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## FABIOLA

Or The Church of the Catacombs,  
By His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman.

(Published by Special Request.)  
Part Second.  
CHAPTER II.  
(Continued from last week.)

The catacomb dives at once, generally by a steep flight of steps, below the stratum of loose and friable sand, into that where it is indurated to the hardness of a tender, but consistent rock; on the surface of which every stroke of the pickaxe is yet distinctly traceable. When you have reached this depth, you are in the first story of the cemetery, for you ascend again by stairs, to the second and third below, all constructed on the same principle.

A catacomb may be divided into three parts, its passages or streets, its chambers or squares, and its churches. The passages are long, narrow galleries, cut with tolerable regularity, so that the roof and floor are at right angles with the sides, often so narrow as scarcely to allow two persons to go abreast. They sometimes run quite straight to a great length, but they are crossed by others, and these again by others, so as to form a complete labyrinth, or network of subterranean corridors. To be lost among them would easily be fatal.

But those passages are not constructed, as the name would imply, merely to lead to something else. They are themselves the catacomb or cemetery. Their walls, as well as the sides of the staircases, are honey-combed with graves, that is, with rows of excavations, large and small, of sufficient length to admit a human body, from a child to a full-grown man, laid with its side to the gallery. Sometimes there are many as four, sometimes as few as three or four, of these rows, one above the other. They are evidently so made to measure, that it is probable the body was lying by the side of the grave, while this was being dug.

When the corpse, wrapped up, as we heard from Diogenes, was laid in its narrow cell, the front was hermetically closed either by a marble slab, or more frequently by several broad tiles, put edgewise in a groove or mortice cut for them in the rock, and cemented all round. The inscription was cut upon the marble, or scratched in the wet mortar. Thousands of the former sort have been collected, and maybe seen in museums and churches; many of the latter have been copied and published, but by far the greater number of tombs are anonymous, have no record upon them. And now the reader may reasonably ask, through what period does the interment in the catacombs range, and how are its limits determined. We will try to content him as briefly as possible.

There is no evidence of the Christians having ever buried anywhere anteriorly to the construction of catacombs. Two principles as old as Christianity regulate this mode of burial. The first is the manner of Christ's entombment. He was laid in a grave in a cavern, wrapped up in linen, embalmed with spices, and a stone, sealed up, closed His sepulchre. As St. Paul so often proposes Him for the model of our resurrection, and speaks of our being buried with Him in baptism, it was natural for His disciples to wish to be buried after His example, so to be ready to rise with Him.

This lying in wait for resurrection was the second thought that guided the formation of these cemeteries. Every expression connected with them alluded to the rising again. The word to "bury" is unknown in Christian inscriptions. "Deposited in peace," "the deposition of," are the expressions used; that is, the dead are but left there for a time, till called for again, as a pledge, or precious thing, entrusted to faithful but temporary keeping. The very name of cemetery suggests that it is only a place where many lie, as in a dormitory, slumbering for a while, till dawn comes and the trumpet's sound awakes them. Hence the grave is only called "the place," or more technically, "the small home," of the dead in Christ.

These two ideas, which are combined in the planning of the catacombs, were not later insertions into the Christian system, but must have been more vivid in its earlier times. They inspired abhorrence of the pagan custom of burning the dead; nor have we a hint that this mode was at any time adopted by Christians.

But ample proof is to be found in the catacombs themselves of their early origin. The style of paintings yet remaining belong to a period of still flourishing art. Their symbols, and the symbolical taste itself, are characteristic of a very ancient period. For this peculiar taste declined as time went on. Although inscriptions with dates are rare, yet out of ten thousand collected by the learned and sagacious Cavalier De Rossi, about three hundred are found bearing consular dates, through every period, from the early emperors to the middle of the fourth century (A. D. 350). Another curious and interesting custom furnishes us with dates on tombs. At the closing of the grave, the relations or friends, to mark it, would press into its wet plaster and leave there a coin, a cameo, or engraved gem, sometimes even a shell or pebble, probably that they might find the sepulchre again, especially where no inscription was left. Many of these objects continue to be found, many have been long collected. But it is not uncommon, where the coin, or to speak scientifically, the medal, has fallen from its place, to find a mould of it: distinct and clear in the cement, which equally gives its date. This is sometimes of Domitian, or other early emperors.

