

FABIOLA

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

(Published by Special Request.)

Part Second.

(Continued from last week.)

CHAPTER XV EXPLANATIONS

"Then as to the Christians; you will remember, excellent Proculus, that in the account to which you have done me the honour to allude, which was at the deified Fabius's table, if I remember right, I mentioned that the sect came originally from Chaldaea, a country always famous for its occult arts. But we have a most important evidence bearing on this matter recorded in history. It is quite certain that, here in Rome, a certain Simon, who was sometimes called Simon Peter, and at other times Simon Magus, actually in public flew up high into the air; but his charm having slipped out of his belt, he fell and broke both his legs; for which reason he was obliged to be crucified with his head downwards."

"Then are all Christians necessarily sorcerers?" asked Scarpus.

"Necessarily; it is part of their superstition. They believe their priests to have most extraordinary power over nature. Thus, for example, they think they can bathe the bodies of people in water, and their souls acquire thereby wonderful gifts and superiority, should they be slaves, over their masters and the divine emperors themselves."

"Dreadful!" all cried out.

"Then, again," resumed Calpurnius, "we all know what a frightful crime some of them committed last night in tearing down a supreme Edict of the imperial deities; and even suppose (which the gods avert) that they carried their treasons still further, and attempted their sacred lives, they believe that they have only to go to one of those priests, own the crime, and ask for pardon; and, if he gives it, they consider themselves as perfectly guiltless."

"Fearful!" joined in the chorus.

"Such a doctrine," said Scarpus, "is incompatible with the safety of the state. A man who thinks he can be pardoned by another man of every crime, is capable of committing any."

"And that, no doubt," observed Fulvius, "is the cause of this new and terrible Edict against them. After what Calpurnius has told us about these desperate men, nothing can be too severe against them."

Fulvius had been keenly eyeing Sebastian, who had entered during the conversation; and now pointedly addressed him.

"And you, no doubt, think so too, Sebastian; do you not?"

"I think," he calmly replied, "that if the Christians be such as Calpurnius describes them, infamous sorcerers, they deserve to be exterminated from the face of the earth. But even so, I would gladly give them one chance of escape."

"And what is that?" sneeringly asked Fulvius.

"That no one should be allowed to join in destroying them, who could not prove himself freer from crime than they. I would have no one raise his hand against them, who cannot show that he has never been an adulterer, an extortioner, a deceiver, a drunkard, a bad husband, father, or child, a profligate, or a thief. For with being any of these, no one charges the poor Christians."

Fulvius winced under the catalogue of vices, and still more under the indignant but serene glance of Sebastian. But at the word "thief," he fairly leapt. Had the soldier seen him pick up the scarf in Fabius's house? Be it so or not, the dislike he had taken to Sebastian, at their first meeting, had ripened into hatred at their second; and hatred in that heart was only written in blood. He had only intensely now to add to that feeling.

Sebastian went out; and his thoughts got vent in familiar words of prayer. "How long, O Lord! how long? What hopes can we entertain of the conversion of many to the truth, still less of the conversion of this great empire, so long as we find even honest and learned men believing at once every calumny spoken against us; treasuring up, from age to age, every fable and fiction about us; and refusing even to inquire into our doctrines, because they are made up their minds that they are false and contemptible?"

He spoke aloud, believing himself alone, when a sweet voice answered

him at his side: "Good youth, whoever thou art that speakest thus, and methinks I know thy voice, remember that the Son of God gave light to the dark eye of the body, by spreading thereon clay; which, in man's hands, would have only blinded the seeing. Let us be as dust beneath His feet, if we wish to become His means of enlightening the eyes of men's souls. Let us be trampled on a little longer in patience; perhaps even from our ashes may come out the spark to blaze."

"Thank you, thank you, Caecilia," said Sebastian, "for your just and kind rebuke. Whither tripping on so gaily on this first day of danger?"

"Do you not know that I have been named guide of the cemetery of Callistus? I am going to take possession. Pray that I may be the first flower of this coming spring."

And she passed on, singing blithely. But Sebastian begged her to stay one moment.

