FABIOLA

Or, the Church of the Catacomba.

Written by His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman.

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CHAPTER XXXIII. -Continued.

As to the daughter, who was three years younger, he did not' so much care. He deemed it foolish and unmanly to take much trouble about religion; to change it especialty, or abandon that of the empire, was, he thought, a sign of weakness. But women being more imaginative, and more under the sway of the feelings, might be indulged in any fancies of this sort. Accordingly he permitted his daughter Miriam, whose name was Syrian, as the mother belonged to a rich family from Edessa, to continue in the free exercise of her new faith. She became, in addition to her high mental cultivation, a model of virtue, simple and unpretending. It was a period, we may observe, in which the city of Antioch was renowned for the learning of its philosophers, some of whom were eminent as Christians.

A low years later when the son had reached manhood, and had abundantly unfolded his character, the mother died. - Before her end, she had seen symptoms of her husband's ruin, and, determined that her daughter should not be dependent on his careless administration, nor on her son's ominous selfishness and ambition, she secured effectually from the covetousness of both, her own large fortune, which was settled on her daughter. She resisted every influence, and every art, to induce her to release this property or allow it to merge in the family resources, and be made available towards relieving their embarassments. And on her death-bed, smong other solemn parental injunctions. she laid this on her daughter's filial sense of duty, that she never would allow, after coming of age, any alteration in this arrangement.

Matters grew worse and worse: creditors pressed; property had been judiciously disposed of: when

whe tried, every persuasion enplayed, but she simply and firmly resisted, both in obedience to her mother's dying orders, and because she had in view the establishment of a house for consecrated virgins, in which she intended to pass her days. She was now just of legal age to dispose of her own property. She oflered them every advantage that she could give them; proposed that for a time they should all live together upon har means. But this did not answer their purpose, and when every other course had failed, Eurotas began to hint, that one who stood

so much in their way should be got rid of at any cost. Orontius shuddered at the first proposal of the thought. Eurotas familiarized him gradually with it till-shrinking yet from the actual commission of fratricide—he thought be had almost done something virtuous, as the brothers of Joseph imagined they did, by adopting a slower and less sanguinary method of dealing with an obnoxious brother. Stratagem and unseen violence, of which no law could take cognizance, and which no one would dare reveal. offered him the best chance of SUCCESS.

Among the privileges of Christians in the first ages, we have already mentioned that of reserving the Blessed Eucharist at home for domestic communion. We have described the way in which it was enfolded in an orarium, or linen cloth, again often preserved in a richer cover. This precious gift was kept in a chest (arca) with a lid, as St. Cyprian bas informed us. Orontius well knew this; and be was moreover aware that its contents were more prized than ellyer or gold; that, as the Fathers tell us, to drop negligently a crumb of the consecrated bread was considered a orime; and that the name of pearl', which was given to the smallest fragmant, showed that it was so precious in a Christian's eye, that he would part with all he possessed to rescue it from sacrilegious prolanation.

The scarf richly embroidered with poarls, which has more than once affected our narrative, was the outer covering in which Miriam's mother had preserved this treasure: and her daughter valued it both as a dear inheritance, and as a consecrated object, for she continued its use One day, carly in the morning, she knelt before her ark; and after forvent preparation by praver, proceeded to open it. To her dismay she found it siresdy unlocked, and her treasure gone! Like Mary Magdalen at the sepulchre, the wept bitterly, because they had taken her Lord and she knew not where they had laid Him. Like her, too, 'as she was weeping she stooped down and looked, again into her ark, and found a paper, which in the confusion of the first glance she had overlooked. It informed her that what she sought was safe in her brother's hand, and might be ransomed. She ran at once to him, where he was closeted with the dark man, in whose presence she always trembled: threw herself on her knees before him, and entreated him to restore what she valued more than all her wealth. He was at the point of yielding to her tears and supplications, when Eurotas fixed his stern eye upon him, overawed him, then himself addressing her, saying: Miriam, we take you at your word. We wish to put the carnestness and reality of your faith to a sufficient test. Are you truly sincere in what you offer?"

their breasts the Holy Eucharist when embarking for a voyage. We used not say that Miniam bore it securely folded in the only thing of price she cared to take from her father's house.

