

Sunday Reading.

IN RUINED POMPEII.

How the Buried City Appears as it is at the Present Day.

Mac D. Frazar writes as follows in the Boston Sunday Times:

Pompeii was built upon a small hill, the result of a former outbreak of Vesuvius, was only a short distance from the shore of the bay, a small river ran through it, it had about thirty thousand inhabitants and was the place of residence of many noted persons.

In the year of 63 A. D. there was a terrible earthquake in this region and Pompeii suffered severely, very many of its dwellings and temples, together with its basilica and forum having been destroyed. Sixteen years later, before the damage of the earthquake had been entirely repaired, there came the frightful eruption of Vesuvius that buried the city beneath a shower upon shower of ashes and pumice stone.

While there have been about five hundred skeletons found thus far, during the excavating, it is remarkable that so many people escaped. But the truth is, there was sufficient time for nearly all to leave the city, for in the first outbreak ashes to the depth of three feet only, fell.

The people returned and secured their valuables, and shortly after came a second shower adding five feet to the depth of matter and this was followed by others till the city lay twenty feet below the upper level.

The vapor from the volcano was condensed and fell in a fine rain upon the ashes and pumice stone, making a sort of liquid mud.

Very many of the dwelling houses in the city had a second story reached by a stairway, sometimes within the house, but more often upon its outside. The weight of the matter crushed the timbers and the masses of debris fell within the walls of the buildings and were imbedded in the soft, wet mixture that served so admirably to preserve all that was buried beneath it. The moisture caused by the constantly falling water prevented any destruction by fire.

Just a short distance within this gate we find the museum of Pompeii, to which has been brought every article of interest found, that has not been taken away to Naples for the museum there.

Here we find some locks and hinges, mason's tools, a window with a grating and a shutter, lamps, vases, porringers, plates, cups, tiles and many other familiar and useful articles. In one of the rooms are casts of some of the people found beneath the ruins; one a woman who had fallen upon her face, so that we see how the hair was arranged at that period, another is of a man who evidently died in extreme suffering, and then there is the skeleton of a dog that was found not many years ago. This dog had been fastened by a collar, at the door of what is known as the House of Orpheus, and the position of the body shows the agony he endured while endeavoring to break away.

This House of Orpheus belonged to one of the cash keepers, and all the decorations relate to Orpheus, depicting him as charming wild beasts with the music of the lyre that Apollo had given him. The casts made of these bodies are absolutely perfect, for although the bodies had decayed, an impress had been made in the ashes that served as a mould, after the bones had been carefully removed. Plaster was poured into the space and the bodies were exactly reproduced, as when death overtook them.

There are scales, a compass, bottles, glasses, baskets, door-latches, together with bread baked in large, round loaves having a hole in the centre like a doughnut, egg shells, dried fruits and moulds for jelly in the shape of pigs and chickens.

Coming from the museum we visit several houses and note the domestic arrangements for comfort and luxury.

First came the vestibule; then the atrium or court, which was the general living room for the family, and which had a roof that sloped toward a central opening, so that the rain might fall into the large tank, or basin that occupied the centre of the atrium. This tank was fed also by the public aqueduct. Across the opening in the roof a shade of linen could be drawn to exclude the sun.

In ordinary houses the sleeping rooms and the dining room opened into this atrium while the kitchen was just beyond.

But in houses belonging to the wealthy citizens, there was, back of the atrium, a tablinum where the records of the family and all valuable relics were kept; then came the peristyle, with a basin as in the atrium, and having the same sort of roof, and here was a garden with flowers, shrubs and statuary.

Upon this opened the dining-room, with its table surrounded upon three sides by couches, upon which persons reclined at ease, one end of the table being left unoccupied so that servants could readily serve the guests.

Also upon the peristyle the chambers of the family opened. These were mere closets having no light or air except what came from the door, and within was a sort of bench, or couch, built into the room upon which the occupant slept without removing his garments.

Back of the peristyle was the kitchen with its braziers for cooking. The brazier was also used in the atrium during the winter, and was the only means of obtaining artificial heat.

The basilica or court of justice, is one of the most imposing of all the ruins. It had three naves, the centre one uncovered and there were two main portions of the grand columns that supported the roofs of the other two naves. At one end of the basilica was the tribune where the magistrates sat, and beneath this, reached by a stone stairway at either side, is a large sort of cell. For some time it was supposed to have been a place for keeping prisoners, but now it is generally believed that it was used as a storage place for the furniture of the tribune.

