

Sunday Reading.

The Catacombs.

* Miles after miles of graves and not one word or sign of the gloominess of death.—*Extract from Prof. Jules De Launay's Lecture.*

Miles after miles of graves,
League after league of tombs,
And not one sign of spectre Death,
Waving his shadowy plumes;
Hope, beautiful and bright,
Spanning the arch above—
Faith, gentle overcoming faith,
And love, God's best gift, love.

For early Christians left
Their darlings to their rest,
As mothers leave their little ones
When the sun gilds the west;
No mourning robes of black,
No crape upon the doors,
For the victorious palm-bearers,
Who tread the golden floors.

Arrayed in garments white,
No mournful dirges pealing,
Bearing green branches in their hands,
Around the tomb they're kneeling;
This was their marching song,
"By death we are not holden,"
And their glorious funeral hymn,
"Jerusalem the golden."

Beautiful girls sleep there,
Waiting the Bridegroom's call,
Each lamp is burning brilliantly,
While the bright shadows fall;
And baby martyrs passed
Straight to the great I AM,
While sturdier soldiers carved o'er each,
"Victor, God's little lamb."

Miles after miles of graves,
League after league of tombs,
The Cross upon each conqueror's brow,
Lights up the Catacombs;
"Tis in this sign we conquer,"
Sounds on the blood-stained track,
"Tis in this sign we conquer,"
We gladly answer back.
—*Golden Hours.*

The Foreign Missionary Meeting at Detroit.

We have thought it would be very acceptable to our readers to have two or three of the speeches given at the recent Anniversaries. The following is the address of the Hon. Mr. Merrill, the chairman at the opening of the meeting:

"One of the leading religious journals of our denomination printed in a recent issue the following paragraph, which I desire to endorse heartily and fully, and recommend to you as the keynote for all we shall do and say at these meetings. 'Nobody can doubt that the one great missionary necessity among Baptist missionaries and churches is the power of a controlling missionary conviction—a conviction of the supreme importance of the missionary work in its length and breadth, and of the Divine obligation resting upon every Christian to do his part in promoting it.'

What are some of the considerations that show this obligation?
First of all, and above all, and including all—

Jesus Christ commanded it. Field Marshal Wellington was right when he asked a friend, who raised a question whether it was well or necessary to spend so much money or so many men in the cause of missions,

"What are your marching orders?"
Let me read you those orders, soldiers of Christ, as I find them recorded:

"As my father has sent Me even so send I you."

"And He said unto them, thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo! I am with you always even unto the end of the world."

Do I not rightly say this obligation is upon us first of all and above all else because the Master commanded.

But if the son of God had not commanded such a mission, the condition of the world sunk in sin and ignorance and suffering, would compel all unselfish and benevolent hearts to do what is possible to preach the good news of salvation from sin and death

to open the blind eyes and unstop the deaf ears.

The gospel of Christ is the gospel of love and love goes out from self to others.

Jesus in teaching his townsmen, said; the spirit of the Lord is upon me because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor.

He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised and proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Christianity is not satisfied with that benevolence that protects animals from cruelty or that averts punishment from criminals. It recognizes all men as our neighbors and stretches out her all-embracing hand of mercy to the ends of the earth.

A weighty consideration why we should renew our zeal and devotion to this cause, is that the Christian religion is the only effectual means that mankind has found to raise men and women from the degradation into which heathenism has sunk them. Christianity alone makes new men.

The sacred books which priests have read for ages to their followers contain poetry, truthful maxims and much that is good, but they have no power over the people.

Let me read you the recent testimony of a traveller who sees and portrays with wonderful distinctness the failures of false religions, but whose eyes are not open to see what Christianity has done and is doing to raise depraved men.

At an interview in his library since his recent return from India, Mr. M. C. Conway said, 'Along those shelves you will find all the sacred books of the East over which I have pored and exulted for years, the noble aspirations of those ancient writers, the glowing poetry of the Vedas, the sublime imagery of their seers have become part of my life. Nor can I ever sufficiently acknowledge my indebtedness for the spiritual life which they have imparted.'

But when I went to the great cities, the pilgrim cities to which throng every year millions of those who profess to follow the faith of the men who wrote those books and mingled with the vast procession of worshippers at the shrines sacred to the deities whose praises are sung by the Hindoo poets, then alas! the contrast between the real and the ideal was heart-breaking. In all those teeming myriads of worshippers not even one man, nor even one woman, seemed to entertain the shadow of a conception of anything ideal, or spiritual, or religious, or even mythological, in their ancient creed; not one glimmer of the great thoughts of their poets and sages lightened their darkened temples.

