kiss of affection, whilst Domitiana, or rather their sister Flaminia, opened to them her heart.

“Dearest sisters, this is the mercy of God shown to us, not for our merits, but for His who suffered so much for us all. He sees that we need not suffer more in this solitary place, for His glory, and therefore does He release us. He has been very merciful, even in the days of our degradation for His name’s sake, and we have loved each other in chains. Our love can scarcely ever be sweeter, though we regain, each of us, our lost possessions, and may and must be very thankful. .

“But let us all return to Rome together. Do not mistake me : I do not mean to return merely to take possession of those rights of Roman citizens now so providentially granted us. Pomp, pageantry, folly, superstition, pride, and power, must not breathe in our hearts. Rome is yet pagan, idolatrous, cruel, and superstitious. We return, as Christians, clothed with humility, having learnt a lesson which we may teach others from our own experience. O let us love one another with the same united spirit which we have here imbibed ! Freely do I confess that we shall stand in greater danger hereafter than we have done hitherto, because we shall be so apt to think this return a reward for our patience, suffering, and faith. If this be our reward, we shall be apt to flatter ourselves into some ideas of our own godliness.

“Dear sisters, we have a deeper lesson yet

to learn, before we can count on a reward. We must endure a short prosperity after a night of adversity. We are now going to higher duties : let us maintain the same lowly faith. Let us not fall away from God, or from each other, but consider each other as sisters, who have a Father in heaven. We must not expect joy to continue unalloyed by any persecutions : we must bear the same testimony in Rome that we have borne in Pandataria, and watch lest our enemy take advantage of our weakness. We rejoice in the goodness of God : oh, let us keep our faith one with another !

“Believe me, though I may obtain possession of my wealth, I shall never look upon myself as higher than the poorest of you, unless He who has humbled me should desert me. We can all befriend each other. My goods shall be the support of you all, only

remember that they, we, and all things, belong to the Lord.

“Come, let us now walk together to the Governor’s habitation. We will not be exalted over each other in spirit. Let us accept what is given us, and not be jealous or envious of each other. Will you all be as I am, and accompany me to the metropolis of our country? God grant we may meet with joyful friends to welcome us in the Lord.”

Affection was repaid with affection. There were some that had been banished only because they were supposed to possess wealth, some of much respectability, and more who were in humble ranks of life, yet all felt exalted by the joy which they now experienced. They were cheerfully entertained by the Governor, who had the sagacity to perceive the nobleness of mind and disinterested love which Flaminia Domitiana exhibited, and conse-

quently treated her happy and adopted sisters with the same respect as herself.

They embarked on board the same ship, and were favoured with pleasant and prosperous gales to the island of Pontia. The memory of their noble captivity remained long celebrated in the island of Pandataria, and was one of the strongest incentives to that green isle becoming afterwards converted and consecrated to Christianity.

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## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## NERVA.

IF the short reign of Nerva, replete as it was with every kindness to poor mortality, had been of sufficient duration to allow those Christians of whom this work speaks, to end their days in tranquillity and the quiet enjoyment of their religious privileges, the universal joy then felt would have formed the last chapter of this narrative. But history proves that no reign of peace on earth

continues for ever, any more than a man can say, that his days have had no sorrows. Pain heightens our sense of pleasure, as pleasure often makes us sensible of the more acute agony of pain. So the Christians did, indeed, experience joy in their suspended state, their emancipation from the thralldom of slavery, and their release from persecution.

Happy was the song which the devoted sisters sung, as they arrived once more at the desolate island of Pontia, and were moored along that same dark and dreary building which had formerly been the place of their separation. The same deputy came on board : but O what joy to all that train of liberated children of God, to find that he welcomed them, as they would be received with the joyful salutation of a Christian brother ! A great work had been performed. Mercy had reached the officer, and, though he was in daily expectation of

being superseded in his employment, on account of his change of heart and creed ; yet no orders for his suspension had arrived, though he well knew that complaints had been forwarded to Rome by his enemies. What was his joy to receive and convey to his friends and prisoners the tidings of their liberation ! Never did Roman deputy enjoy a greater happiness than in liberating the captives, to whom, under God, he felt that he owed his own liberation from darkness and death.

Flavia Domitilla was engaged amidst other female slaves polishing a beautiful column with her hands. Laborious as the work was, it had become a matter of such constant employment that it was even felt as a source of alleviation in her distress. But for the employment of the hands, the heart might have had too great a pressure of sorrow to bear the agony

of reflection. To be always thinking, thinking, thinking of our sorrows, without cessation, must destroy the equilibrium between mind and body. Wisely, therefore, was it overruled by Divine mercy, that the intended punishment of the persecutor should be the means of health to the victim. Flavia was thus enabled to be cheerful amidst her sufferings. Such was her deportment, her willing submission, and faithful devotion, that she too had souls given her in this solitude to be the crown of her rejoicing. The deputy-governor of Pontia sought her conversation, admitted her to as much intimacy as he dared with his family, and so she became the instrument of his conversion.

But what pen shall do justice to the meeting of those dear friends, Flavia and Flaminia! Perhaps the only person most deeply afflicted was the deputy-governor of Pontia, who,

having enjoyed the Christian society of this eminently noble lady, saw himself deprived of the greatest source of consolation in his difficult and painful duties.

Flavia and Flaminia had so much to relate, so thankfully to speak of mercies shown to them, such instances of divine goodness in their captivity, that not even the whole voyage would afford them time for all they had to say. O how sweet are the thoughts exercised in the ways of true godliness! Men in luxury and not Christians in reality, but only so in name, know nothing of the trials which true holiness endures. The world hated the Founder of the only true religion, and it is no marvel that it should hate his faithful followers. The world and the wicked of this world can have no fellowship with those whose only hope of happiness is in the world to come. Yet none are more kind, more willing to serve,

more ready to obey, than Christians, where the commands of their Lord and Master are not violated.

These two estimable Roman ladies, the highest in rank, as they were in virtue, at Rome, submitted without a murmur to the condition of slaves. They excited no rebellion against the tyrant ; they were no parties to his death ; they were even hated by his wife, Domitia, who was the main spring of that conspiracy which was so successful against Domitian. They left vengeance to God, and vengeance came, and it pleased God to release the victims of suffering throughout the realms of the Roman Empire.

“Farewell, Christian lady!” said the deputy, (as his wife and family, with himself, came on board the ship which was to take the liberated captives to Rome,) “farewell! We shall think of thee in our prayers, and make mention of

thy name. I need not give thee any writing under my hand and seal to recommend thee to the good Emperor of Rome. He appears sensible of thy merits and is desirous of repaying thee for thy captivity; but how can I ever repay thee! How can my wife and children ever be sufficiently grateful for all the kindness thou hast shown us!"

"Talk not of debts of gratitude, Governor! I am proud to think that I have been an instrument in the hands of Wisdom to do thee good. O that I could but be of more service to thee and the desolate inhabitants of this dreary isle! My heart weeps while I see so many souls sinking into ignorance and death, for the want of the waters of life. I will not forget thee; I will make mention of thee to the Church, and, if I can befriend thee in any thing, I will cheerfully do it."

“Pardon me then, most noble lady, that I make a request with hope. When thou art returned to Rome, and hast settled thyself there, and found thy Christian friends restored to thee, and thou dost enjoy the fulness of the Word of God, and partakest of communion with thy bishop, think of us, poor distant islanders, and of the comfort it would be to us to have one read in the Scriptures to teach us the way to the kingdom of heaven. O bear in mind our lonely condition—that we have no opportunities like yourselves of hearing the Word, and having it preached unto us; but, if some one were sent unto us, we should receive him gladly.”

“I will bear in mind thy pious request: it shall be my first petition to those who have authority to send forth preachers to the work, to beg of them to be mindful of you. Thou hast been merciful to me in my misfortunes,

and the Lord will amply repay thee. Farewell !”

The deputy returned thankful but sorrowful. He mourned as though he should see those loved faces no more, and, only in the bosom of his family, kneeling in prayer, could he find that comfort which a sorrowing soul imbibes.

Onward sped the Christian voyagers to the celebrated sea-port whence they sailed. Gladly indeed did they spend their precious hours in descanting upon the past, the present, and the future, and in making their united requests for help and succour for the time to come. The perils of the deep were divested of their terrors by their faith in God. Calms are often more deceitful than storms, as prosperity in life is much more dangerous to the welfare of the soul than adversity.

They arrived at Puteoli singing that beautiful hymn which they had daily used when in

their severe captivity. They had but to alter one word in it to make it as applicable to their then free condition as it had been in their slavery.