The temple of Venus, one of the finest in the city, was reached by sixteen steps.

At the head of these was an altar for three places for fire, and in each of these were found the ashes of victims.

The baths in Pompeii were among the most important of the institutions. Some of the old writers say that many people bathed three or four times a day, and when one considers that it was at the bath that the toilet was always made, the statement is not so difficult to believe.

The Stabian bath was one of the largest institutions, and the outer court was splendidly decorated. In this court were found two very heavy stone balls that were used for gymnastic exercises. On the left was the bath for swimming, opposite the door of entrance was the portion reserved for women, and on the right were the cold baths, the tepid one and the small rooms reserved for those who wished to be alone.

FAITH IS COMMON SENSE.

Difficulties are Abundant but They are on the Surface.

Faith, that great force of the soul, which lies at the root of our religion is neither mental athletics, nor enthusiastic sentiment, nor wild emotion. Nothing of the kind, says Canon Knox-Little—"Faith" is the movement of the whole of my being, governed by a moral purpose, illuminated from God, stimulated by grace, co-operated in by my will, whereby, by a real act of my own self-determining responsibility, I allow myself to go out to meet, to see, to grip the living God. They that look in the moral act of faith, they live.

Try that statement by an experience that many, perhaps, have known. Why have we at any time lost or shaken our faith? Why have we found Christianity an impossibility? Why if I may use the expression, have we thrown up the sponge? My brothers, I submit, the error was not theological, it was not intellectual; it was, at least in nine cases out of ten, strictly moral. It was an error of our deliberate choice. Certainly, we sheltered ourselves, you and I, when we lost our faith, under the crowd of difficulties that stand around Christianity; we sheltered ourselves under the difficulties that so we might deceive ourselves, and make our self-satisfaction just bearable. Ah! my friends, we are all aware of the difficulties, we have all felt them a hundred times—the difficulty of the date of the Pentateuch, the difficulty of the date of Daniel, the difficulty of the rejection of Esau, the difficulty of the betrayal of Judas, the difficulty of the denial of Peter. Then, shifting our ground, the difficulty of the existence of the devil, the difficulty of the existence of pain, the difficulty of the existence of evil, the difficulty of that solemn revelation, the punishment of unrepented sin. Yes, there are plenty of difficulties, and how have we dealt with them? We have looked at them and said, "These difficulties are so enormous that I, in consequence, throw up the Christian faith." In consequence? Let me ask you, Are you quite sure that it was in consequence? I think not.

Granted your difficulties, and I do not deny that they are abundant, although I assert that an explanation in nine cases out of ten may be found by a thoughtful man—but granted your difficulties, they all lie on the circumference, and do not touch the central point. For the central point I repeat, is this, that faith, in some sense or other, is common-sense; that no man ever does an hour's work in the city without some sort of faith. I repeat that if that be common-sense in experience and life, then it ought to be exercised towards the highest, towards the great thought of God. And then there comes the high probability that God should speak to His creatures, and then there comes by direct revelation that God has spoken in Christ; and then, as I said the other day, you have put your foot on the stage of history, and you are face to face with the most remarkable, the most wonderful, the most unique, the most lovely Personality, on the confession of unbelievers themselves, that was ever known. And all this is guaranteed to us by the miracle of the resurrection, which you cannot checkmate unless you do it by the argument of a priori, that is, by the argument of a fool, but which, if you take it on the commonsense rules of evidence, I assert, has higher evidence in its behalf than the story of the coronation of our Queen or the last great battle in European history. And if you come to that, what becomes of your difficulties? Is it not common sense to say, "I own my ignorance; I am a fly on a cartwheel; I know very little indeed; but I have got the corroborative evidence of the revelation of the eternal Son. I can well accept His testimony—as a child accept the word of its parent—in things that I cannot penetrate. If I cannot understand, I can accept that testimony about sin, about conversion, about the sacraments, about the church, about salvation, and I can leave these difficulties that lie around the circumference to settle themselves, as they will some day, whilst I look to the great living presence of the Cross, and thereby rise up to the higher life. Indeed, our difficulty is not in such matters; our difficulty is the worldly mind, the stress of life, the giving up of good habits, then a wrong attitude, then no looking towards eternity: our difficulty is not intellectual; it is not theological—believe me, it is moral. It is the terrible temptation of the creature to take the lower life. Oh look up, and you will find religion the real power of life.

