

## Sunday Reading.

### The Supper of St. Gregory.

A tale for Roman guides to tell  
To careless, sig-at-worn travellers still,  
Who pause beside the narrow cell  
Of Gregory on the Caelian Hill,  
One day before the monk's door came  
A beggar, stretching empty palms,  
Raining and fast-sick, in the name  
Of the Most Holy, asking alms.  
And the monk answered: "All I have  
In this poor cell of mine I give,  
The silver cup my mother gave;  
In Christ's name take thou it, and  
live."  
Years passed; and, called at last to  
bear  
The pastoral crook and keys of Rome,  
The poor monk, in St. Peter's chair,  
Sat the crowned lord of Christendom.  
"Prepare a feast," St. Gregory cried,  
"And let twelve beggars sit thereat."  
The beggars came, and one beside,  
An unknown stranger, with them sat.  
"I asked thee not," the Pontiff spake,  
"O stranger; but if need be thine,  
I bid thee welcome, for the sake  
Of Him who is thy Lord and mine."  
A grave, calm face the stranger raised,  
Like His who on Gennesaret trod,  
Or His on whom the Chaldeans gazed,  
Whose form was as the Son of God.  
"Know'st thou, he said, "thy gift of  
old?"  
And in the hand he lifted up  
The Pontiff marvelled to behold  
Once more his mother's silver cup.  
"Thy prayers and alms have risen, and  
bloom  
Sweetly among the flowers of heaven.  
I am The Wonderful, through whom  
Whate'er thou askest shall be given."  
He spake and vanished. Gregory fell  
With his twelve guests in mute accord  
Prone on their faces, knowing well  
Their eyes of flesh had seen the Lord.  
The old-time legend is not vain;  
Nor vain thy art, Verona's Paul,  
Telling it o'er and o'er again  
On gray Vicenza's freescod wall.  
Still wheresoever pity shares  
Its bread with sorrow, want, and sin,  
And love the beggar's feast prepares,  
The uninvited Guest comes in.  
Unheard, because our ears are dull,  
Unseen, because our eyes are dim,  
He walks our earth, the Wonderful,  
And all good deeds are done to Him.  
JOHN G. WHITTIER.

### Faith.

Faith may be defined in three simple words, namely, Belief without sight. We believe there once lived a man named George Washington, and yet we never saw him. We believe there is such a city as Pekin, China, and yet many of us have never seen it. The sweet English poet Tennyson says:  
"We have but faith; we cannot know;  
For knowledge is of things we see,  
And yet we trust it comes from Thee,  
A beam in darkness. Let it grow."  
A blind man being led along the street has faith—that is, belief without sight—in his leader. He believes that he is walking on the proper road and in the right direction. When we receive a despatch from another town or city we believe that it came from the person whose name is signed to it, though we cannot see that person and cannot recognize the handwriting. And should the despatch say to us, "Come at once, your mother is dying," we would take the announcement on faith, and make every arrangement to take the first train, boat, or conveyance for that mother's bedside.  
Instances could be multiplied from every walk and station in life to show that nearly everything we do is done through and by faith. The merchant deposits his cash in the bank because he has faith that the capital of that bank is exactly what it is represented to be. He believes the report of the president and directors, though he does not see the actual money or its full value equivalent.  
If, then, we can and do have faith in our fellow-man, why cannot we have faith in God and in His holy Word?  
It is announced that three curates of the Church of England have resigned their curacies and joined the Salvation Army as simple cadets. This resignation appears to have been purely voluntary. They have given up salaries amounting to a total of £405.  
The Charlottetown Examiner is pleased to learn that there is this year a falling off in the import of liquor into P. E. Island.