They landed — they were received with honour, and conducted on their way to Rome. Their expected return had induced many faithful Christians to journey forth to meet them : and it need scarcely be added that among the foremost was their faithful friend Zenon. He met them with a numerous band of joyful followers, about ten miles from Rome, and conducted them, with cheerful triumph, not with ostentatious pomp, to their native place. They wanted not to be objects of admiration to the gaping multitude, but bent their first steps to the house of the venerable Bishop, and thence with him into the congregation of the Lord : there, bending lowly before their God, with united voices of praise, they sang their glorious

hymns of thankfulness and adoration, and told of all the wonderful doings of the Lord. They joined the Church, and were sincere, conscientious, unflinching members of it, walking in faith and good works, during that happy period of renovation then afforded to all conditions of men in Rome.

They were treated with marked respect by the amiable Nerva, who would have had them resume their former station in society, among the noblest of the noble in Rome. They acknowledged his kindness, but declined the honours of the world. Their estates were returned to them, but the titles they did not care to accept.

They had enough to do daily in Rome to make their presence useful in the Church of God. They forgot not their captivity, but conducted themselves still as though they were in bonds. Nor were they unmindful of the

islands from which they had been delivered. They mentioned the request of the deputy, and his prayers were attended to; for the good bishop not only sent out elders to those spots, to preach, teach, and baptize, but himself visited them in the following year, and confirmed many in the faith.

Good use was made of the leniency shown them under the benevolent reign of Nerva. They boasted not of their own strength, but conducted themselves with all humility, as patterns to the Church, friends of the poor, and united in Christian love and charity with each other.

Nor were Romans the only persons who enjoyed the liberty which at this period shone upon the world. The venerable John, bishop of the churches of Asia, was at this time liberated from his cruel banishment in the island of Patmos, and returned to rectify

many evils which had crept into the Church during his absence. Nerva, who had been the pupil of the philosopher Apollonius, wrote requesting him to come and help him in the government: but that wise and cunning philosopher, who knew well that his fame would suffer more by the chance of accusation of being privy to the death of Domitian, chose to keep aloof; because his conscience told him that the intrigue of his daring mind could only be concealed effectually by his continued refusal to repair to Rome.

It was not likely that such a man—whose idea of immortality consisted in the notion of his wonderful mind partaking of inspiration, and whose last great crowning act of imposition was pretending to see Domitian slain, when he himself had appointed the hour and confirmed it with all the solemn promises of success if observed—should put himself in the way of

any sinister imputation upon his philosophy and double sight. No ; he knew that, to be thought divine, he must conceal as much as possible the weakness of human nature. He had done marvellous things to raise himself into notice at Ephesus, and had gained many disciples, and made himself appear something more than a philosopher. He had thus inspired many with vain notions of their own superior understandings, and sought to magnify his own reputation above that of all other men.

One of his most constant maxims was, "Conceal thy life if thou canst ; if not, conceal thy death." In this he thought to gain immortality. He did both ; for, though he lived to a very advanced age, yet no one knew the exact manner of his death.

What is fame among men to any man after his death ? We cannot hear it. It would

give us little pleasure if we could, because we deserve no praise, and we should then be fully conscious that we deserved none. Praise be then to God alone and to his only Son! Had this been the delight of Apollonius, he would have let his light shine before men, and would have glorified God in his death. But he hid himself in life and in death, and is now only looked upon as an impostor.

Not so the beloved disciple. He returned to Ephesus, counteracted as much as possible the evil of this vain philosopher's doctrines, and lived and died beloved of all in his latter end—a martyr in his sufferings at Rome and Patmos, a saint in his death at Ephesus.

Mark the wise ways of God in bringing about retribution. Though Stephanus, and Petronius, and others, were not put to death by Nerva, yet they did not live happy or free

from fear, though the peaceful life of the Emperor seemed to offer them security.

The Roman soldiers, ever desirous of war, and restless under so peaceable a ruler, remembered the vain-glory of Domitian, and how actively he kept them employed. Casperius Ælianus, ever an active and ambitious man, inflamed the minds of the Prætorians against the murderers of Domitian. Nerva did his utmost to prevent their taking vengeance upon the actors in this tragedy, but he first discovered his great weakness in this matter, and it led to his appointing his successor. For Casperius Ælianus stirred up the soldiers, who seized Stephanus and Petronius, and murdered them without giving them time to obtain help. So audacious and powerful were the military, that they even compelled Nerva to give public thanks to the soldiers for having destroyed those wicked men.

When a prince is compelled to do an act which he considers unjust, he may be sure that his power is declining, and the sooner he can retire from the cares of empire the better. Nerva appointed Trajan his successor, but lived not more than one month afterwards. He died in his sixty-sixth year, reigning but one year and four months.

Zenon, however, had under his reign come forth from his hiding-place, pardoned and restored to his former condition. He became conspicuous in Rome for his attachment to the Church, and exercised under Clemens and Alexander the office of a presbyter and elder in its affairs.

His open dealing, his defence of poor Christians, his fervour, zeal, and piety, were remarkable throughout the succeeding reign. He was intimate with the learned Pliny, and if the letters which he wrote to that

enlightened heathen could be found, what an interesting insight would they afford us into the arguments that he used to allay the persecutions of the Christians, and to persuade that amiable man to become a Christian !

He lived beloved in Rome, a nobleman of eminent piety and unostentatious conformity to the duties of the Church. As he had known suffering, so he never deserted sufferers. Flavia Domitilla and Flaminia Domitiana became his most intimate friends. They lived with his aged mother, who was blessed in the restoration of her excellent son. She died in a good old age, supported by Zenon even to the last moment, until she departed.

This good man was found everywhere in Rome, like Nicomedes, carrying consolation and relief to the afflicted. Our records do not tell us that he married Flaminia Domitiana, or that he did not. He undoubtedly lived in the

strictest friendship both with her and the estimable widow of Flavius Clemens. He lived through the reign of Trajan, that proud conqueror of the earth, mighty warrior, and terrible persecutor; who, in the latter part of his life, ashamed of his cruelties, did somewhat mitigate his severities towards the Christians.

It now occasions wonder to look upon the records of cruel tortures which, in those times, were exercised against the faithful and innocent disciples of our Lord. What ingenious torments were invented to show the savage brutality of man's degraded nature! Rome has exhibited the most frightful spectacles of the devil's agency and powers among the nations of the earth. Even in the polite reign of Trajan, when men of learning, like Pliny, studied and wrote, in many ways according to the dictates of philosophy and humanity, yet Christianity, even then, was accounted super-

stition, and its professors deemed worthy to be tormented. What an age of danger had Zenon to go through before he and his friends obtained the crown of martyrdom! Through all the third persecution of the primitive Christians, he maintained that faith which he sealed at last with his blood. To quote the words of the English Martyrologist, "Trajan being succeeded by Adrian, the latter continued this persecution with as much severity as his predecessor. About this time, Alexander, Bishop of Rome, with his two deacons, were martyred, as were Quirinus and Hermes, with their families, *Zenon, a Roman nobleman*, and about ten thousand other Christians."

Here, reader, shall close the history of Zenon, the noble Roman martyr. Would that Pagans had been the worst enemies and persecutors of Christianity! These pages have afforded a brief sketch of some of the suffer-

ings of early Christians under the pride, prejudice, and cruelty of Roman Emperors. But no horrors here mentioned, no torments herein recorded as inflicted, can equal those which men professing Christianity in Rome afterwards perpetrated. When temporal dominion was usurped by the popes of Rome, and kings, princes, and potentates delegated even their authority, and delivered over the very lives of their subjects to the papal power, impositions dark and dreadful were everywhere practised. Those who should have been the servants of Christ, and for His sake the servants of all men, became the tyrants of nations and the inquisitors of the earth.

The soul shudders at the iniquity of idolatry which, under the pretence of faith, introduced the most absurd phantoms of devotion and lying wonders of credulity. The Devil assumed the form of Universal Patriarch,

and exercised judgment without justice, gave laws without liberty, learning with licentiousness, and pardon without repentance. He built towers pointing to heaven, whilst he laughed Faith to scorn. He chained men with links of iron, through the fetters he wrought for the nobles of the earth. He brought men low to kiss his feet, and to do homage thereby to the triple crown of Lucifer, Mammon, and Beelzebub. Men groaned under his yoke, but were unable to shake it off.

Those who tried to do so found themselves most forcibly resisted. Arguments of sophistry taught thousands that mercy was exercised in persuading men to recant their declarations of faith, and worship a lie, even as the tyrant Domitian, in the hypocrisy of his pretended clemency, would intercede for the condemned criminals, that they might have the choice of the death they would die!

Christianity, Christianity ! thou most blessed gift of Divine peace, thou glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men, how hast thou been abused, and perverted to be made the scourge of the world ! Oh, when shall thy light illumine all the nations of the earth, and Israel return and acknowledge thy glory ?

God grant it may be soon ! Lord, open the eyes of thy people, and let them see thy glory ! Let them return to the Ancient of Days, and become, as it were, the life from the dead !

