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The Catholic Journal.

Vol. XI, No. 35.

Rochester, N. Y., Saturday, June 2, 1900.

\$1.00 per Year, 3c per Copy

'GOD'S ACRE'

BEAUTIFUL TERM GIVEN TO BURIAL PLACE OF OUR DEAD.

Cremation Contrary to the Spirit of Christianity—some curious inscriptions on Monuments—Longfellow and Shakespeare Quoted

Some one has sent me a copy of Frank G. Carpenter's letter from Manila to the American press, says R. C. Gleaner in Catholic Columbian, in which he describes the awful prevalence of leprosy in the Philippine Islands, estimating the number to be about 50,000 and asking why cremation would not be a good sanitary measure to dispose of the bodies of those who die of this foul affliction. A dead leper buried in the earth can not possibly be a cause of spreading the disease.

Cremation is opposed to Christian feeling and though it might in exceptional cases become necessary, as a general thing the Church forbids it. I think it was allowed in the case of Dr. Mueller of Vienna, who died last year of the bubonic plague. This Catholic doctor went to Bombay and for a time made a serious study of the disease. Returning home he entered into a scientific study of the bacilli of the plague. A hospital attendant, who was careless, contracted the disease and died of it. He was attended by Dr. Mueller and a nurse, both of whom were stricken down and died. All through his attack the brave doctor was satisfied that he could not recover and courageously waited for death, registering every change as he felt it and keeping an exact record of his temperature. A priest gave him absolution through an open window; the doctor insisted on him not coming in to his room—and after absolution the priest placed the Blessed Sacrament in a corporal on the window-sill, whence it was taken by a Sister of Mercy in attendance and placed before the dying hero and thus he communicated himself and had his God with him in his last moments to strengthen him for his journey to eternity. At his own suggestion, his body was cremated. We find in the Old Law (Amos, 6:10) that during the time of pestilence the Jews burned bodies.

Reference is made to burning bodies in the last chapter of the Book of Kings where it is related that Saul and his three sons were cremated by the men of Jabez Gilead, in order to save the bodies from insults at the hands of the Philistines. The bones that remained, however, were afterwards buried in the earth, while the people fasted seven days.

The advocates of cremation to-day are for the most part unbelievers and they approve cremation in order to carry out their theory of complete annihilation after death. One very specious theory in favor of burning the dead is that it will thereby remove all danger of being buried alive. The numerous stories about persons being buried alive are mostly without foundation in fact. In some European countries, notably in Germany, vaults are used to retain the dead before actual burial and a bell-pull is so arranged in connection with the corpse, that the least motion will give an alarm and summon an attendant, who is constantly on watch. So far these precautions have been useless. One surgeon, who for forty-five years had been attached to such a mortuary house at Metz, Germany, had during that long term of years only one single alarm; it happened from the corpse of an old man, the abdomen having subsided from the discharge of a large amount of fluid, and the arms had fallen lengthwise beside the body, thus sounding the alarm bell. In examination the corpse showed no signs of life, but decomposition had set in.

The Church has always in her legislation encouraged her children in taking decent care of the resting place of the faithful, whose bodies as St. Paul says in his beautiful 15th chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians are sown in corruption, but shall rise in incorruption, sown in dishonor but shall rise in glory, sown in weakness but shall rise in power. In the Old Law every city had its burial place outside of the walls, that of Jerusalem being in the valley of Cedron. Josephus, the Jewish historian says: "Our Law hath also taken care of the decent burial of the dead, but without any extravagant expense for their funerals and without the erection of any illustrious monument for them." This very good practice might be followed to this day by the people of the New Law. The most interesting burial places of Christian times are of course the Catacombs of Rome and the inscriptions on the marble and stones found therein have led to many an item of interest proving the early customs and practices of the Christians, who lived in the centuries immediately following the Ascension of Christ. The late Commendatore Rossi spent his life in exploration of these ancient burial places and has given to the world a huge work on the subject and his followers and admirers are still engaged in the work. Many of these inscriptions found in the Catacombs are silent but powerful witnesses to the Catholic doctrines of the Real Presence, prayers for the dead and the honor we give the Blessed Virgin. Our modern cemeteries are apt to be but places of pomp and make of the pride of life. An anecdote is told of a famous cemetery in Paris. A boy and his father were strolling about the place; the boy stayed away for awhile and coming back to his father said: "Papa, where are the bad people

buried?" "Why," replied the father "everywhere—here in this cemetery and in others." "No—not here," said the boy, "I have been all around here and read the inscriptions on the tombs and none but the good are buried here." The child's answer set the father to thinking—suggesting to him the force of the sarcasm—"None but the good die."

