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"God—and our Native Land."

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RHEA SYLVIA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"TALES OF THE PACKOLETTE."

Three fourths of a century had elapsed from the establishment in Rome, by the Sabine Numa, of the order of the Vestals, when his grand son Ancus Martinus was called to the throne. Numa, the inspired—the loved of the goddess Egéria, had long been gathered to his fathers; but the sacred fire of the temple still burned on the altars first erected by himself. The Vestal order had preserved its purity and its vigilance from suspicion. It still retained its popularity with the people and its votaries were held in the highest estimation and veneration.

Great and various were the privileges and powers of the holy maidens, who, proud in their humility, seldom walked the streets of Rome, unattended by their guards, supporting the faces, emblems of their rank and sacred office. The lightest and the noblest of Rome's noble dames gladly devoted their offspring to the service of the temple of Vesta, and eagerly intrusted for the honors of the Novitiate for their favorite daughters. Seldom had the seniors of the temple availed themselves of the privilege of the law, of again returning to the world after having served out the requisite time, as novices, priestesses, and teachers of sacred mysteries. Yet the occurrence was not so uncommon as to excite indignation, though it might surprise, when Gegania the eldest of the Vestals upon the promotion of Canuleia to the rank of priestess, announced her determination to quit the temple, and, at the age of forty take back her vow of celibacy. An application to the Pontifex Maximus, to supply the vacancy among the Novices, became necessary by the withdrawal of Gegania, and the disagreeable duty of making a selection, devolved upon Ancus Martinus, who blended with his office of King that of Sovereign Pontiff.

The solicitations of the Roman matrons were too quibbling to allow the vacancy to be easily filled owing to the fact that the applicants were most numerous. Ancus Martinus still hesitated in his decision when an urgent appeal from the mothers of Vesta showed him the necessity of a prompt compliance with their demands, if he would avoid the anger of the powerful Virgins, whose influence was sufficient to control to excite all Rome in their cause. It was no uncommon practice in Ancus to stroll through the royal city in disguise, unattended by his guards, or other insignia of power. And more than once had he found the benefit of this practice during the fourteen years he had already reigned, in the discovery and defeat of treasonable plots against the stability of his government. It is at this period our tale commences, and on the very day which the monarch had promised to make known his final determination respecting the new Vestal.

Within the walls of Rome a few days previous to the period we have designated, Tarquinius Priscus, a wealthy citizen of Corinth, had taken up his residence. He was accompanied by his only child a daughter, about nine years of age, Tarquinius was a widower—the early betrothed of the Vestal Gegania, and to receive her hand was his principal business at Rome. No dreams of aspiring ambition for himself or his daughter had ever influenced the philosophical Priscus. Satisfied with his immense wealth and patrician rank, he sought happiness and quiet in unpretending retirement.—His unbounded benevolence—his varied acquirements and solid virtues coupled with unostentatious piety, had rendered his name well known in Rome, and secured him a great and lasting popularity.

The daughter of Priscus was all that a father could wish. She was a surprising lovely child, with a mind, so far as developed, fully equal to the promise of her person, and fondly did that father devote upon the young and beautiful girl who devoutly returned

the strong affection of her sole parent. She also, in accordance with the established customs of her people, was betrothed and wore upon her fore-finger the iron ring of her distant kinsman Servius Tullius. This youth had been selected by her father from family considerations—the affections of the children were not thought of—Servius was a soldier and aspiring one of his age, which did not exceed sixteen when he entered the royal army. Whether the betrothment between himself and his kinsman's daughter would be agreeable to him when the time for consummating it arrived, gave the young soldier little uneasiness.—The evil day was far off and the compact in the meanwhile secured him a princely fortune. He was away on some distant expedition at the time Priscus visited Rome once more to form a matrimonial engagement.

A Roman knight was passing the house of Tarquinius, when attracted by a sweet and girlish voice, he raised his eyes and met the curious gaze of the proprietor's daughter. "Who are you?" he asked abruptly. She timidly drew back from the soldier's interrogatory. "Nay speak pretty one," said he, smiling kindly. "What is thy name?" "Rhea Sylvia."