Reader, may the peace of God be with thee ! May He let thee see his ancient people restored to their rights, and mayest thou rejoice in their fulness ! May He lead thee forth beside the waters of comfort, and strengthen thee to bear the cross for Christ's sake, that

thou mayst be ever the friend of the else friendless, the brother of the orphan, the husband of the widow, and the true worshipper of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever !

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## THE CHARACTERS.

EVERY reader of the foregoing pages will have formed his own ideas of the characters introduced in them. But he must have been particularly struck with the enormous, overgrown tyranny of such a potentate as Domitian. These volumes, however, have but feebly represented him, and have exhibited a few instances only of his furious disposition. History must be read by the nobles of our land, to enable them to perceive how the giving absolute

power to one man operates in making all ranks and conditions of life the mere subjects of his caprice—the slaves of his will.

The Roman people were ever fond of shows; every part of their observance, whether to God or man, was governed by outward show, and triumphal processions were decreed for their emperors, their warriors, or their legislators. In religion they made a display of magnificent sacrifices and pompous ceremonies. Their games were not complete without the crowning of the victor; and nothing could exceed the extravagance of the exhibitions in their amphitheatres. All these things tended to render Domitian the character he was, and to afford him the opportunity of exercising brutality and ferocity amidst the most splendid and sumptuous entertainments. Man is a monster when, raised to the giddy heights of power, he thinks only of making himself a

name in the earth, and cares not how notorious.

O England ! what reason indeed hast thou to rejoice that tyranny and oppression, black, dark, ferocious, blood-thirsty tyranny, does not sway thy counsels, and make thy senators tremble ! Wisdom, true wisdom, based upon the good of the public, the true liberty of the people, yet shines conspicuous in the noble bearing of those who love truth more than power, principle more than wealth, and the happiness of their fellow men more than vain-glorious ambition. Men must detest a power which is gratified only by exalting itself through deeds of cruelty and horror.

May God defend us from the dark ages of superstition, and from a Romish ruler, who, like this tyrant, would annihilate every principle of truth and lay our bulwarks of liberty level with the ground ! To think of Chris-

tianity being changed into a temporal sovereignty, exercising lordship over princes, nobles, and rulers of this earth, in such a manner as to subject their very crowns to the disposal of the pretended successors of St. Peter, is enough to create surprise and indignation in the heart of any Christian who knows that Christ's kingdom is not of this world. But when, as in this very day, the papal power is acknowledged to be that of one of the princes of the earth; when the pope himself has a body-guard of soldiers to defend his person, and can wage war with the sword; when the lives of men are in his hands, and he can make laws of condemnation for what he may choose to call offences, but which plain common sense and decency, and the pure precepts of that profession of which he claims to be the head utterly deny to be so, it is time for those who live in this land to be put upon their guard

against the admission into this country of a power which history has proved to be in every land the most bigoted and heartless, whenever the light of truth and freedom has dared to oppose it.

One of the solemn declarations of our church and nation is this :—

*“The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England!”*

The Pope has had an awful jurisdiction in this land. Men’s lives have been forfeited upon this very point: age, sex, station; nay, infancy itself, have been involved in cruel edicts of destruction; and thousands who have protested against that usurped authority which dares, in the name of the Lord of Life, to exercise the terrors and horrors of death, have been themselves and have caused their families to be, butchered by the myrmidons of darkness.

Domitian’s pageants are far less fearful in

their consequences than the follies and fooleries of the holy week ; inasmuch as men's bodies are of far less consequence than their souls ! Martyrs may exist for the things of this world as well as for the truth ! and perhaps one of the strongest instances of this is to behold men compelled to go through ceremonies which they despise, to perform deeds which they detest, and to take part in the rounds of unmeaning pageants which they well know are as adverse to the spirit of Christianity as light is to darkness.

Men often talk of gratitude to Rome for having protected the archives of Christianity, and preserved the learning and letters of the ancients. Who employed more scribes than the Emperor Domitian ? Who enriched his libraries more gloriously, or sent more agents to Alexandria to take copies of the MSS. to enrich those of Rome ? It is a well-known fact that, under

his own eye as it were, that great historian Josephus wrote : yet who can give to such a power as that wielded by such a tyrant the meed of gratitude ? At that rate we might praise the greatest monsters of depravity, if only they indulged for a short time a love of literature !

It may be said, that the outward shows and pageants of the Papal Power, have a beneficial tendency as religious observances ; but this cannot be where the religion professed to be observed directly militates against and denounces such absurdities, as contrary to the profession of the Faith. Who was more eulogized for his great public shows and rewards than Domitian, when, sitting in state with his crown and purple robe, surrounded by all the priests of Jupiter, and the whole college of Flavian Priests, he distributed his prizes to the successful candidates ? And who more

profoundly eulogized in this day than the Pope, surrounded by his cardinals and priests, and engaged in the mockery of washing the feet of the celebrated thirteen mendicants or fishermen?

Gratitude must be felt towards those, and those only, who do us or the world any good ! but where men do the world a positive evil, where tyranny and cruelty, under the garb of Religion, exercise a sway so absolute as to infect mankind with notions diametrically opposed to every thing truly spiritual and enlightened, gratitude cannot and ought not to be felt.

The Papal Power has not half as much claim to the gratitude of the Roman Empire as even had the Emperor Domitian ; but what claim has it to the gratitude of Englishmen ?

It neither has nor ought to have any jurisdiction in this realm of England. If the

English nobility wish to forfeit their liberty, if they wish to be priest-ridden, and to give up their claim to the exercise of that just, lawful, and holy control over their families to which every true Christian is entitled, let them deliver their spiritual liberties into the hands of a foreign pontiff, and take the mandates of his hierarchy as the rule of their lives! Let them take warning, however, from the past, how they yield the spiritual liberty of Truth which their ancestors have once obtained, into the hands of a power which, when it grasps them again, will hold them by a tighter chain than it ever before did.

Let them not suppose, however, that the people of a free country like this will submit easily to such a yoke, which, through so many years, made them plough the fields of superstition, in ignorance such as pervades the unfortunate sufferers of our sister kingdom. Whilst

the whole Word of God is in this land, and faithful expounders of that Word, without guile and treachery or party spirit, shall, with the help of God, openly declare the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth, the falling away of some rulers, and the desertion of some teachers, will not cause that Word to be of no effect; but men like Flavius Clemens and Nicomedes will appear and shew themselves brave and faithful to resist the dominion of spiritual tyranny, and rejoice to lay down their lives, if necessary, for the Truth!

There are noble Christians in this land—men of the highest rank, who are able to appreciate the value of the blessings which God has given them—men who have not yet sold themselves to the spirit of the times, to take the highest bidder's price for the gem they possess. There are noblemen who can weigh in the balance of justice the measures

which are now meted out to the people of this country, and who would freely offer themselves as Flavius Clemens and Nicomedes did, for the good of their countrymen. Such, though quick observers of the times and seasons, and reading deeply the character of the age they live in, think it wisdom and prudence at present to remain passive spectators of the struggle now going on between the powers that be, and those which are boldly attempting to be. The deep waters roll within them, and long to find a free current for their healthful course. They will find it soon! The muddy barriers built against them will give way, and the indignant torrent, not of their anger, but of their long accumulated force, will burst forth, and spread again over the arid soil of desolation, and fertilize the land.

Yes! much as is now-a-days spoken

against the aristocracy of England, there is no country under the sun where talent, virtue, probity, and piety, are so conspicuous, as among that order in our own. Nowhere is the labour of learning so steadily cultivated—nowhere are the profound depths of true wisdom so fathomed. Men of value, whether for knowledge, virtue, solicitude for the good of their fellow-creatures, spiritual or temporal, find a welcome reception, come they whence they may, among the aristocracy of this land. They have a great stake in the welfare of the community, and are placed in their high positions to encourage all that is good in the various grades beneath them. Where they fail to do so, the exception is rather looked upon with wonder and astonishment: for, in very few instances indeed does it occur that the worthy among the people for any talent or virtue do not find friends in those above them for their support.

All the institutions of the land tend to bring forth men of distinction, that their light may be conspicuous. Spurious pretensions to abilities do not, and cannot command any long or fixed attention. The aristocracy of this land are too well educated to be deceived in this respect, or to suffer themselves to be carried away by the clamour of the multitude, or to mistake licentiousness for true liberty. The true health and happiness of society they well know to be dependent on better things than popular impulses, how imperative soever they may appear for a time. "*Have any of the Rulers or the Pharisees believed on Him?*" was the indignant and conceited, and at the same time madly perverted construction of those words, which a young democratical divine was heard to apply, when speaking of the nobility, aristocracy, and gentry of the land—as if every nobleman were an infidel,

and a ruler was an unbeliever, and no gentleman could be a Christian ! . Words like these, used in this manner by a Christian minister, however forcible in themselves, uttered as they were originally by the enemies of the Christian religion, bespeak a strange perversion of intellect, when applied in sweeping condemnation of the rulers of this land, who are many of them, and I hope, most of them, more enlightened, more faithful, and more truthful than to utter such a sentence of themselves, or to be worthy of its being put forth against them. Flavius Clemens and Nicomedes were instances in early days, of faith, integrity, and honesty, such as many, very many, rulers have since exhibited, and it is to be hoped many more both do and will exhibit the same in defence of truth, more than of ephemeral and baseless assertion.