Ludicrous inscriptions on tombs are to be found in almost every cemetery of this country have an organization that meets once a year and have a monthly published in their interests. At a recent meeting, one gentleman told the story of a costly monument erected in the cemetery of a large city to a liquor dealer by his wife and nothing should do but she must have engraved on it in large letters "summoned before the bar of justice." Another erected to a detective, "gone to look for his last clue."

Another told this story: A young widow put up a costly monument to her late husband and had inscribed upon it "My grief is so great that I can not bear it." A year or so later she married again and feeling awkward about the inscription she solved the difficulty by adding one word to it, alone, so now it reads, "My grief is so great that I can not bear it alone."

GOD'S ACRE.

Is the old Catholic name for a burial place and the poet, Longfellow, I think, says "I like that ancient Saxon phrase which calls The burial ground, God's Acre. It is just. It consecrates each grave within its walls And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust."

God's acre, yes, that blessed name imports Comfort to those, who in the grave have sown The seed that they had garnered in their hearts, Their bread of life, alas, no more their own.

Into its furrows shall we all be cast In the sure faith that we shall rise again At the great harvest, when the Archangel's blast Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain.

Then shall the good stand in immortal bloom, In the fair gardens of that second birth, And each bright blossom mingle its perfume With that of flowers which never bloomed on earth.

With thy rude plow, O Death! turn up the soil And spread the furrow for the seed we sow; This is the field and acre of our God, This is the place where human harvests grow."

Shakespeare says: "Let's talk of worms and graves and epitaphs, Make dust our paper and, with rainy eyes, Write sorrow on the bosom of this earth; Let's choose executors, and talk of wills; And yet not so—for what can we bequeath Save our deposed bodies to the ground."

CEASED PLAYING MONK.

The Members of a Ritualistic Brotherhood One By One Adopts the True Faith.

At the celebration of the 50th anniversary of St. Bridget's church, New York city, there sat among the people in clerical-looking gentlemen clad in a brown habit of a Franciscan monk, with the white cord about his waist. He was Brother Augustine of the Ritualistic Brotherhood of Verplanck Point. Dr. McSweeney, seeing him, and thinking sure enough he was a Franciscan, invited him to the sanctuary. But Brother Augustine demurred—said that "he was quite comfortable where he was, and begged to be excused." Not many weeks after that he made his submission to Rome and was received into the Church at the Paulists.

He was one of six Episcopalian Brothers, who conducted a religious establishment at Verplanck Point. Grouped under the supervision of Brother Gilbert, there were a convalescent home, a school for boys and other charitable works. Since the reception of Brother Augustine, two others of the six have been received, and Brother Anthony is now under instruction. The drawing power of the religious life within the Catholic Church was too much for Brother Gilbert and his so-called Franciscans. The community is in danger of melting away under the influence of its Romanizing tendencies.

THE MACCABEES CONDEMNED.

Milo Meredith, of Wabash, Ind., commander of the Maccabees of Indiana, was advised that the Church has placed the order under the ban. Archbishop Martinelli, Apostolic Delegate, has written a letter to the ordinary of the diocese, in which he said the obligations taken by the Maccabees were so binding that they came in conflict with the duty of communionists' loyalty to the Church, and all Catholics must withdraw from the society.

RUMORED CHANGES.

GREATER NEW YORK TO BE CONVERTED INTO ONE GREAT ARCHDIOCESE.

Under the Jurisdiction of Archbishop Corrigan Who Will Probably Be Made a Cardinal—Bishop McDonnell to Be Coadjutor Bishop With Right of Succession.