"Indeed! the mother of our Romulus and Remus bore the same name and was a Vestal. Wouldst thou like to fill the office of thy illustrious namesake?" Even the young Rhea Sylvia knew that the office of a Vestal was one of the highest consideration, and answering the question with delighted and sparkling eyes. "Of all things it would please me the best." She had forgotten her betrothment—the world with which she was barely acquainted—the hopes of her fond and indulgent father. Her very name had from infancy, associated her, in imagination, with the vestal order, and to become a priestess of that order appeared to her the most glorious destiny to which a female could aspire.

"Art thou of Rome?" asked the stranger. "No of Corinth." "And thy father, what is his name and rank?" "A Patrician by birth. Tarquinius Priscus by name." "Hah! the good Priscus. Then thy wishes shall be gratified. Know me child for Pontifex Maximus, and thank the gods for this accidental meeting. Prepare to enter the Temple of Vesta to-morrow, when the good matrons shall call to escort thee to their burning altars. Young novice, I bid thee farewell." And Ancus Martinus passed on, leaving the fair Rhea Sylvia lost in astonishment at the sudden change in her destiny.

Deeply as Priscus felt the loss of his daughter, and anxiously as he desired to keep her with him, veneration and respect for the order and for the religion of his country forbade any interference on his part. The vows were made, and Rhea Sylvia became a novice in those sublime mysteries, known only to the virgins of the sun. For ten years she acted the favored guardian of the sacred fire. The rank was finally won, and the pure and ardent priestess devoted herself with zeal and enthusiasm to the duties of her high office which proved that no holy or earthly feeling intermingled with her devotion to Vesta. Tarquinius Priscus had returned to his native Corinth, and in the pursuits of literature and science ceased to regret his daughter whilst he gloried in her high destiny and immaculate fame. The Vestal was pious, honored and happy—the most popular and beloved of her whole sisterhood.

"Father Jupiter! what a glorious being," exclaimed a young and handsome soldier, as a Vestal and her guard passed the place where he was standing. "It were worth a kingdom to win a smile from so fair a creature." "Say you so, sir soldier," replied a citizen near whom he stood, and know you not it might cost a head? Our pious Ancus would turn a Vestal's smile into the bitterest fruit you could pluck in all Rome.

"It may be so, sir citizen, yet his power will not last always." "No, but the Colline Gate will survive him—a proper dread of which, will turn the Vestal's smile into a frown." "A smile and more have been won from Vestal purity, and in spite of Vestal fears." "Not in Rome my gay soldier." "So musty legends tell; yet our great Romulus had a Vestal mother." "So the same legend saith but—"

"Hah! You a soldier of Rome and doubt her certain history. Beware, sir soldier. It were no less than blasphemy in you to throw a shade of suspicion on our divine Roman's birth. I know it friend citizen. Forgive me—I spoke carelessly. I meant no question of what all Rome believes—"

myself among the rest. Ancus Martinus, however, hath not the same origin."

"It is not claimed for him, yet he is a good and a pious king."

"Well wale—you know not the name of the Vestal?" "It is not so. None but a stranger in Rome should be ignorant of it. And I, sir citizen am that stranger. For the last twelve years I have followed the banner of our good monarch without stepping foot in Rome till this blessed day. Father Jupiter! I have lost much of pleasure whilst spending my time among the barbarians. Will you name the vestal?"

"Rhea Sylvia, daughter of Tarquinius Priscus of Corinth."

The soldier started with an expression of the deepest astonishment but without asking further questions, bade the adieu cautiously, and gathering up his toga, walked swiftly in the direction the vestal had taken.

"Merely! oh! beautiful and holy priestess, mercy for the love of Vesta, upon a wretch condemned to instant death." Rhea Sylvia made a sign to her guards to halt, and demanded of the officer having the supplicating prisoner in charge, for what offence the man had been condemned. "For fratricide," was the reply, and on the clearest testimony. The wretch still clamored for mercy in the most piteous terms, whilst he offered sundry excuses for the foul act. I cannot pardon one so atrociously guilty, said the Vestal, her cheek turning pale and her lip quivering, as she cut off by her refusal the last hope of the condemned man. The officer and guard moved on instantly to the place of execution. The gentle priestess delighted in acts of mercy, and would gladly have exercised her high prerogative had the offence permitted; as it was, the pain she endured from being compelled to refuse, induced her immediate return to the temple.

