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FABIOLA

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

(Published by Special Request.)

Part Second.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT DIOGENES COULD NOT TELL
ABOUT THE CATACOMBS.

(Continued from last week.)

During this period, no tomb was allowed to be opened, no body to be extracted. Through apertures made into the grave, handkerchiefs or scarfs called brandes, were introduced, to touch the martyr's relics; and these were carried to distant countries, to be held in equal reverence. No wonder that St. Ambrose, St. Gaudentius, and other bishops, should have found it so difficult to obtain bodies, or larger relics of martyrs for their churches. Another sort of relics consisted of what was called familiarly the oil of a martyr; that is, the oil often mixed with balsam, which burned in a lamp beside his tomb. Often a round stone pillar, three feet or so in height, and scooped out at the top, stands besides a monument; probably to hold the lamp, or serve for the distribution of its contents. St. Gregory the Great wrote to Queen Theodelinda, that he sent her a collection of the oils of the popes who were martyrs. The list which accompanied them was copied by Mabillon in the treasury of Monza, and republished by Ruinart. It exists there yet, together with the very phials containing them, sealed up in metal tubes.

The jealousy of disturbing the saints, is displayed most beautifully in an incident, related by St. Gregory of Tours. Among the martyrs most honoured in the ancient Roman Church were St. Chrysanthus and Daria. Their tombs became so celebrated for cures, that their fellow Christians built (that is, excavated) over them a chamber, with a vault of beautiful workmanship, where crowds of worshippers assembled. That was discovered by the heathens, and the emperor closed them in, walled up the entrance, and from above, probably through the luminae, or ventilating shaft, showered down earth and stones, and buried the congregation alive, as the two holy martyrs had been before them. The place was unknown at the peace of the Church, till discovered by Divine manifestation. But instead of being permitted to enter again into this hallowed spot, pilgrims were merely allowed to look at it, through a window opened in the wall, so as to see, not only the tombs of the martyrs, but also the bodies of those who had been buried alive at their shrines. And as the cruel massacre had taken place while preparations were being made for oblation of the Holy Eucharist, there were still to be seen lying about the silver cruets in which the wine was brought for that spotless sacrifice.

It is clear that pilgrims resorting to Rome would want a handbook to the cemeteries, that they might know what they had to visit. It is likewise but natural that, on their return home they may have sought to edify their less fortunate neighbours, by giving an account of what they had seen. Accordingly there exists, no less fortunately for us than for their untravelled neighbour, several records of this character. The first place, among these is held by catalogues compiled in the fourth century; one, of the places of sepulture of Roman Pontiffs, the other of martyrs. After these come three distinct guides to the catacombs; the more interesting because they take different routes, yet agree marvellously in their account.

To show the value of these documents, and describe the changes which took place in the catacombs during the second period of their history, we will give a brief account of one discovery in the cemetery where we have left our little party. Among the rubbish near the entrance of a catacomb, the name of which was yet doubtful, and which had been taken for that of Prætextatus, was found a fragment of a slab of marble which had been broken across obliquely, from left to right, with the following letters:—

(Of) . . . nelius martyr.

The young Cavalier de Rossi at once declared that this was part of the sepulchral inscription of the holy Pope Cornelius; that probably his tomb would be found below, in a distinguished form; and that as all the itineraries above mentioned concurred in placing it in the cemetery of Callistus, this, and not the one at St. Sebas-

tian's, a few hundred yards off, must claim the honour of that name. He went further, and foretold that as these works pronounced St. Cyprian to be buried near Cornelius, there would be found something at the tomb which would account for that idea; for it was known that his body rested in Africa. It was not long before every prediction was verified. The great staircase discovered was found to lead at once to a wider space, carefully secured by brick-work of the time of peace, and provided with light and air from above. On the left was a tomb, out like others in the rock, without any exterior arch over it. It was, however, large and ample; and except one, very high above it, there were no other graves below, or over, or at the sides. The remaining portion of the slab was found within it; the first piece was brought from the Kircherian Museum where it had been deposited, and exactly fitted to it; and both covered the tomb, thus—

Of Cornelius Martyr Bishop

Below, reaching from the lower edge of the stone to the ground, was a marble slab covered with an inscription, of which only the left hand end remains, the rest being broken off and lost. Above the tomb was another slab let into the sand-stone, of which the right hand end exists and a few more fragments have been recovered in the rubbish; not enough to make out the lines, but sufficient to show it was an inscription in verse by Pope Damasus. How is this authorship traceable? Very easily. Not only do we know that this holy Pope, already mentioned, took pleasure in putting verses, which he loved to write, on the tombs of martyrs, but the number of inscriptions of his yet extant exhibit a particular and very elegant form of letters, known among antiquarians by the name of "Damasian." The fragments of this marble bear portions of verses in this character.