### "Praying Always."

What is meant by this? What is it to be "praying always"?  
The anecdote is told of a young minister of high promise, who died at an early age, that one day a friend, on entering his room to get a book, found him on his knees in prayer, and when he apologized for having disturbed him, the other quietly replied: "It doesn't matter at all; for prayer is so much a part of one's life, that a little interruption, like this, makes no difference." His life seems to have been a great continued prayer, his thoughts always going up to heaven in silent supplication, from a heart abiding in the will of God.  
What a blessed spirit, flowing out and going forth, like a living stream in the heavenly channel of a holy habit? Is not this the true spirit of real prayer; what the apostle meant by "praying without ceasing," "continuing instant in prayer," and "praying always, with all prayer and supplication," and what the blessed Saviour meant by saying, that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint"? If we enter into the true and full spirit of prayer, should not our thoughts, at all times, be going forth in communion with God, in acknowledging his greatness and excellence, in thanking him for his ceaseless mercies, in asking blessings for ourselves and others, in committing ourselves every hour to his guidance, and in praying for the extension of his kingdom to the ends of the earth? A week of prayer, or any special season of supplication may, indeed, animate and quicken the spirit. But is not prayer—the living spirit of prayer—the very breath of the renewed soul? And, like the breathing of the body through the lungs, does it not, with the spiritual Christian, go on almost unconsciously and in all circumstances of life, rising not merely from the retirement of the closet, but in the meditation of the night watches, in the intervals of business, and on the walk by the way? Are there not only at times "groanings that cannot be uttered," but sweet and joyous communings with God which are uttered only in the thoughts that wing them to heaven?  
"Prayer," says one, "is quite as much aspiration as verbal petition." And another says: "It has full right to the word ineffable; for there are outpourings of the soul that words cannot express—an interior speech of the heart which utters no sound, but speeds the more swiftly to the throne of God." And good old John Bunyan tells us of "the heart praying without words," when it is most full of real prayer. And "in the precept to pray always," says Archbishop Trench, "there is nothing of exaggeration, nothing commanded that may not be fulfilled, when we understand prayer to be the continual desire of the soul after God; having, indeed, its times of intensity—seasons of an intense concentration of the spiritual life—but not confined to those times, since the whole life of the faithful Christian should be, in the beautiful words of Origen, "One great connected prayer." And so good old Dr. Donne tells us "that the soul that is accustomed to direct itself to God on every occasion, and which, as a flower at sunrise, conceives a sense of God in every beam of his, and spreads itself in thankfulness for every blessing he sheds upon it—that soul prays sometimes when it does not know that it prays." And in the same spirit Augustine says, that "longing desire prays always, even though the tongue be silent," and that "if we are ever longing, we are ever praying."  
We read of an excellent woman in humble life, who, when spoken to by her pastor on the subject of prayer, meekly replied, that with all her incessant toil and labor, she found but little time for the closet; but she added: "If I am washing, I pray, in thought, that my soul may be washed from sin by the blood of Christ; if sweeping the floor, that my heart may be cleansed by the Holy Spirit; if eating my plain meal, that I may be fed by the Word of God; if weary, that I may find rest in Jesus; if diligent with my daily toil, that I may be diligent and faithful in the divine life; if trying to provide for the wants of my family, that all my wants, both