It was night—the moon cast a pale and flickering light over the highly cultivated garden of the temple, whilst the balmy fragrance of the air seemed to invite the young priestess to sooth her agitated and over wrought feelings, by rambling amidst the sweet influences of the lights and shades of her favorite walks. The voice of fratricide still rang in her ears and pained and excited her more than she was willing to allow. But gradually she recovered her composure, though not her usual tone of mind. Her thoughts were pure but earthly. They were of her father—of the home and companions of her youth—and that deep blush betrays her—Servius Tullius was remembered in her wandering mood. Whence came that strange and mysterious association by which the boyish image of Servius long since banished from her memory was so vividly called up? Why does she feel anxious to learn of his fate, to learn if the man has realized the promises of the ardent boy.

In the changeful vagaries of her thoughts, she remembered a soldier like young man's gazing intently upon her as she passed the streets, and in fact following in sight of herself and guards until she entered the Temple. 'Twas not that she had traced a single feature she could identify—but there was some undefinable association with Servius Tullius.

She leaned against the outer wall of the garden, resting beneath the foliage of an overspreading tree. "Can it be possible," she murmured unconsciously, "can it be possible the soldier was Servius?"

"Without doubt, virgin of the Sun," was the immediate response, and a man jumped from the tree to her feet. "What sacrilegious madman is this? demanded the young priestess haughtily—who has dared to intrude into the gardens of Vesta?"

A deep crimson overspread the Vestal's neck and face, and whether of pleasure or anger might have been difficult for her to determine.

"I was the subject of your thoughts, Rhea Sylvia," he continued, "as you holy Maiden, have long been mine.—Little did I think when I first gazed upon you to-day, and admired your transcendent beauty, that you were the betrothed of my boyhood, of whom the mandate of a tyrant had robbed me."

"I may not deny I thought of you. It was almost the first time in ten years. You forced yourself upon my attention to-day, by following me."

"Thanks, gentle, priestess, Servius Tullius was not forgotten by you." In truth you were, I know not your features.—Though some vague reminiscence associated the supposed stranger with your memory.

"My Memory! Thank Jupiter, or Vesta, my memory is not that of the dead, though it were of the forgotten. "And of the dead. At least dead to me. I am vowed to the temple." "I know it, yet daughter of Vesta, if I mistake not, thou art too young

and too lovely to have quenched all the fires of a woman's heart, in that throbbing bosom of thine."

"Servius Tullius," said the Vestal sternly, "you are fully aware, not only of the great inpropriety, but the great danger of intruding, upon my privacy. Should you be discovered here, your fate is inevitable. Unworthy suspicions might fix themselves upon my character. I am a Vestal, and as such may not hold secret converse with any name. Away sir, nor longer endanger my fame or your own safety by delay."

"Cold, cruel, unimpassioned maiden. Is it not so—that you will not deign to bestow one kind word or look, upon the companion of your infancy?"

"Servius, 'tis you that are inconsiderate and cruel. I voluntarily and cheerfully assumed, the duties and took the vows of a Vestal. You did our good Pontifex Maximus great injustice in charging, that his mandate unwillingly changed my destiny.—"

"Stay, fair priestess. One moment longer hear me. Think you, that were you not bound to the shrine of Vesta, Servius Tullius might hope for favor?" "This is worse than madness—'tis folly. I am bound—let that suffice." "One word, of hope or despair," cried Tullius passionately. "It matters not what is possible or impossible—answer me. We may never meet again—yet answer me. Might I have hoped, did not Vesta interpose between us?"

"You were my father's choice. My consent should not have been wanting to confirm it. Farewell. She turned to leave him.

Tullius seized the Vestal's reluctant hand, and imprinted upon it a burning kiss. (Roman ladies had hands to be kissed as well as the moderns.)—"Bear witness then," cried he, "bear witness, father of the gods. Servius Tullius swears to win his Vestal bride or to perish in the glorious attempt."

For days the vestal appeared lost in overpowering thought. She knew not what made the warm blood course with such thrilling violence through her veins. She knew not what produced that painful-aching—still pleasurable—throbbing of the heart. One idea alone filled her mind and she could not banish it. Servius Tullius was in everything she saw—heard—spoke or thought. The subtle poison was working. The pure and noble minded girl knew not, woman as she was, that she either did or could love. Her waking and her sleeping dreams turned upon one pivot. If perchance she thought of love, she rejected the intruding idea with horror. No!—it was impossible. She the vowed priestess of Vesta, could not, did not, must not love mortal man; but this self-deception could not last always.—The truth was, ere-long forced upon her, and she awoke to the horrors of her helpless and hopeless destiny.

