

FATHER JOGUES AT THE LAKE OF THE HOLY SACRAMENT

BY WILLIAM HICKLING.

Laudato sit, mi Signare, per sor aqua
La quale e multo utile et humile et pretio
casta.

We take pleasure in copying the American Messenger of the Sacred Heart the following beautiful paper written by Dr. De Costa (under nom de plume of Wm. Hickling) copy of which he sent to a friend in Ontario:

The beautiful inland sea now usually known as "Lake George," originally named Lac du Sacrement by the great martyr missionary to the Mohawks, the Rev. Isaac Jogues, O. S. A. On the eve of the festival of Christ, the Father arrived at the lake or northern end of this most picturesque water, when on his way to complete a mission attended with yet never-ending object was to do a peace between the French in Canada under Governor Montmagny and the Mohawk Indians, amongst whom he was to take up his abode. He passed the night where first reached the lake. The morning, May 29, 1646, he named the lake while the Church throughout the world was celebrating the feast, and then started to travel southward to the Mohawk country where councils were held under great pine trees. He followed the Indian trail, getting well into the valley, near Johnston and Fonda, reaching Tribes Hill, which then must have been a beautiful and romantic place, and marching on by the present Auriesville; little realizing that one day his shrine would set up there, and that thousands of Catholics two hundred and four years later would be making pilgrimages and offering their prayers at this place.

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Leaving with the people a beautiful probably small altar, when he should return, he started on his return journey, carrying provisions, baggage, the account says, his horses. On their return, they reached the head or south end of the lake, the Holy Sacrament, and there he was buried. The Indians buried him in a shallow grave, and the French, the latter receiving strings of enameled porcelain which they valued highly.

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THE CATHOLIC RECORD

OCTOBER 6, 1905

AURELIA;
OR,
THE JEWS OF CAPENA GATE.

PART THIRD—THE TRIVIR.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE DELIVERANCE.

If, some thirty hours after the consummation of this fearful atonement, a citizen should have ventured, notwithstanding the darkness, in this deserted section of Rome, he would have noticed, with surprise, four slaves bearing a litter, and who silent and motionless like so many shadows, waited patiently under the solitary porches of the temple of Safety.

Then, if this belated citizen, inclining a little to the right, had ascended by the way of the Agger of Servius as far as the Collina Gate, he would have discovered by the pale light of the stars, an old man kneeling on a slight mound in the barren plain and praying with fervor.

Now, at the very time we speak of, an individual was precisely accomplishing this nocturnal excursion; walking with noiseless step, peering carefully into every dark recess and corner, and stopping, from time to time, to listen anxiously to the slightest noise. These extraordinary precautions were justified by the very singular appearance of this night prowler, which would have certainly excited the suspicions of the capital triumvir if he had suddenly caught upon him.

The mysterious wayfarer carried a rope ladder rolled around his body, a spade in one hand, and an iron crowbar in the other. He was, moreover, provided with a dark lantern. The chief of the urban police would have doubtless asked our friend Gurgues—the reader has already recognized him—what use he intended to make of these suspicious instruments, and whether he was not undertaking one of his old expeditions, and preparing to desecrate the grave and rob the dead, for the benefit of his friend the triumvir.

Gurgues was making all haste to join Clemens in the Campus Scleratus, but he had to use a great deal of caution to avoid dangerous meetings on the way. At last, he reached the further end of the Vicius Cyprinus, and before ascending the Quirinal, he passed in the shadow of the temple of Fortune, and peered through the gloom at the porticoes of the temple of Safety, close by, to ascertain whether his vesperal had carried out his instructions.

"Very well," he muttered, as he discovered the lectica and its motionless bearers. "All is well. These vesperals have understood me. By Venus Libitinal! I can launch now at the capital triumvir and his men."

But Gurgues had scarcely muttered those defiant words, when he threw himself down flat on the pavement of the temple of Fortune, exclaiming: "Unfortunate vestal!"

The regular tramp of a patrol could be heard in the distance, coming up the Vicius Cyprinus. If Gurgues had had the good luck of preceding the cohort, the cohort would have been upon him. Still, things might take a different course. The patrol might pass straight on without discovering the designator, but then they would necessarily come upon the vesperals and their suspicious looks. Or they might turn to the right; but in this case they would surprise the pontiff of the Christians in the Campus Scleratus.

