

At these words Aeneas sprang to his feet, and cried that the prophecy was fulfilled at last, and that now they could settle in the beautiful country they had reached. The next day they were welcomed by Latinus, king of Latium, who, after hearing their story, remembered his dream, and promised Aeneas that he should have his daughter Lavinia in marriage.



V. THE WOLF AND THE TWINS.

ALTHOUGH Aeneas had been so kindly welcomed to Latium by the king, his troubles were not yet ended. Turnus, the young king who had been engaged to Lavinia, was angry at her being given to another, and, in the hope of winning her still, he declared war against the Trojan strangers.

During the war Aeneas and Turnus both won much glory by their courage. At last they met in single combat, in which Turnus was conquered and slain; and Aeneas, having thus got rid of his rival, married the fair princess.

He then settled in Latium, where he built a city which was called La-vin´i-um, in honor of his wife. Some time later, Aeneas fell in battle and was succeeded by his sons. The Trojans and Latins were now united, and during the next four hundred years the descendants of Aeneas continued to rule over them; for this was the kingdom which the gods had promised him when he fled from Troy.

The throne of Latium finally came to Nu´mi-tor, a good and wise monarch. He had a son and a daughter, and little suspected that any one would harm either of them.

Unfortunately for him, however, his brother A-mu´li-us was anxious to secure the throne. He took advantage of Numitor's confidence, and, having driven his brother away, killed his nephew, and forced his niece, Rhe´a Syl´vi-a, to become a servant of the goddess Ves´ta.

The girls who served this goddess were called Vestal Virgins. They were obliged to remain in her temple for thirty years, and were not allowed to marry until their time of service was ended. They watched over a sacred fire in the temple, to prevent its ever going out, because such an event was expected to bring misfortune upon the people.

If any Vestal Virgin proved careless, and allowed the sacred fire to go out, or if she failed to keep her vow to remain single, she was punished by being buried alive. With

such a terrible fate in view, you can easily understand that the girls were very obedient, and Amulius thought that there was no danger of his niece's marrying as long as she served Vesta.



A Vestal Virgin.

We are told, however, that Mars, the god of war, once came down upon earth. He saw the lovely Rhea Sylvia, fell in love with her, wooed her secretly, and finally persuaded her to marry him without telling any one about it.

For some time all went well, and no one suspected that Rhea Sylvia, the Vestal Virgin, had married the god of war. But one day a messenger came to tell Amulius that his niece was the mother of twin sons.

The king flew into a passion at this news, and vainly tried to discover the name of Rhea Sylvia's husband. She refused to tell it, and Amulius gave orders that she should be buried alive. Her twin children, Rom'ulus and Re'mus, were also condemned to die; but, instead of burying them alive with their mother, Amulius had them placed in their cradle, and set adrift on the Tiber River.

The king thought that the babes would float out to sea, where they would surely perish; but the cradle drifted ashore before it had gone far. There the cries of the hungry children were heard by a she-wolf. This poor beast had just lost her cubs, which a cruel hunter had killed. So instead of devouring the babies, the she-wolf suckled them as if