Among the busy multitude that thronged in mighty Rome, were very many of broken fortunes and ambitious minds. Men who were ready to hew out with the sword an amendment of their condition, in a domestic broil, as in a foreign quarrel. The seeds of that turbulent and factious spirit which subsequently enabled the soldierly to set up a crown itself for sale, were already sown in Rome.—The good Ancus Martinus with little natural disposition for war, could not find employment suitable to their rank, for all who chose to live by the sword. A conspiracy was already formed to dethrone the peaceful monarch, and bestow the crown upon one of the conspirators. But Rome was not so utterly corrupt as it subsequently became, and Ancus had sufficient notice of the movements of the conspirators to enable him to bring them to justice whenever their plot reached maturity.

Servius Tullius, an approved soldier, had often been solicited to take a part in the proposed rebellion, and though he did not entirely discountenance or peremptorily reject the solicitations and offers of the traitors, he had studiously kept himself aloof from their cabals and was in no way committed to their party. But under the influence of his new born passion for the Vestal, he was ready to join them, heart and hand, upon the sole condition that she should be his reward, spite of her vows and official station. This demand was readily concealed by the embryo monarch of the conspirators, who only wondered that the influential soldier could be so infatuated as to join their ranks without further stipulation. Servius neither asked nor wanted more. The crown itself, without Rhea Sylvia, would have been worthless. But this sacrifice of honor and loyalty was calculated to benefit him, even less than he anticipated, though he should fail in his ultimate object. The treason was known—the traitors were arrested—the proof was full and conclusive. The leaders of the conspiracy were doomed to die.—

The Centuriata sternly performed their duties—from the Sovereign nothing was left to hope. Servius was condemned to the Tarpeian Mount, and he prepared himself for the fate he felt to be inevitable. He found means to have his last farewell borne to the Vestal, with the assurance that his fate was preferable to that of living without her—that for her he had risked all—dared all—and true to his vow, having failed, was ready to suffer all which the laws could inflict.

Rhea Sylvia was not ignorant of the course of public events. She heard of the arrest and condemnation of Servius, and that information laid bare the secret of her guiltless heart before her. She loved. No sophistry could conceal—no art hide it from herself. She loved. Mad and disloyal as was the project of Servius, it was undertaken on her part, and she, above all others, could not censure and abandon him. She had learned what it was to love, and supposed impossibilities lost their character. To save him now was her whole thought. She had power to pardon even a traitor, could she find the proper time to exercise her indisputable prerogative. To do this, required some management, as her meeting with the condemned must have the appearance of being accidental—not sought for. It was a part of the superstition of the times, and was so admitted by the laws, that the accidental meeting by a Vestal of a criminal being led to execution, was an interposition of the gods, in favor of the condemned, and gave her the power of absolute pardon, if she thought proper to grant it. It was seldom this power was abused by the virgins, and public opinion generally, sanctioned their humane decisions. Rhea Sylvia could hope for as much indulgence from the people of Rome as any one of the order, and doubted not her intercession would meet with a cheerful acquiescence on their part, as well as from the Pontifex Maximus. The young Vestal easily ascertained the time Servius was to die, and took her measures accordingly.

Two hours before meridian on the day of execution, the priestess dressed in her white robes of office, passed out of the temple, attended by a more numerous guard than usual, inclining, by a circuitous route, her walk towards the Tarpeian Rock. The streets of the city were alive with the teeming population hastening towards the fatal Mount. The Vestal had calculated on meeting the guard of Servius, as she issued out of a narrow street into the main road leading to the rock; but in this she was disappointed; the dense multitude having blocked up the passage so as to delay her passage until the attendants of Servius had passed. She had made an impatient gesture to her guards, who advanced their faces and struggled stoutly to make the crowd give way. The delay, however, was evitable, and the fair priestess saw her last hope of saving her lover cut off. To hasten forward would betray her design of meeting the prisoner, and render the interposition useless.

"Back," cried the angry guard in front—"give way for a daughter of Vesta." And in his impatience he struck the man nearest to him. Under the impulse of the moment, the blow was returned. A shout of horror was raised by the surrounding multitude, who pressed forward to seize the sacrilegious assaulter of the guard of a Vestal.

