

both entering into the construction of one of the hovels of this miserable hamlet, once the flourishing "burg" which Jesus and His disciples loved to visit. But we have descended the dark stairway by the aid of our lighted tapers, and are now standing in the chamber sanctified by the presence of the God-man, and rendered forever memorable by the miracle which He wrought there at the fearful prayer of His two most devoted and faithful friends, Mary and Martha. What tongue can express the emotions of our hearts during those rapturous moments! We seemed to see the majestic form of the Saviour, and to hear His fervid cry to His heavenly Father: "*Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always, but because of the people who stand about have I said it; that they may believe that thou hast sent me.*" (St. John, XI. 41-42.) Alone, He, the author of life, stood here in presence of the dead, whilst the sorrow-stricken sisters of the deceased, surrounded by the friends and neighbors who had accompanied them, waited tremblingly without. "And Jesus wept," says the Beloved Disciple (St. John, XI. 35.);—a fact which caused the Jews in attendance to exclaim, "Behold how He loved him!" (Ibid., 36.). "Then," continues the evangelist, "He cried with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth! And presently he that had been dead came forth." (Ibid., 43-44.). With what reverence and devotion did we not kiss the walls of this thrice holy spot, pausing before the altar erected there to invoke Sts. Mary, Martha and Lazarus, and thrilled to our inmost souls by the august memories that crowded upon us. *

In another moment we were in the tomb itself, which is reached by a further descent of three steps. It is of the same size as the anti-chamber, namely, three yards in length by as many in width, but its vaulted roof is somewhat lower. Around its walls, excepting that of its entrance, are three stone benches, destined originally to receive the bodies of the dead who were to be interred there. Whether these are the identical couches of our Lord's time—one of which was occupied by the remains of Lazarus—it would be difficult to say. But the thought came quite naturally that provision had been made in advance for the last resting place of the sainted trio whose names are inseparably interwoven with this sacred shrine, and who, having been so tenderly devoted to one another in life, had doubtless so arranged that they might not be separated in death.

Visitors are cautioned against remaining more than a few minutes in this tomb, so unwholesomely damp is it; but before I left it I managed to secure a bit of stone from one of the walls—a treasure which, needless to say, I shall preserve as a precious relic as long as I live. With minds deeply impressed by the sacred recollections which came upon us so vividly within these hallowed precincts, and with hearts touched by the sweet manifestation of human affection given there by Jesus, we silently groped our way up the steep, narrow stairway, and found ourselves once more in the light of day. There being little else of interest in Bethany (for I will not stop here to speak of the once flourishing Benedictine Nunnery, of which some ruins still remain, nor of the great Monastery which also existed there in the happier times), we re-entered our

* NOTE—A Solemn High Mass is sung every year upon this altar on the feasts respectively of Sts. Lazarus and Mary Magdalen.