

The September number of the *Methodist Magazine* contained a finely illustrated article describing the present condition of these Seven Churches, from which we take the following account of one of them, the Church of Laodicea, of which only the ruins are shown in our cut.

More than forty miles to the east of Ephesus was situated Laodicea, now known as *Eski-Kissar*, or the Old Castle. At an early period it became the seat of a Christian Church. Its inhabitants were distinguished by their successful cultivation of the arts and sciences, and especially by the famous medical school which they supported. It was owing, perhaps, to their cold philosophical culture that those among them who had embraced Christianity called forth the rebuke of the Saviour by their "lukewarmness."

In 363 Laodicea was gill of so much importance that one of those gatherings of bishops and priests, known as Councils, was held here, and determined the arrangement of the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments. In 1255 it was ravaged by the Turks, again in 1402, when it was literally razed to the ground. It is now a pile of mouldering ruins. "It is even more solitary," says a traveller, "than Ephesus—sitting in widowed loneliness—its walls grass-grown—its temple desolate—its very name perished! The threatening is accomplished; it now stands rejected of God and deserted of man—its glory a ruin—its name a reproach."

In the East, under Ottoman rule, a blight seems to rest upon the fairest and most favoured lands on earth. The glory of the Seven Churches of Asia has departed; the candlesticks are removed out of their places, and thick darkness has settled upon the land. The beautiful myths of Homer and the sublime Gospel of Christ are alike forgotten, and the Turkish mosque has superseded both Pagan fane and Christian temple. As we contemplate these things we cannot help asking, Is it forever? Is there no resurrection for those nations? no regeneration for those lands? Yet, though oppression and superstition may have crushed and degraded the inhabitants, nature is eternal, and the golden sunlight falls, and the sapphire seas expand, and the purple mountains rise as fair and lovely as of yore. The valleys of the Orontes and Cayster and the slopes of Lebanon are no less beautiful and fertile to-day than in the time of their greatest prosperity and glory.

The Christian nations of the West are called upon by every principle of moral obligation and of human sympathy to reciprocate the benefits they originally received from the East. Christian schools and Christian missions are sowing the seeds of new and nobler civilization. The candlesticks may be relighted in the Seven Churches. The crescent may ere long give place to the banner of the cross upon the battle-plate of Zion, the long-rejected Messiah be adored amid the scenes of His passion, and Jerusalem become again a praise in the earth.

OUR PUBLICATIONS.

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| Christian Guardian, weekly |\$2 00 |
| Methodist Magazine, monthly | 2 00 |
| Guardian and Magazine together | 3 50 |
| The Wesleyan, Halifax, weekly | 2 00 |
| Sunday School Banner, monthly | 0 60 |
| Berean Leaf Quarterly | 0 06 |
| Quarterly Review Service. By the year, | |
| 24 cents a dozen; \$2.00 per 100. Per | |
| quarter, 6 cents a dozen; per 100 | ... 0 50 |
| Home & School, 8 pp. 4to, fortnightly, | |
| single copies | 0 30 |
| Less than 20 copies | 0 25 |
| Over 20 copies | 0 22 |
| Pleasant Hours Issued to alternate with | |
| Home & School. Same size and price. | |
| Berean Leaves, 100 copies per month | ... 5 50 |
| Sunbeam, fortnightly, less than 20 copies | 0 15 |
| 20 copies and upwards | 0 12 |
| Happy Days, fortnightly, less than 20 | |
| copies | 0 15 |
| 20 copies and upwards | 0 12 |
| Address— | WILLIAM BRIGGS, |
| | Publisher, Toronto. |
| C. W. COATES, | S. P. HUETIS, |
| 2 Bleury Street, | Meth. Book Room, |
| Montreal, Que. | Halifax, N.S. |

Sunday School Banner.

W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, NOVEMBER, 1886.

Report of the Sunday-School Board of the Methodist Church.

PREPARED FOR THE GENERAL CONFERENCE, 1886.

We give in abridged form the substance of this Report, omitting the paragraphs on Missions, Temperance and Sunday-school Statistics given in the October number of the BANNER.

GRANTS TO POOR SCHOOLS.

Special prominence has been given to what may be called the missionary operations of the Board, in promoting the establishment of new schools and assisting poor schools in remote and destitute neighbourhoods, by means of grants of books and papers from the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund. The growth of this Fund, which is sustained by one collection taken up each year in each school, has been very gratifying. During the first four years of its existence its income averaged \$524 per year; during the second four years, \$785 per year. During the last four years the income has averaged \$2,044 per year.