The confusion amounted to a riot.—At the loud and angry shout of the multitude, the commander of the escort having Servius in charge, halted his men, uncertain what the shout might indicate. The deep agony of the young Vestal as she saw her hopes of safety to Servius blasted, brought a deathlike paleness to her cheeks and tremor to her limbs, that rendered her insensible for a moment. She was sinking to the ground, overpowered by her emotions, when a casual opening in the crowd discovered the guard still standing, where she had last caught sight of them. Love in woman is as prompt as energetic in action. The priestess discovered at a glance the true cause of the tumult and delay, and her determination was formed instantly. She rushed forward, and flying towards the officer, cried out, "Protection for a daughter of Vesta save me, sir officer, from the populace—rescue for the guards of a priestess of the sacred fire." The man opened their ranks to receive her, and immediately closed around the Vestal for her safety; whilst she, panting—sinking with her exertions and alarm, found herself supported by the strong arm of Servius Tullius.

A few moments sufficed to restore tranquility to the agitated multitude. The assaulter of the guard had made his escape in the confusion, whilst they, soon extricating themselves, advanced forward to receive the priestess again

under their protection.

"Thanks, sir officer," said Rhea Sylvia, "for your prompt assistance and ready aid. The gods whom I serve will not forget the service rendered me in a time of apparent need. But, who is the criminal in your charge? What is his name and offence?"

"Servius Tullius, by name, convicted of treason and condemned by the Centuriata to the Tarpeian Mount." "The offence is a serious one—the punishment most severe. How many have suffered on account of the late conspiracy?"

"I know not the exact number, beautiful daughter of Vesta; this man however, is the last of the traitorous band—the rest have paid the penalty which now awaits the prisoner." "It is blood enough to spill for example. Our pious Ancus Martius asks none for revenge. The man shall escape."

The officer bowed low to the Vestal. To set the prisoner at liberty seemed no ungrateful task to him. "Servius Tullius, you are pardoned; nay, no thanks. I wish not to hear the sound of your voice. You are pardoned. Let this fortunate escape make you cautious and loyal in your future conduct. Return to the service of your lawful sovereign, and redeem your last errors. Quit Rome," she added emphatically, "quit Rome, without a moment's delay, or you may meet with a worse fate than you have just escaped."

The Vestal returned to her temple, to return thanks in secret for the fortunate termination of her day's adventure—to still, if possible, the compunctions of conscience which forced her to remember she had been guilty of fraud and deception in saving the life of her lover—to brood over that love so dangerous to herself and its object—to still the violent beatings of a heart, now all too earthly for a priestess of Vesta—to hide that burning brow, feverish from the feelings that agitated her bosom, within the deep and sacred recess of the temple.

Ancus Martinus, merciful and amiable as he was in feeling, had determined that Servius Tullius merited and should endure his fate. He had some vague recollections that Rhea Sylvia once was the betrothed of Servius, and could not believe, notwithstanding the clear and apparently satisfactory report of the officer, that their meeting was entirely accidental. Chagrined and angered at the escape of Tullius, he vented his ill humor in reproaches of the priestess, and worked himself into a state of mind unfavorable to his former and familiar protegee.

Jealousy—envy—malice—were not unknown in the temple of Vesta.—Rhea Sylvia had an enemy among the guardians of the sacred fire, who hated her for her beauty, accomplishments, noble birth, immaculate purity and high favor with the people and Pontifex Maximus. Personally, the mild and amiable Virgin had never given her aspiring rival the slightest cause of offence. Yet she could not disarm her of her enmity or conquer her hate—which, petty as it was, seemed undying and unextinguishable. This rancorous enemy by the nearest chance had witnessed the Vestal's interview with Servius in the garden of the temple. Too distant to hear the precise words that passed between them, she was prepared by previous embittered feelings, to put the worst construction upon all she saw, and all she heard. Determined on the Vestal's destruction, she buried the secret in her bosom, until she could find a fitting opportunity to divulge it. When it was known that Rhea Sylvia had pardoned Servius, this enemy sought the Sovereign Pontiff to lay her charges before him, exulting in the belief, that they were sufficient to ensure the condign punishment of the being she so causelessly hated, and sought to destroy.

A few days after the pardon of Servius, the Vestal Canuleia demanded a private interview with Pontifex Maximus. It was granted of course, and the spiteful woman told her tale of malice and revenge, with all the amplification necessary to excite the horror and disgust of the pious Ancus. "This shall be strictly inquired into," said the Pontiff King. "If Rhea Sylvia be guilty of the charges you bring against her—if she has dared to pollute the altars of Vesta, she shall abide the penalties of the law in its utmost rigor. To-morrow, I, I, Canuleia, expects us at the temple to prosecute this investigation."