Flowers Without Fruit.
Prune thou thy words, the thoughts control
That o'er thee swell and throng;
They will condense within thy soul,
And change to purpose strong.
But he who lets his feelings run
In soft luxurious flow,
Shrinks from hard service must be done,
And faints at every woe.
Faith's meaneast deed more favor bears
Where hearts and wills are weighed,
Than brightest transports choicest prayers
Which bloom their hour and fade.
John Henry Newman.

NEWS AND NOTABILLIA.

Habits are to the soul what the veins and arteries are to the blood—the courses in which it moves.—Horace Bushnell.

The income during the past year of the Ladies' Society for Female Education in India and Africa was £210,568, besides which there had been raised on the foreign field, £8,000.

According to Canon Farar, about 4,000 clergymen of the Church of England are out of employment. Another writer declares that about an equal number are miserably underpaid.

Helen Jay, in Harper's Bazar, says that Susan Warner, author of "The Wide, Wide World," for years, every Sunday, used to row to West Point with her sister to attend service and to teach a Bible class of cadets by whom they were held in great respect.

When Anaxagoras was told of the death of his son, he only said: "I knew he was mortal." So we in all casualties of life should say, I knew my riches were uncertain; that my friend was but a man. Such considerations would soon pacify us, because all our troubles proceed from their being unexpected.—Plutarch.

When Joseph Halsey went among the black Jews of Abyssinia he spoke the word "Jerusalem" while in a group of them. The effect was magical. Their black faces shone with joy. "Oh! do you come from Jerusalem, from the holy city?" "Have you, with your eyes, beheld Mount Zion?" They never wearied of asking such questions.

The circular concerning the holding of a congress of the Jews of the world in Chicago next September is signed by representatives of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the Committee on a Jewish Church Congress. These representatives have sent fraternal greetings to the Jews of all countries.

She that hath a wise husband must entice him to an eternal dearness by the veil of modesty and the grave robes of chastity, the ornament of meekness, and the jewels of faith and charity. She must have no painting, but blushings; her brightness must be purity, and she must shine round about with sweetness and friendship; and she shall be pleasant while she lives and desired when she dies.—Jeremy Taylor.

Many of the Stundists at present in banishment in Transcaucasia are arranging to petition the Russian Minister of the Interior to change their place of exile to Siberia, where agricultural land is plentiful, and where they may have some chance of earning a living. So long as they remain in their present position they will always be in extreme destitution and a tax on the charity of their friends.

What was the sin which doomed Dives to such awful agony? He was no monster of vice. On the contrary, he seems to have lived respectably. It was selfishness that blasted his moral being and finally damned him. He sinned the sin of inhumanity. God gave him the means and opportunity to help a poor brother; but he refused the helping hand, and thought only of his own comfort. Let his terrible fate be a warning to us.

Mrs. Bishop says that 500 Mohammedan missionaries go forth from Cairo every year, who are to be found everywhere in the East. She does not think that Mohammedanism can ever be successfully coped with except by Christian converts who are fully Oriental in mental habit. And she advocates the fostering of the corrupted Coptic Assyrian church, which is not wholly rotten, as a valuable mission enterprise.

The death is announced of Rev. John Miller Ross, general agent of the Presbyterian church of New South Wales. Born in Aberdeenshire in 1826, he studied at the Free Church college, Edinburgh, and was ordained at Ancoats, near Manchester, where he soon became a popular preacher. Having had much to do with the Sustentation fund of the English church, he was invited in 1880 to establish a similar fund in New South Wales.

The three brothers (John James, Andrew and Horatius) Bonar, of Scotland, who lived so long to preach and sing the Gospel, and who have been translated during these recent years, are greatly revered and beloved by universal Christendom. In 1881 a handsome church, erected for Rev. John James Bonar, was opened for public worship by the three brothers—he preaching on "Christ as a Prophet," Dr. Horatius on "Christ as a Priest," and Dr. Andrew on "Christ as a King."