When the yeasel was out at see. instead of coasting towards Jopne or any port on the coast the captain some distant shore. What his purpose was, it was difficult to conicoture; but his low passengers became alarmed, and a serious alterestion ensued. This was out short by

a sudden storm; the vessel was carried forward at the mercy of the winds for some days, and then persons saved. Those, therefore, passengers and crew.

She was picked up on the shore by men who lived on such spoil all but Fabiola, that the patient, Destitute and friendless, she was though the wound had healed, did sold to a trader in slaves, taken to Tarsus, on the mainland, and again sold to a person of high rank, who the slow waste of illness, in child or treated her with kindness,

After a short time. Fabius instructed one of his agents in Asis to procure a slave of polished mannars weak, and a slight cough was heard and virtuous character, if possible, at any price, to attend on his daugh- awake, and she desired to have her ter; and Miriam, under the name of Syra, came to bring salvation to the she could look out upon one spot But the dostrine of the Blessed never before displayed, house of Fabiola.

CHAPTER, XXXIV. BRIGHT DEATH.

It was a few days after the poourrences related in our last chapter but one, that Fabiols was told, that an old man in great anguish, real or protonded, desired to speak with her. On going down to him and asking into this chamber, and in the middle him, his name and business, he of the grounds, was an opening, surreplied:

and I have a large debt secured on and air to the room below. Towards the property of the late Lady Agnes, this place Miriam loved to look, as which I, understand has now passed the nearest approach she could make, into your hands; and I am come, in her infirm health, to the sepulchre

boly Dionysius.

water, by which they were to be regenerated, or the oil with which as well as the chrism, they were annoin-

ted, or the sacrifice by which they are fed? Miriam explained nto the catechumens its more domestic and practical use, and axhorted Liem to dashed to pieces on a rocky island practice faithfully what all good near Cyprus. Like Satyrus, Miriam | Christians did, that is, to make this attributed her reaching the shore in | holy sign upon themselves already, safety to the procious burden which in the course and at the boginning of she bore. She was almost the only every work, on coming in and going survivor; at least she saw no other out, when putting on their clothes or sandals, when they washed, sat down that did live besides, on returning to to table, lighted their lamp, isy down Antioch, reported har douth, to in bed, or sat in a chair, in whatever gether with that of the remaining conversation they should be engaged."

But it was observed with pain, by not gain strength. It is often the mother or sister that is last to see sister. Love is so hopeful; and so her check, she was emaclated and from time to time. She lay long bed so placed that from early dawn more fair to them all than the richest | Euchanist was not infinited tillation | her: Darterre.

body. 🥏

beptism.

There had been in the vills an an trance to the cometery of this road; but from this time it had already received the name of Agnes; for near its entrance had this holy martyr been buried. Her body rested in a cubiculum or chamber, under an sroked tomb. Just above the entrance rounded above by a low parapet, 'My name, noble lady, is Ephraim; concealed by shrube, which gavelight

undergoing.

discourse on Christian subjects, when [through the usual course of prepara- | former slave; not in virian. Miriam would follow up, humbly and tion, though abridged on account of beauty of one radier, not in g unprotendingly, but with the warm the presecution. By living at the of mind, and in beauvaly, wh glow which had first charmed Fabi- very entrance into a constary, and not to marit badge Gode ola, the instructions given by the me furnished with such large all this she hild benealt infla hurches, they were enabled to pass inferior. Hus as a shild of Gud Thus, for instance, when he had through the three singes of calechu beiress to an eternal bingdom, an been tranting of the virtue and mean- monship. First they ware hearers, living member of the body of the ing of the sign of the cross to be admitted to be present, while the as admitted to a living share-in stood straight out, as if making for used in baptism, 'whether on the lessons were read; then kneelers, His mercies, so all the price of a

forchead of believers, or over the who sustated at a portion of the redemption, in a new count liturgical prayers; and lastly elect, Him, she felt that she was squal to or petitioners for beptism; Miriam, and with bappy give also told Once in this last class, they had to her so.