It is reported, says the New York Sun, that one result of Archbishop Corrigan's visit to Rome may be an alteration of the boundaries of the New York archdiocese. For more than ten years it has been said that the territory over which the Archbishop has jurisdiction was too extensive, and that a new diocese, would be created in the upper part of the present archdiocese, thus relieving the Archbishop of much routine work. The appointment of Bishop Farley as auxiliary Bishop in 1895, removed the necessity of reducing the size of the archdiocese. A change that is now spoken of involves the creation of a new diocese out of the territory from Yonkers to Poughkeepsie and the consolidation of the remaining part of the New York Archdiocese with the diocese of Brooklyn, thus making the Greater New York jurisdiction. At present the New York archdiocese contains three boroughs of the greater city, Manhattan, The Bronx and Richmond; and the Brooklyn diocese is made up of the other two boroughs, Brooklyn and Queens, together with the rest of Long Island.

Since the creation of Greater New York there has been much talk of the formation of one great Catholic archdiocese that would take in the whole city. It is said that the Catholic authorities have recognized the fact that such an ecclesiastical consolidation is inevitable. The story current in Catholic circles now is to the effect that Archbishop Corrigan and Bishop McDonnell of Brooklyn are both in Rome at present, the matter is likely to be brought before the authorities there for consideration. It is said that should the consolidation take place Bishop McDonnell would be made coadjutor to Archbishop Corrigan with the right of succession. He would then, on the death of Archbishop Corrigan, become Archbishop of New York. It was in a similar way that Archbishop Corrigan himself attained his present dignity. He was the coadjutor of the late Cardinal McCloskey, on whose death he immediately succeeded to the office of head of the archdiocese.

If New York and Brooklyn are made one diocese the Archbishop will be the head of one of the most important and largest Catholic sees in the world. He will have under his jurisdiction a Catholic population of nearly a million. The Catholic churches in the greater New York archdiocese would number about four hundred and the priests would number about eight hundred. At the head of such a vast diocese, it is believed Archbishop Corrigan would surely be a Cardinal, especially since Baltimore, whose Archbishop is now a Cardinal, has a population of only 215,000, and 172 churches and 983 priests.

Private advice received here from Rome are to the effect that a consistory for the creation of Cardinals is to be held either in June or September. As there are a large number of vacancies in the College of Cardinals, it is expected that several red hats will be bestowed. Archbishop Corrigan's chance for promotion is considered good. It is declared also that one American prelate will certainly be made a Cardinal soon, and that that prelate is Archbishop Chapelle, who is at present in Manila, where he is making an investigation of the condition of the Church in the Philippines. Archbishop Chapelle, who is the head of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, was made Apostolic Delegate of Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines a year ago, and commissioned in these places the Church affairs that had been disturbed by the Spanish war. He has concluded his work in Cuba and Porto Rico, and is expected that he will soon have affairs settled in the Philippines. It is customary in the Catholic Church to reward Apostolic Delegates when they have finished their work with a cardinalate. It was thus that Mgr. Satolli, the first Apostolic Delegate to this country, secured his red hat.

GENERAL JACKSON'S DAUGHTER.

A recent remarkable conversion is reported from the South. Mrs. Ellison, daughter of General Jackson, a famous Confederate general, was recently received into the Church at Nashville, Tenn. Mrs. Ellison comes from the most aristocratic Southern circles and has been looking towards the church during some months hoping to find relief for her religious perplexities. Finally when the step was taken a sweeter feeling of peace and security so filled her soul that she could not help manifesting her joy to her relatives. The stern old general, seeing how joyful she was, remarked rather quizzically: "Daughter," said he, "you must have had a great load of sin to confess, for you seem so happy after getting rid of them."

Here is a psychological phenomenon:—The brother, nephews and nieces of James Anthony Froude, the bigoted historian, are all converts to the Catholic faith.

Charles Warren Stoddard, of the Catholic University, who has been seriously ill at Kendall Green, Mass., is so far recovered as to resume his work at the University.

FAITH OF WASHINGTON.

"The Father of His Country" Held Great Devotion Towards the Mother of the Redeemer.