A Berlin despatch says that early last week the newspapers published the report that Prince Max, the twenty-three-year-old son of Prince George, heir presumptive to the Saxon throne, had left his regiment in Oshatz to enter a monastery in Eichstaett. This report was denied promptly, but it has since been found to be substantially correct. Prince Max has resolved to be a priest, and, despite all efforts of his royal relatives, has begun studying in the Eichstaett theological seminary in preparation to taking orders.

Ex-Congressman Alexander Russell Webb, the American Mohammedan, says that he has been securing estimates on lands in Georgia, Alabama and Florida for the formation of Mohammedan colonies, and expects to know very soon with regard to their definite establishment. Both Mr. Webb and his guest, a certain Abdurahman Effendi, of Egypt, are very enthusiastic about the project and seem to think the lands in the south better adapted for colonization purposes than those in any other part of the world.

A singular custom is observed at Auxerre, on Easter Day, the canons, in the very centre of the great church, playing solemnly at ball. Vespers being sung, instead of conducting the bishop to his place, they proceed in order into the nave, the people standing in two long rows to watch. Girding up their skirts a little way, the whole body of clerics await their turn in silence, while the captain of the singing boys casts a ball into the air, as high as he can, along the vaulted roof of the central aisle to be caught by any boy, and tossed again with hand or foot till it passes on to the portly chanters, the chaplains, the canons themselves, who finally play out the game with all the decorum of an ecclesiastical ceremony.

Messages of Help for the Week.

Sunday.—Psalm 84, 1, 2: "How amiable are the tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the courts of the Lord."

Monday.—5th verse. "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee."

Tuesday.—Job, 3, 9, 12: "Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?"

Wednesday.—Matthew, 8, 13: "As thou hast believed, so be it."

Thursday.—Mark, 4, 29: "He putteth in the sickle, because harvest is come."

Friday.—Revelation, 14, 14 and 15: "And I looked and beheld a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud. Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap: for the harvest of the earth is ripe."

Saturday.—Hosea, 14, 9: "Who is wise, he shall understand these things." Read also Proverbs, 1 to 5.

England's Largest Choir.

The English church having the largest choir is that in connection with the Foundling Hospital, Guilford Street, London. Its music and services on Sundays have long been a special attraction, and the choir, which is composed of the greater number of the children themselves, has at various times been assisted by most distinguished singers. The average number of the children on the books of the hospital is about 500, of whom 300 are maintained at Guilford Street and the remainder in the country. Allowing for contingencies, the choir rarely consists of fewer than 200 children's trained voices, in addition to the four or five singers of repute. St. Paul's Cathedral has between forty and fifty men and boys in its choir, the lads being fed, housed, and educated. M. Gounod, the veteran French composer, and one of the foremost of living musicians, visited St. Paul's when he was last in England, heard the choir sing, and declared it to be the finest church choir in the world. Next to St. Paul's, of cathedral choirs, comes that of Durham. Mormon Temple, at Salt Lake City, has the largest choir in the world, being 300 strong.

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No. of Members.	Balance in Bank.	No. of Members.	Balance in Bank.
Oct., 1882.....	880	July, ".....	20,450
Jan., 1883.....	1,134	Jan., 1881.....	24,466
July, ".....	1,737	July, ".....	28,804
Jan., 1884.....	2,216	Jan., 1882.....	32,303
July, ".....	2,960	July, ".....	33,155
Jan., 1885.....	3,558	Jan., 1883.....	34,106
July, ".....	3,646	Jan., 1884.....	36,118
Jan., 1886.....	3,648	Jan., 1885.....	37,171
July, ".....	4,028	Jan., 1886.....	37,915
Jan., 1887.....	4,804	Jan., 1887.....	38,560
July, ".....	5,921	Jan., 1888.....	38,845
Jan., 1888.....	7,111	Jan., 1889.....	39,714
July, ".....	9,558	Jan., 1890.....	40,256
Jan., 1889.....	11,608	Jan., 1891.....	41,002
July, ".....	14,286	Jan., 1892.....	41,902
Jan., 1890.....	17,027		

Membership May 1st, 1893, about 52,000. Balance in Bank, \$680,000.

The total number of applications considered by the Medical Board for the month of April, 1893, was 1500; May, 1890, and for the year ending 31st December, 1892, was 18,247, of whom 17,025 were passed, and 1,222 rejected.

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