attend frequently in church, but Never had she been so pe more particulary on the thire Wod-splendid germant as she was of neadays. following the first, the white robe, which she had received fourth, and the last Sundays in Lent, as abs came out of the forth on which days the Roman Missal yes and which she had to wear for eight retains & second collect and lesson, days

derived from this custom. Any one But a merciful tather knows in perusing the present rite of baptism to blend our joys and sorrows, and in the Catholio Church, aspecially sends us the latter when He has best that of adults, will see condensed prepared us for them. In that warminto one office what used to be subrace which we have mentioned, anciently distributed through a she for the first time noticed the variety at functions. On one day shortened breath, and heaving chast the renunciation of Satan was made, of her dear sister. She would not previous to its reposition just before dwell upon it in her thought, but baptism on another the touching of sent to ber Dionysius to come on the the cars and nontrils, or the Npt- morrow. That evening they all topt phota, as it was called. Then wers their Easter bainquet together, and repeated exorcispus, and genuliso Fabiols felt happy to preside as Mittions, and signings of arosses on the ism's side over a table, at which He forehead and body, breathings upon plined or sat her own converted

the candidate, and other mysterious slaves, and those of Agnes' here blind! There was a hectic blush on rites. More solemn still was the hold, all of whom she had retuined unction, wich was not confined to She never remembered baying the the head, but extended to the whole joyed so delightful a supper.

Early next morning, Miriam called The Greed was also faithfully Fabiols to her side, and with a food, learnt, and committed to memory, caressing manner, which she had

"My door sister, what will when I have left you?

exercises the penitential time of Poor Fabiola was everyowe Lent passed quickly and solemnly, with grief. 'Are you then going's leave man I bad hoped we show It doss not fall to our lot to live forever as sisters together. But describe the caramonial of the Church if you wish to leave Rome, may I not in the administration of the Secra- scoompany you, at least to asses ments. The liturgial system received | to serve you?"

its great developments after peace Miriam amiled, but a her eye, as taking her slating longs tooutward forms and spiebdour she boin ted a toward was incompatible, with the Ditter Pablois understood bill persecution which the Church was O, no, dearest stater. Pray Gud who will refuse you a It is enough for us to have shown, that I may not lose you. It] how not only doctrines and great That a

mysterious person, called Eurotas, made his appearance in the family. No one but its head seemed to know him, and he evidently, looked upon him as a blessing and a curse, the bearer both of salvation and of ruin.

The reader is in possession Eurotas's own revelations; it is sufficlent to add, that being the elder brother, but conscious that his rough morose and sinister character did not fit him for sustaining the position of head of the family and administering quietly a settled property, and having a haughty ambition to raise his house into a nobler rank, and increase even its riches, he took but a moderate sum of money as capital. vanished for years, embarked in the desperate traffic of interior Asia pedetrated into China and India, and came back home with a large fortune. and a collection of rare gems, which helped his nephew's brief career. but misguided him to ruin in Rome

Eurotas, instead of a rich family, into which to pour superfluous wealth, found only a bankrupt house to save from ruin. But his family pride prevailed, and after many reproaches, and bitter quarrels with his brother, but concealed from all else, he paid off his debts by the extinction of his own capital, and thus virtually became master of all the wreck of his brother's property, and of the entire family.

After a few years of weary life. the father sickened and died. On ambition and voluptuousness, in the by the Roman law. hands of a cold-hearted, remorseless, restore family position and wealth.

after the rule which had overtaken the house. With a good capital in hand, much might be done elsewhere. But now, even the sale of all left would scarcely cover the liabilities discovered after the father's death. There was still untonched the sister's fortune; and both agreed that this

have, to rescue from profanation the every case of injury or oppression. Holy of Holies.

tas, with a sneer.