CHAPTER XVI

THE WOLF IN THE FOLD

After the adventures of the night, our youths had not much time for rest. Long before daybreak, the Christians had to be up, and assemble at their several titles, so as to disperse before day. It was to be their last meeting there. The oratories were to be closed, and divine worship had to begin, from that day, in the subterranean churches of the cemeteries. It could not, indeed, be expected that all would be able to travel with safety, even on the Sunday, some miles beyond the gate. A great privilege was consequently granted to the faithful at such times of trouble, that of preserving the Blessed Eucharist in their houses, and communicating themselves privately in the morning, "before taking other food," as Tertullian expresses it.

The faithful felt, not as sheep going to the slaughter, nor as criminals preparing for execution, but as soldiers arming for fight. Their weapons, their food, their strength, their courage, were all to be found in their Lord's table. Even the lukewarm and the timid gathered fresh spirit from the bread of life. In churches, as yet may be seen in the cemeteries, were chairs placed for the penitentiaries, before whom the sinner knelt, and confessed his sins, and received absolution. In moments like this, the penitential code was relaxed, and the terms of public expiation shortened, and the whole night had been occupied by the zealous clergy in preparing their flocks for, to many their last public communion on earth.

We need not remind our readers, that the office then performed was essentially, and in many details, the same as they daily witness at the Catholic altar. Not only was it considered, as now, to be the Sacrifice of Our Lord's Body and Blood, not only were the oblation, the consecration, the communion alike, but many of the prayers were identical; so that the Catholic hearing them recited, and still more the priest reciting them, in the same language as the Roman Church of the catacombs spoke, may feel himself in active and living communion with the martyrs who celebrated, and the martyrs who assisted at, those sublime mysteries.

On the occasion which we are describing, when the time came for giving the kiss of peace—a genuine embrace of brotherly love—sobs could be heard and bursts of tears; for it was to many a parting salutation. Many a youth clung to his father's neck, scarcely knowing whether that day might not sever them, till they waved their palm-branches together in heaven. And how would mothers press their daughters to their bosom, in the fervour of that new love, which fear of long separation enkindled! Then came the communion, more solemn than usual, more devout, more hushed to stillness. "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ," said the priest to each, as he offered him the sacred food. "Amen," replied the receiver, with thrilling accents of faith and love. Then extending in his hand an orarium, or white linen cloth, he received in it a provision of the bread of life, sufficient to last him till some future feast. This was most carefully and reverently folded, and laid in the bosom, wrapped up often in another and more precious covering, or even placed in a gold locket. It was now that, for the first time, poor Syra regretted the loss of her rich embroidered scarf, which would long before have been given to the poor, had she not studiously reserved it for such an occasion and such a use. Nor had her mistress been able to prevail upon her to accept any objects of value, without a stipulation that she might dispose of them as she liked, that was, in charitable gifts.

[To be continued.]

WASHINGTON LETTER

The Weak Points in the Public School System.
(Special to The Journal.)

Aside from the Catholic standpoint of view, which condemns the public schools for their want of religious training, the public school system has, from a purely pedagogical point of view, some elements of weakness which will always prevent its development, in spite of the vast expenditures made in its behalf, from the public treasures of the states for which expenditures the American people deserve infinite credit.

The first element of weakness in the public school system is the school board. Leaving out of consideration the fact that in the appointment of members of school board, politics enter into it in a greater or lesser degree it is a fact that the members of the board are usually selected from the most intelligent and cultured citizens. It is not an unusual thing to find on the school boards prominent lawyers, doctors, merchants, etc. Now, as a rule, these men, with all their intelligence and practical business education, know nothing whatever about the subject with which they have to deal as members of the school board. Yet these men come together, select books, elect teachers and decide upon the most profound questions pedagogics with an assurance and a sang froid which would be ludicrous were it not that their decisions are fraught with such momentous consequences. To select a school book is about the last thing that these men should attempt, only a teacher of wide experience can decide whether the diction of a book is suitable to the age of the child, and whether the subject matter is treated in a manner conformable to his age.

If a doctor on that board had a difficult case of illness on his hands, he would never think of consulting the lawyer or merchant who may be his colleague on the school board, neither would the lawyer with a complicated law case before him, dream of seeking the advice of the doctor. Yet, these men coolly and presumptuously meddle with a subject with which they are totally unfamiliar, never thinking whether the results of this meddling may be injurious to the young minds of the children under their care. So much for the school boards.

