

Sunday Reading.

A GREAT MOSLEM TEMPLE.

The Mosque of Omar and its Traditions—The Character of Omar.

The great Mosque of Omar on the site of Solomon's Temple on Mount Moriah, is regarded as the most magnificent building in the city of David.

Some thirty years ago, it was strictly forbidden that any one, not a Moslem, should enter the mosque, or even tread on the ground on which it stands.

Religious services are held unceasingly in the mosque. On festivals, such as the "great feast" (the first after Ramadan, the "fasting month") the mosque of Omar, is the gathering place of many thousands of the country people.

On their homeward journey, these rural pilgrims, especially the women sing the songs of joy peculiar to the Moslems, in which they celebrate their visit to "the rock," from the top of which they believe their prophet took his way to heaven.

The mosque is now in a state of partial decay. The gate to the right is the main entrance, and adjoins the western wall of the city, known as "the walling place of the Jews."

Omar, Abu-Hafsah Ibn-al Khatib, was the second of the great Moslem Caliphs, and lived in the sixth century.

He was the third cousin of Abdallah, the father of Mohammed, and in his early career was a violent enemy of the prophet, but afterwards became a staunch friend.

Omar, after Mohammed's death, was proclaimed Caliph, and he became prime minister, afterwards succeeding to the Caliphate. In his reign Syria was conquered for the Crescent, Jerusalem was besieged and captured and the keys of the Holy City were handed to Omar in person by the messenger of Sophronius the high priest.

All the other important cities of Palestine capitulated in rapid succession. Omar's nature, however, was sincere and not all were dealt with as leniently by his victorious armies as the people of Jerusalem.

Many stories of his remarkable sense of justice are preserved in Moslem literature. He was assassinated in the mosque at Medina by a Persian slave named Abu Lulu Firuz and was buried in that city close to the tombs of Mohammed and Abu-Bekr.

Omar was the first ruler who kept armies under pay, and assigned pensions to faithful public servants. He is also said to be the first to establish a municipal police force and to promulgate laws defining the relations and the responsibilities of masters and servants.

The Cost of a Slack Wire.

In the course of a recent discussion on the propriety of spending public money for repairs, a certain vote was opposed. One of the advocates of the expenditure related the following incident: A few years ago there was a serious accident on the Lachine canal at Montreal.

Indeed, the whole loss was estimated roughly at scarcely less than one million and a quarter dollars. The speaker asked his hearers to consider how much would have been saved by spending a quarter of a dollar in having that wire tightened before the catastrophe occurred.

ca'astrophe. When in the closet the Christian finds that some fault or secret sin interrupts communion with his God he should never disregard it, but examine himself to see where he is in fault.

THE WORSHIP OF "KWANON."

Once a year the people about Swatow, in China, go to a temple on a small island near-by to worship the Chinese "Queen of Heaven," to whom mercantile men think they owe their success upon sea and land.

"The temple dedicated to the goddess stands high, and is reached by a flight of stone steps. It is highly ornamented in flowers, fowls fishes and beasts, the ridge-pole being crowned by a great dragon.

To the right of this is a huge paper image, its head as high as the top of the temple, its face and hands as hideous as you can imagine.

"Within the temple, at the farther end, sits the goddess in a chair, with a heavy canopy above, all elaborately wrought in silk.

Beyond these altars are mats upon which the worshippers kneel after having made their offerings; and gongs are beaten with a deafening noise while they prostrate themselves before the idol.

"We turn aside and wander a short distance from the temple, where we find a number of women whom we tell of our God. Some listen, others examine our dress and inquire after our families.

"There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim., 2, 5.

"He is able to save them to the uttermost that cometh unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7, 25.

"These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through His name." John 20, 31.

"By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Eph. 2, 8.

"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

It is more than twenty years ago since Bishop Wilberforce, riding with Earl Granville to Mr. Leveson-Gower's seat in Surrey, where Mr. Gladstone so often stays, fell from his horse and was killed.

Old Paperforties. An English paper names fresh laid eggs as the most unusual offering ever taken in a church.