To all of them the great false god which they worshipped, a hulk of roughly carved wood or stone, appeared, to be the authoritative presentment of some terrible demon or invisible power who would treat them cruelly if they did not give him some melted butter; of religion in a spiritual sense, there is none. If you wish for religion you will not find it Brahminism.

The same is true of China and Japan, Buddhism has no regenerating power.

The same is true of Confucius. The wise maxims and beautiful sayings of this great man fail to convert men from the error of their ways. They profess to believe them; they laugh at the idea of practicing them.

They lack regenerating power, but Christianity has a regenerating power. It opens up a new life to man, it lifts him into a new state of existence, it educates, it civilizes, it ennobles.

Our great American historian in a recent letter remarks: 'Certainly our great united commonwealth is the child of Christianity. It may with equal truth be asserted that modern civilization sprung into life with our religion, and faith in its principles is the life boat on which humanity has at divers times escaped the most threatening perils.' This Christianity we have to give to the world. Already a profound impression has been made.

Some years since that wonderful man, Chunder Sen, the prophet of the Brahma Somaj, was obliged to acknowledge that 'the spirit of Christianity has already pervaded the whole atmosphere of Indian society, and we

breathe, think, feel and move in a Christian atmosphere. Native society is being roused, enlightened and reformed under the influence of Christianity.'

And in a speech at Calcutta he said: 'Our hearts are touched, conquered, overcome by a higher power, and this power is Christ.'

Christ, not the British Government, rules India. No one but Christ has deserved the precious diadem of the Indian crown, and he will have it.

It is no longer a problem. For myself I can say I feel no misgivings. I fully believe Christ has come into India, and taken possession of India's heart. Some day India will be Christ's, but it is not yet.

I hate the idea of conjugating Christ's success in India in the future tense. It is a thing already achieved. I say emphatically that the spirit of Christ has gone into the depths of India's heart. I declare that the sanctifying and civilizing influences of Christ's life and teachings are wonders in this land.

After several others had spoken, at the previous sittings in the evening meeting, the Hon. Robert O. Fuller who presided said:

'We hear it frequently said that our missionaries are not respected by merchants. Five years ago I was on the mission field. I was at Ongole. I was there on the Sabbath when candidates were examined. I had an interpreter who told me the questions and answers. I can say that the church was more thorough and careful about examining the candidates than we are, as a rule, in this country. Out of 35 only 22 were accepted. When a famine came to India the Duke of Buckingham advocated the cause of famishing people. He placed large amounts in the hands of Dr. Clough. I saw that Dr. Clough had received from the Duke \$125,000. If that was not a recognition, an endorsement of a man, I don't know what an endorsement is.'

Dr. Clough then gave the following very interesting sketch of the field and work in which he has been so successfully engaged:—

'I am not here to seek applause. I am here to tell you something of our work. You will all remember the Lone Star mission, and how often it was on the point of being given up. In 1864 I was appointed a missionary and designated to the Telugus. I reached India in 1865. I found just 19 Christians. The outside circumstances were discouraging. The cholera had broken out and the people were turning hopelessly to their gods. I felt something must be done. I did not know but four to six words of the language. I suggested that there might be tracts. The next day I had Coolies carry a basket of books; and as we passed along the streets, I asked every man to take one and read it, or get some one to read it for him. Thus two or three weeks were passed until 7,000 were distributed. If no good came to others—good came to me. I then commenced to repeat scriptures to the people. Then I wrote home asking for privilege to remain among the Telugus. There were indications of good among the people. These came to believe that we were messengers from the living God. He told of the conversion of a priest, who brought his idols to exchange them for a Bible. The man became an earnest Christian and continued to labor until Dr. Clough left for home. He has since—according to his own earnest desire—passed to heaven. Others were soon converted.'

In 1866, upon my request, I was permitted to go to Ongole to labor. He told of his desire to gain the learned and the wealthy; but God in his Providence and by his word turned him to the poor.

I saw in Ongole fine intelligent looking men who could talk English. They had taken a full collegiate course and been graduated at Madras. They had studied the English facts and essayists. They are found everywhere; you could find also all grades of education.

