

One afternoon towards the end of December Corvinus proceeded to the Baths of Dioclesian, accompanied by Catulus, who had an eye for proper combatants in the amphitheatre, such as a good dealer would have for cattle at a fair. He called for Rabirius, the superintendent of the convict department, and said to him: "Rabirius, I am come by order of the emperor to select a sufficient number of the wicked Christians under your charge for the honor of fighting in the amphitheatre on occasion of the coming festival."

"Really," answered the officer, "I have none to spare. I am obliged to finish the work in a given time, and I cannot do so if I am left short of hands."

"I cannot help that; others will be got to replace those that are taken from you. You must walk Catulus and myself through your works and let us choose those that will suit us."

Rabirius, grumbling at this unreasonable demand, submitted nevertheless to it, and took them into a vast area just vaulted over. It was entered by a circular vestibule lighted from above, like the Pantheon. This led into one of the shorter arms of a cruciform hall of noble dimensions, into which opened a number of lesser, though still handsome chambers. At each angle of the hall, where the arms intersected one another, a huge granite pillar of one block had to be erected. Two were already in their places; one was girt with ropes round capstans, ready to be raised on the morrow. A number of men were actively employed in making final preparations. Catulus nudged Corvinus and pointed with his thumb to two fine youths, who, stripped slave-fashion to their waists, were specimens of manly athletic forms.

"I must have those two, Rabirius," said the willing purveyor of wild beasts; "they will do charmingly. I am sure they are Christians, they work so cheerfully."

"I cannot possibly spare them at present. They are worth six men, or a pair of horses, at least, to me. Wait till the heavy work is over and then they are at your service."

"What are their names, that I may take a note of them? And mind, keep them up in good condition."

"They are called Largus and Sularagdus; they are young men of excellent family, but work like plebeians and will go with you nothing loth."

"They shall have their wish," said Corvinus with great glee. And so they had later.

As they went through the works, however, they picked out a number of captives, for many of whom Rabirius made resistance, but generally in vain. At length they came near one of those chambers which flanked the eastern side of the longer arm of the hall. In one of them they saw a number of convicts (if we must use the term) resting after their labor. The centre of the group was an old man, most venerable in appearance, with a long white beard streaming on his breast, mild in aspect, gentle in word, cheerful in his feeble action. It was the confessor Saturninus, now in his eightieth year, yet loaded with two heavy chains. At each side were the more youthful laborers, Cyriacus and Sisinius, of whom it is recorded that in addition to their own task work, one on each side, they bore up his bonds. Indeed, we are told that their particular delight was, over and above their own assigned portion of toil, to help their weaker brethren and perform their work for them. But their time was not yet come; for both of them, before they received their crowns, were ordained deacons in the next pontificate.

Several other captives lay on the ground about the old man's feet, as he, seated on a block of marble, was talking to them with a sweet gravity which riveted their attention and seemed to make them forget their sufferings. What was he saying to them? Was he requiting Cyriacus for his extraordinary charity by telling him that, in commemoration of it, a portion of the immense pile which they were toiling to raise, would be dedicated to God under his invocation, become a title, and close its line of titulars by an illustrious name? Or was he recounting another more glorious vision, how this

smaller oratory was to be superseded and absorbed by a glorious temple in honor of the Queen of Angels, which should comprise the entire of that superb hall, with its vestibule, under the directing skill of the mightiest artistic genius that the world should ever see. What more consoling thought could have been vouchsafed to those poor oppressed captives than that they were not so much erecting baths for the luxury of a heathen people, or the prodigality of a wicked emperor, as in truth building up one of the stateliest churches in which the true God is worshipped and the Virgin Mother, who bore Him incarnate, is affectionately honored?

From a distance Corvinus saw the group, and pausing, asked the superintendent the names of those who composed it. He enumerated them readily; then added, "You may as well take that old man, if you like; for he is not worth his keep so far as work goes."

"Thank you," replied Corvinus; "a pretty figure he would cut in the amphitheatre. The people are not to be put off with decrepit old creatures whom a single stroke of a bear's or tiger's paw kills outright. They like to see young blood flowing, and plenty of life struggling against wounds and blows before death comes to decide the contest. But there is one there whom you have not named. His face is turned from us; he has not the prisoner's garb nor any kind of fetter. Who can it be?"

"I do not know his name," answered Rabirius; "but he is a fine youth, who spends much of his time among the convicts, relieves them, and even at times helps them in their work. He pays, of course, well for being allowed all this; so it is not our business to ask questions."

"But it is mine, though," said Corvinus sharply; and he advanced for this purpose. The voice caught the stranger's ear, and he turned round to look.

Corvinus sprang upon him with the eye and action of a wild beast, seized him, and called out with exultation, "Fetter him instantly. This time, at least, Paneratus, thou shalt not escape."

(To be continued.)

A little thing shows us that the deeds of kindness we do are effective in proportion to the love we put into them. More depends upon the motive than upon the gift. If the thought be selfish, if we expect compensation, or are guilty of close calculation the result will be like the attitude of mind which invited it.

MEMORIAL TO FATHER DORE

AN APPEAL.

At a meeting of the parishioners of the late Father Dore, held on Sunday, July 28, it was resolved that a suitable memorial be erected to his memory; and as it was Father Dore's most keen desire, often expressed, to erect a new church at Foxton, that said memorial be a new church.

It was also resolved that a Subscription List be now opened, so that the many friends of Father Dore throughout the Dominion may have an opportunity of showing their appreciation of him who was such a sincere and faithful friend to their boys in their dire hour of need on the stricken field of Gallipoli.

Mr. James Hurley was elected chairman of the Memorial Committee, Father Forrestal and Mr. Denis Purcell joint treasurers and secretaries. All subscriptions will be acknowledged in the *Tablet*.

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