

so know that the Jewish people did not make use of coffins for their dead. The Redeemer himself was laid in the sepulchre without a coffin, and the widow's son of Naim sat up from his bier on being called upon by the *Son* of God to arise, showing that he was not enclosed in a coffin. After being embalmed, the dead bodies were laid in caves, hollowed out from the rocks, which were easily found suited to the purpose in that mountainous country. They were laid in these caves, wrapped up in sheets, but, as I have already said, without coffins: Lazarus, and the young man of Naim, were wrapped in sheets, and the Redeemer himself was also enclosed in a similar manner, on being placed in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, which had been dug in a garden near Mount Calvary. And when Joseph of Arimathea wished to embalm the body of our Lord, the Gospel says, that he bought of myrrh and aloes about a hundred pounds weight; and this circumstance is used as an argument against those infidels who deny that part of the Gospel; for such a quantity of perfumes placed over his body, wrapped in linen for so long a time, would have been of itself sufficient to cause death, if he had been even alive when placed in the tomb.

“To come down to the early ages of Christianity, we find new forms of burial introduced. During the time of persecution, when the sacred mysteries of religion were obliged to be celebrated in the vast cavities under or near Rome, from which the clay and other materials for building the city were procured, and where the ceremonies were carried on at night, and even during the day by the light of lamps—hence the custom of using candles during mass in our churches, at the present day—during this period the early Christians depart-

ed from the custom of the ancient Romans, and were in the habit of placing the remains of their deceased brethren in those catacombs, near where their religious sacrifices were offered up. Sepulchres were hollowed out of the sides of the catacombs, and these were afterwards closed and cemented again, so that there was a separate tomb for almost every individual. During the first three centuries of the church, persecution continued rife, and this custom prevailed, and when Christian churches began to be built, the bodies even of clergymen were not interred in the interior of these new temples. When, however, peace was restored to the Christian world, by the emperor Constantine, and when churches were openly erected and founded, a different custom began to be introduced. That monarch expressed a wish to be buried in the porch of a church. The same course was adopted on the death of the emperor Theodosius, and from that period, bishops, abbots, and clergy, began to be buried in churches; until, about the 9th and 11th century, the custom of burying in or near churches became general, and the ancient practice fell altogether into disuse. In the Greek church, there was established from the 4th century an inferior order of clergymen, who were named, *Kopitatoi*, in Latin called *Fossores*, or *Diggers*; and their duty was, to see that every ceremonial required in the Christian service should be rightly performed over the dead, and that all such persons deceased should be buried in a proper and becoming manner, and under them the barbarous custom of the ancient Romans, to lavish such immense sums on the funerals of the more wealthy of their citizens, whilst they neglected the poor, was entirely abolish-