To proceed: on the wall, right of the tomb, and on the same plane, were painted two full-length figures in sacerdotal garments, with glories round their heads, evidently of Byzantine work of the seventh century. Down the wall, by the left side of each, letter below letter, were their names; some letters were effaced, which we supply as follows—

(The picture) of St. Cornelius Pope, of St. Cyprian.

We here see how a foreigner, reading these inscriptions, with the portraits and knowing that the Church commemorates the two martyrs on the same day, might easily be led to suppose that they were here deposited together. Finally, at the right hand of the tomb stands a truncated column about three feet high, conical at the top, as before described; and as a confirmation of the use to which we said it might be put, St. Gregory has in his list of oils sent to the Lombard Queen, "Oleum S. Cornelii," the oil of St. Cornelius.

We see, then, how, during the second period, new ornaments, as well as greater conveniences, were added to the primitively simple forms of the cemeteries. But we must not, on that account, imagine that there was any danger of mistaking these later embellishments for the productions of the early ages. The difference is so immense, that we might easily blunder by taking a Rubens for a Beato Angelico, as by considering a Byzantine figure to be a production of the two first centuries.

We come now to the third period of these holy cemeteries, the sad one of their desolation. When the Lombards, and later the Saracens, began to devastate the neighbourhood of Rome, and the catacombs were exposed to desecration, the popes extracted the bodies of the most illustrious martyrs, and placed them in the basilicas of the city. This went on till the eighth or ninth century; when we still read of repairs made in the cemeteries by the sovereign pontiffs. The catacombs ceased to be so much places of devotion; and the churches, which stood over their entrances, were destroyed, or fell to decay. Only those remained which were fortified, and could be defended. Such are the extra-mural basilicas of St. Paul on the Ostian Way, of St. Sebastian on the Appian, St. Laurence on the Tiburtine, or in Ager Veranus, St. Agnes on the Nomentan Road, St. Pancratius on the Aurelian, and, greatest of all, St. Peter's on the Vatican. The first and last had separate burghs or cities round them; and the traveller can still trace remains of strong walls round some of the others.

Strange it is, however, that the young antiquarian, whom we have frequently named with honour, should have re-discovered two of the basilicas over the entrance to the cemetery of

Callistus almost entire; the one being a stable and bakehouse, the other a wine-store. One is, most probably, that built by Pope Damasus, so often mentioned. The earth washed down, through air-holes, the apollonian practiced during ages, by persons entering from vineyards through unguarded entrances, the mere wasting action of time and weather, have left us but a wreck of the ancient catacombs. Still there is much to be thankful for: Enough remains to verify the records left us in better times, and these serve to guide us to the reconstruction of our ruins. The present pontiff has done more in a few years for these sacred places than has been effected in centuries. The mixed commission which he has appointed have done wonders. With very limited means, they are going systematically to work finishing as they advance. Nothing is taken from the spot where it is found; but everything is restored, as far as possible, to its original state. Accurate tracings are made of all the paintings, and plans of every part explored. To secure these good results, the Pope has from his own resources, bought vineyards and fields, especially at Tor Marancia, where the cemetery of SS. Nereus and Achilleus is situated; and we believe also over that of Callistus. The French emperor, too, has sent to Rome artists who have produced a most magnificent work, perhaps somewhat overdone, upon the catacombs; a truly imperial undertaking.

It is time, however, for us to rejoin our party below, and finish our inspection of these marvellous cities of departed saints, under the guidance of our friends the excavators.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT DIOGENES DID TELL ABOUT THE CATACOMBS.