It may be asked, therefore this anxiety to rediscover with certainty the tomb? Besides motives of natural piety, there is one constantly recorded on sepulchral inscriptions. In England, if want of space prevented the full date of a person's death being given, we should prefer chronicling the year, to the day of the month, when it occurred. It is more historical. No one cares about remembering the day on which a person died, without the year; but the year, without the day, is an important recollection. Yet while so few ancient Christian inscriptions supply the year of people's deaths, thousands give us the very day of it on which they died, whether in the hopefulness of believers or in the assurance of martyrs. This is easily explained. Of both classes, annual commemoration had to be made, on the very day of their departure, and accurate knowledge of this was necessary. Therefore it alone was recorded.

In a cemetery close to the one in which we have left our three youths, with Diogenes and his sons, were lately found inscriptions mingled together, belonging to both orders of the dead. One in Greek, after mentioning the "Deposition of Agauda on the 13th day before the Calends, or 1st of June," adds this simple address—

"Live in the Lord, and pray for us"

Another fragment is as follows:

"... Nones of June... Live in peace, and pray for us"

This is a third—

"Victoria, be refreshed, and may thy spirit be in enjoyment" (good).

This last reminds us of a most peculiar inscription found scratched in the mortar beside a grave in the cemetery of Praetextatus, not many yards from that of Callistus. It is remarkable, first, for being in Latin, written with Greek letters; then for containing a testimony of the Divinity of our Lord; lastly, for expressing a prayer for the refreshment of the departed. We fill up the portions of words wanting from the falling out of part of the plaster.

"To the well-deserving sister Bon... The eighth day before the Calends of Nov. Christ God Almighty refresh thy spirit in Christ."

In spite of this digression on prayers inscribed over tombs, the reader will not, we trust, have forgotten that we were establishing the fact, that the Christian cemeteries of Rome owe their origin to the earliest ages. We have now to state down to what period they were used. After peace was restored to the Church, the devotion of Christians prompted them to desire burial near the martyrs and holy people of an earlier age. But, generally speaking, they were satisfied to lie under the pavement. Hence the sepulchral stones which are often found in the rubbish of the catacombs, and sometimes in their places, bearing consular dates of the fourth century, are thicker, larger, better carved, and in a less simple style, than those of an earlier period placed upon the walls. But before the end of that century these monuments became rarer, and interment in the catacombs ceased in the following at latest: Pope Damasus, who died in 384, reverently shrunk, as he tells us in his own epi-

graph, from intruding into the company of the saints.

Restitutus, therefore, whose sepulchral table we gave for a title to our chapter, may well be considered as speaking in the name of the early Christians, and claiming as their own exclusive work and property the one thousand miles of subterranean city, with their six millions of slumbering inhabitants, who trust in the Lord, and await His resurrection.

### CHAPTER III.

#### WHAT DIOGENES COULD NOT TELL ABOUT THE CATACOMBS.

Diogenes lived during the first period in the history of the cemeteries, though near its close. Could he have looked into their future fate, he would have seen, near at hand, an epoch that would have gladdened his heart, to be followed by one that would have deeply afflicted him. Although, therefore, the matter of this chapter have no direct bearing upon our narrative, it will serve essentially to connect it with the present topography of its scene.

When peace and liberty were restored to the Church, these cemeteries became places of devotion, and of great resort. Each of them was associated with the name of one, or the name of several, of the more eminent martyrs buried in it; and, on their anniversary, crowds of citizens and of pilgrims thronged to their tombs, where the divine mysteries were offered up, and the homily delivered in their praise. Hence began to be compiled the first martyrologies, or calendars of martyrs' days which told the faithful whither to go. "At Rome, on the Salarian, or the Appian, or the Ardeatine way," such are the indications almost daily read in the Roman martyrology, now swelled out by the additions of later ages.