The dilemma had three horns, and all equally dangerous! Hence the designator exclaimed under the curse he addressed the triumvir.

There was, however, still a chance of safety.

About a hundred steps from Fortune's temple, there was to the left a narrow lane which led to Caesar's Forum, and finally to the Catularia gate, after passing near the atrium of Freedom. If the patrol followed this lane there would be nothing to fear, for it would lead them to distant quarters of the city, whence they would not be likely to return in this direction. The question was, would they take the lane? Meanwhile, they advanced with their torches, whose light caused Gurgues no little perturbation.

Another cry of alarm was very near escaping his lips when he recognized the capital triumvir, ordering his men to ascend the Quirinal, near whose base was situated the Agger of Servius, whence it was an easy matter to survey the Campus Scleratus. But to the designator a great consolation, the patrol stopped and refused to proceed further. The triumvir, surprised at this unusual resistance, repeated his order.

"Are you not aware," remonstrated some voices, "that this spot is sacred, and if we were to advance we should be in the shade of the Grand Vestal hovering near her grave?" And such a sight announces death within the year to the beholder!

"That is a fact," said the triumvir, "I had forgotten that with men. I had forgotten that execution. Let us get away from here."

And the officer countermanded his little troop, who turned into the narrow lane.

When the noise of their steps had died away, Gurgues sprang to his feet.

"By Venus Libitinal," he cried, "what cowards those fellows are! Who ever knew the dead to come back? I have never seen any, and many a night I have passed amidst the tombstones. I mean the veritable dead. . . for as to the Grand Vestal, I hope and trust she is still alive. . . and that I, Gurgues, will soon take her out of the vault!"

Never mind, those worthy patrolmen have given me a terrible scare! But the pontiff of the Christians will be thinking that I have broken my word to him, and I would not have him think this for anything in the world! . . . Let us make haste, then, I shall explain to him what caused my delay. . . Good luck, my dear triumvir! . . . It is probable we shall not meet again this night."

Collecting his various instruments, Gurgues ascended the Quirinal as promptly as he could, embarrassed as he was with his load. A few minutes later he was near Clemens and apologized to him by telling him his adventure with the triumvir.

"You see it, my son," said the priest with a quiet smile. "God watches over dangers. He proves it by turning off these first dangers. It will, perhaps, not be the last mark of assistance He will give us. But what are you doing, Gurgues?"

The designator, after striking the soil

several times with his crowbar, had thrown himself on the ground and was listening anxiously.

"What are you doing, Gurgues?" the pontiff repeated, no answer having been made to his first question.

Gurgues raised himself on his knees and looked at Clemens with an air of anguish.

"This is singular!" he remarked. "I have made this noise to warn the Grand Vestal that we are here. . . and I hear nothing, absolutely nothing! . . . Not a cry, not a movement! . . . Oh! . . . Then already succumbed? . . . Oh! . . . And Gurgues laying hold of his spade began to dig with an ardor that amounted almost to rage.

Clemens said nothing. It was well that the weakness of man should show itself before the greatness of God.

Three men had been employed piling up earth into the shaft; then they had trodden upon it, and made it so compact and firm that Gurgues soon found himself struggling against an almost insuperable obstacle. It had been easy work at first, but when he stood up to his waist in this narrow aperture, hemmed in between four thick walls, he saw that it would be impossible for him to finish his task unaided. Every shovelful of earth that he threw out would crumble in again carrying with it the rubbish previously shovelled out, and which, falling upon him, made his work still more difficult.

The poor fellow persisted manfully but his efforts were unavailing, and once, being nearly covered up by the crumbling sand, he uttered an exclamation of despair. But another voice replied to his cry of anguish, and Gurgues looking up saw Clemens in a halo of light with his hands extended over the chasm!

Then, Gurgues felt that the ground upon which he stood was sinking rapidly, and he rolled suddenly into the open vault. When he rose to his feet, Clemens was standing by his side. No other light could be seen but the small funeral lamp still burning near the bed. By this flickering flame they saw the Grand Vestal stretched motionless on her couch.

