



Jesus said to his disciples. Whom do you say that I am!

Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my father who is in heaven AND I SAY TO THEE THAT THOU ART PETER; AND UPON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT.

AND I SHALL GIVE TO THEE THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven. S. Matthew xvi. 15-19.

Was anything concealed from PETER, who was styled the Rock on which the Church was built, who received the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the power of loosing and binding in Heaven and on earth?

—TERTULLIAN Proscrip. xxii.
"There is one God, and one Church, and one Chair founded by the voice of the Lord upon PETER. That any other Altar be erected, or a new Priesthood established, besides that one Altar, and one Priesthood, is impossible. Whosoever gathers elsewhere, scatters. Whatever is devised by human frenzy, in violation of the Divine Ordinance, is adulterous, impious, sacrilegious."—St. Cyprian Ep. 43 ad plobem.

"All of them remaining silent, for the doctrine was beyond the reach of man, PETER the Prince of the Apostles and the supreme herald of the Church, not following his own inventions, nor persuaded by human reasoning, but enlightened by the Father, says to him: Thou art Christ, and not this alone, but the Son of the living God.—St. Cyril of Jerusalem. Cat. xi. 1.

Calendar.

- SEPTEMBER 17—Sunday—XIII after Pent II Sep Holy Name of Mary.
- 11—Monday—St Nicholas of Tolentine C Doub
- 12—Tuesday—St Catherine of Siena Virgin Doub.
- 13—Wednesday—St Paschal P C
- 14—Thursday—Exaltation of the Holy Cross of our Lord G Doub.
- 15—Friday—Octave Day of the Nativity Doub com &c.
- 16—Saturday—St Cornelius P and Cyprian B M Doub com &c.

Correspondence

VISIT TO THE TOMB OF PONTIUS PILATE.

[To the Editors of the Cross]

Gentlemen,—

In reading in your paper of the 24th of last June, an account of the Consecration of the Catholic Cathedral at Agra, Hindostan, East Indies, I perceived among the names of the Rev Fathers assisting on that occasion, one which has brought to my recollection pleasing reminiscence of days and events gone by. When about to leave France in the year 1841, I one day expressed to our superior my desire of going to Vienne, to see the tomb of Pontius Pilate before I should return to America. He being a good and fatherly man, and scarcely ever refusing to grant me, whom he always called "Mon bon American," my request, consented, but remarked that on the 21st of the following month the Consecration of the Bishop of Gap would take place in Vienne—that I had best postpone my going till then, when I could be present at the Consecration of the Bishop and visit the tomb of Pontius Pilate on the same day, and that he would permit five or six other young men of our society to go with me to bear me company, among whom he would appoint one to be my associate in particular, whom he said I would find to be both an intelligent and agreeable guide and companion on the road. I felt much delighted, as well as very thankful to our superior for his kind condescension, but waited with anxiety for the day that should bring us to Vienne. At length, however, the day arrived, and we were all in readiness. It was on Monday morning, the 21st of September, 1841; we got up, dressed, and took the road to Vienne, distant about seven leagues and a half. We soon got to the heights of Millanga, a neighbouring village, and it being the vendange (vintage), we met, as we went along, groups of men and women on either side of the road, some smoking their pipes, some singing their songs champetre, whilst others made every hill and valley resound with their loud laughter and merriment, waiting for the carts to come to take away their paniers well filled with grapes, and to leave them empty ones. Whoever has been in the grape-growing parts of France, knows that the vendange is a season of feasting and rejoicing, of universal happiness and merriment. Many persons afflicted with divers diseases descend from the mountains at this time, offer their services gratuitously for the grape gathering, without any other recompense but the opportunity of filling themselves with the fresh grapes, and of partaking of the hilarity and rejoicings of the vintage, they return home healed of whatever disease that had afflicted them. Many of those remarkable cures had been related to myself who was then labouring under the pressure of a severe asthma. It was a beautiful

