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FABIOLA

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

(Published by Special Request.)

Part Second.
CHAPTER XXIV.
THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER
(Continued from last week.)

"Order Hyphax to come hither," roared the tyrant. In a few minutes a tall, half-naked Numidian made his appearance. A bow of immense length a gaily painted quiver full of arrows, and a short broad sword, were at once the ornaments and the weapons of the captain of the African archers. He stood erect before the emperor, like a handsome bronze statue, with bright enamelled eyes.

"Hyphax, I have a job for you to-morrow morning. It must be well done," said the emperor.

"Perfectly, sire," replied the dusky chief, with a grin which showed another set of canines in his face.

"You see the captain Sebastian?" The negro bowed assent. "He turns out to be a Christian!"

If Hyphax had been on his native soil, and had trodden suddenly on a hooped asp or a scorpion's nest, he could not have startled more. The thought of being so near a Christian—to him who worshipped every abomination, believed every absurdity practised every lewdness, committed any atrocity!

Maximian proceeded, and Hyphax kept time to every member of his sentences by a nod, and what he meant to be a smile—it was hardly an earthly one.

"You will take Sebastian to your quarters; and early to-morrow morning—not this evening, mind, for I know that by this time of day you are all drunk—but to-morrow morning, when your hands are steady, you will tie him to a tree in the grove of Adonia, and you will slowly shoot him to death. Slowly, mind; none of your fine shots straight through the heart or the brain, but plenty of arrows, till he die exhausted by pain and loss of blood. Do you understand me? Then take him off at once. And mind, silence; or else—"

CHAPTER XXV THE RESCUE

In spite of every attempt at concealment, the news was soon spread among all connected with the court, that Sebastian had been discovered to be a Christian, and was to be shot to death on the morrow. But on none did the double intelligence make such an impression as on Fabiola.

Sebastian a Christian! she said to herself; the noblest, purest, wisest of Rome's nobility a member of that vile, stupid sect? Impossible! Yet the fact seems certain.

Have I, then, been deceived? Was he not that which he seemed? Was he a mean impostor, who affected virtue, but was secretly a libertine? Impossible, too! Yes, this was indeed impossible! She had certain proofs of it. He knew that he might have had her hand and fortune for the asking; and he had acted most generously and most delicately towards her. He was what he seemed, and she was sure—not gilded, but gold.

Then how account for this phenomenon, of a Christian being all that was good, virtuous, amiable?

One solution never occurred to Fabiola's mind, that he was all this, because he was a Christian. She only saw the problem in another form; how could he be all that he was, in spite of being a Christian?

She turned it variously in her mind, in vain. Then it came to her thought thus. Perhaps, after all, good old Chromatius was right, and Christianity may not be what I have fancied and I ought to have inquired more about it. I am sure Sebastian never did the horrible things imputed to Christians. Yet everybody charges them with them.

"What a pity, she thought, that she had not talked more to Sebastian on such subjects? But it was now too late; to-morrow morning he would be no more. This second thought came with the sharp pang of a shaft shot into her heart. She felt as if she personally were about to suffer a loss, as if Sebastian's fate were going to fall on some one closely bound to her by some secret and mysterious tie.

Her thoughts grew darker and sadder, as she dwelt on these ideas, amidst the deepening gloom. She was suddenly disturbed by the entrance of a slave with a light. It was Afra; the black servant, who came to prepare

her mistress's evening repast, which she wished to take alone. While busy with her arrangements, she said, "Have you heard the news, madam?"

"What news?"

"Only that Sebastian is going to be shot with arrows to-morrow morning. What a pity; he was such a handsome youth!"

"Be silent, Afra; unless you have some information to give me on the subject."

"Oh, of course, my mistress; and my information is indeed very astonishing. Do you know that he turns out to be one of those wretched Christians?"

"Hold your peace, I pray you; and do not prate any more about what you do not understand."

"Certainly not, if you so wish it; I suppose his fate is quite a matter of indifference to you, madam. It certainly is to me. He won't be the first officer that my countrymen have shot. Many they have killed, and some they have saved. But of course that was all chance."