temporal and spiritual, may be provided for by my covenant-keeping God and Redeemer, and that he will receive me at last to the blessed family of heaven."  
In this spirit one may be always praying; not only, as Cecil says, "by finding parentheses for prayer even in the busiest hours, but by associating every form of business or pleasure, or daily avocation of any kind, with the up-going of the soul in prayer and communion with God, asking his presence and guidance and blessing at every step of our way. And if this be our spirit, then we may truly say:  
"Though once I sought a time and place  
For solitude and prayer,  
Yet now, where'er I find thy face,  
I find a closet there!"  
Holding fast thus to prayer, we hold fast to Christ; and holding fast to him we are forever safe and blessed. "He that knows thus to pray," says William Jay, "has the secret of safety in prosperity and of support in trouble; the art of overcoming every enemy, and of turning every loss into a gain; the power of soothing every care, of subduing every passion, and of adding relief to every enjoyment. The merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof, than fine gold."  
Not till life is over will the whole strength be understood, or the full safety and blessedness it has brought us be fully known and felt, as it then will be in the perfect blessedness of heaven!—*Independent.*  
**Eighty Years of Missions in India.**  
BY DR. VALENTINE, OF ARGENTINA.  
Those who assert that missions have been a failure lay themselves open to the charge of culpable ignorance, if not wilful perversion of the truth. My theme to-day is India. Let us in imagination throw ourselves back to the India that was at the beginning of the present century. Eighty years ago the fires of suttee were publicly blazing, even in the presidency towns of Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta, and all over India. Upon these fires the screaming and struggling widow—in many cases herself a mere child—was bound, and burned to ashes with the dead body of her husband.  
Eighty years ago infants were publicly thrown into the Ganges as sacrifices to the goddess of the river. Eighty years ago the cars of Juggernath were rolling over India, crushing hundreds of human victims annually beneath their wheels. Eighty years ago lepers were buried alive. Devotees publicly starved themselves to death. Children brought their dying parents to the banks of the Ganges and hastened their death by filling their mouths with the sand and water of the so-called sacred river. Eighty years ago the swinging festivals attracted thousands to see the poor, writhing wretches, with iron hooks thrust through their backs, swing in mid-air in honor of the gods.  
For these scenes that disgraced the India of eighty years ago we may now look in vain. Do I need to remind you that every one of these changes for the better is due, either directly or indirectly, to the missionary enterprise? They were missionaries and the friends of missions who brought these tremendous evils to light. Branded as fanatics and satirized as fools, they ceased not until, one by one, these hideous crimes were crushed out by the strong arm of the Legislature,—just as we will not cease to agitate until the accursed opium trade and other evils cease to exist.  
Eighty years ago there was not a single female school in the whole of India. At the Decennial Missionary Conference, held in Calcutta during the first week of 1883, Dr. Newton, of Lahore, said: "When I came to India in 1835 a young lady also came, under the protection of my wife and myself, to aid in that part of the work which relates to females; but soon after our arrival in Calcutta she was informed by the missionary who had preceded us to Lodiana, that there was no work there for young ladies, and so it would be useless for her to go—and she did not go!" Eighty years ago not a single bookshop existed out of Calcutta; and these were only for the sale of a few English books.  
Eighty years ago and our native

Christians could have been counted by tens, and the missionaries themselves, few in number, were liable to be turned out of the country at any moment as dangerous characters. The missionary enterprise a failure! It is a failure in the same sense as Christianity at the end of the first century was a failure! It had not then, nor has it yet, completed its triumphs. But it had entered upon its work: the nations that opposed or threw it out have ceased to flourish, many of them have ceased to exist, and those that accepted it have basked beneath its smile. In India, Christianity has entered upon its work.  
The Bible has been translated into every one of its languages. Millions of tracts and books in the vernaculars of that great land are now in circulation. Mission schools in which the Scriptures are read are scattered up and down through the country.  
The number of Foreign and Eurasian Female Mission agents is 541, with a staff of 1944 native female missionaries, while the total number of female pupils was, at the end of 1881, 65,761. Now the zenanas, that masterpiece of satanic ingenuity, are opening before the zenana teachers and female medical missionaries. Statistically, the progress of the native Church in India is represented by the following figures: In 1851, there were 91,000 Protestant Christians; in 1861, 138,000; in 1871, 224,000; and in 1881, 417,000. This represents an increase, between 1851 and 1861, of about 53 per cent; in the next decade it was 61 per cent; and in the last it was 86 per cent.  
What reason have we for raising our Ebenezer and saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us!"  
But there is still another side to this great question. The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. In India we have a population of nearly, if not altogether, 300,000,000 of people, a population as large as that of the whole of Russia, Turkey, Germany, France, Austria, Hungary, the United States of America, and the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland all put together, with a mission-staff of only 586 foreign ordained agents, with a native agency of 461. Truly may we exclaim: What are these among so many? Take the following as examples of how this agency is distributed:—  
Within a hundred miles of Calcutta—the capital of India, the city of palaces—we have Burdwan, with 3500 square miles, and a population of one and a half millions of people, with only one European missionary and nine Christian helpers; Boncoorah, an adjoining district, with a population of one and a half millions, with one European missionary and ten Christian helpers; Beerbhoom contains half a million of people, and has three missionaries with nine Christian helpers. Moarshadabad contains about a million of people, and has three missionaries with four Christian helpers. These four districts are a fair sample of how feebly vast populous districts are occupied.  
Nor is even this all. Bogva has half a million of people; Malda a like number; Pubna has nearly a million of people, living in 2,792 towns and villages. These three districts are within a day's journey of Calcutta, and yet no church in all Christendom has a single missionary laboring in them. In Bengal proper there are upwards of twenty-two millions of Mahometans,—our fellow-subjects—and yet in Bengal there is not one single male missionary who knows the Arabic language (the language in which the Koran is written) or the Mahometan controversy, or is specially devoted to work among these people. These are facts of a sufficiently startling nature, and are well calculated to make each of us pause and consider our own individual responsibility for this state of matters. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel unto every creature" are words addressed by our blessed Lord and Master to every one who is called by His name. God grant that each of us may apply these words to ourselves, and that the answer of many a heart may be, "Here am I, Lord; send me."—*The Christian.*  
To deny, as Peter did, is bad; but not to weep bitterly, as he did, when we have denied, is worse.—*Payson.*