"Did Washington die a Catholic?" is the question Rev. John Scully, S. J., rector of St. Joseph's church, Philadelphia, discussed last Sunday evening. A history of the early missions in the neighborhood of the home of "The Father of His Country" is in course of preparation, and in the course of the investigations there has been found to be generally extant among both the whites and negroes of the neighborhood a tradition that Washington was received into the Church on his death bed by Rev. Leonard Neale, S. J., who was once pastor of St. Joseph's church, and afterwards Archbishop of Baltimore, succeeding Bishop Carroll, who was a commissioner of the colonies to France and Canada during the Revolution.

The principal authority for the tradition at the present day is Miss Olivia Floyd, whose mother was a Sumner and herself a Confederate spy during the War of the Rebellion. She is now a cripple of perhaps seventy years. She remembers often hearing her mother, who lived to be eighty-six, and who died about thirty years ago, speak of a large boat rowed by six or eight men which came from Mount Vernon to St. Thomas' Manor on the evening of December 13, 1799, the night before George Washington died. They bore a message from the general to Father Neale, then superior of the residence at St. Thomas. Between Washington and the priest there had long existed an intimate friendship.

The rowers found Father Neale walking up and down the beach waiting for him. He immediately went up to the rectory, whence he returned in a few minutes, probably having provided himself with the priestly stole, the ritual and other essentials. He accompanied the boatmen and was detained at Mount Vernon the greater part of the next day. It was said by all in the neighborhood that General Washington had sent for his old friend, Father Neale, to receive conditional baptism, make his confession and be received into the Catholic Church.

Miss Floyd's mother certainly had means of knowing the truth if it was so, as Dr. Brown, Washington's physician, was an intimate friend of the Floyd family, the Sumners, and had a room which was always kept ready for him in the Floyd mansion, which is only fourteen or fifteen miles from Mt. Vernon, where he slept on his return from and on his way to Mount Vernon.

Miss Floyd's account is very circumstantial. It is difficult to see how her mother could under the circumstances have been deceived, and the tradition is strengthened by the fact that even now over the bed at Mount Vernon on which the "Father of His Country" died there is to be seen, as during his life, a picture of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The above is a synopsis of Father Scully's remarks regarding the tradition. Dr. Scully further said that the presence of the picture of the Immaculate Conception over Washington's death bed, the speaker said:

"I myself remember to have seen in some popular life of Washington (I do not say which) the report of a conversation between Washington and a friend, who, seeing the picture of the Blessed Virgin over Washington's bed, said: 'Why, General, you are not a Catholic, are you?' 'No,' said the General, 'I am not; but I respect and love the Mother of Him whom I believe to be Almighty God. I could esteem or love no man who did not respect my mother.' 'Whatever may be thought of this tradition, which will soon be thoroughly investigated, the fact that one whom we all so love should have died as devoted a lover of our Mother Mary as he was a patriot must be a great consolation to every Catholic heart.'

OUR LADY'S COLOR.

Why is the Blessed Virgin generally represented as dressed in blue?—Child of Mary.

In the language of color, blue expresses purity, love and loyalty; hence "blue blood," "true blue," etc. The Mother Most Pure and Most Amiable, the Mirror of Justice, is therefore, "clothed in mantle blue." The sky is called, poetically, heaven; and the color of the clear sky is blue, and the Blessed Virgin is invoked as the Queen of Heaven. The "blue garment" is the region where the sun, moon and stars appear; and there St. John saw the sign of "a Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." The sign refers to the Church of Christ, and by allusion to the Help of Christians. The use of blue-colored vestments on feasts of Our Lady is permitted in some countries, and vestments of this color were once common in England. In Spain sky-blue vestments are always used on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. This color is also the symbol of eternity, and signifies faith. It is exquisitely appropriate, therefore, to the Mother of Him whose reign shall be without end (cujus regni non erit finis). Her faith endured when that of Apostles failed, and she is sainted Virgin Most Faithful—Ave Maria.

The late Sister Mary Innocent was one of the original Mother Seton black cap nuns, who amalgamated with the French order, discarded the black cap and donned the white cornette. The fifteenth anniversary of the assumption of the two orders was observed last month at the convent of the late Mother Seton, where the great St. Mary Hospital, New York, Mass.

ST. DE LA SALLE.