She took the pen in her hand. and after running her eye over the document, signed it. It was a surrender his death-bed he told Orontius that of her entire property to Eurotas. he had nothing to leave him, that all Orontius was furious when he saw he had lived on for some years, the himself overreached, by the man to very house over his head, belonged to whom he had suggested the share through life. his friend Eurotas, whose relation. for his sister. But it was too late: ship he did not further explain, he was only the faster in his unsparwhom he must look up to entirely for ing gripe. A more formal renunciasupport and guidance. The youth tion of her rights was exacted from thus found himself, while full of pride. | Miriam, with the formalities required | Christian initiation, To promote

For a short time she was treated and no less ambitious man, who soon soothingly: then hints began to be a spot dear to both, the Nomentan man, who soon soothingly: then hints began to be prescribed as the basis of mutual given to her of the necessity of moyconfidence, absolute submission to ing. as Orontius and his friend inhis will, while he should act in the tanded to proceed to Nicomedia, the capacity of an inferior, and the un- imperial residence. She asked to be derstood principle, that nothing was sent to Jerusalem, where she would zeo great or too little, nothing too obtain admission into some communigood or too wicked to be lone, to ty of holy women. She was accord. ingly embarked on board a vessel. To stay at Antioch was impossible the captain of which bore a suspicious character, and was very sparingly supplied with means. But she bore round her neck what she had gived proof of valuing, more than any wealth. For, as St. Ambrose Agnes mentioned, than her old faithrelates of his brother Satyrus, yet a must be got from Her. Every artifice | catechumen, Christians carried on | and wag his tail, and look around | Saints

A SHE AND A

therefore, to claim it from you, for otherwise I am a ruined man!'

'How is that possible?' asked Fabiola in amazement. I cannot bedebta.

a little abashed: "but a gentleman to angle in the neighboring Asio, called Fulvius, to whom the property was to come by confiscation: so I advanced him large sums upon it.' Her first impulse was to turn the man out of the house; but the thought of the sister came to her mind, and she civilly said to him:

Whatever debts Fulvius has contracted I will discharge; but with only legal interest, and without regard to usurious contracts."

But think of the risk I ran, madam. I have been most moderate in my rates, I sesure you.

Well," she answered, 'call on my steward, and he shall settle it. You are running no risks now at least?

She gave instructions, accordingly, to the freed-man who managed her sfiairs, to pay this sum on those conditions. which reduced it to one half him in a more laborious task, that of going through the whole of her late 'I will surrender any thing, all I father's accounts, and accortaining that restution might be made. And "Then sign that paper,' said Euro. further, having ascertained that Corvinus had really obtained the imperial rescript, through his father. by which her own lawful property was saved from confincation, though she refused ever to see him, she bestowed upon him such a remuneration as would ensure him comfort

> These temporal matters being soon disposed of, she divided her attention between the care of the patient and preparation for her with a portion of her household, to villa. The spring had set in, and Christians. They assailed her with lowed Confirmation, and then Mirlam could have her couch brought to the window, or, in the warmest part of the day, could even be carried down into the garden before the house, where, with Fabiola on one side and Emerentiana on the other. and noor Molossus. who had lost all his spirit, at her feet, they would talk of friends lost, and especially of was associated in their memories. And no sooner was the name of ful guard would prick up his cars him. They would also frequently

and loved.

No, not she, rejoined the usurer, dozen young men, who on their way have chosen. were taking a short out across the

vills, and so committing to trappet: They passed by this opening; and called the others.

This is one of those underground lurking-places of the Christians."____ burrow.

"Let us go in,' said one.

again?' asked a second.

who had looked down more oursfully, the resting-place of the Persian marshading his eyes from the light, tyrs, SS. Abdon and Sennen. called the others to do the same, but tain close at hand, and threw down commenced." a volley of them at something below,

martakers in them with their wicked- later.

tomb of Agnes, there to pray. She the Bread of Angels,

of one whom she so much venerated secred rites, but how even coremo-

had been gained; and much that be-

In these multiplied preparatory

till at last Rastoneys arrived.

Early one morning, beautiful and in the three first converies as now. Ohrist oan de for te by int calm; for it wanted but a few weeks If our example is shought worth fol- I will pray to A rose and Hobertal llove that my cousin over contracted to Easter, she was looking in that lowing, some one will perhaps to interpret for direction, when she obsevred half-a- | illustrate a brighter period than we | great a calenily.