Gurgues laid a trembling hand upon the dead form, and fell sobbing at the pontiff's feet.

"Oh, my lord," he exclaimed, "she is dead! her body is icy cold!"

Clemens smiled as he looked at this poor man whose heart would not yet open to confidence, and said to him kindly:

"What, my son, after what you have seen, do you still doubt?"

Gurgues then saw that the old man held in his hands a vase and some bread.

"My son," added the pontiff, "the work of God is accomplished. The work of man must now commence."

When Cornelia descended into the vault, she placed herself on the bed, in the attitude of one who has lost even the power of thinking. She did not weep, but the fictitious strength which had sustained her during the execution, had completely vanished. She was in that state of stupor which causes a void in the mind, and plunges the body into a rigid inertia.

Her eyes followed vacantly the motion of the earth shovelled at the entrance of the vault by Ravinus and his aids, and part of which, sliding into the vault, rolled to her feet and gradually covered them. This sand, which moved as it spread into the vault, the noise made by the workmen above, all these fearful preparatives were life still, and the Grand Vestal clung to them as to a last hope.

Then all was hushed, and all motion ceased.

Cornelia gazed slowly around her, with eyes distended by terror. . . She saw the bread, water and milk, placed near the lamp. She remained thoughtful a long time, contemplating this food by which the remaining days were measured. Then, concluding, doubtless, that all hope had vanished, and it was better not to prolong sufferings which must end in death, she took the bowl of milk, brought it to her lips, and poured the remainder of the consecrated oil on the ground. With a bitter smile she now took up the piece of bread, felt its weight, and breaking it into crumbs, cast them about and trampled upon them.

The water she preserved. Was it from some secret hope? These things were consumed, life was no longer possible. Death could come now, and the Grand Vestal lay on her couch, to await its coming.

We shall not describe the mental tortures of the unfortunate young woman, the cruel sufferings caused by the want of air, or the first pangs of that terrible disease—bunger. When Gurgues found her rigid and cold as a corpse, she had fainted, exhausted by thirty hours of want and terror.

Finding Cornelia inanimate, Clemens raised her head, and poured drop by drop between her lips the cordial he had brought with him. A slight tremor of the rigid limbs soon proved to Gurgues that the Grand Vestal still lived, and would not be long recovering her senses.

Clemens again opened Cornelia's lips and repeated the dose at short intervals, until the small amphora he had brought was emptied of its contents. Life was restored. The exhausted girl was still unconscious. After a little while the good priest took a small loaf of bread, made from the whitest flour kneaded in pure milk, and placing it between the vestal's fingers, lifted her hand near to her face. By an instinctive motion, the Grand Vestal brought the savory food to her mouth and ate it greedily. Still, she spoke not. So completely exhausted had been the victim, that her faculties could only be gradually restored.

Clemens waited, kneeling near the bed. Gurgues, overcome by emotion and admiration, seemed plunged in a sort of dreamy stupor. His face was bathed in tears.

A deep sigh announced at last that the resurrection was complete. Cornelia raised herself on her elbow, and passing her hand on her forehead, as if she awoke from a dream, exclaimed:

"Where am I?"

But she fell back with another cry—a cry of terror and fearful despair! By the dim light of the lamp she had recognized the vault in which she had been left to die!

"You are saved! madam," said Clemens in a grave and calm voice, and he touched her hand.

"Who are you?" asked the Grand Vestal with astonishment, for she could not notice the features of the speaker. "How did you gain access to this tomb?"

"Madam, have you forgotten the man who promised to rescue you even from the bowels of the earth. . . if you were even made to descend into this

abyss? . . . I have come to fulfil my promise!"

"The pontiff of the Christians!" exclaimed Cornelia, "ah!"

She sprang from her couch and fell at the feet of her preserver, holding them tightly clasped and bathing them with her tears. So great was her gratitude, so overpowering her emotion that she could not speak. Nothing was heard in this narrow space but the convulsive sobs of the poor woman miraculously restored to life.

"Madam," said Clemens, as he endeavored to raise her trembling form. "You are saved! But you must now hasten to leave this dismal abode. A devoted man will take place of concealment where your persecutors cannot reach you."