An ordinary reader of the book hardly knows the importance of these indications; for they have served to verify several otherwise dubious cemeteries. Another class of valuable writers also comes to our aid; but before mentioning them, we will glance at the changes which this devotion produced in the cemeteries. First, commodious entrances, with easy staircases, were made: then walls were built to support the crumbling galleries; and, from time to time, funnel shaped apertures in the vaults were opened, to admit light and air. Finally, basilicas or churches were erected over their entrances, generally leading immediately to the principal tomb, then called the "confession" of the church. The pilgrim, thus, on arriving at the holy city, visited each of these churches, a custom yet practiced; descended below, and without having to grope his way about, went direct, by well constructed passages, to the principal martyr's shrine, and so on to others, perhaps equally objects of reverence and devotion.

To be continued.

#### NOTES OF A MODERN PILGRIM.

Being an Account of the Recent Pilgrimage From Rochester to the Shrine of St. Anne De Beaupre.

BY FRANK CARLTON.

(Continued from last week.)

Someone from the front of the car, with a better view than the rest, gave the longed for signal "St. Anne's—St. Anne's," and every neck for the next few minutes, without any supernatural aid, worked miracles of extension. The first thing to come into view, very appropriately, was the gorgeous Corinthian basilica, the present day shrine of St. Anne. The village runs length ways under a sheltering hill; up the cultivated sides of which the inhabitants have built their humble homesteads. Jutting out into the St. Lawrence is a long narrow pier, at which boats land from Orleans island just across the river, also from Quebec, and other nearby places.

On the way down from Quebec our spiritual director and in all respect "our general utility man" gave detailed instructions as to that day's programme, from the securing of hotel accommodation, to attendance at the pilgrimage mass, and the subsequent refreshing of the body at breakfast. The priests of the party said Mass in the side chapel of the basilica, and at these many communicated. At 10:30 a.m. solemn benediction was given in the church, and the sacred edifice was crowded almost to its capacity, rich and poor and a round dozen of nationalities being represented in that congregation. The preacher of the day, speaking now in English, now in French, referred to that day as "Rochester's Day at St. Anne's," and warmly welcomed the pilgrims from that

city, for coming so far to pay honor to Canada's patron saint. He reminded them that only a few weeks before a countryman of theirs, a Mr. Lavoie, of Lewiston, Me., had been cured in the presence of 3,000 souls. He had broken his leg on the ice during the past winter, and had been discharged from the hospital in a helpless state. He joined a pilgrimage to St. Anne's, and remained two days after his party had left, refusing to believe that the good St. Anne would not aid him. His touching and great faith was rewarded in a most dramatic manner, and the crutches he had hitherto found so indispensable for support were now part of the pile stored at the entrance of the church.

At the close of the sermon, a procession was formed, in which was carried by eight stalwart men, a statue of St. Anne. The famous hymn of St. Anne De Beaupre was sung until the processionists had left the church for the grounds before the basilica, and I sincerely wish I had language to describe the scene as it appeared to me from the gallery where the organ is situated. It was overpowering. I felt at one time that only tears, or a shriek, would relieve my feelings. I have seen hundreds of immense crowds, and have felt their indescribable influence, but there was something about this throng at once pathetic and majestic, that stirred up every vestige of sentiment and feeling in my composition. One mighty flood of song surged through the building supported by the deep diapason of the organ—thousands of voices, held some in whole, and some in maimed hands, flickered their silent prayer—and behind it all, serene and beautiful, were the sanctuary and altar of white marble, and it was so easy to the soul's eye to see the Prisoner of the Tabernacle gazing with loving complacency on the scene being enacted before him. Many poor cripples hobbled along in the procession with the aid of their crutches, and who shall say how many there were whose physical afflictions were known only to themselves, their woe faces alone giving any clue as to their being in need of the good offices of St. Anne in a special manner.

When the procession returned to the church all were invited to approach and venerate the relics of St. Anne, and the sick were placed round the statue or shrine in the center of the church. This is perhaps the most dramatic moment in the whole ceremony for as the wounds of the afflicted pilgrims are touched with the sacred relic the word "miracle, miracle, miracle" dance in the air before one's eyes, and one instinctively looks for exhibitions of the "faith that moves mountains." At this point in the service the tension of expectancy and emotion is at breaking point, but happily it is not prolonged unduly.