There was significance in her words and tones which did not escape the quick ear and mind of Fabiola. She looked up for the first time, and fixed her eyes searching on her maid's swarthy face. There was no emotion in it; she was placing a flagon of wine upon the table, just as if she had not spoken. At length the lady said to her—

"Afra, what do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing, nothing. What can a poor slave know? Still more what can she do?"

"Come, come, you meant by your words something that I must know."

The slave came round the table, close to the couch on which Fabiola rested, looked behind her, and around her, then whispered, "Do you want Sebastian's life preserved?"

Fabiola almost leapt up, as she replied, "Certainly."

The servant put her finger to her lip, to enforce silence, and said, "It will cost dear."

"Name your price."

"A hundred sestertia, and my liberty."

"I accept your terms; but what is my security for them?"

"They shall be binding only, if twenty-four hours after the execution he is still alive."

"Agreed; and what is yours?"

"Your word, lady."

"Go, Afra, lose not a moment."

"There is no hurry," quietly replied the slave, as she completed, unfurled the preparations for supper.

She then proceeded at once to the palace, and to the Mauritanian quarters, and went in directly to the commander.

"What dost thou want, Jubala," he said, "at this hour? There is no festival to-night."

"I know, Hyphax; but I have important business with thee."

"What is it about?"

"About thee, about myself, and about thy prisoner."

"Look at him there," said the barbarian, pointing across the court, which his door commanded. "You would not think that he is going to be shot to-morrow. See how soundly he sleeps. He could not do so better if he were going to be married instead."

"As thou and I, Hyphax, intend to be the next day."

"Come, not quite so fast; there are certain conditions to be fulfilled first."

"Well, what are they?"

"First, thy manumission. I cannot marry a slave."

"That is secured."

"Secondly, a dowry, a good dowry, mind; for I never wanted money more than now."

"That is safe too. How much dost thou expect?"

"Certainly not less than three hundred pounds."

"I bring thee six hundred."

"Excellent! where didst thou get all this cash? Whom hast thou robbed? whom hast thou poisoned, my admirable priestess? Why wait till after to-morrow? Let it be to-morrow, to-night, if it please thee."

"Be quiet now, Hyphax; the money is all lawful gain; but it has its conditions, too. I said I came to speak about the prisoner also."

"Well, what has he to do with our approaching nuptials?"

"A great deal."

"What now?"

"He must not die."

The captain looked at her with a mixture of fury and stupidity. He seemed on the point of laying violent hands on her; but she stood intrepid and unmoved before him, and seemed to command him by the strong fascination of her eye, as one of the serpents of their native land might do a vulture, to be continued.

CONSCIENCE

Or, The Trials of May Brooke.

AN AMERICAN CATHOLIC STORY

BY MRS. ANNA H. DORSEY.

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(Continued from last week.)

CHAPTER IV

"No, ma'am, for there is a load of good wood at your door, which is now being sawed for your benefit."

"Did you do that too, Miss May?"

"Never mind who did it," said May, who ran out and gathered up a few small pieces of wood, which she hurried in with, and soon kindled a bright blaze on the hearth; after which, she requested the sawyer to bring in two large logs to lay behind.

"Now, Aunt Mabel, are you comfortable?" she inquired, as she drew a low chair up by the old woman's side, and seated herself in it.

"Ah, honey, if you could only know how good the warm blood feels creeping up to my shabby old heart, you wouldn't ask me; and this beautiful shawl, Miss May! it 'mind me so of the bright swamp flowers in old Calina, and it takes me clean back but. I had good times then, honey; but I can't say nuffin. I feel it all here, and I hope your heavenly Father will make it out, and pay you back ten thousand times," said old Mabel, laying her shrivelled hand on her heart.

"Your Father and God too, Aunt Mabel," said May, leaning towards her, and lifting her sunshiny face close to hers.

"No, missis; I ain't good enough. He don't think of the likes of me."