All that we have told our readers of the first period of the history of subterranean Rome, as ecclesiastical antiquarians love to call the catacombs, has no doubt been better related by Diogenes to his youthful hearers, as, taper in hand, they have been slowly walking through a long straight gallery, crossed, indeed by many others, but adhered to faithfully; with sundry pauses, and, of course, lectures embodying what we have put together in our prosaic second chapter.

At length Diogenes turned to the right, and Torquatus looked around him anxiously.

"I wonder," he said, "how many turns we have passed by, before leaving this main gallery?"

"A great many," answered Severus drily.

"How many do you think, ten or twenty?"

"Full that, I fancy; for I never have counted them."

Torquatus had, however, but wished to make sure. He continued, still pausing—

"How do you distinguish the right turn, then? Oh, what is this?" and he pretended to examine a small niche in the corner. But Severus kept too sharp a look-out, and saw that he was making a mark in the sand.

Come, come along," he said, "or we shall lose sight of the rest, and not see which way they turn. That little niche is to hold a lamp; you will find one at each angle. As to ourselves, we know every alley and turn here below, as you do those of the city above."

Torquatus was somewhat reassured by this account of the lamps—those little earthen ones, evidently made on purpose for the catacombs, of which so many are there found. But not content, he kept as good count as he could of the turns, as they went; and now with one excuse, and now with another, he constantly stopped, and scrutinised particular spots and corners. But Severus had a lynx's eye upon him, and allowed nothing to escape his attention.

At last they entered a doorway, and found themselves in a square chamber, richly adorned with paintings.

"What do you call this?" asked Tiburtius.

"It is one of the many crypts, or chambers, which abound in our cemeteries," answered Diogenes; "sometimes they are merely family sepulchres, but generally they contain the tomb of some martyr, on whose anniversary we meet here. See that tomb opposite us, which, though flush with the wall, is arched over. That becomes on such an occasion the altar whereon the Divine mysteries are celebrated. You are, of course, aware of the custom of so performing them."

"Perhaps my two friends," interposed Pancratius, "so recently baptised, may not have heard it; but I know it well. It is surely one of the glorious

privileges of martyrdom, to have the Lord's sacred Body and precious Blood offered upon one's ashes, and to repose thus under the very feet of God. But let us see well the paintings all over this crypt."

[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.)

On the morning of Thursday, August 4, I took leave of Beaupre, turning my face in the direction of Rochester, having for my travelling companions a priest and a layman. The latter proved, despite his years, to be the soul of our little triumvirate. His piety was unmistakable, but it was of that profound character that you did not often see outward exhibitions of it; for instance, he fell foul more than once of the clerical's insatiable craving to see every church in Quebec, and Montreal. Seeing a few of the best of them he did not object to, but he protested in pathetic somewhat archaic English against the religious mania of pulling up the carriage at every "little church round the corner." It meant so much kneeling! Now and again he would look ruefully at the knees of his trousers, when a growl would escape him something to the effect that "if this sort of thing continues much longer, my pants will be gone, and I'll have to enter Rochester in a sack."

But our clerical companion was relentless. Certainly the old gentleman asserted his independence at times, by staying outside of a few churches, on some pretext or other, and on giving the matter a little thought, I observed that the churches he selected for his boycott, were those styled by the driver "Irish" churches. He "had no use" either for the Protestant cathedral at Quebec. What cared he that it contained the battle and time worn flags of those doughty opponents Wolfe and Montcalm? Ah, but if you had seen our lay friend in the citadel of Quebec! There's where he shone. He button-holed our military guide, and made him feel "like ten cents" on the subjects of armament and tactics, while we stood by in mute admiration. It was worth the \$12 of the trip to hear Rochester lay out the British Empire. Every argument the soldier advanced he pooh-poohed and demolished with fine scorn, his arms revolving like those of a windmill. He lived his battles in the Fatherland over again, and revelled in the retrospect. All the same, he made a pass to Tommy Atkins when we were leaving, which, whatever he did, served to eclipse his two companions in the soldier's regard. Probably he bettered us twenty-five cents. Perhaps you will not be surprised to hear that our veteran companion was "mighty loth to quit the precincts of the citadel. He was 'it', there, besides, once outside the walls, it meant more churches, and more trousseau stretching. However, he was 'good' for a while, and gave the father free rein for a straight couple of hours. He then insisted by way of intermission, that we pay a visit to the magnificent "Chateau Frontenac"—which is not a church.