When a dark and bigoted superstition, in

the place of pure religion, shall envelop the nobles of England, when they become so blinded as not to be able to perceive the distinction between faith, hope, and charity, and doubt, despair, and persecution, then may they be expected to utter such a sentence as this against the true professors of Christianity, but not till then. God forbid that any one should be so presumptuous as to pronounce it against them, and to succeed, by such pernicious doctrine, in arousing a spirit of hatred against them.

Religion is not shewn in any man by detestation or disrespect of the legal authorities of any country ; and no religion is so little opposed to the exercise of justice as the Christian religion. Faith is to be found in men placed in the highest authority, as well as in others. The Great Author and Finisher of our faith did not extol the indi-

vidual faith of many of those to whom he expressly came, upon whom he worked miracles, and whom he fed by thousands. Of whom was it that he said, "Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith,—no, not in Israel?" Was it not the man in authority, who had soldiers under him, who is represented as saying to one man, "Go, and he goeth," and to another, "Come, and he cometh," and to my servant, "Do this, and he doeth it?" He was not commanded to leave his station and authority. He had his prayer answered, in the very position he held, as a proof of the purity of his faith. Assertions are much easier to make than to be proved; and judgment and condemnation are often exercised by men whose spiritual pride is mistaken for faith, but who are totally deficient in humility.

The reign of Domitian has had no parallel

in England! Why conjure up such a phantom of tyranny from the depths of so many centuries? Why, in this free country, hating tyranny, are such a despot and his deeds to be made familiar to men's minds? "We have no such monster," exclaims one; "We have no such persecutor," says another; "Christianity is in no such danger," cries a third; and a host of men may argue that, in the nineteenth century, there is no fear of persecution, no fear of any man exercising the madness of Domitian with impunity.

It is well if there is no such cruel tyrant to afflict us: it will be well, indeed, if no such bold and daring man shall rise up to exercise vengeance upon whomsoever he will. Within the memory of man, wide disaffection and destruction have proved that, even in the nineteenth century, the nature of man, invested with a little brief authority, has

afforded to history examples of the most barbarous cruelty, without the sway of such a power as that of the Roman Emperor. Human nature is much the same in every age, and if not controlled, if not brought into the subjection of a lawful servant to good authority, it will be as wild, as mad, and as monstrous as that of Domitian, or of any other tyrant who has gained ascendancy for the moment. The nobles of a land are the guardians of public liberty ; the people look up to them, and have a right so to do, for the encouragement of everything that is praiseworthy : and if they are nobles, they know and fulfil this as sacredly as they do any other trust committed to them.

The nobility of England will never cringe before a tyrant, let him assume the gaunt figure of public opinion, popular audacity, or political expediency—or, worse still, let him come under the garb of philosophy, and pre-

tend to be swayed by the purest motives in the world—philanthropy, the love of freedom, and a regard for the rights of conscience and of men. Let them beware, then, how they depart from the avowed and acknowledged principles by which their own dignity, and that of their country are upheld among the nations of the earth. Commercial enterprise is not the only quality necessary to constitute a great people, nor even internal speculation, though it employ all the loose hands of the land, a sure sign of prosperity.

Where men are dependent upon foreign relations, without the strength of good government to protect them against fraud, their enterprises will be disappointed, and where internal speculations are so great as to make even the nobility mere promoters of projects for getting money, the people will be slaves, like themselves, to the dagon of the day.

The English nobility are not so blind, however infatuated some may be with the love of money. They know, and can see clearly, that mere speculations can produce no permanent good, unless something or other shall be stable enough to give their projects solidity, resolving and terminating in the rest, contentment, and happiness of man. Let them support themselves upon the public principle of duty—duty based upon the acknowledged principle of Christianity; that they are entitled to the respect and honour due to them, so long as they are true to the Constitution of that country of which they are the nobles. Let them not cringe before any power, but maintain right principle before all men.

We live under a free and happy constitution, wherein public liberty is enjoyed with all the freedom which every man, in every situation of life, may claim; where rulers are a terror

only to evil doers, and not in the least so to men of no sinister or disaffected views. We are free at present, in this country, from the domination of spiritual tyranny, usurping absolute authority over the consciences of Queen, Lords, and Commons, and God grant that we may long continue so. But if ever that spiritual power which once took upon itself to excommunicate or degrade the highest authorities of this land—instead of fulfilling the duties of Christianity in spiritual advice and admonition, beyond which no Christian bishop has any authority whatsoever over the princes of earth—if ever that power shall gain the ascendancy, and assume the right to depose whomsoever it will, England will groan from one end of the land to the other, and every man mistrust his neighbour.

Be wary, then, brave nobles of the land, and guard with jealous dignity the preroga-

tives which you justly possess. You will be supported not only by the wise and good among the people, but by that God, who Himself places you in authority, and grants you education and enlightenment, to resist the audacity of a tyrant who would reduce you to servitude, and debase you in your own and your country's eyes. You will never want the prayers and voices of the People, so long as you are brave in the defence of Truth, and do not give way to error, against the convictions of your conscience and your faith.

Ages after ages admired the characters of Nicomedes and Flavius Clemens, because they feared God rather than Domitian. Yet these brave and good men had only the voices of their consciences to support them in the hour of fiercest trial. True, they had a noble friend, a minister of the Truth, to assist them ; one bound to them by gratitude for

their defence, or attempted defence, of him in the face of the tyrant. Yet these nobles defended him when they were not possessed of that spirit of fortitude which animated the faithful Zenon. They were rewarded, however, with a joy which proved to them more grateful than if the whole host of the priests of Jupiter, with Domitian at their head, had bestowed upon them crowns of gold, and all Rome had shouted in their honour.

May such joy be the blessing of many a British nobleman, whenever he shall be brave and good enough to defend the humble professors of Christ crucified against the usurpation of a power which claims, without authority, to be the head of His church upon the earth ; and to demand of England and the Church of England an obeisance which the lowest servitor of the latter will be ready to resist. A character like that of Zenon will not be left unsupported

in this country. The nobles, the Commons, and the people, have yet too much real wisdom to suffer themselves to comply with the mandates of a foreign bishop. They will not suffer themselves to be so overpowered by superstitious tyranny as to give up the honest independence of freemen for the pretended necessity of spiritual allegiance to the See of Rome. Should they be so infatuated, and forget the warnings of past experience, they will still find men, like Zenon, resolved rather to die than to sacrifice their faith upon the altar of superstition.

At present the greatest advocates for the dominion of the papal power, dare not assume the tone of vengeance which they secretly burn to exercise. All is placid, calm, smooth, and gradual interference. As it was in the beginning of the reign of Domitian, many virtues are exhibited ; there is much show of pleasant

mercy and security; human vanity is delicately fed; processions, sacrifices, and penances, only partially and gently marching on their way. But let these errors be recognised as religious services—let the impositions thereof go on increasing, and the influences of the papal hierarchy be a little more extensively felt—and a voice like Zenon's, lifted up to proclaim them blasphemous, idolatrous, and profane, will meet with persecution.

It may be all very well, for men like the philosopher Apollonius, to treat all these matters with high-minded indifference, and to be astonished at the truthful declarations of Christian faith. There are many who would rather be blessed with the philosophy and pedantry of the Tyanean than with the faith of the Christian. Many there are who count themselves exceedingly wise in their own eyes and very confident of their own strength, who

laugh to scorn the humility, and patience, and resignation of Zenon, calculating in their own minds the spirit of the times they live in, and who are well acquainted with all the popular arguments of this world's wisdom.

Such wise men know well how to appear that which they really are not, and can dive into the counsels of princes, governments, religions, studies, sciences, and pursuits of men, and seem to influence no one, and to care about no one ; yet none are more intriguing than they are—no professors of the doctrines of Loyola more artful, cunning, crafty, and insinuating than they. Pretending to uphold religion, they are encouragers of every species of self-deception, and working all manner of mischief secretly.

Time was, when such men were discovered to be hostile to the liberties of a Christian nation like England. Such men are gradually

disseminating their pernicious doctrines, and are now busy in planting schools, colleges, and houses of retirement, or secret establishments of intrigue, into which it will be thought a stretch of authority in any government to look.