night, under a serene, clear, mature autumnal sky, not a cloud was to be seen, the blue vault of heaven brilliantly adorned with stars, the moon half gone and in the western hemisphere, forming an angle of about 45 degrees with the horizon, a gentle and exhilarating zephyr softly nestled along the half-dried foliage of the hedges and the vineyards as if to whisper to nature that day was approaching. About this time we had finished our prayers, which, on this occasion, we undertook to recite in charmen, and having said the *Chaplet* and *De Profundis*, the subject of meditation for the day, having been proposed, each commenced his own reflections. For my own part I found subject sufficient for my meditation in the object of our journey. Whither, said I, am I going? To visit the tomb of Pontius Pilate, a worm of the earth like myself, and yet who had in his power to crucify or release the Lord of heaven and earth. Alas! how comes it to pass, that the Lord of glory, the Eternal Word who calls heaven and earth in the twinkling of an eye out of nothing, is in the hands of a weak and vile worm of the earth, with power to judge, condemn and crucify him. Who can comprehend or reconcile these extremes? Will those who stumble at the Real Presence in the Blessed Eucharist do it? After this who will be offended or discouraged on seeing the Church of Christ beset, persecuted, and sometimes, to human appearance, almost destroyed and overthrown by its sectarian enemies and the great ones of this world, while we behold Christ its founder and first principle, whom the Fathers call the Brightness of Eternal Light, and the Scriptures the Only Begotten Son of God, and the fairest among thousands, and to whom the sublime Isaiah appropriates so many titles of power, and might, and glory, now apparently weak and helpless, without succour or resource, and abandoned in the hands of Pontius Pilate—a Heathen without the light of true faith to direct him, and enable him to pass a merciful and righteous judgement. Who could believe it, did not the Church and book of God declare it? We now began to descend to the deep valley of the Garonne, and in about half an hour's walk saw ourselves at the head of the stream. We followed its course till we came to the crossing place, and some of our party proposed to shorten our road considerably by crossing the stream there, it was on a thick tree flattened a little on the top, but since what is called in France, *garde de fou*, had fallen away, I could not be prevailed on to venture across, therefore we continued our way along the stream, under the thick shade of clumps of large oaks and elms, it now being as dark as midnight, the moon having sunk beneath the highlands of Monterey, till we came to the skirts of an extensive orchard. From thence we came on the track of the railroad leading from Lyons to St Etienne, thence to Genose, a town on the bank of the Rhone, about eight miles from whence we had started. Here the day began to dawn, and I perceived the blue smoke beginning to curl up from two or three of the chimneys, and met one or two early risers in the streets. The rest of our road to Vienne led along the course of the Rhone amidst the most romantic, interesting, and picturesque scenery, affording abundant matter for description, but I shall hasten to Vienne to see the object of my anxiety and journey. A circumstance should be remarked here, which had then and has often since astonished myself, to-wit, that though I had then been for many years afflicted with a distressing asthma, unable to get out of my bed before six o'clock any morning, and forced to keep my bed two or three days out of every fortnight, and not

unfrequently, every week; but on this occasion, notwithstanding I got up early and had been so little accustomed to travel on foot, I felt not the least inconvenience from my asthma—always kept ahead of our company—and even had frequently to wait for them on the road. We at length reached St. Collamb, a small town on the bank of the Rhone right opposite Vienne, whence we crossed the Rhone on an iron bridge, which ushered us into Vienne, the long wished for city. It was now about 9 o'clock in the morning, and having travelled seven leagues and a half, we felt that we would not be the worse of some refreshment, so we selected a neat little café not far from the Cathedral, which stood on a little eminence above, and took breakfast. About half past ten o'clock we mounted to the Cathedral, which was now beginning to be densely crowded with spectators from the adjacent towns and country places, with a multitude of the Clergy from the neighboring Cantons and Parishes, with several regiments or detachments of the army, together with a good sample of Suisse, arranged in different directions throughout the congregated multitude. Many persons in this country will scarcely understand what Suisse means, since I have seen none in any Church in America except in that of New Orleans. It became now quite a task to gain anything like a comfortable or advantageous position in the building, and indeed to enter it at all, when, happily, a Priest whom I had seen before at our house, recognised some of our party, and took great pleasure in exerting his kind endeavours in our behalf, to open the way for us through the crowd, and to lead us up to the temporary gallery erected for the occasion around the Church, and on which he placed us in a favorable position to witness all the ceremony of the Consecration. We overlooked the sanctuary, which, though as spacious as an ordinary country chapel, was on this occasion filled to overflowing with the most ancient and dignified of the Clergy, with municipal officers, and with veteran and distinguished military officers in full uniform. As for the ceremony itself I will not attempt to describe it. Suffice it to say, that there were present three or four of the French Prelates, among whom I noticed Archbishop DeBonald, now Cardinal Dr Bonald, at whose installation in the Cathedral of St John in Lyons, I had been present a few weeks before. The ceremony was attentively contemplated to throughout, in such peals from the military bands as seemed to jar every part and particle of the noble and venerable edifice. We now proposed to leave the Cathedral, and go in search of the tomb of Pontius Pilate. But I cannot bid adieu to this magnificent temple without a few observations. I shall take no notice of its vast dimensions, of its great Altar and spacious sanctuary, of its fluted columns, of its galleries, on the second of which a full grown man dwindles to a pygmy in the view of a person below. I shall only say that the ancient Cathedral of St Maurice is a standing, noble, and commanding monument of the piety of ages gone by, and that it loudly proclaims to the world in more than human eloquence, the zeal and perseverance of our predecessors in the faith for the honor and glory of God and of His House. I have not been able to see in all France such an instance of the zeal, patience, and perseverance of man to do something worthy of his Creator, as his noble edifice presents. There is not a stone, as well as I can recollect, from the ground to the top of the roof, in the end facing the street—which is also the great door—on which there is not sculptured some scriptural device representing man and things, lions, leopards,