I felt that I wanted to get these educated men into our churches. I felt that we might become independent, and in all ways do the mission work. I felt that it would be more pleasant to speak of poor people, and that you would more fully rejoice. But I started a camp-meeting among the poor;

word passed forth. People came, they wanted to remain and learn. We taught, preached and prayed with the result that twenty-eight were really converted. We baptized them. The results have proved that we were right. Five of them are to-day preachers. Not one of the whole twenty-eight has given us the least trouble. After returning home, the educated men approached him. They had before said: we are going to become christians. We have no book like your bible; but we want to wait for our women, who there, have their own way as they do in this country. Theoretically, they don't have their own way, but practically they do. But now they said: we hear of what you have been doing—working among the poor and outcasts.

Caste holds those Hindoos in firmer grasp. It binds them in relentless chains. I gave them to understand that God wanted the poor as well as rich. I settled the matter by saying that the place where I had been was forty miles away. After a few months, ten of the poor people where I had been came to Ongole, professed faith, and wanted to be baptized. Next morning they were presented to the church, with due caution about receiving them. The church and he were satisfied that they were converted. Reluctantly—because of what it involved—he baptized them. The higher class decided against Dr. Clough's work. Upon returning home he went into his house, and was depressed. He opened his Bible. His eyes first lighted on these words: (1 Cor. 1:26). 'Ye see your calling etc.'

He thought, if these Brahmins were converted they would think they were doing the Almighty a favor. His wife came in; she said: It seems that it is God's plan to save these poor people. They had made an agreement that one of them should not have the blues when the other did. She related that she, too, had taken up a Bible; it opened to the same passage referred to. From that time, we felt that we must labor earnestly for the poor. Come what would, American Baptists had got to fill the bill. So, foot the bills and rejoice that you have these to pay. Thereafter the first year I baptized from 60 to 70; the next year 200; the next, 300; the next, 400. In 1882 the church had grown to 2,00. At that time you gave me \$50,000 and four men. In 1876 we did not baptize any one. For a dreadful famine swept from 200 to 400 miles. In two years one-fourth of the people died, 6,000, 000 in the aggregate.

The people tried to appease their gods. No help came. He felt that he must care for the members of the church. A good man offered help. In order to help the people in their extremity the government started an enterprise of digging a canal. Dr. Clough was sought to do the work. He consented if government would furnish all he asked—houses, sappers and miners, stores, medicines, doctor and all other needful things and men. The houses were built. Then he sent out forty men with money and hired people to come. Some 3,000 were brought in, and were put to work under his charge. When the men earned a little they started home to give the money to father and mother; and sent others. On Sundays he preached to them, as did also his assistant preachers.

Distress was renewed through blight. He called for more help. The editor of a Madras paper was a great friend. The cause was presented to the English people, and a most generous response came. Matters were placed in his hands. Grain was bought and planted, and when it sprang up the locusts came and again was the grain destroyed.

He told of the close of the famine, and of the religious work following; of the efforts of Catholics to buy the people seeking baptism; of his holding them back, until Dr. Warren sent word that the people should be baptized. Since then the thousands of whom you have heard, have been baptized. He related an incident of a dying native Christian, who could not recognize his wife or son, or Dr. Clough, but who replied when asked: Do you know Jesus? Yes. Is Jesus with you? Yes. Are you happy? Yes. Do you want to go? Yes. So he died.

High positions are like the summits of high steep rocks; eagles and reptiles alone can reach them.—*Madame Necker.*

Prayer is so mighty an instrument that no one ever mastered all its keys. They sweep along the infinite scale of man's want and God's goodness.—*Hugh Miller.*

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1884.

SECOND QUARTER.

Lesson XII.—JUNE 22, 1884.

OBEDIENCE TO LAW.

Romans xiii. 1-10.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 7-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers."—Rom. xiii. 1.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

1. The Lesson.

2. Governments of Divine Appointment.—Ex. xviii. 21-26; Deut. xvi. 18; Prov. vii. 15, 16.

3. Jesus and Tribute Money.—Matt. xxii. 16-22.

4. Honor to Rulers.—1 Pet. ii. 13-18.

5. Christ's Example of Submission.—Matt. xxvi. 51-57.

6. Paul's Example of Submission.—Acts xxiii. 1-5.

7. Christ's Prayer for Brotherly Love.—John xvii. 20-26.

8. Christ's Prayer for Brotherly Love.—John xvii. 20-26.

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