> The baptism of Tabiols and her household had nothing to chase it but purely spiritual joy. The titles in the city wars all closed, and one of them, having looked down, among them that of St. Pastor with its papel baptistery.

> Early, therefore, on the morning of the suspicious day, the party orept 'One of their rabbit holes into the round the wells to the opposite side of the city, and following the Via Portuensis, or road that led to the "Yes, and how shall we get up port at the mouth of the Tiber. turned into a vineyard near Cenear's This dislogue she could not hear: gardens, and descended into the but she saw what followed it. One cemstery of Pontianus, celebrated as

The morning was spent in prayer with gestures which enjoined silence. and, preparation, when towards In a moment they pulled down large evening the solemn office, which was stones from the rock-work of a foun- to be protracted through the night."

When the time for the administrathe demand. But she soon engaged They laughed very heartily as they tion of baptism arrived, it was went away: and Miriam supposed indeed but a dreary pelebration that that they had seen some serpent or it introduced. Deep in the bowels other noxious animal below, and had of the earth the waters of a subtaramused themselves with pelting ranous atteam had been gathered into a square well or elstern, from When others were stirring she four to five feet deen. They were mentioned the occurrence, that the clear, indeed, but cold and bleak, if stones might be removed. Fablols we may use the expression, in their went down herself with a few serve subterranean bath, formed out of the ants, for she was jealous of the ture, or volcanic rock. A long flight custody of Agnes's tomb, What was of steps led down to this rude bapher distress at fluding poor Emeren- tistery. A small ledge at the nide tians gone down to pray at her sufficed for the minister and the canfoster-sister's tomb, lying weltering didate, who was thrice immerned in in her blood, and perieotly dead. It the purifying waters.

was discovered that, the evening be | The whole remains to this day, fore, passing by some Pagan orgins just as it was then, except that over near the river, and being invited to the water is now to be seen a painting ioin in them, she had not only of St. John paptining our Lord. Miriam's recovery, she removed her, refused, but had reprosched the added probably a century or two

> the stones, and grisvously wounded her: neophyte, or new-born child of the but she escaped from their fury into Church, after due instruction, was the vills. Feeling herself faint and admitted for the first time to the tawounded, she crept unnoticed to the big of his Lord, and nourished with

had been unable to move away when It was not till late on Easter day some of her former assailants dig that Fabiola returned to her villa; covered her. Those brutal Pagane and a long and allent embrace was had anticipated the ministry of the her first greeting to Miriam. Both most boly Communities, the her with whom every object sround Church, and had conferred upon her were so happy, so blissful, so fully curs. This private the the baptism of blood. She was bur- repaid for all that they had been to we know from the states of the ried near Agnes, and the modest one another for months, that no others, which has peasant child received the honor of words could give expression to their annual commemoration among the feelings. Fabiole's grand idea and Fabiols and her companions wast now shall and day was that the

you? And now top, that I miss and accessories were the same how much they who rules at "Do get well; "I alk oure there"

nothing serious in the emotion: the warm weather, and the regial climate of Campania will soon restors you, We will sit together by the surface. and talk over better things philosophy.'

Mirium shook her had, not mournfully, but cheerfully, :bellger

Do not fatter yourself. Tantant God has spared me this I should see this happy day. But Hit held here me now for death, of it was have hisherto for life; and I hall it will joy, I know too well the metaline my ders."

beat same antimites Ohi int it not out Pablola. 'Not while you have do. y corment. dans sinter.' ane ian. Thindw you which mourn for man Joint Ly ma

you of one how of your months wi Digardius come. and gave a ohonge in his patient when head be leared it might be. The insidia point of the design had a the bone, and injural the and chibiels had a popfigmed Miriam's mass ticipations.

Tablela weet to pray for an tion at the securite en Arm prayed long and fervently, and will many tears, then return

'Sister,' she cald with dr 'God's will be dome. I am w realign area you to like . Non ma I entreat you, what would have me do, after you are taken me?"

Mirian looked up in a of Agains, and metals to watch, des ne, to pray to her, and for the a stranger aball artive inter the bearer of good tillaget On the Sunday Sellowing. of the white mermatin !

calebrated, do deserved and the second approximately the second s