And turning to Gurgues: "My son," he added, "prepare your ladder! . . . Your prudent foresight has been wise. . . You may now finish the work of God."

The rope-ladder having been made fast to a projecting stone on the crest of the wall, the pontiff placed the other end in the Grand Vestal's hand.

"Come, madam," he said, trying to release his knees from her embrace. "It is getting late and day-light must not find us here! . . . Hasten, I pray you!"

Cornelia rose to her feet, but instead of taking the rope she let it drop. Going to the further end of the vault she took the small picture of which she had preserved, and bringing it to the priest, she again knelt before him:

"Father," she murmured faintly and in a beseeching tone, "Metellus Celer is no more! I heard his last cry! . . . All the affections of my heart are dead, and of the Vestal there remains only the virgin saved by you! . . . Your God is mine! . . . It is by water that one becomes a Christian, and I have kept the water given to allay the dying thirst of the victim, in that hope, for as I was about to spill it, I remembered that you might come! . . . Before you return me to the world of the living, make me a Christian, so that I shall be henceforth only your daughter!"

"To be a Christian," answered the eyes of venerable pontiff and rolled slowly over his cheeks.

"My daughter," he said, with deep emotion, "take off that veil and bow your head. . . Ordinarily the holy baptism is given only after a long period of preparation, and probation. . . But you have already been instructed in our holy doctrine. . . and then, who could add anything to the solemn teaching of this tomb, from which God alone, and not I, have rescued you?"

"I believe in you, my daughter, and pray to Him who, at my voice, will make you His child."

Then Clemens laid his hands on the head of the recalcitrant virgin, and marked her forehead with the sign of the cross. The baptismal ceremony made her a catechumen. Then taking the water which he blessed, he proceeded:

"Cornelia," he said, "I baptize thee in the name of God the Father. . ."

Here he sprinkled her with holy water.

"I baptize thee in the name of Jesus Christ His Son."

And he again poured water on her head.

"I baptize thee in the name of the Holy Spirit."

And what remained of water was again poured on the pure brow of the kneeling virgin. After a last invocation, in which he united the three persons of the Holy Trinity, he blessed Cornelia, saying:

"Rise, my daughter, thou art a Christian! . . . a Christian in life! . . . a Christian in eternity!"

A few moments later, Cornelia stepped out of the pit, supported by the holy pontiff. The remaining days were measured, the dreary chasm was suddenly filled up, and Ravinus himself, if he had seen fit to visit the spot on the next day, would have never suspected that any strange hand had disturbed his work.

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CHAPTER XXII.

GURGUES TREATS OF THE EMPEROR.

On the eighth day before the idea of September, 6th of September, A. D. 96, as the shadows of night commenced to invade the streets of Rome, two men could have been seen walking hurriedly in the Suburana Way. They came from different directions, one looking modestly on the ground and absorbed in thought; the other casting anxious glances on the houses as if he were seeking to recognize some particular one. As neither of them looked before him, it naturally happened that they ran against each other.

"Ah!" cried one of the two men.

"Oh!" exclaimed the other simultaneously.

For in every language these two little words "Ah!" and "Oh!" are used to express sudden admiration or astonishment.

"Blockhead!" added the house-seeker, which showed that his "oh!" was not intended as a mark of admiration.

"What shall I call you?" replied Gurgues, and almost laughingly the other; "neither of us paid any attention to what was in his way. That is all!"

"Hullo!" . . . it is Gurgues, exclaimed the former speaker, casting a single glance on the designator. "Ah! this is a lucky meeting! . . . I intended to see you in a few days, to speak to you about some important matters, in which you may be very useful."

Gurgues was surprised to hear himself called by name by this stranger. Still, upon studying his features more closely, it seemed to him that this was not the first time he had met the man. He looked at him, trying to remember when and where they had met. Light dawned at last, which the designator expressed by another "ah!"

"Ah! you recognize me, do you?" said the stranger.

"You are the man," replied Gurgues firmly, "who, two years ago, came to my house one night, and brought me a certain letter."

"That's it," said the stranger, "was it a bad office? And did it not result in your being able to save the Grand Vestal?"