eagles, and pelicans of the wilderness.—Suffice it, that even in France where there are other contemporary buildings of the kind, never is mentioned made on any occasion, of this Cathedral, without the qualificative venerable. It has suffered much from the Infidels in the great revolution; yet it nobly proclaims its Catholic ancestry. We now directed our course to the Pillar said to have been erected over the tomb of Pontius Pilate, and which stands solitary and alone in the midst of a commons, said to be the site of the ancient city of the Romans, distanced about three quarters of a mile below the present city, on the left bank of the Rhone. The base of the Pillar rests on four huge columns, about twelve or fifteen feet from the ground. When we approached it I perceived a couple of ragged Carlists hanking beneath it; I spoke to them, but they sneaked away without making an answer. I then commenced to examine, with the greatest care, every part of and about the base of the Pillar, in the hope of discovering some inscription, indicating that the remains of Pontius Pilate laid there. I next made several excursions in the vicinity of it with the same intention, but had not been able to discover a tombstone, or monument, or inscription, or the least fragment, indicating that, or even that a city had ever stood there at all, and having been, in some respects, disappointed, I returned to the Pillar, and fell into the following train of reflections. Alas! Pontius Pilate, if you lie under this pile you are low enough, and sufficient weight lies on you. Oh! what happy days you have seen in Jerusalem. In your day the Messiah appeared in the Royal City—in your day water was turned into wine in or about Jerusalem—in your day the blind saw, the dumb spoke, the lame walked, the dead even resuscitated, the lepers cleansed throughout Jerusalem, and yet you remained a Pontius Pilate, while even he that laid at the pool with five pouches was healed. In your day the Potter's Field was purchased with the price of Jesus—in your day the enemy was slain, and the veil of the temple rent from top to bottom, opening the way for the human nature to God, and for God into the world. And as it is written: Amen, amen, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, it remaineth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.—So, in your day this grain of heavenly wheat was bruised and buffeted, and died, and bequeathed himself to his chosen twelve, and was put in the ground; and in three days revived and rose again from the dead; and in fifty days produced abundant fruit. But blessed be God and the Father of all Paternity, who gives us both the one and the other, the wheat to sow our fields, and the heavenly wheat for the seed and increase of our souls. And while the multitude of the disciples with joy, praised God with a loud voice, for the mighty works they had seen Jesus perform, and saluted Jesus with the title of King, saying: Blessed be the King who cometh in the name of Lord, peace in heaven and glory on high, you commuted yourself by listening to all that was rumoured by others, O Jesus, throughout Jerusalem, and either discredited all or gave yourself not the least concern to know any of these things of yourself. Alas! Pontius Pilate, what a noble criminal you have had in your judgment hall but how little ingenious you have been in your generation. Not content to scourge and crucify Jesus, you must also set up his accusation above his head, in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, that all who passed by, whether Jew, Greek, or Barbarian, whether learned or unlearned, might perceive the accusation of Jesus. How completely you prefigure in your