The second element of weakness in the public school system is the teacher. Young men teach for a while in order to earn a little money which will enable them to study for something higher. Our young ladies who graduate from the Normal school take to teaching to earn a little money and to fill up the time between their young maidenhood and married life, for I take it that every American girl with a sound constitution, a level head and a loving heart, looks forward to the time when she will preside over a home of her own with a devoted husband and a due allowance of children. To hold out to our young American girls a life spent in the school room would have the same effect upon them as a cold shower bath. It may therefore well be asked if a system that is carried on with a body of employees who look upon their occupation as a temporary makeshift can ever be what it should be. Men in nearly all other walks of life embrace a profession or a trade which they expect to be their life work, and in which, if they have any ambition, they expect to rise. Not so with our teachers, "a few years in the school room and then let us get out" is their object when they begin.

These elements of weakness are well appreciated by some of our foremost educators, but the American Public, the voting citizen who can compel things, has not yet, arrived at the point where he will appreciate the radical changes necessary to effect this improvement.

E. L. Scharf, Ph. D.

Weekly Church Calendar.

Sunday November 6—Gospel, St. Matt. viii, 23-27—St. Leonard, hermit.
Monday 7—St. Willibrod, bishop and confessor.
Tuesday 8—St. Godfrey, bishop and confessor.
Wednesday 9—St. Theodorus, martyr.
Thursday 10—St. Andrew Avellino, confessor.
Friday 11—St. Martin, bishop and confessor.
Saturday 12—St. Martin I., pope and martyr.

Forty Hours Devotion.

The devotion of the "Forty Hours" will be held in the churches of the diocese of Rochester as follows:
November 18—Rushville; St. Mary's, Dansville; St. John's, Greece; Montezuma.

BUILDING RAPIDLY.

Work on Catholic Home for the Aged Progressing Satisfactorily.

The new Home for the Aged is rapidly assuming form. It is expected that the structure will be closed in next month and completed this winter. The new home is of imposing proportions. It is on the Charlotte boulevard a little to the south of St. Bernard's Seminary and on the opposite side of the road. The building itself has a frontage of 177 feet and is 118 feet in depth. It will be three stories in height, with a basement.

The floors throughout the building will be of concrete with a covering of Georgia pine. They will be supported by steel trusses. The walls are of quarried stone lined with brick. The trimmings are concrete block. The roof also will be of concrete and the whole structure is intended to be absolutely fireproof.

Fifty men are at work on the building laying the walls under the direction of Superintendent Louis Wera. There has been some little delay in the delivery of the steel and frames, but the work will now go on rapidly. The walls of this large structure are 1,100 feet in length. The building will have three wings with a connecting front. The areas between the wings will furnish an abundance of light and air to all of the rooms.

Denniston & Company, the contractors for the public market and the Faby and Cornwall buildings, have the contract for the masonry, steel and stone work. It is estimated that the cost of the building will be \$10,000, exclusive of the furnishings.

Wide verandas will be built on the entire front and sides of the building and will be a delightful resting place for the inmates of the home in the summer. The upper stories of the building will command a view of the lake.

Unless the weather is unusually severe Contractor Denniston expects to complete the building so far as the outside work is concerned by January 1st.

BISHOPS ARE SUMMONED.

Catholic Prelates of New York Province Meet on November 9th.

According to a despatch from New York the Catholic bishops of the New York province have been called to meet in New York on November 9th.

The despatch goes on to say that at that meeting the question of a coadjutor bishop of the diocese of Rochester will be taken up.

NATIONAL THEATRE.

A splendid scenic and singing spectacle entitled, "Me, Him and I" will be the attraction at the National Theatre all next week with usual matinees. Hurlig & Seamon are the proprietors of this organization, employing about fifty people, including the eccentric comedians Bickel, Watson and Wrothe, and the charming prima donna, Miss Marion Stanley. The equipment is new and magnificent, the costumes especially gorgeous and of French design, and the score, which of course is original, is replete with pretty songs and powerful ensemble numbers.

Election returns will be given from the stage Tuesday evening.

BAKER THEATRE.