I was considerably amused at both of my companions when we reached the Franciscan convent at Quebec. One of the attractions of this institution is the bazaar, open all the year round, where the sisters sell the results of their wonderful handicraft, from a ten cent scapular to a five hundred dollar chasuble. You pay a dime to go into this store. Naturally, having paid the price of admission, you expect peace; but you reckon without the good sisters. Immediately you get inside, your nationality is discreetly ascertained by the shrewd janitress, and the next moment from a room in the rear emerge as many white-robed nuns as there are visitors and with the sister who speaks your mother tongue, willy nilly, you repair "to do the lions" of the place, which consist of, as I said before, of nothing but religious and material merchandise. By way of preface you are informed that the proceeds go to support the order's missions in China and Japan, so that your heart must surely be in the wrong place if you don't buy something. As for the saleswomen, if I may apply such a term to such ethereal creatures, they have no equals in the world in the power of persuasiveness. I verily believe they could persuade you to buy your own shroud.

I felt considerably non-plussed myself, and at last looked round to see how my companions were faring. I could only see one, the priest, but I

noticed that he was not laden down with packages of gold, fringed vestments; as a matter of fact, I could see by his face he was still pocket-whole. I worked up the most beseeching look of which I was capable and threw it over my shoulder in his direction, and like the good father he was, he came to my rescue; and thus I was able to escape from the angelic figure which for the last half-hour had been at my elbow sticking there with the pertinacity of one of those holy waxen votives of one of those holy waxes you read about. In a measure too I believed the besieged situation in which he found himself, though he assured me afterwards he was never in any serious danger of capitulating. He was the coolest proposition under fire I ever saw. He asked a million and one questions, to all of which the poor little sister replied eagerly, thinking that at last he was surely going to unloose his purse-strings, but surely and steadily he held his course for the door and eventually with a profusion of elegant salaams that would have turned a star courier green with envy, he left the sister—his benediction.

On getting to the door, I drew a long breath, and then asked for "the general."

"Oh," said Father Nemo with a merry laugh, "he's been out this half hour. Didn't you notice that retreat of his? It was masterly, and worthy of his military reputation. Directly it dawned upon him that the longer he stayed he would infallibly be outfanked, he fired one shot to the effect that, 'if his daughter were there she would buy the whole place,' and then set about conducting his retreat. As he reached the door he seemed to be under the impression that even at the very end he was to suffer the ignominy of being ambushed, but with one supreme effort he charged through the door into the open air, and freedom."

I was enjoying this description of the general's strategy when the approach from the opposite side of the road, his expressive countenance wreathed in smiles. Pulling his cigar out of his mouth, all he said was "Goah!"

The priest said he would give a handsome reward to the one who was the general in such a tight corner again; knowing, of course, that the money is perfectly safe.

To describe the churches in Quebec would be an impossible and interminable task. Each one seemed to eclipse the other in beauty; it soon exhausted all our adjectives. It resolved itself eventually into a saturation of beauties and wonders, and we were surprised at nothing. I was struck with the richness of the Seminary chapel at Quebec in sacred relics—it must represent the whole calendar of saints. It amounts to a perfect glut. Every square inch seemed covered with reliques. Our friend the priest looked at these with hungry eyes, and thought of his own poor little church, down in New York state.

As for the city of Quebec itself it collapses "Philadelphia on a busy day." In the upper city one looks in vain for a face in the windows; though it was early morning when we arrived there not even a hired girl, or colored handy man could be seen round the houses, though everything "was wondrous neat and clean." What is known as the "French Quarter" is lively, and as quiet enough, and strange to say, it is the French not the Anglo-Saxon quarter of Quebec that is active and business like in appearance. It is pleasing to see the Celts "get home" occasionally in this respect.

We stood before the monument of Wolfe, a Belgian (nearly a Frenchman), a German, and an Englishman, and we fought another battle (not so desperate as at the Franciscan bazaar) a perfectly friendly one. We furnished up our memory tablets, and stormed the "heights of Abraham" with the gallant commander who so patriotically advertised Gray's immortal phrase: "The paths of glory lead but to the grave." The path up that hill on which we were standing had in all truth led him to glory, and the grave. On the monument is inscribed the eloquent epitaph:

"Here died Wolfe, victorious."