"Silence!" muttered Gurgues.

"Very well," replied the unknown, "we shall drop this subject if you wish. . . But I wish to speak to you. Let us go there."

And he pointed to a tavern near by through whose door, left ajar to attract customers, stared a pair of eyes. Gurgues, naturally, was curious to know who this mysterious individual might be who was mingled with one of the most important circumstances of his life. "Let us go in," said Gurgues, "I have something to say to you. I have to do, and it will amount to the same thing."

The stranger, preceding the former designator of pagan ceremonies—Gurgues had resigned this important office in consequence of his conversion to the Christian faith—entered the tavern and for a private room. He also ordered some food and wine, which he offered to Gurgues to share with him. But the latter declined, with thanks.

"My dear Gurgues," the stranger began, "in order to give you confidence, shall I tell you where you come from and where you are going? For, although I was slightly astonished to meet you on my way, I soon recollected that you must have been in this neighborhood, at the time we met."

"Speak," said Gurgues, still retaining a ceremonious tone, although his companion treated him familiarly. "Speak, I listen to you."

"Well, my dear Gurgues, you have been washing the body of that Nicomedes who was beaten to death yesterday, near Minerva's temple because he refused to sacrifice to the gods. And you are now going to the Capena Gate, to tell the Christians that you will give him a burial. . . Shall I add dear Gurgues, continued the unknown, "that you will go a little out of your way, to call at the house of the divine Aurelia, who expects you, and who will possess the form, so on Sundays and holidays the peasants have a long walk over the mountains to get to Mass."

A bell is rung three times before each service; first half an hour before, then after fifteen minutes, and lastly as the priest and acolytes leave the sacristy.

But it is hardly necessary to go to such pains to call the pious Luxemburgers to prayers. Their religion is their life, and they are most faithful in the observance of it.

Every morning at 7:30 the little troops of school children are to be seen hurrying to Mass, with their baskets of lesson-books on their arms. The tiny feet patter off to church as willingly as to play, and so the years roll by, and the children become men and women, pious and good natured, such as one likes to meet on life's rugged road.

There is a spirit of chivalrous devotion among them to the cure, and all priests and nuns. When they pass in the street the little children run after them, and the men salute them respectfully, often stopping for a friendly chat on the harvest or the latest bit of news.

The Luxemburgers are Catholics in the truest sense of the word, and one cannot remain a day in their midst without noting the thousand and one trifles which make them so different to Protestant nations.

But of all times in the year that of the annual procession is most edifying. They begin the last week in April, and last nearly a fortnight, and are in honor of Our Lady Consoler of the Afflicted, whose miraculous picture hangs over the high altar in the Cathedral at Luxemburg. Many are the miracles wrought by it, as is testified by the numerous offerings bequeathed to the shrine.

At the earliest hours of the morning the pilgrims with their cures come pouring in from the neighboring villages, praying aloud to Our Lady. For hours they kneel before the miraculous picture, oblivious of all that passes, thinking only of their needs and troubles.

But Luxemburg is not the only place

"What! Flavia Domitilla also! . . . But you said at Terracina? The island of Pontia was the place of banishment of those three Christians. . . You have been deceived!"

"My dear Gurgues," replied the other, "have you never heard that Domitian, when he wishes to destroy people, and is withheld from doing so on account of their name or influence, or from some other motive, draws them to some place where everything has been prepared for their 'accidental' death? This is what has happened. Flavia Domitilla and her companions were suddenly transferred to Terracina, upon the pretext of softening the rigor of their exile. But on the very night after their arrival, the house in which they had found shelter was destroyed by fire, and good care was taken that they should not escape."

"Another sorrow for the divine Aurelia and her noble relatives! Another triumph for the religion of Christ!" exclaimed Gurgues, with that accent peculiar to times of persecution, in which bitterness and sorrow were blended with faith and enthusiasm. "Yes, for the religion of Christ! for those illustrious virgins have suffered martyrdom!"

"It was martyrdom, or at least what you call by that name," replied the stranger. "It is said, in fact, that Flavia Domitilla and her companions showed publicly their contempt for the gods and refused to offer them incense. So did Nerens and Achilleus, Flavia Domitilla's eunuchs, who were beheaded in Terracina on the very day their mistress died."

