

that can in any way be laid under tribute to the glorious work of preaching the Gospel. During student days good habits of study should be formed, and care should be taken that nothing is lost after college helps are no

longer available, and then the ministry, full of consecration and well trained will be an ever increasing power, and we shall hear less and less about the decay of the pulpit, and the loss of its influence.

THE CATACOMBS OF ROME.

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Among the grounds not far from Rome, and chiefly along the great roads leading from the city, may be met here and there a low-browed opening like a fox's burrow, almost concealed by the long grass, and overshadowed by the cypress or gray-leaved ilex. Entering this opening by a descending path with winding steps we find ourselves in a narrow corridor, four or five feet in width, and of a man's height. The light admitted by the mouth of the cavern is sufficient for the first part of the way. As we proceed, openings cut in the mantled roof admit a struggling light, and give a short relief from the heavy, impure air. We are in the catacombs of Rome, and here, on either side, in recesses hewn in the walls, have lain the bones of the early Christians of Rome, slumbering in this subterranean cemetery for sixteen centuries.

As we follow along the vaulted corridor, now gently ascending, it may be, now descending, we find it opening into frequent chambers, and crossed ever and again by other intricate passages—chambers and passages alike lined with silent sleepers, "each in his narrow cell forever laid."

How are we to realize the prodigious fact in presence of which we stand? Here, beside this ancient Mistress of the World, lies another city with almost 700 miles of tomb-

lined streets and numerous alleys yet to be explored. Bryant has said

"All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom."

So is it at Rome. For every one who walks her streets to-day hundreds of her former citizens sleep in this vast city of the dead, outside the circle of her walls. Here lie the dead of ten generations in four or five millions of coffins.

As one looks about on this "mortuary creation," more like the weird product of a dream than an actual existence, he asks who were the builders, and what the belief or circumstance that led to its creation?

One attributes these galleries of tombs to a prehistoric race of Troglodytes who loathed the light of day, and burrowed like moles in the earth. A certain MacFarlane has an eloquent apostrophe to the old Etrurians, by whom he imagines they were excavated 1,200 years before the Christian era. So much for fancy.

The builders were the Roman Christians of the early centuries of our era. Until a few years ago it was believed that the catacombs were at first quarries, whence materials for Roman edifices were taken, which the Christians adapted to their purpose. It was also commonly supposed that here they celebrated their worship