Not at this time but later in the day a large section of the Rochester party were privileged to witness a most extraordinary scene in which a poor Indian squaw figured prominently, inasmuch as she claimed loudly, and vigorously, nay hysterically, in two languages be it also noted (her own, and the French patois of those parts) that her foot was "cured." As the poor creature stood there laughing and crying, and applying desperate tests to her lately afflicted member she soon drew attention from the crowds gathered round the souvenir stalls, or performing the penance of the Scala Santa (the Holy Stairs) over the way. A cry of "a miracle, a miracle" rose on the stifling summer air, and in a twinkling the rush of humanity set in from all sides. The excitement was intense. Souvenir vendors left their stalls, worshippers on the Scala Santa interrupted their devotions and rushed precipitately to the scene. French Canadian grande dames visiting the village from neighboring chateaus alighted from their carriages and the next moment were craning their patriarchal necks to get a glimpse of the favored one quite as unrehearsally as the humblest member of the crowd. Perhaps the most pathetic figures in this throng were those who themselves were afflicted with some physical infirmity, but for whom, for some inscrutable reason St. Anne's intercession had as yet proved efficacious. They seemed full of gratitude for the mark of supernatural favor shown to this poor illiterate daughter of the wilds, and there was a look of hope and yearning in their tear-dimmed eyes that would have moved a heart of stone to pity.

After a time I was invited to examine the woman, who was now in a calmer state of mind. She gave her name as Mrs. Ferdinand Gognon, a widow from the Indian village of Lorette on the Charles river, above Quebec. Some six months ago she

scalded her foot in a shocking manner (a fact of which the company were given evidence) and after receiving attention at the hands of Dr. Ferron of Betula, with no permanent satisfactory effects, she set out for the shrine, which it took her three weeks to reach. Whilst at prayer in the church she suddenly felt a "pricking sensation" in the affected limb, and she sprang to her feet feeling, confidently, that she was cured; and such was the case! When the attention of the crowd was drawn to her she was submitting her foot to appalling tests in the way of squeezing it with all the strength of her bony fingers, and banging it against any obstacle that offered, but "I have no pain, I have no pain" was her only reply to those remonstrating with her. Had she not been restrained by those around, it is questionable whether she would not have stood in need of another miracle to make good the work of her exuberance. The Redemptorist fathers attached to the basilica vouched for the respectability and credibility of the woman. At all events her crutches are now added to the two great pillars of these votive offerings at the entrance to the church. One of the visiting priests took up a collection for the poor creature, which after deducting her fare back home to Lorette would make her a millionaires of a twelve month among her tribe.

The references to votive offerings above, reminds me of the truly strange and priceless collection of these in the sacristy of the basilica. These are jealously guarded in big cases and consist of every conceivable object from a waterbury watch to a golden crown. Among the donors are many distinguished names as well as names which in no other way would meet the public eye. Whether the blazing diamond necklaces of the countess or the beaded meekness of the Indian child, these were mute and eloquent tributes to a religion which must survive as long as time itself.

The day the Rochesterians arrived in St. Anne's found it the busiest human hive imaginable. There must at least have been four thousand visitors in the place, and when you recollect that these are dispersing themselves over a space no more extensive than from the Four Corners to Clinton St., you may be sure there is none too much elbow room. At every window and balcony are to be seen faces across which is writ large the word "pilgrim." Not "doleful pilgrim" only "pilgrim"; simply that, and nothing more. They don't sit there in sackcloth and ashes, nor yet telling their beads; on the contrary they are rather a "well" crowd, and, if their faces are any index, true disciples of St. Francis de Sales, who held that true religion was evidenced quite as much by smiles, as tears; indeed a little more so. Sounds of sweet music were ever on the air, and should you stray anywhere in the neighborhood of the basilica, no matter what time of the day, or early evening, through the open doors came the prayer of the great \$10,000 organ, now in dulcet, crooning tones, as though it were inducing the afflicted ones bowed in humble supplication round the shrine to put themselves in the right disposition,—again a veritable hallelujah chorus would proclaim in claxon tongue all the tokens of love and solicitude the Creator has shown his people from this the modulation was but a step to the levelling at the celestial walls of the whole artillery of the pipes, from the thunderous bourdon to the shrill piccolo as though it would impel the Great Healer to come down to earth again bringing health and so-lace to humanity's bruised reeds.