After the Vestal had withdrawn, Ancus long continued walking with uneasiness and agitated step. There was a heavy depression of spirits in his manner—a contortion of the brow, that spoke of inward pain and suffering—an unearthly sparkling of the eyes, that indicated some bodily or mental struggle. It was not of the young Rhea Sylvia and her probable fate that the monarch was thinking. Sad

presentiments of some impending evil forced themselves upon his consideration. His vision was vague and undefinable; yet he felt that some mighty power was at work within him—that the crisis of his own fate was not far distant.

True to his appointment, Ancus was early at the temple. In his character of Pontifex Maximus he directed the whole order to assemble, mothers, priestesses and novices, to bear and witness the investigation.

Canuleia was directed to make her statements, and as she did so, Rhea Sylvia heard with feelings of astonishment and alarm, a full and particular account of her interview with Servius in the garden of the temple. The proof, circumstantial and positive coupled with the pardon of Servius, she saw was overwhelming against her. That she was in fact innocent of the graver charge of having broken her vow of chastity, she at once saw would avail her nothing, unless she could free herself from the suspicion of having designedly met Servius on his way to execution. An oath to declare the whole truth was administered to her.

"Now priestess of Vesta," answer, said Ancus, "stain not thy soul with perjury, least the gods, whose altars thou has desecrated make thy punishment greater than man can inflict.—Answer. Art thou guilty of the criminal meeting in the garden of the temple? Didst thou meet Servius Tullius by design or accident, when 'thou didst pardon the justly condemned traitor?'"

Thus adjured—thus answering under the solemnity of an oath, the young Vestal sealed her fate by answering truly. Her guilt was apparent. The king believed her even inebriate and perjured. Her sentence was in accordance with the laws and customs of Rome. She was condemned, within three days, to be buried alive in the vault beneath the Colline Gate, with the usual forms and ceremonies.

None who saw the ghastly expression—the dull and heavy eye of the Pontifex Maximus—the tremor and debility of his frame, would have doubted the deep sympathy with the doomed Vestal. Yet such opinion would have been wide the mark of truth. Ancus Martinus was but mortal. A fell disease revelled in his system, leaving him neither time nor feeling for sympathy with the sorrows of another.

The day of burial arrived. Rhea Sylvia, redolent with life and health and beauty, was on her way to her tomb. The litter was at the door of the temple—the people with dejected looks and heavy hearts, stood around, anxious to catch a last view of the frail and lovely Vestal.

A horseman is swiftly approaching—his panting animal strains every muscle to meet his rider's wishes. Ho! alights at the door of temple at the very moment the condemned Vestal appears. It was Servius Tullius.

"Joy—liberty—pardon—he cried—to the daughter of Priscus. No longer a Vestal. I claim thee, my betrothed. Servius Tullius has won his Vestal bride."

The bewildered maiden could scarce realize the glad tidings. "How is it?" she asked. "Has Ancus Martinus relented? have you proven my innocence?"

Ancus Martinus no longer reigns in Rome—the grand-son of Numa sleeps with his sires.

"Who then reigns in his place?" "Who? Thou shalt hereafter, as thy father dost already. The good Tarquinius Priscus, by the free election of the Senate, is now fifth king of Rome. Father Jupiter! thou wert very kind in taking off the good Ancus at the lucky moment."

We follow the fortunes of the Vestal no farther. Every reader of Roman History knows, that upon the death of Priscus, his son-in-law, Servius Tullius, was accepted as his successor. His Vestal bride was long the loved mistress of mighty Rome—the cherished queen and wife of her sixth king.

To TOBACCO-CHEWERS.—The New York Journal of Commerce gives the following warning to tobacco chewers:

Besides the poison contained in the weed itself, many of our tobacco chewers are absorbing into their systems an oxyd of lead—the same which kills so many painters, and paralyzes others. Lead foil is cheaper than tin foil, and some of those who put up tobacco for chewing, use the latter in stead of the former. The counterfeits may be known by its dark blue or bluish color, whereas tin foil is nearly white. Tobacco chewers who do not wish to absorb two poisons at once, will do well to profit by this caution.

A GOOD TEST.—The pursuit in which we cannot ask God's protection must be criminal; the pleasures which we dare not thank him for, cannot be innocent.