The Founder of the Christian Schools Now Honored By the Catholic World at Large.

The canonization of St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle is the triumph of Christian education. This signal benefactor of childhood and youth had felt that, after the priest, nothing is more necessary in a parish than a Catholic teacher, and he did not consider that he was doing too much in devoting his whole life to the foundation of a work whose object would be to secure for the children of the people the inestimable blessing of Christian education.

May the Catholics of our day understand what the founder of the Christian Schools had so well understood! May they be convinced of the necessity of a "teaching which will be thoroughly in accord with the Catholic faith as well as with the duties connected with it."

As for us, our duties in this respect are clearly laid down by His Holiness Leo XIII. in his masterly Encyclical "Aeterni patris."

"Without religion," says the Sovereign Pontiff, "there can be no moral education deserving of the name not truly efficacious. Wherefore to wish for souls endowed with good morals and to leave them at the same time deprived of religion is as senseless as to urge people to virtue after destroying the basis thereof. Now, for the Catholic, there is but one true religion, the Catholic religion; therefore as regards doctrine, morality or religion he cannot accept or acknowledge any which is not derived from the very sources of Catholic teaching. Hence the necessity of having Catholic masters and of having liberty to organize schools in such manner that their teaching shall be fully in accord with the Catholic Faith as well as with the duties connected therewith."

"Your children cannot be allowed to seek the benefits of education from schools which ignore the Catholic religion, or are positively antagonistic to it; from schools wherein its doctrine and fundamental principles are repudiated." Every school of that kind is condemned by the Church because nothing can be more pernicious, more calculated to destroy the integrity of the faith and to turn away youthful minds from the path of truth."—Rev. Joseph Simard, O. S. M., in Montreal True Witness.

THE POWER OF A CATHOLIC PAPER.

Writing of those who fall away from the Church, and suggesting remedies for such defection, the Catholic Citizen says: "We know of no better means of bringing religion to those who fall to come for it than the silent missionary of the press—the fifty-two-times-a-year visit of a Catholic paper, speaking to every member, young and old, and speaking by every device from the innuendo Catholicity of the story to the five-minute sermon. No Catholic father or mother can better insure the Catholicity of their children than by cultivating a habit of reading a paper for Catholic reading. It is difficult to induce them to read books, but this is the age of newspaper reading, and a good Catholic newspaper is a power for good at this time we live in that no one has as yet begun to realize."

THANKSGIVING OFFERING.

Cured After Twenty Years Suffering By Implored the Aid of the Blessed Virgin.

An interesting story took place in the House of Calvary, New York city, on May 12—it was the blessing of a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes and, with the blessing, went an interesting story. Just one year ago on May 12 Mrs. Peterson, the donor of the statue, was a good Protestant, an invalid suffering for 20 years from neural complaint, but through the advice of kind friends she had implored Our Lady of Lourdes to help her. She had recourse to prayer, she bathed in the water, she entreated the powerful intercession of the Blessed Mother. As a result of her deep faith she was cured. After 20 years on a sick bed she was granted the grace of health, of body and conversion to the true Church. (It may be a devout Catholic and an act of thanksgiving for the graces received, she placed in the Chapel of the House of Calvary, this statue to Our Lady of Lourdes. The statue while in the chapel looks out on a ward for cancer patients and in the beds of the wards are nearly ten poor women down with that loathsome incurable disease. Superstitions of the kind of "Women of Calvary" Mrs. Storm accepts into her home only the incurable destitute cases, cases that will not be accepted in any hospital of the city. She takes them irrespective of religion and while no influence is brought to bear on them except the silent appealing influence of the Blessed Sacrament and the atmosphere of prayer that pervades the house, already two of the patients have been cured. When one is afflicted with cancer and the world offers no charms in the face of a lingering death, the sweet consolations of the Catholic Church are eagerly sought for and when secured they more than compensate for the distressing pleasures of life.

The Rev. Charles M. Bridges has been appointed to the charge of the Jesuit novitiate at Frederick, Md., to succeed the Rev. William H. Walsh, who has gone to direct the building of St. Andrew's-on-the-Hudson.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop Fitzgerald of Little Rock, who was recently stricken with paralysis, is out of all danger and gives promise of being good many years at the helm.