A new scenic production of "The Charity Nurse," is booked for the Baker Theatre next Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. It is said to be a great heart story melodrama and a play teaching a lesson of life as it comes to us, through the medium of evil as well as good. The cast is said to be a particularly strong one.

"The Fatal Wedding" opens an engagement of five performances at the Baker Theatre next Thursday night. The play is a melodrama by Theodore Kramer, one of the most prolific writers of plays now before the public.

Election returns will be given from the stage Tuesday evening.

Thanksgiving Holiday Excursions.

On Tuesday, Nov. 22nd, the New York Central offers one of their popular excursions to Boston, Springfield, Palmer, Worcester and South Farmington. The rate will be \$10 for the round trip for tickets good returning within ten days. The Thanksgiving holiday is observed as a great feast day in New England and this excursion is planned to give patrons an opportunity at slight expense to spend the holiday with friends in the Old Bay State.

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KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN.

New Grand Commandery Formed.

The Knights of St. John organized a grand commandery in this city Sunday, that day having been designated as the time for the forming of the grand commanderies throughout the country by Supreme President Wilhelm. It was impossible to perfect all the details of the organization owing to the fact that copies of the new constitution have not yet been received in Rochester, and this will be done at a later meeting. The following officers were chosen: Grand President, Frank J. Schwalb; first grand vice-president, Martin Wahl; second grand vice-president, Frank X. Hauser; grand secretary, Michael Weismiller; grand treasurer, Frank Koch; grand sergeant-at-arms, Charles Claus.

The meeting was held in St. Joseph's Hall, and the ceremonies were performed by Retiring Supreme Trustee John P. Smith of this city, who afterwards gave a short address, together with some other knights. All of the Rochester branches were represented, including Knights of St. Mauritius, Knights of St. Eustace, Knights of St. George, Knights of St. Boniface, Knights of St. Theodore, Knights of St. Michael, Knights of St. Peter and Paul, Knights of St. Louis, and Cadet Commanderies 4, 6, 9, 13, and 19.

The Grand Commandery of Rochester will exercise jurisdiction over all the district, local and cadet commanderies of the Knights of St. John within the diocese, and over all the territory of any contiguous diocese that may unite with the commandery, as provided by the constitution of the supreme commandery.

Besides the officers elected Sunday the Grand Commandery will have a spiritual director and a representative to the supreme commandery. The representative will be selected by the grand president. The next convention of the supreme commandery will be held in Buffalo in 1906.

Sister's Assault Pleads Guilty.

Changing his plea from not guilty to one of guilty, John F. O'Brien, of 79 Spring street, who assaulted Sister Mary Aimey of Nazareth convent on State street last Thursday, asked for leniency in Police court Thursday on the ground that he was intoxicated at the time.

"O'Brien was not so intoxicated," remarked Prosecutor Bechtold, "that he could not make a good escape on a crowded street. He has no excuse for this brutal attack on those good and noble nuns who offend no one and sacrifice their lives for others' benefit. It was an outrageous attack if the woman was not a religious but the more so because she is. There was no excuse for it. No punishment is severe enough for a man that will attack one of these sisters of charity."

"If you put yourself in that position," said Judge Chadsey, "there is no excuse for you. You are entitled to no leniency. These nuns are inoffensive and noble and should be above such cowardly acts. They should be protected from repetitions of the act. This is not the first time you have attacked inoffensive persons when drunk; you have even struck dumb animals in your passion. Pay a fine of \$25."

COOK OPERA HOUSE.

Snyder and Buckley, the funny German comedy musicians will it is announced, head the vaudeville bill for next week at the Cook Opera House. R. J. Jose, the sweet voiced tenor, of minstrel fame, will be heard in new ballads. Harry Roche will show his trained horses and dogs. Pat Rooney's fifteen street urchins of New York will give an act said to consist of songs and dances characteristic of the gamins of Gotham. The rest of the bill will be made up of Alburus and Miller, Searl, and Bertha Allen in "The Sign Painter" and the Bros. Bright in hand lifting. The kinetograph will fill out the show. This bill will be given every afternoon and evening next week.

\$42.50 Buffalo to the Pacific Coast via the Nickel Plate Road. One way Colonist tickets on sale daily from September 15th to October 15th. For full information see your local ticket agent, or write R. E. Payne, general agent, 291 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y.

