

The sarcophagus of stone, the lamps which had burned before the bodies of the martyrs, the paintings that ornamented either the walls or the ceilings, were all intact. During their pilgrimage through the Catacombs, the guests of the Lateran palace met numerous groups of the faithful, who taper in hands, visited the holy places and sang hymns whose melody charmed the ear. The tombs, almost all of which were decorated with wreaths and fresh flowers, revealed the piety of the pilgrims who took pleasure in lighting lamps on the side of the sepulchral stones that were hollowed out to receive them.

Valeria proved an admirable cicerone, commenting on the smallest particularities concerning the blessed underground cemeteries and their precious relics.

As a gardener, walking complacently in his garden, gathers here a rare flower, there a half opened bud, and soon forms, with the best his garden contains, a charming bouquet of varied colors, so Valeria explained here an inscription, there a symbol, further on a painting.

She led the visitors to richly ornamented chapels, then stopped before a *polyandrium* enclosing the bodies of several martyrs who had died torn by wild beasts or burned on red hot gridirons. Thus, from floor to floor, she led them all over the vast and sacred necropolis where the glorious remains of so many awaited the resurrection.

Rufinus listened with delight to the words that fell from his beloved daughter's lips ; of the Catacombs, Candidus had retained but the souvenirs of his childhood and he admired, in turn, the richness of the mysterious jewels that Holy Church hides in her treasures, and the profound piety, the sacred knowledge and the quick intelligence of his *fiancée*.

"Look," said Valeria, "at this chapel supported by