The first collection from the natives of New Guinea, at a meeting held in Port Moresby, in aid of the London Missionary Society, included: 325 spears, sixty-five shell armlets, ninety-two bows, 180 arrows, besides shells, drums, shell necklaces, feather and other ornaments, valued at £10.

NEWS AND NOTABILLIA. The Catacombs of Rome contain the remains of about six million people. In England three hundred years ago, anyone absent from church on Sunday was fined one shilling.

There are 9,000,000 English-speaking people who profess no particular religion, and there are 1,100,000 atheists. The 1895 International Convention of Christian Endeavor Societies is to be held at San Francisco.

Canon Edwards Cust, Archdeacon of Richmond—no relation of the Dean of York—entered the other day on his ninety-ninth year, so that the united ages of the Dean of Ripon and himself, whose birthdays occurred in the same week, are 175 years.

In 1850, it is said, there were about ten Norwegian pastors in the United States. Now the Norwegians in the North-west have three large church bodies with 682 pastors and 1,705 congregations.

In Christiania, in Norway, there is an average population of 13,000 for each church, and in Copenhagen an average of 26,000; or, including the suburbs of Frederiksberg, even of 28,000.

A touching old rural custom still prevails in the western parts of France during the harvest season. On the edge of a field bordering the highway a sheaf of grain is left standing, to which all the peasants of the village contribute, and which is called "the stranger's sheaf," as it is the property of the first tramp or other homeless wayfarer who may care to carry it away and profit by its price.

The Christian World, of London, has been publishing a series of articles on the Stundists. In the last number it gives a summary of the statistics which is of great interest.

Archdeacon Sinclair is very fond of riding and cycling. As London does not afford the opportunities he would like for the indulgence in these exhilarating exercises, he makes the most of his annual six weeks of holiday.

A Chicago correspondent of the London Church Times says: Down in the grounds of the Columbian Exposition a few days ago an earnest Church woman said to me—"Talk about Catholicity and Christian unity! You should have been at the little church in Woodlawn near the Fair grounds last Sunday, to have seen a practical illustration of both."

The church beadle is about to be revived, says an English paper. In the old times he was a very gorgeous and important individual; but for a long time now he has been regarded with a feeling not at all proportionate to that which his dimensions and his gilt buttons ought to inspire.

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HIS FIRST EXTEMPORE SERMON.

The Incident that led a Clergyman to Abandon Written Discourses.

Rev. Arthur Robin writes in the illustrated Church News—"The first extempore sermon I ever preached was to an itinerant congregation of two dogs. It came to pass in this wise. Thirty years ago it took me a whole day to set down a sermon in some sort of shape. I used to write for the pulpit all Monday. Bishop Wilberforce told me he had never heard the like thereof.

On Wednesday evening, in the glorious summer time of 1867, when I was a curate-in-charge in hospitable, picturesque Burnham, just by the Beeches, I was going to testify at the close of the day to the buccolics on a village green.

Between manner and matter, happily for me, there was no one fit to judge, and because of the success of the full-dress rehearsal with the dogs I was just a little above myself.

"I never stopped for an idea nor paused for a word. It I could thus, without once coming to grief, address an unconverted world, through a St. Bernard and a pug, in what was a faultless flow, why, I then thought me, should I otherwise go to the dogs, it contemptuous of the familiar written word within my pocket. I preached with all this passion in the little school-house on the green? The dogs had behaved quite beautifully. My natural timidity had never been known to have begotten an impromptu yet."

The Seed and the Fruit. When the gospel seed is sown the harvest is sure, but it may be long in coming and may appear in unexpected places.

When the gospel seed is sown the harvest is sure, but it may be long in coming and may appear in unexpected places. A lady in Melbourne, Australia, had proof of this recently. She says: "I was visiting in the hospital one day in connection with the Flower Mission, when I noticed a new case, a woman with a dark skin and very dark hair. Thinking she was asleep I passed on, but on coming down the ward again she opened her eyes and stretched out her hands for some of my flowers. I gave her some, and found she was one of the Syrian women who carry about small things for sale in the streets. When I asked her it she knew my Saviour her face lit up so brightly, and she said, 'Oh, yes!'"

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