

was dedicated to Titus Vespasian, and to the people; was completed when Trajan was Consul; was by him consecrated; and that it occupied twelve years in the erection. This building, the citizens around us call the *NEW AMPHITHEATRE*; for you will perceive from the above inscription, that it is but a few years since it was finished. This, and other sumptuous edifices, indicate more clearly than any words your guide could use, the wealth, the luxury, and the licentiousness of the inhabitants of Laodicea.

In this gay and pleasure-loving city a Church of Jesus Christ was planted, probably by the Apostle Paul, between thirty and forty years ago. In an early period of its history the members were wont to meet, for worship and Christian intercourse, in the house of a brother, whose name was Nymphas. Epaphras, from the neighboring city of Colosse, a friend of the Apostle Paul, and a "servant of Christ," to whom we have before referred, frequently ministered to them in holy things. The Apostle himself addressed an important letter to them, which he also wished to be read to the Christians at Colosse; that letter, there is reason to believe, is identical with that addressed, or supposed to be addressed, to the Ephesians. The influence of that wealth, however, of which we see such abundant indications, and of those splendid theatres, which we noticed, and of those gorgeous temples, whose stately columns meet our eye on every side, has been too strong for the piety of these Laodiceans. Their love to God and goodness has cooled; they have not the relish they once had for spiritual things; they are become conformed to the world; they are proud of their wealth and respectability; they are not likely to make any inroads upon the gross heathenism around them. Whilst they, and the rest of the citizens, are intent upon their business and their pleasures, and whilst we are gazing upon the public buildings which attract our attention, a messenger quietly arrives in the city, bringing from the exile of Patmos, the last surviving Apostle, the following startling letter, (see Rev. iii. 14-22).

How pregnant with meaning is every expression in that message! To notice one—"So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth." This refers to the well-known fact, that tepid water tends to produce sickness at the stomach, and an inclination to vomit. Now, call to mind the fact that this region abounds in springs of tepid water, which bubbles up on the mountain, in the plain, and in the mud of the rivers. There are also pestilential grottos, from which issues the most noisome effluvia. These the mass of the inhabitants regard as apertures of hell, openings for deadly fumes to rise up from the realms of Pluto. Warm water, mud, fire, pumice-stone, have been vomited up from the bowels of the earth, and form, as we see, in many places the very crust of ground on which these people live, and move, and have their being. With what meaning and emphasis, then, must come to such a people, in such a place, the plain language of our Lord, "Because thou art lukewarm, I will spue thee out of My mouth!"

What is the result of this message? As to its immediate result we have no knowledge; but, to ascertain its ultimate result, let eighteen centuries roll away, and let us pay a *SECOND VISIT TO LAODICEA*.

Ah, how changed! On that hill, whose summit we saw crowned with an Acropolis, and whose sloping sides were covered with stately edifices, no trace of houses or of churches can we see. You look in vain for a single inhabitant. Nay, there is *one*. Do you see his ears peeping over that brow on your left? It is a fox, whom our visit has disturbed, and who is evidently surprised and indignant at our intrusion. The ruins of theatres—those theatres which witnessed the diversions and echoed the applause of congregated thousands—abound: those theatres, the attractions of which were such a snare to the professing Christians, and for the sake of which they heartlessly left Christ standing at the door, and knocking in vain for admission. The whole of the district, once most fertile and