TO BE CONTINUED.

A JEWEL OF CATHOLICISM.

It is a country pushed almost out of sight by France and Belgium. It is a little country consisting of three or four towns, and innumerable villages, mountains and valleys. We speak of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. Its history is unimportant, and, therefore, little known. It was long a disputed possession of the great powers. But now peace has done more taken her scepter in her hand and rules with her gentle sway.

At the congress of Wiener, 1815 it was raised to a grand dukedom, with Wilhelm I. as its first Duke. He was succeeded by two other Princes, who in their turn passed away, and left the government of the little country to Adolph of Nassau, and his wife, the Grand Duchess Adelaide.

In 658 St. Willibrord left Northumbria and became the apostle of the land. He was held in great veneration and every year a pilgrimage is made to his tomb at Echternach, a town on the frontier of Prussia, where he spent much of his life and founded a convent.

It is the only one of its kind in the world. The pilgrims, carrying their sick, dance round the town to the sound of music. This seems rather comical than otherwise, but it is a most edifying sight to see the simple devotion of the dancing crowd, and moves one to tears rather than laughter.

The procession was only once omitted and that year the beasts in the stalls, it is piously recorded, imitated the step in reproach.

The first thing that the traveler notices as he crosses the Belgian frontier is the immense difference in the landscape. In the latter country it is flat and most uninteresting, but once the border is passed, immense mountains, pine forests, rocks and precipices burst into view.

The country is thickly populated, at least as far as can be expected from its hilly structure. Little villages are scattered all about in the valleys and on the mountain sides, sometimes consisting of but five or six houses, and a diminutive church and school. But every house has a garden, and the former, so on Sundays and holidays the peasants have a long walk over the mountains to get to Mass.

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in which these pilgrimages are made. At Eselbruck and Diekirch, they are celebrated with almost equal splendor. The Blessed Sacrament is carried round the town under a golden canopy, and Our Lady's statue is borne on the shoulders of the Children of Mary, dressed in white.

The streets through which the procession passes are strewn with flowers, and everywhere flags and decoration of all kinds announce the joyful triumph.

It is a most touching sight to see the devotion of the pilgrims. Old men with their hats in one hand and their rosary in the other, mothers with their little ones by the hand—people of every rank unite in homage to Jesus and Mary.

Benediction is given five times on the way, and is announced by the booming of a cannon. As soon as it is heard, the crowd fall on their knees in the roadway, in humble adoration.

And now a word about the Luxemburgers themselves.

In general their mode of living is much like ours, but they have many quaint customs of their own.

Their day begins with the dawn and ends about sunset, and they live a great deal in the open air, which is, perhaps, the cause of their inviolable good health and good spirits.

The women seldom wear hats out of doors on week days, but on Sundays they are resplendent in all kinds of bright colors. The grandmothers and old mothers wear little round white caps like nightcaps, instead of bonnets, and the men felt hats and half-length blue blouses.

Of course, this does not apply to the upper class, who dress much the same as we do.

The Luxemburgers have a great taste for gardening and agricultural pursuits. Every family has its little patch of ground, with potatoes and beans planted in artistic shapes. The peasants seldom cultivate flowers; indeed, it is hardly necessary, for nature is so lavish with them.

The gardens are never near the houses, but scattered all about on mountain sides, and fenced off by a low railing. Sometimes they are so high that steps have to be cut in the earth to facilitate the ascent of the proprietor.

Fruit of all kinds is very plentiful, more especially cherries, grapes and pears. The latter grow to an enormous size, and are remarkably fine.

In some parts cherries are so abundant that a feast is made as soon as they are ripe (in May), and the whole village rejoices in cherry wine, cherry tarts, and other dainties produced from this fruit.

Owing to the mountainous formation of Luxemburg, goats are very numerous, and the poor would be badly off without them, as they drink their milk. And very good it is, too, though a little stronger in flavor than that which the cow gives us.

The food is of the simplest kind, and consists principally of soup, salad, and vegetables. Coffee takes the place of tea, and butter is almost a luxury, jam of different kinds being used instead.

The language of the