"Oh, Aunt Mabel, you must not say that. You are his creature, and from him proceeded your life and soul; for you, as well as me, his divine Son died that we might inherit eternal life. He knows no distinction in the distribution of his divine charity; the humblest slave, and the most powerful king, are alike the objects of his tender solicitude. And if I, a poor frail child of earth, pity and love you in your low estate, how much more does He, the sweet and merciful Jesus, regard with tender compassion the soul for whose salvation He has shed His precious blood."

"Do your religion teach the same to everybody, honey; or is you only sayin' so of your own 'cordin' inquired old Mabel, wistfully.

"Our holy religion teaches it to all. Into her safe and ancient fold she invites all; and when we know that this fold is the kingdom established on earth by Jesus Christ himself, how we ought to fly, and never rest until we are gathered in. In this divine faith we are taught to 'love one another,' without regard to race, color, or nation and bring forth fruits unto righteousness; which, if we fail to do, we disobey,—we bring scandal on it, and the love of God is not in us," said May, earnestly.

"Fruits unto righteousness, which mean good works, I reckon, honey!" said the old creature, musingly. "Well, I dunno, but it do seem like 'tinkling cymbals,' and 'sounding brass' to go preachin' the gospel to poor sufferin' folks like me, and telling of 'em to be patient and resigned, and suffer the will of Heaven, and all that, if they don't give the naked clothes to cover 'em, and the hungry food to nourish 'em, and to the frozen fire to warm 'em. I tell you what Miss May, such religion aint no 'count it 'pears to me, and jest minds me of a apple-tree used to grow in ole mass'rs' garden; it would get its leaf and blossom, like the rest on 'em, but never a sign of apple did it bear; so one day ole missis tells him he better cut it down for firewood—and so it was, and spit up, and sent to my cabin; and I tell you what, honey, I was glad, 'cause somehow it seemed to 'cumber the air'."

"Yes, Aunt Mabel, if the true love of God is not in us, we are like fruit-trees cursed with barrenness—only fit to be cast into the fire," said May, sighing.

"Well, honey, I never was a professor, 'cause I never yet heard professors agreein'. The Baptists hated the Methodists; the Methodists hated the Presbyterians; the Protestants looked down, like, on all of 'em, and they all hated each other. I never could understand it, so I thought I'd go to heaven my own way."

"Well, Aunt Mabel, leaving these to their discords," said May, smiling at her rude but truthful description, "did the thought never enter your mind that Jesus Christ might have established a faith and rule on earth to guide souls, which would be upheld and governed by His holy Spirit until the end of time?"

"I often thought he ought to, honey; but I'm a poor ignorant creatur—what do I know?" was the naive reply.

"He did, Aunt Mabel; and from the time he established it until now, during eighteen hundred years it has never changed; it will never change until it exchanges for eternity its reign upon earth. All other religions were founded by men,—wicked, blood-thirsty, ambitious men, who wanted a broad license to sin, and who reserved only such fragments of our divine faith, as would give plausibility to their new doctrines without fettering them with responsibilities to spiritual tribunals. That is why all these discords, exist among professors. In leaving the one faith which acknowledges one Lord and one baptism, they have hewn out for themselves 'broken cisterns which hold no water.' But do you understand me?"

"Yes, honey, that I do. But I'm too old and ignorant to hear learning and argumentation. I want the faith of Jesus Christ; and it 'pears to me that I never heard the true story until now. What ever it is, your religion suits me, if you will just show me the way. I'm gwine down, honey, to the valley of death, and the way'll be mighty dark without the help of the Lord."

"He will be your guide and staff, Aunt Mabel, when the dark hours comes," said May, dashing a tear from her cheek. "But I must go away now, and I want you to think a great deal about Almighty God, until I come again; then tell me if you think His word and promise are worthy of belief. Turn it over in your mind; view it in every way, and let me hear the result. I see your grandchild coming with a bundle of faggots; here is a little change to buy something—tea, or whatever you want."

"Good by, missis. Lord bless you and reward you." But May was out of the cot, going at full speed towards home which was not very far distant.

