

objects, in my judgment with good reason, to this *interpretation. He calls in question the genuineness or analogy of the other inscriptions usually compared with this as confirming the sense assigned to it, and points out the improbability that the stone marked a *loculus* in the Catacombs, as the greatest number of bodies contained in such is 4. He suggests that the inscription may be imperfect, and that thus N may be regarded as the last letter of ANN. *i.e. annorum, scil. annorum XXX*, the person, whose name preceded, being of thirty years of age. It is remarkable that in this De Rossi was anticipated by Maitland, who (p. 58) "reads the words as the fragment of *qui vixit ann. XXX Syrra et Senec. coss*, who lived thirty years. In the Consulate of Syrra and Senecio; that is, A.D. 102." I cannot concur in this explanation. It suits this particular case, but is wholly inapplicable in others *e. gr.* in Fabretti, p. 574, 61, we have the epitaph of *Leopardus*, a boy whose age is stated to have been 7 years and 7 months. At the commencement of it are the letters—DMASACRVM XI, *i.e. Dis Manibus Sacrum*. 40. Again, in the Catacomb of St. Agnes, De Rossi found LIX on the *loculus* of an infant. Nor can Amati's positive assertion that they indicate *loculorum ordines* be received, for this is contrary to the experience of those who have personally examined the Catacombs. To me it seems evident that there is no sufficient reason for believing either that these numerals indicate the number of bodies buried within, or that the deceased were Martyrs. I can offer no satisfactory solution: it has seemed to me, however, not improbable that the numbers were the marks of workmen—the *fossores* or their assistants—who may have been paid according to the number of *loculi* excavated or of slabs put up. I have observed a similar notation in a Pagan epitaph, given by Orelli, n. 5008:—*N. III. Id. Nov. Diis Manibus Didix Q. F. Quintinæ Luetina Priscus uxori optimæ V. A. XXVII*. Labus remarks:—"Numero tertio, Idibus Novembribus: cioè la pietra, il cippo, il monumento ecc. era posto nel terren sacro al No. 3."

* This view might seem to be as old as the time of Prudentius (*scil.* the 4th century), for he writes:—

*Sunt et multa tamen tacitas claudentia turbas,
Marmora quæ solum significant numerum.*

But the reference here seems to be to *Polyandria*—pits containing many dead bodies—not to *loculi*, of which, so far as I am aware, there is no example of their containing more than four.