

determination in effort, full faith in ultimate victory. There have been undertones of doubt and fear. There has been disaster in some quarters. There have been much asperity of criticism, much fault-finding, and sighs and groans of pessimistic despair. But these symptoms count for little when we mark the onward march of the Gospel army. The notes of preparation are heard the wide world over. Languages long strange to civilized ears are now made to bear the glad tidings of Salvation. The Gospel is preached or read in upwards of three hundred languages and dialects. Corea itself has at last opened its doors to the Gospel; and Japan is rising into the light with a steadiness and a rapidity quite unprecedented in the world's history. Generally speaking, the same notes of good courage and hopefulness come from all the great mission fields; not more, or very little more from Japan than from China and India. We have had before us a thrilling narrative of conversions in one of the Scotch Missions in India, where the converts are flocking in, literally in hundreds. There were years of sowing, and now has come the reaping-time. Happily the reaping and the sowing go on together: the new converts ever manifesting great zeal in the propagation of the faith. They "tell others the story" with a freshness and fervour that would put to shame the dulness of older disciples. This instance is but one of many that come to us from all the great mission fields. Baptist, Methodist, Congregational, Episcopalian Societies, as well as our Presbyterian Boards, share the same blessing and are inspired with the same noble zeal and enthusiasm. Let us thank God and take courage; and continue to be fellow-workers with God in the noblest of causes.

### Brieflet No. 9.

#### BATHS OF CARACALLA, AND COLUMBARIUM OF CESAR'S HOUSEHOLD.

THEY say it is a long road that has no turning. We have been walking for a week in nearly a straight line, turning aside only a few paces to look at the Pantheon and the Quirinal. We are now nearing the entrance to a much longer road

than the 'Flaminian' and one invested with far greater interest. It is the "Queen of Roman Roads"—The *Via Appia*, now called the "Appian Way." Leaving the Coliseum at a right angle, we pass under the magnificent triple arch of Constantine, into the *via Gregoria*, having on our right the Palatine, crowned with a monastery, in front of which three large palm trees are waving in the wind. Turning to the left, we are soon abreast of the *Baths of Caracalla*—a vast group of ruins, a mile in circumference. This was one of the most splendid of many similar institutions in Rome that have a great deal to answer for in corrupting public morals, by inducing indolence, frivolity and effeminacy, in ways that polite ears would not care to hear of. Here were cold, tepid, and warm baths, swimming and shower baths, to accommodate 1600 bathers at one time, with their 'sweating-rooms,' 'perfuming-rooms,' reading-rooms, boxing-rooms, lecture-halls, picture galleries, gymnasiums, tennis-courts, and what not; while outside were extensive gardens with fountains and statuary.

We are on the great highway that forms the chief entrance into Rome from the south, shut in by very high walls, and crowded with conveyances, chiefly huge waggons drawn by two yoke of oxen, or by as many mules. Beyond these gloomy walls; on either side of the road, are the cities of the dead—the *Catacombs*, with their 350 miles of subterranean galleries, containing the remains of seven millions of people, on the right, and on the left, some very perfect specimens of *Columbaria*, in which the ashes of countless thousands more are kept in the storied 'urn,' awaiting the great day of assize. I came on the latter accidentally. Seeing a bell rope overhanging where a flight of steps led to the top of the wall, my attention was attracted to a notice over the door which, though I could not understand it, led me to ring the bell. It was quickly answered by a porter, greedy for his fee, who led the way through an old vineyard to the top of a hill. Halting in front of an arched door-way, he took from his pocket a key, turned the lock, and opening the heavy iron door, motioned me to enter. Well, I never!—I looked down into a vaulted chamber the like of which I had never seen, nor ever heard of. It