

with interest.' He said a great many other things and Dubawnt said some things, too, and when they sat down to breakfast he had in his pocket a cheque for the full amount due him with interest to date.

After breakfast Bartlett and Annette found themselves sitting on the bench before the big blazing fire. Somehow or other she found her dainty little hand resting confidently in his and she heard him say:

'Now, Miss Lang'—he seemed to emphasise the 'Miss'—'for some days you've been calling me "William." Don't you think it time that I should be permitted to call you "Annette"?' She didn't just know how she wanted to answer, but she smiled, blushed, and said:

'Yes.'

Well, the wedding took place in the 'little church a few doors below on the other side of the street,' and after the ceremony they went to France, for both she and Bartlett knew of so many nice places there that they were sure it was just the place for them to spend their honeymoon.

'Billie,' said Annette, after they had been sitting on the deck of the French liner for more than a half hour, looking out over the moonlit ocean, 'some evening next week, when we are walking beneath that romantic grape-arbor you were speaking of, won't you tell me all about that girl that came into the tea-room with you?'

For a moment he was puzzled, then suddenly recollecting: 'Why, yes,' he said, 'haven't I told you already? That is my sister, the sister of whom you reminded me, and she has taken the veil in the convent attached to that little church across the way.'

She pressed his hand, and together they continued looking out over the smooth surface of the ocean.—*Messenger of the Sacred Heart.*

THE STORY OF THE CATACOMBS

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CITY

In connection with the Constantinian Centenary the Right Rev. Dr. Gunn, Bishop of Natchez, delivered a very interesting lecture, entitled 'Through the Catacombs to Constantine and Ourselves,' in the course of which he dealt with the origin and history of the Catacombs. After dealing with the struggles and sufferings of the early Christians, and the many persecutions to which they were subjected, Bishop Gunn went on to say:—It may help to impress the picture of Christian life more firmly in our minds if I tell you something of that great Christian city, which commenced to exist when Nero was building his golden palace, and rebuilding the Rome he himself had burned. The new Christian city lay outside Rome. It had streets, palaces, churches, and houses full of inhabitants; the streets were narrow, the palaces and temples were graves, its inhabitants were the dead. It had one thing peculiarly and exclusively its own: it lay entirely underground. Not a vestige of it could be seen from above. I refer to the first Christian city, to

The Roman Catacombs.

I would like to take you with me on a trip to visit one of these underground cities, and I will tell you the history of the Catacombs as we go along. We can visit only one. It may surprise you to know that there are forty of these grave cities around Rome. Don't ask me to show you everything, or to bring you everywhere. The galleries alone are longer than from Natchez to New York. If we walk out to see the Catacomb of Saint Calixtus, we pass the famous Roman Forum; we see the ruins of the Temple of the Vestal Virgins; we see the Arch of Titus, so religiously shunned by the Jews. We see the famous Coliseum, capable of holding 200,000 people. We pass under the Arch of Constantine, skirt along the Celian hill, where Pope Gregory saw the first English slaves that made him send an Augustine to convert England. We hurry out of the city, we see the spot where Peter and Paul parted on their way to martyrdom, pass the little Church Quo

Vadis; then get a view of the famous Appian Way. If we are reminiscent, we can almost see the Roman legionaries carrying back to Rome the spoils of conquered worlds. We can see captive kings and princes in chains, beside the triumphal chariots of their conquerors. We may read pagan inscriptions by the way full of grief for the dead, but without a word of hope, or a dream of reunion. Here St. Paul passed as he came to Rome; here passed victorious generals, with their legions returning from foreign service. Emperors and courtiers; representatives of every form of heathenism; Greeks and Asiatics, captive Celts and Britons entered the Eternal City. Here Julius and his legions came after the conquest of Gaul and England. Here came the victorious soldiers of Titus and Vespasian, who had razed Jerusalem and its Temple to the dust. But you will interrupt me and say: 'There are no homes along this noble avenue—there are only tombs.' That is true, the Romans buried their dead, not in a cemetery as we do, but along the roads radiating from the city. The rich had a monopoly of the Appian Way, and for thirty miles from the city, we see nothing but tombs, tombs, tombs.

The First Catacombs

were on the estates of wealthy Christian families. These took a deed to the property as a cemetery, enclosed it by marked stones, warranted and willed it to a Christian, and so put it fully under the protection of Roman law. It was by law exempt from police inspection. By law it afforded rights of sanctuary to all. At the end of the century a law was passed which permitted the poorer classes to secure for themselves burial places by forming associations for that purpose. These burial clubs, whether pagan or Christian, had, or pretended to have, a certain religious character. Their members might hold meetings and possess property, provided the ostensible motive of the association was to provide burial for their members. They could meet in the cemeteries, gather there for feast days, etc., and the law did not interfere with them. The Roman law itself was the screen behind which the Catacombs were made possible. The right of forming burial clubs, the habit of visiting the tombs, of eating and drinking and feasting there in solemn memory of the departed; all these facts and customs and principles, guaranteed by Roman law and practice as the privilege of every citizen, were of admirable convenience to the makers and frequenters of the Roman Catacombs. If a number of Christians were seen wending their way to this or to that cemetery, they would be to pagan eyes only the members of a burial club, or the relations, friends, or dependents of some great family, going out to the appointed place to celebrate the birthday or anniversary of some deceased benefactor. The Christians did not burn their dead as the pagans did, but they could not be molested, since custom only, not law, prescribed its use. The pagans might, and did, grumble, but the tact and prudence of the Christians, the external features used by both Christians and pagans alike, made a screen of such resemblance that

The Origin of the Catacombs

may be easily and readily explained. But let us now light a taper and take a look at the Catacombs from within. Perhaps our guide (because we can never go alone if we want to come back) may take us down a modern stairway, or through some accidental man-hole in the soil, and at a depth of fifteen or twenty feet we shall find ourselves in a dark, narrow gallery about three feet wide and seven or eight feet high, cut out of the living rock. Its walls are pierced with a number of horizontal shelves, one above the other, like the shelves in a book-case. Our guide will tell us that each shelf once contained a dead body, and had been shut up by long tiles and slabs of marble inscribed with the name of the family, or some Christian emblem. We may even see to-day the bones and ashes of the dead. We may see the palm branch carved on the marble slab, or the vial showing where the bloodstained sponge was put. Our gallery may lead us to a family vault, or to a chapel where two or three little chambers are made to open into one. The guides to the Catacombs know the history of nearly all the martyrs and con-

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