Mr. Stillingham had purchased the house some thirty years before when it stood three quarters of a mile from the city. It was then a villa, and had been built by a French refugee, who, in those days of courtly customs, was famed for his elegant hospitality. One of the old noblesse, and but little acquainted with the practical management of business affairs, he became embarrassed, and was finally compelled to dispose of his elegant house and furniture, and retire to a life of obscurity and poverty. But the city was growing around it rapidly; in a few more years it would be hemmed in and walled around by streets and houses. Mr. Stillingham fretted and chafed; then calculated its increased value and grew almost savage at the idea that he would be dead and forgotten when heaps of gold would be paid down for the few feet of earth it covered.

When May went in, glowing with exercise and happiness, she found Helen moping over the grate in which the fire was nearly extinguished.

"[To be continued.]

WASHINGTON LETTER

(Special to The Journal)

Playing A Desperate Game.

Ever since President Roosevelt directed that the Indian Tribal funds could be used for the education of the Indian children in the mission schools of the different denominations, a storm—this time only a storm in a tea-pot—has been gathering all over the country which entered at the capitol of the United States after the assembling of Congress. Mr. Stephens of Texas led the fight in the House. He began operations by introducing a resolution asking the Secretary of the Interior for information regarding the use of the Tribal funds. When he learned that the attorney-general had decided that these tribal funds could be legally used for the mission schools he introduced an amendment to the Indian bill making such use illegal. This amendment was ruled out of order on a motion by Mr. Sherman of New York. Mr. Stephens, not willing to take his defeat gracefully, moved over to the Senate wing of the capitol and began work with renewed vigor. There he found a congenial spirit in Senator Bard from California. The senator had the advantage of being a member of the Indian Affairs committee, and with the assistance of Mr. Brosius of Philadelphia, the secretary of the Indian Rights Association, began the task of convincing the senate committee that the president had done an awful thing in directing the use of the Indian's own money for "sectarian" purposes. The same amendment was introduced in the senate bill, but the big men of both parties saw through the littleness of the scheme, and ignominious failure stared the trio in the face. Mr. Brosius had been told by Senator Bard of an interview I had had with the latter about three years ago. In that interview I explained to the senator the needs of our mission schools, and discussed with him the possible political effect of legislation in their behalf.

How about the present case? Finding that the sentiment of the house and senate was favorable to the president's position, a grand stand play was necessary. Brosius stated before the committee that an "agent" of the Church of Rome had threatened Senator Bard with defeat if he did not comply with his wishes, and had shown the senator where the Catholic strength was to do it.

The statement given out to the press by Father Ketchum, the director of the Catholic Indian Bureau, that I had not acted as the agent of that Bureau, is perfectly correct. At the same time I desire to add that I received the special acknowledgment of the bureau for valuable services rendered, in its report to the three archbishops who are its incorporators, and that the thanks of the bureau are extended to me for the same valuable services in the last issue of the Indian Sentinel.

I regret to say, in conclusion, that this has been a session of great anti-Catholic activity before congress. After the close of the session I shall take occasion to write more fully regarding these matters. They were carried on quietly, but appeared occasionally on the surface in little bills and amendments.

E. L. Schaff, Ph.D.

Knights of Columbus.

The Public Comfort Committee of the Knights of Columbus, of Washington, D.C., have made arrangements to provide rooms, etc., for Brother Knights and their friends who will visit the Capital City on the occasion of the Inauguration of President Roosevelt on March 4th, and extend a cordial invitation to all the visiting brothers to make Knights of Columbus Hall their headquarters while in the city. Any Brother Knight who has not secured accommodations can have the same attended to by writing to the Secretary, Geo. H. Ogilvie, K. of C. Hall, 606 E Street Northwest, or by reporting to the Hall upon their arrival in the city.

L. C. B. A. Banquet.

The Advisory Senate of the L. C. B. A. held its annual banquet at Teall's Monday. The following are the officers of Advisory Senate: Chancellor, Mrs. D. K. Pierce; president, Mrs. Hugh O'Hara; 1st vice president, Mrs. Mary Huether; 2nd vice pres., Miss Margaret Managan; reader, Mrs. K. J. Dowling; rec., Mrs. Elizabeth Murphy; fin. sec., Mrs. Elizabeth Burke; treat., Miss Mary Sullivan; marshal, Mrs. Mendenham; executive board, Mrs. Dr. J. T. McGovern, Mrs. Anna Kennedy, Mrs. Katharine Bauman, Miss Leola Myers, and Mrs. L. B. Savant.