CATHOLIC NOTES.

Mrs. Goernann, one of Holland's most famous Catholic Bishops, died recently aged 81.

Saint Severin, one of the most historically interesting of Parisian churches, is to be restored at a cost of \$200,000.

The Rev. Edward Henry Bryan, late Vicar of Hensall, Yorkshire, England, has been received into the Catholic Church.

The Very Rev. Father Aloysius M. Gell, General of the Calced Carmelites, died recently, after a short illness, in the head-house of the order in Rome.

The Sacrament of Confirmation was administered to six Indian girls from the Lincoln Institution, Philadelphia, at the Church of the Nativity recently by Archbishop Ryan.

At the close of a recent mission given by the Paulist Fathers in the Cathedral of Sacramento, Cal., Bishop Grace confirmed over 100 adults, most of whom were converts received before or during the mission.

In 1849, when the Ohioans came to Texas, there was not a single religious edifice from Hope-Ohio to Laredo; in 1859 there were twenty-five churches or chapels along the Rio Grande, besides their own houses at Eagle Pass, Del Rio, and San Antonio.

Great interest is manifested in the new Trinity College, the work of which is progressing favorably. The sisters are confident that the college will be ready for classes in October. The prospectus containing the conditions for entrance will be issued in a few days.

St. Thomas Seminary, Hartford, Conn., was so badly damaged by fire recently that it has been found necessary to disperse the students until the building shall have been thoroughly renovated.

One of the oldest churches in India is the Church of Our Lady of the Snows in Bandel, in the Hooghly district, belonging to the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Mylapore. It was built in 1590, and the third centenary was celebrated recently.

With the hearty concurrence of Dean Farrar (Anglican), of Canterbury Cathedral, the Catholic Truth Society of England has received the Cardinal Pole, which had until this disquieted many. The society's record was 1000.

The silver jubilee of Bishop Hall will be celebrated in the Cathedral of Portland, Maine, on June 1. The anniversary of the Bishop's consecration on the 12th of June, 1855, is observed on the 12th of each year, that falls on the vigil of Pentecost. Celebrations have been postponed this Tuesday following.

OUR RELIGIOUS ORDENS.

According to the Messenger of Sacred Heart of Mary, we have a country containing different religious congregations of men and women, 275 priests, fully 1,500 nuns, and 150 brothers given to maintain the moral edifice of the community. There are 110 convents, 100 hospitals, 100 orphanages, 100 schools, 100 asylums, 100 refuges, 100 homes, with 100,000 Catholics in charitable institutions.

MAINE AND THE BISHOP. "There is a great devotion to the Blessed Virgin in Maine, and it is to be seen in the many statues of Our Lady of Lourdes, which are placed in the homes of the people, and in the churches, and in the schools, and in the hospitals, and in the orphanages, and in the asylums, and in the refuges, and in the homes, with 100,000 Catholics in charitable institutions."

FIFTY YEARS AN ARCHDIOCESE. The archdiocese of New York will celebrate on July 15th, the golden jubilee of its elevation to an archdiocese. During the fifty years of its existence the archdiocese of New York has seen but three archbishops, Archbishop Hughes, Cardinal McCloskey, and Archbishop Corrigan. The event will be one of the greatest importance. The Archbishop will return from Europe in time for the ceremonies.

The death is announced of Richard Storrs Willis, one of the leading Catholic gentlemen in Detroit, Mich., a brother of Nathaniel Parker Willis and Kinneard of the once well-known authors, "Tanny Fern."

On May 22d, the memorial day of the Confederacy, a monument to the late Rev. Abram Ryan, the president of the Confederacy, was unveiled in Norfolk, Va., under the auspices of the Daughters of the Confederacy. The monument is in the form of a cross. It is of Southern granite, seven feet high and bears this inscription: "Father Ryan, post-prime of the Daughters of the Confederacy, Norfolk, Va., his body lies here. He was one of its noblest spirits. The death of this noble man is a great loss to the Confederacy."

Reports from Manila of the arrival of the archbishop of the Philippines, who is expected to arrive in the Philippines.

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