Like Apollonius, at present they appear to the world to be above suspicion. The time will come, however, when their secrets will come to light, and, like the proud philosopher of Tyana, they will proclaim their own folly. It behoves rulers to look well to such men, and not to trust them with too much confidence. They will despise Zenon; they will almost deem it a virtue to rid the earth of such a character, but none such as he will be afraid of them. Confront them, and in a moment it will be seen that their secret machinations will fall to the ground before the light of Truth.

Oh, the true dignity of a faithful Christian! how little is it affected by the malignity of such men! Fidelity, even unto death, was the motto of Zenon, and is the same with every Christian who looks for the Crown of Life. There is no fear that all such are banished from this land. Enemies may and do surround the true Church of Christ in England; and severe, very severe trials await her; such as have been deemed merely ideal, and have been treated with indignation and indifference, as if these things were all chimeras.

People have been lulled into the calm contemplation of growing and confessedly absurd errors; the men who lifted up their voices against them have been treated with contempt; and the ministers of that pure and reformed Church which has been so long the glory of this country, have been abused as if they possessed neither talents, firmness, nor integrity,

to stand in the gap. A short time, and the proofs of their faith will be tested in such a way as to remove these doubts, and to let the world see that they have not spoken in vain. Whatever terrors may have surrounded them—however hostile the cries of bitter enemies against them—whatever accusations have been brought with a view to impeach their lives, and to ruin their influence with the people among whom they live, they have, as a body, been, as yet, faithful to the sacred trust reposed in them.

Wicked but clever men may point the finger of scorn at them, accuse them of entertaining merely temporal views, and endeavour to torment them with threats and promised persecutions. They will be found as a body, like Zenon, without hypocrisy, openly attached to good, without any secret encouragement of mischief, any connivance at

political chicanery, with a single, clear eye to God-ward, and a consistent, cheerful love for all men; having no compromise with philosophy, infidelity, superstition, and idolatry, but declaring openly, under all circumstances, the truth, and maintaining a lively faith, working by love, to the last moments of their lives.

Such men will take courage from the contemplation of the character herein attempted to be set forth as deserving of imitation; and though long gone-by days have been called to their view, they will see that faith, true faith, is the same in every age, and is not to be discountenanced and terrified, by the rising up of any monster, in any shape whatsoever, to shake their integrity.

Human nature is a compound of the same qualities in every age of the world, liable to the same errors, acted upon by the same motives, urged on by the same incentives.

The love of money is as great an evil in this day as it was in the days of Judas; and where it infects a whole body of Christians, nominally so called, to such a degree as to induce them to sell even the Church to the highest bidder, those in whose hands the sacred trust is placed, who hold the bag for the providing such things as are needful for the support of the faithful, will be the very first to reproach themselves, for they will find the sting of conscience too strong for their endurance.

The greater the trust put into a man's hands, the greater is the vigilance required of him. May God protect the nobility of England from that almost universal infatuation now overwhelming the country, the love of money. Men who are already possessed of estates, ease, education, erudition, and enlightened minds, holding a certain elevated position, granted to them for the talents dis-

played by their ancestors, or by themselves, in various branches of service for the public good, ought not to be so eagerly devoting every faculty of their minds to the accumulating wealth, as if they had no confidence in anything but the getting money, and no other pleasure than in possessing it. Though no man has any right to envy them their fortune, or to rob them thereof by violence; though no man should even covet their possessions; yet may good men ever be ready to remind them of the truth that their stations, and their wealth, and leisure, are given to them for purposes which they themselves may feel to be the most valuable; valuable to themselves and to the community.

The greater portion of mankind have to toil hard for their daily bread. It is absolutely necessary that some should not do so, if only that they may direct men how to employ their

riches profitably, by distributing to the various necessities of the indigent, and encouraging the industrious, softening the heavy hours of poverty and affliction, and lifting up the humble from the dust. The nobles of England have ever been famed for virtues like these! May God protect them many days, yet many days, in the exercise of such virtues, and bless them with the means and the heart of gladness to do good!

A character like that of Domitia it is to be hoped this Christian land does not contain. It is almost too abhorrent to the spectator of the nineteenth century. Bad as the disposition of a tyrant, merciless and bigoted, is in man, it is something more appalling in the character of a woman. Men look upon it with unqualified horror; yet how soon are the tender ties of nature broken, scattered, and destroyed, when the influence of Christianity

fails to subdue the jealousies and envies of the female heart! A woman possesses, not unfrequently, as strong a mind and as strong passions as can be found in one of the opposite sex. She is quite as susceptible of outraged dignity as a man can be; but it is universally allowed and felt, in this as it has been in every other age, that mercy is even more becoming in her than in man.

We do not expect to find so artful, cunning, and deceitful a character among the enlightened and educated members of the higher classes of females in this age and country: certainly not where examples of Christian virtue, domestic faith, and honour, reign as here—are reflected from sovereignty, nobility, and commonalty, through a wide-extended empire. Domitia has no parallel here, save in the base degeneracy of half-educated ignorance exalted by presumption—the presump-

tion of possessing money, without any of the attributes or qualifications of a gentlewoman or a Christian lady in the possessor. Offend such a character, and forgiveness, let the person be like Zenon, Flavius Clemens, Nicomedes, Flavia Domitilla, or Domitiana, will never be extended to him or her.

A woman like Domitia can forgive no offence. Any person with whom she has anything to do, possessing even the meekest spirit in the world, once offending her, can never expect to meet with compassion. The mainspring of her words, her actions, her life, being money, neither husband, child, brother, sister, father, nor mother, can find pity from her. Lust of every kind is her rage: lust of dignity, because she has no real pretensions to it; lust of pride, because she cannot admit an equal with herself; lust of power, because she thinks wealth can purchase it. These are her daily

food, with which she feeds her solitary selfishness; and she despises every character under the sun but her own.

She can shew symptoms of feeling for others, whilst they do not interfere with her prospects; but, let the spirit of truth once cross her path, and shew her how little, in the estimation of true wisdom, her personal pride and nothingness are, and she will endeavour to crush the independent speaker, let him utter but one sentence in condemnation of her pride and haughtiness. Zenon was her detestation! and such a character as his will be the abhorrence of all such infatuated, bold, and wicked women as Domitia.

Of Flavia Domitilla and Flaminia Domitiana, words can scarcely convey a sufficient sense of admiration. Whether we survey the Roman matron exhibiting the virtue of hospitality, and receiving her husband's friend as he would have him received; or the modest

Roman daughter, the niece of Flavia Domitilla, confiding in the matronly direction and judgment of her relative, we may behold a picture of decent respectability, which hundreds and thousands in the nineteenth century would find it no disgrace to imitate. Irreproachable were many a Roman matron, and many a daughter; the females, the virtuous children of the nobles of Rome, were as conspicuous for their propriety of conduct as those of any nation on the face of the earth. Heathen as they were, and ignorant of the intrinsic value of virtue, unacquainted with the doctrines of immortality, they yet exhibited a real and heartfelt sense of every decent ornament which could make them conspicuous for that which is praiseworthy and honourable in the sight of all men. Obedience to their husbands, industry with their hands, and an orderly governance of their household, were

qualities which in very few empires were ever excelled, and are well worthy even of a Christian's admiration. How then are these qualities heightened when we find them brought into trial such as few are yet called upon to endure! Before the light of glory illumined the minds of their possessors, we beheld them worthy of mortal admiration. In their visit to their condemned relatives in the dungeon of Domitian; in their resignation; in their fortitude; in their hope of the same comfort which their dying friends imbibed, we see a strength of character, together with a resignation which none but those placed in difficulties can know.

In their conversion, in their firmness, and in their after persecution, what glorious magnanimity do they not exhibit! More, what humility did they display, how completely persuaded of the instability of all earthly things! how fully convinced of the way, the

the truth, and the life! See them, English ladies, see them consenting to be banished and to work as slaves, rather than lose the freedom of which they had once tasted. Domitia could not terrify them, the Emperor could not intimidate them, Truth was their support, and though they were never carried beyond the bounds of wisdom, into any excessive and fanatic conduct, yet how firm in their dependence upon God, how consistent in their Christian characters! They sought for the help of the faithful bishop in their greatest trial; they were received by him; they were enlightened.

There was no cruel persecuting spirit in them to induce them to treat even those who differed from them with contempt or indignation. They afford a beautiful lesson of charity combined with the firmest assurance of faith. When confronted with their relative Domitia,

how truly calm and placid the manner in which they received the message of the Emperor, and how composed beneath the severity of their trials ! The sweet communion of spirit with each other, how comforting and how rejoicing !