\$14.00 Buffalo to St. Louis and return via the Nickel Plate Road. Tickets on sale every day except Friday and Saturday, until November 24th. Good seven days. See local agents or write R. E. Payne, general agent, 291 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y.

SAN GABRIEL MISSION

IT WAS ESTABLISHED BY A FRANCISCAN PRIEST IN 1771.

The Trials of This Famous Old Church and Its Defenders and the Story of How It Got a New Set of Bells, One of Which Was Lost.

One hundred and thirty years ago San Gabriel mission was founded by Father Junipero Serra, a Franciscan priest. The march of progress has obliterated the picturesque of the old time inhabitants of El Mission de San Gabriel. The descendants have scattered or have lost their personality in intermarriage with "el gringo."

When Father Serra established the mission, Sept. 8, 1771, history tells us "he hung a bell upon a tree and began to ring it, crying: 'Give ear, oh ye Gentiles! Come to the faith of Jesus Christ.'" As there were no Indians in sight he continued to ring the bell until a native appeared, in evident astonishment. Soon hundreds were attracted to the spot.

These Indians readily embraced Christianity. They were taught to till the fertile soil, to plant orchards and vineyards and to cultivate vast tracts of land. Thus prosperity dawned upon them, and in appreciation of the good services of the Franciscans they contributed largely in the building of the San Gabriel church, a memorial of their faith in Christ, which is now one of the few relics of the past remaining near Los Angeles. The stranger that casually peeps within its portals, seldom stops to reflect how closely it is associated with romance and reminiscence.

Once the old church was the harbor of refuge from the hostile Apaches. It was when these raids were anticipated that the people either buried their treasure or confided it to the keeping of the priests. Many of the natives as well as Mexicans sacrificed their lives in defense of their homes and church until finally the news of these depredations spread through Mexico and even to Spain, awakening the sympathies and patriotic spirit of the youth of these countries. The young Spaniards and Mexicans residing in Mexico organized a regiment, which was equipped by the church.

This heroic band landed in San Diego and proceeded north, meeting with but few skirmishes and no casualties of any moment. Upon their arrival the young defenders of the faith were received with great rejoicing. Feasts were prepared for them and entertainments were given in their honor, but this rejoicing was of short duration. The Apaches had massed their tribes in the mountains and at midnight made an assault. They appeared sudden and sanguinary. The gallant commander of the "defenders" was killed and fully one-third of his regiment fell. But the remnant of this brave regiment succeeded in driving the Apaches beyond the Mojave territory, where they ceased to be a menace to the future prosperity of this part of the state.

Some of the "defenders" remained as residents of the valley, but the majority returned to Mexico, where they were received with all the honors due to heroes. The first news of their loss was brought with the return of the battalion, and the bells from the different monasteries and churches tolled solemnly the sad news to the multitudes. When it was known that the mission church had but one bell, which was too small to call all the valley worshippers to services, contributions were collected from far and near in order to present San Gabriel with bells that would surpass anything of the kind upon the western continent. Given from Spain contributions were freely given, and no expense in their making was to be considered. Distinguished bellmakers were imported to Mexico from Europe. Copper, bronze, silver and glass were mixed in the making of the metal. The day on which the bells were to be placed in the molds was declared a holiday.

The ceremonies of christening and dedication were observed with great pomp and magnificence under the auspices of the clergy, state and municipal officials. When the impressive ceremony was over and the benediction had been pronounced a young woman clad in pure white advanced to the improvised altar, where stood the bishop. Falling upon her knees, she modestly craved of him a blessing.

A murmur that the girl had been the promised bride of the dead leader of the defenders passed over the crowd. After receiving the blessing she bowed reverently to the bishop and walked toward the immense cauldron which held the melted bell metal. Taking from her neck a gold cross and chain, which she kissed, she cast them in to the cauldron. With a simultaneous movement all knelt in prayer, and then many stepped forward to drop a ring, a bracelet or a trinket into the mass of melted metal.

The bells, in the care of trusted artisans, reached their destination, but unfortunately the largest of the number was stolen, and it has been claimed, whether with authority or not, that it was taken to Spain—Los Angeles Herald.