

[The following letter, in the peculiar and happy style of the writer, will be found interesting. His reference to the words spoken by the Savior to Peter at Cesarea Phillipi may express his own views; but we need scarcely say that we materially disagree with them. Rome claims authority from the words quoted; but she does not possess the authority and power thus claimed; and it is questionable if she will continue to fight and labor and struggle "to the end of time," to "sustain the position of 'the only true church.'"]

(Correspondence of the New York Tribune.)

THE HOLY LAND.

BALDWINVILLE, Galilee, Sept., '67.

The real name of this place is Cesarea Phillipi, but I call it Baldwinville because it sounds better and I can recollect it easier. One of the great drawbacks to this country, is its distressing names that nobody can get the hang of. You may travel here a month, and when you get through you cannot tell where you have been, to save your life, unless you are a living, breathing geography. You may make a stagger of pronouncing these names, but they will bring any Christian to grief that tries to spell them. I have an idea that if I can only simplify the nomenclature of this country, it will be of the greatest service to Americans who may travel here in the future. Galilee is well enough, I don't propose to change that, but I can't accept of Cesarea Phillipi—it uses up too much alphabet, and there is very little music in it any how. Baldwinville is much better.

The ruins here are not very interesting. There are the massive walls of the great square building that was once the citadel; there are many ponderous old arches that are so smothered with debris that they barely project above the ground; there are heavy-walled sewers through which the beautiful brook of which Jordan is born still runs; in the hill-side are the substructions of a costly marble temple that Herod the Great built here—patches of its handsome mosaic floors still remain; there is a quaint old stone bridge that was here before Herod's time, may be; scattered everywhere, in the paths and in the woods, are Corinthian capitals, broken porphyry pillars, and little fragments of sculpture; and up yonder in the precipice where the fountain gushes out, are well-worn Greek inscriptions over niches in the rock where in ancient times the Greeks, and after them the Romans, worshiped the sylvan god Pan. But trees and bushes grow above many of these ruins now, the miserable huts of a little gang of filthy Arabs are perched upon the broken masonry of antiquity, the whole place has a sleepy, stupid, rural look about it, and one can hardly bring himself to believe that a busy, substantially-built city once existed here, even two thousand years ago. The place was nevertheless the scene of an event whose effects have added page after page and volume after volume to the world's history. For in this place Christ stood when he said to Peter:

"Thou art Peter; and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

On those little sentences have been built up the mighty edifice of the Church of Rome; in them lie the authority for the imperial power of the Popes over temporal affairs, and their god-like power to curse a soul or wash it white from sin. To sustain the position of "the only true church," which Rome claims was thus conferred upon her, she has fought and labored and struggled for many a century, and will continue to keep herself busy in the same line to the end of time. The memorable words I have quoted give to this ruined city about all the interest it possesses to people of the present day.

It seems curious enough to us to be standing on ground that was actually pressed by the feet of the Savior. The situation is suggestive of a reality and a tangibility that seem at variance with the vagueness, and mystery, and ghostliness that one naturally attaches to the character of a God. I cannot comprehend yet that I am sitting where a God has stood, and looking upon the brook and the mountains that that God looked upon, and am surrounded by dusky men and women whose ancestors

saw Him, and even talked with Him, face to face, and carelessly, just as they would have done with any other stranger. I cannot comprehend this; the gods of my understanding have been always hidden in clouds and very far away.

To be Continued.

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