## Graduating Essay.

### Shakespeare's Heroines.

BY MISS FANNIE E. COX,  
ACADIA SEMINARY, JUNE 5, 1884.

By general consent Shakespeare is the greatest name in all literature. To all English speaking people his genius has made life more noble and divine. Even in other nations many are studying the English language in order to become thoroughly acquainted with the workings of his master mind.  
It is for his high ideal of woman that we love Shakespeare best. He has no greater security to immortality than in the portrayal of female character. He gives us womanhood fairly and broadly, not satirized, not flattered. He has penetrated the inmost recesses of her soul, and painted woman in every variety. His characters are no mere creations of the imagination; they are realities. We have known them and loved them. They will remain immortal, and as the centuries roll by, Shakespeare will be as much loved and as faithfully studied as in the past.  
We may classify Shakespeare's Heroines into three divisions—characters of history represented by Lady Macbeth and Cleopatra; characters of the affections by Ophelia, Juliet and Cordelia; characters of intellect by Portia and Rosalind.  
The play of Macbeth is one of intense interest, and it requires more than a superficial reading to rightly understand the poet's conception. Mrs. Siddons says that after playing the part of Lady Macbeth for thirty years she never read it without discovering in it something new. At first thought of Lady Macbeth, she might seem merely a cruel unscrupulous woman, inciting her husband to the darkest crimes. A clearer scrutiny, however, reveals a woman endowed with the rarest powers, the loftiest energies, and the profoundest affections. Wicked she certainly was, but not unmixedly so. The chiarsuro of her character is very fine, and she is acknowledged to be one of Shakespeare's grandest creations. Ambition, the ruling motive of her life, becomes an intense over-mastering passion, which must be gratified by the sacrifice of everything that is good and noble in her character. Her crime of murder is rendered still more despicable by disloyalty and ingratitude, and by the violation of the most sacred ties of kindred and hospitality. Although she is a terrible impersonation of evil passions and mighty powers, yet she is not so foreign to human nature as to be cast beyond the pale of our sympathies for she remains a woman to the last.  
The first suggestion of the murder was due not to Lady Macbeth, but to her husband, and doubtless Macbeth would have faltered in his evil course had he not been incited by his wife. Throughout the play she appears the more active, though the guilt was equal. When he hesitates she chides him for his instability of purpose. Finally she removes all obstacles, controverts all arguments, and overcomes all his scruples, thus showing us the wonderful intellect and will power which she possessed.  
It is not for herself but for Macbeth that she thus sacrifices her all of womanhood. It is that the sceptre may be placed within his grasp. In her dream of power she perils her very life and soul for the attainment of the golden diadem, but with the firm belief that she was doing right. Having once proposed the object to herself she stops not till it is attained.  
After the murder of Duncan she is occupied in sustaining the fortitude of her husband. The bravery of her mind scorns the visionary terrors which haunt Macbeth. She would rather suffer a thousand deaths than betray any emotion. It is only in the helplessness of slumber that her scared brain and broken heart are laid bare, and we have a glimpse into the depths of her sufferings. Her sleep is no longer repose, but a protraction of horrors, in which her intellect is powerless. Thus we see she was not really evil in heart or she would have suffered no remorse. She was the victim of a torturing passion and an overmastering ambition. Shakespeare never places evil before us totally void of good, but in such a light as to make it obvious to us, and teach us to love virtue.