My blood ran quicker the few minutes I stood on that historic spot. As a boy at school in England my imagination had been fired by the account of the achievements of that great hero, before the "impregnable" citadel of Quebec. I must reckon this visit to the spot where Wolfe shed his life's blood as one of the proudest incidents in my life. One can be pardoned for lapses into pride of race under such compelling circumstances.

We left Quebec at 5:30 Thursday night, and were put to it during the last two or three hours of our stay, to discover how we could kill time. We

improved one shining hour with a circumvent (the owner of an old money and bric-a-brac shop, but what we succeeded time about will tell. Once on the boat, however our feelings were not so restrained, and we retired early in order to be ready for the campaign of the morning in Montreal.

But I must not forget, as Quebec dock we were joined again by a friend the ecclesiastical student, and two other pilgrims who had left Beaupre some hours after us. They were sensible, for they had appointed only two or three hours for sight-seeing in Quebec. That is ample unless you are an archaeologist, or a British officer.

Next morning, for a few hours we had the pleasure of including the new arrival in our party, driving to the same hotel and partaking of breakfast together. Speaking of driving to the hotel reminds me that our journey home a magnificent map of the County (Quebec) in his face, and had a brown that would have compensated to St. Columba for his exile among the heathen barbarians.

"Parlez vous francais?" said the priest.

"Dead'n I don't this, father?" replied Pat, somewhat shamefacedly, as your genuine Irishman hates to confess himself beaten. "At Virebelle, go ahead and it your Reverence, and I won't be far behind in making out your map!"

"What enemy ever can say the Irish are 'shifless'?"

"You understand, Pat, but you don't speak French, then why don't you marry a Frenchwoman?" said the priest.

"Arrah, father dear, phew didn't ye come along twenty years ago with that advice!" came the reply.

After that his clerical interlocutor discreetly left the journey to his own reflections. In the war of words, and indeed any kind of war, the son of Erin is no mean antagonist.

Breakfast over, the triumvirate sallied forth to do Montreal, and some more trousseau stretching. The law is inevitable, if you visit Lower Canada, and eminently appropriate, you will admit, if there is in the pilgrimic expediency.

We strolled faithfully, grimly, in our task, until lunch time. I think we were all the churches with the exception of perhaps the best, the cathedral of St. James. We arrived there at midday, precisely the hour when it is closed to visitors. I am compelled to admit there was a look in the general's face that was almost diabolically jubilant, when this information was conveyed to him in the almost fearful voice of Father Nemo.

"Ah, woe, father!" he said in a solemn sort of way, his first spasm of ill-composed chuckling over, "never mind, guess we'll do for one day (he meant 'for all time' if the law is any index to the mind) besides, surely I'm not the only hungry man here! Say, driver, take a bee line to the nearest restaurant!"

Two hours later, we were again aboard a steamer, and starting on the last lap of our very interesting journey. Before quitting Montreal let me say that the church of Notre Dame de la Gen, on should not fail to visit when in that city; so is the church of the Jesuit fathers. As for the natural attractions they are headed by the park and heights of Mount Royal, from which a superb view of the city is obtained. The city has many fine buildings of course, but I felt that it was not so big, that it need be so dirty. Rochester could give it points in a hundred ways.

It is not necessary to describe the closing stages of the trip for life ship is pretty much the same at all times. We exchanged the St. Lawrence for the Lacine and other large canal on the way back, and there were very interesting in their way. We spent Friday night on board the "Bohemian" and rose with the lark to transfer to the "Toronto" at Prescott on Saturday and this boat landed us at Charlotte at 10:45 the same night, thus completing for me, and for all I think, one of the most enjoyable trips of a life time.

I understand from various sources that these excursions are not so much aged as much as they might be. I fail to see any good and valid reason why anyone who can afford the small expense should not avail themselves of such an exceptional opportunity of visiting a country replete with interest for a Catholic, or even the necessity of urging on such as may be affected, and wish to invoke the intercession of St. Anne in her various shrines in this continent, that heavenly patroness as near to them as home here in Rochester. I sincerely hope that the time in these lovely surroundings have fallen a triumphant and useful