Such do all good Christians feel in every age of the Christian Church. Charity, pure charity, whilst it is enlightened beyond the usual bounds of faith and hope, never compromising either of these virtues for formality, ostentation, or ceremony, yet never fails in its persuasive force to produce good effects.

Never shall we find any instance of persecution in the conduct of any of the early Christians. No fire, no sword, no torture, no judgment, condemnation to death, banishment, crucifixion, or penal statutes, in their exercise of Apostolical Authority. Grave admonition upon heresy ; a rejection from the congregation

until heresy contrary to the word of God should be renounced; the evil doers put away and held to be inadmissible to the assembly of the faithful, until repentance, sincere repentance, shewn by alteration of conduct, gave evidence that they might again be trusted. Judgment, condemnation, and death were left to God. Submission even to the laws of cruel tyrants, as long as they were the legally constituted authorities of the empire, was one of the bright ornaments of the Christian crown. This submission went not to the fulfilment of idolatrous mandates; here only the Christian spirit could not obey.

Temporalities might be yielded, persecutions and death be inflicted; but young and virtuous females like Flavia Domitilla and Flaminia Domitiana, rather than part with their profession of a true faith, were strengthened to bear any penalties and to shine in the hour of suffering.

We may admire such characters, let them be of ancient or modern date. We do right to search after the same spirit of endurance. We may not be called to such extremity, and we do not certainly desire to see such days as those in which such characters existed ; but we must combat with like spirit the difficulties of our own times, and be prepared against them. Should any spiritual power, taking upon itself apostolical authority, require of the Church of England idolatrous worship, heathenish rites and ceremonies, unholy sacrifices, penances, and submission to impositions, fooleries and follies, under pretence of calling them sacred, her daughters will not want the faith and firmness to protest, resist, and suffer, if need be, in behalf of the truth.

Daughters of England, be upon your guard ! for evidently ye require to be warned in these days not to forsake the truth as it really is in

your Church, and can be received and understood without intermixture of Popish rules and ceremonies, and flagrant impositions, outward pageants, austere, superstitious, and human inventions. Daughters of England, forsake not the faith : the faith once delivered to the saints. Forsake it not for a false faith, however inviting, however externally imposing, or inwardly alluring. Let not the vile impostures of so-called works of merit and of supererogation drive you into the idea of devoting your souls to the service of the monastery, to the taking the veil of absurdity, and retiring for ever from the society of your friends and the duties of domestic life ! No superstitious devotions will ever cover the multitude of sins, though you went barefooted and shorn of your locks to the extremities of the earth. Deeply as the world may be apt to fascinate the young mind, and the extravagancies of society imbue you with

false notions, none are so bad as those which flatter the soul into the idea of meritorious service to God by the extravagancies and follies of human formal inventions! The illustrious females Flavia Domitilla and Flaminia Domitiana, though dwelling in idolatrous Rome, were not called away from the engagements of life into monastic seclusion. Deprived of their dearest friends, their property confiscated by a tyrant's cruelty, driven into exile and treated as the scum of the earth, they were supported not by any idea of their own excellence, but by the faith for which they suffered. So many, very many, in this land and others have been and are supported under injuries, if not in the nineteenth century as barbarous, yet not less wicked.

Daughters of England, faith and patience, domestic love and virtue, piety at home to requite your parents, and an earnest desire

that truth may flourish in the land of your nativity, are ornaments such as become the most graceful among you, and such as no priest on earth ought to interfere with. Your love to God is better shewn therein than in all the gossipings upon sacred things, where even your neighbour's faith is questioned, and your own great works become the secret food of vanity, singularity, and selfish approbation, to the utter injury of pure charity. What truly faithful and humble Christian lady does not suffer when she sees another exalting herself over her, by some vain conceit of her own? Humility suffers a pang, a deep pang, when ignorance exalts herself against meekness and gentleness, faith and patience, pureness and wisdom; and, under the semblance of righteousness, says, "Lord, I thank thee I am not as others are!" It is almost better to meet with a Domitia, than with such a sister; at least, it

is better to hold converse with an opponent who may condemn you boldly, than with a deceiver, who wants humility, whilst she talks of her own wonderful faith.

Oh long, long, may the noblest daughters of England see the beauty of holiness, as displayed in that true profession of a sound faith where every grace is openly cherished, talents not hidden under a bushel, but shining before all men in the production of "*whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report.*" Daughters of England, "*if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think of these things,*" and pardon the introduction to your notice of such as Flavia Domitilla and Flaminia Domitiana, to be admired by you, even if you may never be called to imitate them. It does

not require an exactly parallel position of personal circumstance to produce the same kind of character. Few can be expected, in this age of increasing enlightenment, to be exposed to similar trial with the virtuous sufferer of olden times. The enemy of truth and faith does not assume the same feature at every period, but faith and truth are the same in every age, and can never be other than the friends of the Christian in every trial. Pardon then the offer of these examples to your notice, and take them as they were intended, to shew you the triumphs of female Christian obedience.

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## CHAPTER XXXV.

## THE CONCLUSION.

VIOLENCE never did the world any good ! Violence in the Church, however, is much more unseemly, and something as dissonant as a note of discord in the midst of harmony. Truth may be indignant at the prostitution of her sacred edifices when mere buyers and sellers, money-changers and brokers, usurp the seats of wisdom, and carry on every species of traffic in things unlawful, in that very habitation which is devoted to

God. Not that truth should be daunted by that spurious courtesy which admits the same kind of behaviour and respect towards an enemy, which it observes towards its friends. Man, however, should be very careful how he takes upon himself, in the exercise of spiritual authority, to assume or rather presume to do, as the Son of God did, when he made a scourge of small cords, and drove the worshippers of Mammon out of the Temple of His Father. Carnal weapons, wielded by fallible man, are apt only to provoke resistance when used for spiritual purposes. The weapons which God uses are spiritual, and irresistible. No man can stand before them. They are sharper than any two-edged sword.

Tyranny in matters of spiritual discipline, tyranny which is exercised to suppress or destroy the talents God has given a man, instead of producing godly fear generally

operates in producing stupidity, something worse than idleness, since it gives birth to that apathy which destroys the energies of love.

Wide is the distinction between the orderly governance of the Church, and the spiritual tyranny of that universal Power and Authority which the Pope of Rome seeks to assume. To be governed by truth—to be in obedience to lawful powers, temporal, or spiritual, which are founded not on mere dogmas for doctrines, or experiments for legislative wisdom, is no more than a Christian would desire. But when these things are carried to such an extent that no man can look into the Word of Truth without trembling, lest he should be condemned for the exercise of a privilege, which is the right and title of every living soul, superstition of the darkest and gloomiest kind, will usurp the place of pure Religion.

It is true that men may fancy themselves what they will; and every page of history has afforded examples of fanaticism, wherein the sword has been made the instrument of death, even among those who wielded it, whilst they thought themselves the favoured soldiers of Heaven, to execute wrath upon unbelievers. It is equally true that some who have fought against charity have called themselves the soldiers of Christ; men who never thought of laying down their lives for their brethren, but only of making them lay down their lives for themselves.

In the Church of England, there is little fear of any man presuming to be so audacious as to lord it over God's heritage in this way, at least whilst there is any sound part in that body. It may indeed grow rotten with corruptions, but whilst the virtue of humility is found to be the vital principle of her doc-

trine, and she assumes not the power of infallibility, she may hope to retain her position as a sound member of Christ's universal Catholic Church. It is folly, repeated over and over again, and as often refuted, that in the maintenance of her Articles, she is as bigoted as any of the followers of the Pope. If truth is to be preserved, the doctrines derived from it are not to be overthrown, as if they were built upon a sandy or unsound foundation. She holds that all Churches have erred, and may err ; but she never maintains that they may not be corrected and improved. But it is not every rude hand that attacks her, nor every insidious enemy that may chance to have crept into her fold, that shall prevail to overturn her profession of a sound faith and practice. She may be, as she has been, surrounded by foes, but, by the help of God, she shall yet stand and be delivered from her enemies, pro-

vided her faith fail her not. The way, the truth, and the life, are not so obscured by any formal impositions, or any latitudinarian licentiousnesses, as to make it a matter of doubt whether the profession of a true faith be in her or not.

The reign of terror, like that of Domitian, or that of a more modern absolute tyranny on the earth, has not gained a footing here. Men cannot forget how infidels rose in faction under the semblance of pretended liberty, and exercised that worst of all tyrannies, democratic fury; how, like Petronius, Norbanus, Stephanus, and other conspirators, men banded together against royalty under the pretence of freedom, and were guilty of every species of enormity. The bloody revolution of a neighbouring realm cannot be forgotten among Englishmen. Everything sacred to religion, loyalty, domestic order, and regularity, was

overthrown; and men who pretended to be conspicuous for the love of every virtue, became steeped in every species of public and private villany, many of them forfeiting their lives by the very means they had used to murder others.

