

of March these processions were celebrated daily, the priests returning at evening to the mansions of the Salii, of which there were several in Rome, where they enjoyed a feast celebrated for its sumptuousness.

Another great festival was the Saturnalia, in honor of Saturn, giver of fruitful harvest. This was an old Italian institution and occurred on December 19. During the republic it lasted only one day; but that day the people gave themselves up to all sorts of mirth and pleasures. Social and class distinctions were either set aside entirely, or reversed. The slave sat down to banquet in his lord's clothes, while the lord waited upon him. Calls were made and compliments and presents exchanged. Here the slaves must have obtained a taste of real liberty, and the master rendered better able to appreciate what servitude really was; and although his freedom in opening the way to license was baneful, nevertheless it must have brought about a greater appreciation and sympathy between men and tended to draw classes closer together.

Janus, the two-headed god of entrances and the threshold was a distinctly Roman conception and has no parallel in Greek mythology. The worship of Vesta did much to preserve virgin purity at Rome, while the honors paid to Juno accomplished the same results for the chastity of the Roman matrons. Fortuna, fortune, was also held in great reverence, and was honored with a temple. Plutarch says: When she entered Rome she folded her wings as a sign that she wished to remain.

But we find in the Roman religion no fervor or divine aspiration and no philosophical reflection. Gross superstition meets one on every hand. The form or color of the entrails and often the size of the liver of the sacrificed victim indicated the will of the god. A groan or a peculiar movement of the animal while dying might carry with it terrible consequences. A misstep, the flicker of a flame, or an involuntary sadness coming upon one was the voice of a god to the individual. The fascinum, a little bell on a branch of coral hung about the neck was worn by children as a charm against the "evil eye." "A sure protection against spells," says Pliny, "is to spit into one's right shoe before putting it on." Their forms of worship were exceedingly ritualistic. On important occasions, the consul reads a formula, a priest reads it after him, while another priest sees that silence and proper decorum are maintained, and a musician plays a flute to charm the deity. The omission of a word, a misstep, or any noise would break the spell and spoil it all. The Roman did not love his gods. He feared them. They did not live in him and purify his life or elevate his soul. His worship was always with the purpose of propitiating them. Cicero tells us that "the Romans entered their sanctuary full of affright as though their temple were the cave of a bear or a dragon." People observed religious ceremonies to make bargains with the gods, to draw up contracts in due form. We see the selfish attitude in which the gods were consulted from the statement of Plautus: "He who has made the gods propitious always gains large profits." It was this spirit of self aggrandizement that was the curse of

Rome. Men could fight for her glory and the extension of her boundaries; but they learned to fatten on the spoils, and when these were exhausted they were willing to feed on their poorer and weaker neighbors.

Yet there is one phase of the Roman religion that carries with it an element worthy of admiration. This was the worship of the Penates or Lares, the household gods, and the souls of their dead ancestors—the Lemures. These spirits dwelt about them; and the good were called Manes, the bad Larvæ. The Larvæ gave bad dreams and were propitiated by throwing black beans over the shoulder and striking bronze vessels. They were the evil genii. The Manes were ever near to lend a helping hand. They were the good angels of the Romans and delighted in their prosperity and rectitude. Every home had its ancestral hearth where these shades were worshiped, the father of the family always directing and leading in the ceremonies. Through these ceremonies families were closely welded and the parents respected and obeyed; and by the dignity attached to the fathers in the senate and among the magistrates we see the respect that was tendered to old age. Gray hairs and the wisdom that comes through years of experience ever received great deference in Republican Rome.

Funerals were one of the most important ceremonials carried on in the city. At first these were at public expense; but later they were conducted entirely by the relatives unless a public funeral was given as a mark of respect and honor. The body was embalmed, placed on an ivory couch in the atrium of the house and there lay in state for seven days. The procession was formed at the house of the deceased and proceeded to the Forum in the forenoon when the streets were full of people. It was led by musicians and by women who chanted plaintive songs. By the "twelve tables" the musicians were limited to ten, and the women were forbidden to tear their hair or disfigure their persons. After these came individuals who wore wax masks and impersonated the ancestors of the family. These were followed by the bier, which was carried by the nearest relatives or by the slaves who had been made free by the last will of the deceased. Actors also formed a part of this procession, reciting the virtues and exploits of the dead and entertaining the crowd. Clients, freedmen and slaves swelled the concourse; and methinks I see the inevitable small boy bringing up the rear.

On reaching the Forum the bier was deposited before the rostrum, the ancestors took their seats in the curule chairs, and a relative mounted the rostrum and delivered a funeral oration. From the Forum the procession proceeded to the place of burial or cremation where sacrifices were performed and the body laid in a sarcophagus, a tomb, or a grave walled up with brick, or the ashes were deposited in an urn and laid away in the columbaria. Games and gladiatorial contests came to be celebrated in honor of the dead. The first gladiatorial fight is said to have been presented by the sons of the elder Brutus at his funeral in 264 B. C. These contests in honor of the dead seem anything but consistent; and yet to the Romans they were, for they thought that the Manes loved blood.

Funerals were often used as a means

of attracting attention to a family and winning the favor of people; so much so that restrictions had to be placed upon them by the state.

Here, also, as in every nation where liberty is respected, the home was the unit. Here centered the good citizen's chief interest, and from it radiated those influences that made the Roman youth revere the gods, respect authority, and love his fatherland. That home in the early days was a very simple affair, consisting of one large room called the atrium; but as wealth and civilization with their consequent requirements increased, other rooms were added till it appeared as the elegant town house or the spacious country villa. They were usually only one story in height; but as space became valuable in Rome, they were run up several stories, the "flat" seeming very popular in many localities.

The authority of the husband and father was supreme. The wife and children were his property. The marriage ceremony, called *confarreatio*, was very simple, and consisted of the betrothed partaking of a symbolical cake, placing a Roman coin, the *as*, upon a balance on the Penates at the threshold of her conjugal home and pronouncing the formula: *Uti tu Gaius, ego Gaia*. She then fell according to law into the hands of her husband. Her relation to her former home became severed. The household gods of her husband became her household gods. Until the latter days of the republic, divorce was unknown. Before the law the father had the power of life and death over the household; but he guarded the honor of his wife with jealous care, and home was a sacred place to him. The position of the wife and mother was one of honor and respect. The Lares loved domestic virtues, and the Manes were pleased with concord in families. Cato says, "It is better to be a good husband than a great senator."

The day from sunrise to sunset was divided into twelve parts called *horæ* (hours). The seventh hour always began at noon. The daily program of a well-to-do Roman was about as follows: In the morning, often before rising, his clients, or, if he was an official, his clerks also, called upon him in the atrium of his house, to pay their respects and receive their favors or instructions for the day. On arising he partook of a breakfast, *jantaculum*, which consisted of bread dipped in wine or seasoned with salt, grapes, olives, cheese, milk and eggs; after which he devoted himself to the business of the day. If this took him upon the street to the Forum market, or any other locality, he was accompanied by his crowd, (larger or smaller according to his wealth and influence) of clients. These clients were freemen who had sworn him their allegiance and support in return for protection and other favors which he conferred upon them. But what a strange travesty on manhood! A brief chapter in the history of the aristocracy of wealth and the misfortunes of the poor that became a comedy! At the end of the sixth hour, luncheon (*prandium*), (consisting of both hot and cold dishes, was served. Then a nap was indulged in if business permitted, followed by athletic exercises and a visit to the bath where he enjoyed his refreshing ablutions and engaged in conversation until about the ninth hour, when the *cena*, the dinner and chief meal of the day, was eaten.