SPLENDID CHURCHES

WHY CATHOLICS ARE SO ANXIOUS TO BUILD THEM.

They have the "Catholic Power" that demands a "Catholic Home" in the Temple dedicated to the Worship of Almighty God.

The edifice which is constructed to be a congregation of the faithful, a house of God and the gate of heaven, the chosen place for the divine sacrifice, the permanent abode of Christ, really present under the sacramental species in the sacred tabernacle, the audience hall in which is erected the mystery-theatre of the Eucharist, should, of course, be the finest structure in any locality and furnished with the richest ornaments that the living worshippers can procure. The temple of Solomon was such by the direct order of God Himself, and Catholics have always understood and understood today all over the earth that such place should be, to the best of our power, one of the places of sacred worship. A poetic description written by Tertullian about A. D. 200 for a church built by St. Paul in Naples, France, bears witness to this conviction in the early ages, and the masterpieces of architecture since erected all over the Christian lands testify to it in every subsequent century. Rev. T. B. Bridgett, C. S. B., has rendered the verses as follows: "The sacred Body of the Lamb Divine—A priceless pearl—demands a golden shrine in wealth and art with Solomon's to vie. More rich, more high, to faith's descending eye."

The more fully a people realize the holiness of a church the greater, naturally, will be their eagerness to lend beauty and dignity to the edifice and to all its furniture and ornaments. This truth is evidenced by the facts of history, for it was in the ages of faith that the grandest churches were constructed, and they were provided with vessels and ornaments of gold and silver set with pearls and precious stones to an extent which far surpassed the richest display of kings and imperial magnificence. Since the so-called reformation the same spirit of faith and love for the Blessed Sacrament has made Catholics do wonders of generosity in behalf of their churches, while in Protestant lands the houses of worship have been shamefully neglected. It is only since the Oxford movement revived in England an appreciation of the Blessed Eucharist that a new spirit of respect for churches has been aroused, first among Anglicans and gradually to some extent among others of the sects. Pray for them that they may get back the "Priceless Pearl," and the little setting will not long be delayed. Father Coppens, S. J., in New York.

Rome's Catholic Paper.

The Voce della Verita of Rome, its oldest Catholic newspaper, has just ceased publication, and its staff has gone over to the Osservatore Romano, now the only Catholic paper which the capital contains and which is little read. On the other hand, there are swarms of secular papers, the Giornale d'Italia, Tribuna, Messaggero, Patria, Italia, Avanti and others, all wrangling and fighting with each other constantly, but at one in their hostility to the Pope and the Church. The Catholic party in Rome is more numerous than all other parties combined, and it therefore seems surprising that it should not be able to sustain a live and able newspaper. A sufficient reason, however, for its failure to do so, is that the Church papers have never contained any news. But a new trial is to be made in a short time, based on the theory that piety, orthodoxy and news can go together without exploding. Up to this time the ecclesiastics have admitted that they could not—New York Tribune.

Vatican and Cardinal.

According to advices from Rome, arrangements have been made for the two sisters of the Pope and his niece, Miss Gilda Parolina, to be received in private audience by the dowager Queen Margherita. This is another step toward complete reconciliation between the Vatican and the royal family. Cardinal Gasparri, the vicar-general, acted at the special request of the Pope in the matter. There is strong probability now that the relatives of the Pope will also be received by the king and queen, thus securing in some way the recent rift paid to the Pope by the Duke and Duchess of Genoa, the brother and sister-in-law of the dowager queen.

Schismatics.

Where schismatics exist in any form we cannot but observe evil results. The individual is taught by his conscience and Master that the only good that can be derived from the himself and his contemporaries is by self-sacrifice. The cheerfulness and optimism of life is enjoyed when we are well-faithfully interested in some person or cause, but when we feel the deep pain of the Holy Spirit animating us.

The only way to attain even a small measure of peace and happiness in this world is to be united with the universal Church. This is the only way to the peace of mind and the happiness of the soul.