Visitors to Paris will remember the dominant word of that gay capital, the word you hear day and night, in every mouth, and in every conceivable place, is "Amour" (love). Beaupre too has its watchword, an improvement on that of Paris; it is "Friez" (pray). You hear it in the main street, at the end of the jolly running out into the river, at the souvenir stalls, and even in the barber's shop. Whilst under the tonsorial artist's care (Beaupre has only one barber, who needless to say, thanks to "La femme Sainte Anne" has a sincere cure). I was amused to hear that worthy hail a substantial looking ecclesiastic who was passing the door at that moment:

"Ah, good mornen, Fazer Smeet, you vair well?"

Receiving an assurance from Father "Smeet" that he need have no concern as to his health, and noting that the father was going in the direction of the basilica, the jolly and pious barber assumed the concertina smile, a la Francaise, and brought the interchange of amenities to a close with

"Out out, mon pere."

I confess I did not quite understand the force, or relevancy of that last remark. O Beaupre is by no means without its humorous side. How could it be otherwise? There is for instance, at first thought, something rather incongruous in the local cripples and blind men who are to be met at one point, especially in the neighborhood of the basilica. Presumably they spend much of their time in quiet prayer to St. Anne, invoking her aid in their corporal affliction, but they certainly do not allow that to interfere with business. They have to make hay while the sun shines, while the visitors are there in the summer, and, believe me, they are great workers. It was amusing to note the blind men prick their ears when they heard footsteps coming, and then vigorously rattle their little cane to attract the attention of the passer-by. There was the Soles Saintes too, the holy stairs, which despite the solemnity of the devotion, presented at times an irresistibly comic side. In the first place in the innocence of your heart you would ask some fellow what prayers you had to say, and you time to follow on each of the steps, of which there are thirty-two, many of them being infirm with rheum. The friend of course is always a wag, though at the time you do not suspect it, and he says, "Well, you commence at the very bottom step (as a matter of fact you do to nothing of the kind, but begin with the first step halld with relics) and after saying Ave paters, aves, and glorias and a prayer for me, you kiss the step on which you are kneeling (think of that for an acrobatic feat) and then without rising to your feet, or using your hand for support, clamber to the next step. On reaching the top you must cross the floor on your knees till you reach the little Calvary."

The atmosphere of Beaupre giving an enormous capacity for prayer and pious exercises, even this formidable "instruction" does not dismay you, and you join the humble throng on the scale. Probably your friend starts with you, in fact it seems to be part of his policy to do so, so that he can enjoy and contribute to your discomfort all the more. On reaching the third or fourth step, unless a hand has been laid on the bottom of the world, beginning with your knees, seems to be dropping out; it begins to dawn upon you also that something is wrong with the "instruction" you have received, in a word, that your friend has "done you brown" for there he is, already perched on the top step. That's enough! The poison of doubt has entered your soul, and it flies direct to the marrow of the knee bones; right away, you clutch at the side rails for support, and cheat heaven of a pater and aves or two at each subsequent step, and on reaching the top, walk shamelessly across to the predella; by that time what with your aching knees and disloyal heart, you are in no humor to say a final ave for the friend who has deceived you so perfectly, for you know that he has been saying only one pater and aves on each step, and that if he kissed the step at all, it was always the one ahead of him, instead of the one on which he was kneeling. It occurred to me that knee-pains would be a graceful concession to twentieth century weakness like myself, though I know that introduction would raise a storm for your real holy stair climber would have to be threatened with excommunication before he—generally she—would advance one foot along the path of perfection by such fraudulent devices.

Prosperity does not appear to have spoiled Beaupre, nor does any of the worldliness necessarily introduced by even piously disposed visitors. And an abiding resting place there. There is a delightful old world simplicity about the place and its people. The only really handsome or pretentious buildings are the basilica, and the Redemptorist monastery, and perhaps the convent of the White Nuns. The basilica is a fine specimen of architecture in the Corinthian style, possessing an exquisitely ornamented roof and sacristy. The new pulpit shortly to be erected is to cost some \$25,000. For years money (as well as people) has been flowing into this sanctuary, but much of it has gone in its beautification. Some days over six thousand visitors will arrive in the village, and last year during the summer season over 168,000 persons visited the shrine, thus it is easy to form an idea of the material prosperity, and again from spiritual things, the good St. Anne brings to Beaupre.

(To be Continued.)