Of his characters of the affections, Ophelia and Juliet are the most striking. In the delineation of these heroines the closest attention is given to the minutest details that influence character. We plainly see the effect of climate and of race. In Ophelia we recognize the fair-haired, blue-eyed, reserved daughter of the North. We picture Juliet with the dark, splendid eyes, warm, glowing beauty and the Titian-like complexion of the South. The situation of Ophelia in the drama is that of a young girl brought at an early age from a life of privacy into the circle of a court which, at those early times, was at once rude, magnificent and corrupted. The wicked queen has a real affection for the gentle and innocent girl, who is her favorite attendant. In Polonius, the shrewd, pompous and garrulous courtier, we recognize the man who would send his son out into the world to see and learn all it could teach him of good and evil, but who would keep his only daughter as far as possible from all taint of that world which he knew so well. Hence she in her perfect purity seems strangely out of place in the corrupted court. Her father and brother give her lessons in worldly wisdom in regard to her relations with Hamlet, but they come too late, for from the time she appears on the scene we know what must be her destiny. Let us imagine a dove caught in a tempest; it is young, and either lacks strength of wing to reach its home, or the instinct which teaches it to shun the brooding storm. We watch it pityingly as it flits hither and thither with its silver pinions shining against the black thunder-cloud, till after a few giddy whirls it falls bewildered into the turbid waves beneath, and is swallowed up forever. Such was Ophelia. It is her helplessness arising from her innocence and not from her weakness, which melts us with profound pity. Before her person or her mind have attained maturity, her feelings are overwhelmed by a torrent of love and grief which shatter the frail texture of her existence. Her deep grief lies hidden within her own heart, but in the few words she does say we are made so thoroughly acquainted with her character as if she had poured forth her soul in the matchless eloquence of Juliet. What sublime pathos and despair are contained in those few brief words recording her interview with Hamlet! Her life is blasted in its early prime; she is repulsed and forsaken where she has bestowed her heart's best affection. Her father is slain by Hamlet, who is supposed to be insane, and completely surrounded by a web of horrors, from which she has no power to extricate herself, she becomes "divided from herself and her fair judgment." Her reason is totally gone, and we sadly listen to her wild, rambling fancies, her pretty, aimless speeches, and her snatches of old ballads. We follow her weaving her garlands of beautiful flowers, until "down the weedy trophies and herself fell in the weeping brook." She in her innocence and beauty was engulfed in the dark tragedy of the play, and, a spotless victim, was offered up to the inexorable fates.  
Romeo and Juliet represent two of Vienna's noblest houses—Montague and Capulet, whose families are at deadly enmity with each other. Thus the dark background tends to show more brilliantly the beautiful characters of the hero and heroine.  
In the struggle with a hard world and evil destiny love is triumphant, and gives the heroine power to say, "If all else fail, myself have power to die."  
The course of Romeo and Juliet was brief, but they had "quaffed the cup of life with its infinite of joys and sorrows in one intoxicating draught."  
This drama surpasses all other of Shakespeare's plays in the beauty of its poetry. It is the richest that can possibly be conceived, and each character receives its due share of master touches. As we revel in the rich luxuriance of the poetry, lavished with the "careless prodigality of genius," we would fain believe that Shakespeare had lived under the blue skies of Italy and intoxicated himself in her genial atmosphere.  
In Portia we have the highest type of Shakespeare's heroines. It is in the portrayal of intellectual women that men of genius have committed the most serious mistakes. They have given us