Yet in those days, and in these, many disaffected persons may be found, ready to praise those very men, and to trumpet them forth as heroes and friends to humanity, who had no fear of God before their eyes, and nothing but anarchy and rebellion in their hearts.

Nations, as well as individuals, afford lessons, and offer to after ages the most solemn warnings. Well is it if wisdom is gained by those who read of the past, and see the kind of clap-trap inventions which led to those events; for "Rebellion is as witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry;" and the nation which rejects the Word of the Lord, He will reject from his kingdom.

Though all Rome was assembled against Zenon—though philosophy despised him—the Senators of his country condemned him, and the tyrant Domitian persecuted him unto death—though the wild beasts of the Circus were let loose upon him, he was nothing daunted; he stood, as every man of truth should stand—prepared to part with everything but his faith.

It is in order that some who read these pages may admire and imitate the firmness here portrayed, that this narrative of the early suffering nobility is put forth. Instances might be taken from a much more modern date of history ; but so much human passion, so much discordant language, so much violence of invective, personal and applicable, is used therein, that the dignity of the suffering Christian is injured by the strong arm he was compelled to exercise in self-defence, and

the *strong meat* used to feed the souls of those who had so much to fight against.

The nearer we approach to the times of the Primitive Church, the more pure is the spirit of Christianity ; the less we find of human passions unsubdued, and the more meekness, gentleness, patience, and submission to the truth. Violence was scarcely known in the days of apostolic teaching. Violence of language is nowhere exercised in the writings of the inspired servants of God ; and we may conclude that they had too full a light from their divine Master's glory not to perceive that His example was one of patience, not one of irritation, vehemence, or passion. Human infirmities in an unconverted man, shew themselves in zealous violence ; as in the character of Saul the Persecutor : but Paul the Apostle is a different man—one ready to suffer the loss of all things, to gain souls for Christ. And such is

Zenon represented to be ; not, indeed, in the same efficient manner as the inspired Apostle, but, in the same spirit, sustaining himself by the same word, and exercising the same faith. Such, indeed, in a comparative degree, should be every minister of the truth. He should never be a persecutor, but a persuasive teacher; one exercising the sword of the Spirit, not in violence, but in such a serviceable manner as to defend truth against falsehood faithfulness against infidelity.

Such should be every Christian nobleman, in every land. Such are many, it is to be hoped, in a country so favoured as our own with the blessings of pure religion. We are not afraid that the love of God should become extinct in that class of our fellow-subjects, but when we see dangers arising to them, we should be guilty of neglect if we did not warn them in time, lest the enemy should come upon them unawares.

Let any nobleman, or Christian, shut his eyes, if he can, to the growing disposition to faction in this once happy country, both in Church and State. It is true that a man may pretend not to see it, and may resolve that he will not trouble himself about it, and so may remain indifferent until he sees it approach his own domestic hearth, and he at last finds that it is so close to him as to come hot upon him, and that its breath makes him blush for his coldness and indifference.

In the Church, faction is at work to overturn, on the one hand, all that is established, and to reject the aids, helps, and diversities of gifts which different men possess to bring forth the light of Truth, that the whole body may thereby be edified. So would it contend that any established order of things is utterly discordant with visible improvement. On the other hand, faction is busy to make too much of

externals and to approach the doctrine of meritorious works, in forms, decorations, ceremonies, and usages, which were exploded in days gone by, as tending to subvert faith and internal purification of the heart. The Church consists, as a body, of very many members. It never was, in its early days, made to consist of any one set of members, all hands, all eyes, all feet, as if there were not different offices appointed for different members of it, and as if the Church consisted only of the different orders of clergy. There is not a more delusive phantom than such a misrepresentation, for if it was written in the early days of the Corinthian Church, that "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews, or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free," how can the Church of Christ in England be confined to any one order of subjects in the land?

Our Queen is at this moment, in temporalities, Head of the visible Church in this Christian land, and God forbid that, as Christians and Englishmen, we should ever consider a foreigner, whether pontiff or prince, as our head. Oh! may our Sovereign ever look to the Church of her own dear country as worthy of her nursing protection, as far as God gives her the power to be its nursing mother: nor let the sceptical imagine that in this view of her protection of that Church, is meant merely that of the clergy. They are but one portion, one member, as it were, of the Church; her nobility, who own the truth of her position herein, are a portion thereof; her commons are the same; her entire people—her poorest subjects are the same; and, oh! never, never may we any of us be such undutiful and unthankful children, as to forget the relative position in which we are placed, and to honour her therein most heartily.

If a man think that such a view as this is upholding a mere temporal sovereignty against the Kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world, he mistakes the meaning of the writer of these pages, and attributes to him motives which he does not acknowledge. The service of Christ is perfect freedom; freedom from anything that shall be derogatory to obedience, in the holiest, purest, and most honourable sense of that word. He never asserts that the Queen of England is the head of the Universal Church, any more than he would admit that the Pope of Rome is such. Christ is the head of the Universal Church, and all the kings and queens of earth—lords spiritual and temporal, people, nations, kindred, and families, must look to the same Great Head, one and all, for their deliverance.

Responsibilities are attached to the stations of all—responsibilities of various kinds; and

such only as are traitors, heady, high-minded, and lovers of pleasure (*their own pleasure*) more than lovers of God, will seek that disorganization which separates the members of Christ's body one from another, as if they had no need of each other.

Faction in the Church scouts these doctrines, one portion accounting them as savouring too much of Satan, or the kingdom of this earth; another as courting temporal dominions for the sake of present rewards. Men like Zenon, however, will discover in them something more than such unworthy motives; and though, humanly speaking, they will discern the vanity of the creature, which must very soon pass away, they will own at least that there is some wisdom displayed herein, for which they may be assured no human merit is calculated upon or claimed.

As the sun visits, in his daily course, all

the nations of the earth, and warms the people of every land in a greater or less degree, so, also, does God look upon us all, and compassionate our ignorance. He feeds all, but not all alike—yet all in wisdom for the benefit of the whole. So, He distributes to His Church the diversities of gifts of his Spirit, and has many differences of administrations. Yet is there but one Lord over all.

In the Church of England, we have men of all ranks and classes. Christianity can be alike professed by all, without any man leaving his station to conform to any fancied state of external humiliation inconsistent with the worship of God, and the service of Christ. Where the religion of a people is professedly the Word of God, and that is acknowledged to be the rule and guide of all men, its effect is to be seen as manifest in one class as in another; the words of the

mouth and the meditation of the heart being as acceptable to God from the highest as from the lowest in the realm : for when “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ,” the reward is to be given to them that fear the name of God, “*both small and great.*”

It may be said there is no fear of a man’s leaving his position in the world, his honours, titles, and emoluments, in this country, to become a follower of Christ. If the question were one of distinction between the idolatrous worship of Mammon and the profession of the true faith, many would be the bright examples in the nineteenth century, like those of the first, where men would be ready to give up all things rather than be forced to be the worshippers of idols. A Flavius Clemens would then rejoice to be called a Christian, even at the risk of all loss, let the dignity of his high estate in the

realm be what it might, rather than bow down his head to stocks and stones, pictures and figures, inventions of men's minds and the works of men's hands. Though he might be called a heretic, yet would he rejoice to worship the God of his fathers in spirit and in truth. Human inventions, calculated to make the mind and body imbecile and at the same time proud, would be spurned as they deserved to be, from his presence.

Faction, disaffection, and rebellion against the lawful governance of temporal authority, is no part of Christian faith. They were most directly denounced even in those times when the Emperors of Rome were not Christians; but when the whole nation is nominally Christian, and not unfrequently the highest in authority are the brightest ornaments and jewels in the Christian Church, these sins become the more heinous, and consequently worthy of the more severe condemnation.

Mammon may be and is as much worshipped by men of low degree as by the nobles of a land; and at this very day in England, the men of pleasure, the lovers of this world, and the participators in all the pride of temporal things, in wide speculations, sumptuous indulgences, and extravagant follies, are not the nobles of the land, but those who envy them their stations, vie with them in luxury, and are the very first to denounce the great, because they themselves would be—and are, in their own eyes—greater.

Those who desire to be great men in this world are mostly incapable of sustaining the true dignity of an exalted position, from their complete want of real humility. They often think that by gaining wealth they can purchase wisdom; but many a man has found when so exalted, then alas too late, that it would have been better for his own happiness to have been content.

Faction is busy, and ever will be so in the State as well as in the Church, whilst restless minds, dissatisfied with everything, seek to gain the plaudits of the multitude, in preference to discharging the duty—the conscientious duty, of legislators. The nineteenth century exhibits a restless spirit, a great want of principle, and of wisdom, among some who scruple not to express the most decidedly democratical sentiments, even within the walls of the senate. Nor do we find that noble self-sacrificing honesty in those graver men, who, in the same senate, both know better and are firmer in principle, and ought to be at least bolder and braver in defence of order than others are, in attempting to undermine it. We do not find that dignified spirit which shews the perfection of attachment to sound principle, by a timely, just, and sensible rebuke. It is more noble to defend truth, order,

good government and the social welfare of a whole community by a firm resistance to faction, than by a silent contempt of it, when young and aspiring geniuses, flourishing in the exercise of rhetoric and in the presumption of youth shall assume a species of omnipotence of judgment which despises all government. A timely rebuke is, to a sensible young man, a blessing for which, in his after years, he will never fail to be thankful. If he takes it as intended, as nobly given to warn him of the hollow ground upon which he treads, the danger of the popular pitfall into which he and thousands after him may fall, as thousands before him have in like manner fallen, however much abashed he may feel in the senate of his country for the just rebuke given him, that man will, after awhile, be a great blessing to his country.

Popularity based upon an unsolid foun-

dation, upon the momentary production of some animated, catching speech, has often turned a giddy brain, and made it fit for nothing weighty; whilst a generous rebuke given in the very moment of flowing excitement, has conveyed wisdom to the young aspirant, and made him see that the approbation of his elders and his betters, is more pleasant and healthful than all the flatteries of the multitude, who can for the most part look only superficially upon his words.

God grant that the faithful in the senate of this country may never want wisdom nor moral courage to speak out boldly and bravely, honestly, fearlessly, independently, sagaciously, and faithfully in defence of that constitution of things which they know to have been well tried and found efficient in the day of adversity.

Nicomedes was a noble instance of generous

self-devotion in the face of the whole senate of Rome. Generous devotion to Truth, in an age when the most audacious tyranny dared to oppress the humble Zenon. He exercised no rudeness, he replied not in the language of virulence, he did but oppose the barefaced exercise of absolute tyranny, delusion, and deceit; and, though he found persecution follow him, he obtained a freedom which thousands might rejoice to find.

Early success is not generally an indication of mature triumph. It is better to receive an early check than too early praise. So the school of adversity is a better introduction to the lessons of wisdom than all the gratifications attendant on prosperity. Better to find all the world against you, and yourself supported against it, than to have all the world praise you and inflate you with vanity, whilst you feel no supporting strength within to sustain you against its flatteries.

Such is the important lesson which these pages seek to convey, in the delineation of the character of Zenon.

In the Church and in the State the same qualities alone will be found to be successful in the production of good. As example is better than precept, the character has been attempted to be displayed in the narrative of suffering steadfastness in the days of Domitian;—how successfully, it must be left to the judgment of those who read it to decide. We can but truly and honestly admire the actions of any one when we desire to imitate them, and truly attempt to do so. But we can only form good resolutions, and earnestly desire help from above to do our duty.

Zenon's is not an impossible or even improbable character in the present day. We do not expect to see him in an amphitheatre, surrounded by barbarians who acknowledge the

Emperor or potentate exercising a temporal dominion to be their deity. The age of barbarian cruelty is gone. In England but very few remains of it are at this day extant. Men abhor brutality, and the very coarsest of ruffians are compelled to give way before the prevailing public opinion expressed against them.

Cruelty, however, is still a prevailing spirit over the hearts of men who do not acknowledge in their lives the gentle, generous, and purely benevolent influences of the Christian Faith. There is a species of refined cruelty, far too prevalent in this our day, which deals out condemnation almost as vehemently as in the days of Rome, when the cries were heard against Zenon, "To the lions!" "To the lions!" "Away with him to the lions!" Thousands and thousands are, even in the nineteenth century, and in England, ready

to make an outcry against the Church of this country, and to sweep it away, if they can. Many of these would scarcely be heard to utter a single word in judgment upon themselves. No. They are enlightened men, professing the utmost liberality, the most abhorrent distaste to anything like cruelty. But how do they join, heart and soul, in condemning the Church—scornfully condemning her, in such terms of bitterness and invective, that it is utterly impossible not to perceive that passion, instead of principle, governs their voices.

If men scrutinized the motives of their own words as deeply as they do the actions and words of others, they would see a most wonderful complication of turnings and twistings, as endless in propulsion as the Archimedean screw. Now Zenon had but one motive in his words—the glory of his Master's kingdom.

To such glory every energy of his mind and every faculty of his body were devoted. And to such—notwithstanding the virulence and madness of popular excitement—to such is the Church of England devoted. She requires no apologist to say so, since she stands out for all to observe, and to see whether she does or does not keep this one grand, absorbing doctrine always before her. There are men within her pale, who profess the word of wisdom, and spread it far and wide, in every direction, to promote the glory of God by the production of good ; who do not shrink from declaring the whole counsel of God, and are ready to promote the kingdom of Heaven upon earth, by the dissemination of sound doctrine through every channel. There are in her men who possess the word of knowledge to such an extent as may, without any presumption, challenge the world to let their light shine more

conspicuously therein if they can; men whose knowledge is not superficial—such as puffs up with conceit, and proves that it is a dangerous thing to possess so little, and to boast of such great things—but who dive deeply into the pages of Revelation, who have had time to bring their knowledge to maturity for the good of mankind.

The Church of England possesses men of such mental powers and attainments, operating in channels the most diverse, yet but one and the same spirit working all in all. Their knowledge is not merely of the letter, but of the depths of the spirit, which shines forth in light and life-giving reflection which no man can destroy.

There are in her men possessing such faith as shall be able to surmount every difficulty and to give an answer to every man who shall ask them a reason of the hope that is within

them ; whose lively spirit worketh by love, and is fruitful in the production of such things as shall tend only to the glory of God—men whose walk is that of faith, and who, like Zenon, fear no discouragement from man.

There are in her men who possess such powerful gifts of healing a poor wounded soul, or broken body, as to make empiricism ashamed; who, though not gifted in this age with the power of working miracles, or of prophetic inspiration, possess, nevertheless, such gifts of healing, without any artifice of deception, as to produce a full conviction that the talents which God bestows are to be brought to perfection only by the exercise of humility.

There are men in her of such discernment, that they can see plainly the spirit which actuates themselves and others, and know well whether it be of God or not. The fruits of love, wisdom, peace, gentleness, brotherly

kindness, and charity, they are well assured, however diversified their operations, are the manifestation of the true spirit. They put not light for darkness, nor darkness for light, but clearly discerning the spirit in which a thing is written, spoken, or done, they are not to be deceived by false representations, or a mere show of godliness.

There are in her men possessing the ability to understand the various tongues of the nations of the earth; who are gifted with such talents as to be familiar with languages long dead, and disused, as far as conversation goes, and which are only to be acquired by diligent studious application. There are some possessing minds peculiarly adapted to catch the tones and construction of the languages now spoken in all lands. Such men are not to be deceived by the inventions of strange tongues, such as fanatical spirits have, even in the

nineteenth century, put forward as the language of inspiration.

The miraculous gift of tongues which came upon the Apostles was not a gift of unknown tongues ; but such as the inhabitants of all the distant parts of the world, then in Jerusalem, could hear and understand. “Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.”

This gift of tongues was for an express purpose—a miraculous gift : but is now one of the ordinary gifts in the Church. That the Word, the whole Word of God may be disseminated far and wide throughout the world,

Societies in the Church are united for the purpose of sending forth the Scriptures in all languages, that men may give glory to God, and be no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-workers together with us in the Kingdom of Christ.

There are in our Church men possessing such powers of the right interpretation of tongues, that the whole body of the faithful may be edified ; that the unlearned may not ignorantly depart without instruction ; nor misconception induce men to apply a private interpretation to passages of Holy Writ which bear an application of a universal or particular public character, upon which no man ought to presume to venture.

These gifts still remain in the Church, and are not confined to any one member, but to various members, as God has distributed to each the portion of His spirit ; and the mani-

festation of this spirit is given to every man to profit withal; so that each individual may turn his talent to a proper account for the enlightenment of the whole body of the Church. Long may such gifts remain with the clergy and the laity of this Christian country; and produce fruits unto holiness and edification, from generation to generation.

Readers, had the author of Zenon published a volume of Sermons, perhaps you would not have condescended to have read one of them. Indeed he must apologize for taking up the time wherein he has intruded these observations upon your notice. He has collected materials, and woven them into a connected form, to convey a lesson which appeared to him not unseasonable. A lesson of faith and obedience—a distinction between philosophy and pure Religion—between bigotry, superstition, tyranny, and pride, as opposed to that calm profession

of Christianity which inspired the Christians of the earliest days, and may God grant the same in these. If any man's mind shall be strengthened hereby, and any man's heart improved, let him pardon the imperfections of his countryman, who professes admiration of such a character as that of Zenon, and prays only that he and you, readers, may be found faithful.

THE END.

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