



ST. PETER'S AT ROME.

The Wonders to be Found Within This Great Church.

Adjoining the Vatican is St. Peter's, the grandest church in the whole world, and one to which it is necessary to return again and again in order that its suburb proportions may be realized. We often hear it called the Basilica, which name is also applied to six other churches in Rome. The reason for this that these seven buildings occupy the site, and follow the general construction of seven of the ancient Basilicas, or courts of justice in which law was administered.

When Christian churches came to be built it was found that these "royal halls,"—where kings acted as judges—were admirably adapted to the performing of the services. The tribune, a semi-circular addition to the main hall, where the judge, or king, and officials sat, made a chancel, while the same railing as now shut it off from the rest of the building.

The seat of the judge became the bishop's chair, and where the heathen altar stood was placed the altar of the true God. The nave was covered with a roof, the wide aisles with their columns remained the same, while in many churches the side galleries, one for men and one for women, were retained.

So far back as the year 60 a building dedicated to St. Peter stood, above the spot where his body had been buried after his crucifixion on the Janiculum hill. Constantine the Great built a basilica here, in which Charlemagne was crowned, upon Christmas day in the year 800.

In the fifteenth century the present church was begun, and after undergoing many changes as to plans, under various great architects—one of whom was Raphael—it was entrusted to the skill of Michael Angelo, and after his death the work was continued without material change in his plans, to its completion. It is remarkable that Michael Angelo was seventy-two years of age when this great honor was accorded him.

The time occupied in the construction of this glorious temple was three hundred and fifty years; and forty-three popes had sway in Rome during the period.

One is ashamed ever after to acknowledge that the first feeling upon entering St. Peter's is one of disappointment, and yet such is the almost universal experience. The proportions are so perfect and every detail is so admirably adjusted to the whole, that it is only after repeated visits that its vastness is appreciated. One of the first evidences of its grandeur is our admiration for two small beautiful angels that uphold a basin for holy water, and as we walk toward them they appear to increase in size, till a closer approach shows them to be six feet in height.

A little beyond the central door, let into the pavement is a circular piece of porphyry, and upon this the Roman Emperors stood to be crowned. Beyond this, there are marks in the pavement that show the length of St. Paul's, London, the Cathedral at Florence, the Milan Cathedral and the Mosque of St. Sophia, at Constantinople, so that comparison in size with St. Peter's may readily be made.

As we walk toward the dome, upon our right in the nave, is the bronze figure of St. Peter with the foot extended and the hand, with three of the fingers, raised in benediction, signifying the three persons of the Trinity. The toe of the extended foot is worn thin with the touch of the lips of the faithful who kiss it.

Immediately below the wonderful dome, that is 405 feet from the pavement to the top, is the high altar which is directly above the resting place of St. Peter. This is only used upon special occasions and is the only altar in the Roman church at which the officiating priest faces the people.

Over the altar is a canopy of bronze upheld by four twisted columns ninety-four feet high. In these columns are preserved the bones of many martyrs who perished on the Janiculum Hill. The bronze of which this Baldacchino is made was stripped from the roof of the Pantheon, by Urban VIII. This pope was a Barberini as his armorial bearings, the three bees testify, and they are seen here and there upon the canopy.

In front of the altar, and surrounding the flight of marble steps that lead to the Confession, the tomb of St. Peter, is a balustrade upon which are arranged one hundred and twelve lights that burn perpetually. At the foot of the steps, and kneeling at the door of the tomb, is a figure in marble of Pius VI., the work of Canova.

Michael Angelo's marvelous dome is upheld by four immense piers, columns that support the four gigantic arches. In the four balconies above the niches where are colossal figures of St. Veronica, St. Helena, St. Longinus and St. Andrew, are preserved four sacred relics to which only high dignitaries in the church have access. There is, above St. Helena, a piece of the true cross which she brought back to Rome, herself; over St. Andrew, the head of that saint; over St. Longinus, the lance with which he pierced the Savior's side; and over St. Veronica, the napkin that covered the face of the dead Christ.

Beyond the grand altar is the Tribune, where beside the tombs of several popes, and much rich decoration by Michael Angelo, is the chair once occupied by St. Peter as Pope.

This is covered by a bronze arrangement, in the same form of a chair, the work of Bernini, and it is upheld by four fathers of the Greek and Latin churches, St. Augustine and St. Ambrose of the Latin, and St. Chrysostom and St. Athanasius of the Greek church.

When Napoleon was holding sway in Rome, the covering of bronze was removed

from the chair of St. Peter. Upon this last was found an Arabic inscription, "there is one God and Mahomet is his Prophet."

Around the church are the tombs of the popes, with sculpture of every sort, some in good taste and some in extremely bad taste. In one of the transepts at the right, as we go from the Tribune, is the tomb of the great musical composer Palestrina.

Near the tomb of Gregory the Great is the wonderful Mosaic of Raphael's "Transfiguration," so finely done it is almost impossible to believe it is not a painting.

On the other side of the church, not far from the doors of entrance, is a marble column, over which is a net-work of iron, supposed to be the very one against which Christ leaned when he disputed with the doctors of the temple.

In the chapel of the Holy Sacrament, beneath the pavement, and marked by a stone, lies the body of Julius II., the friend of Michael Angelo, while near here is the Mosaic of the "Last Communion," a worthy companion to the "Transfiguration."

A visit to St. Peter's is not complete till the ascent of the dome is made. From here one looks abroad upon Rome and the wide Campagna, while below, upon the roof is the village where dwell the people who are employed about the great church, the Vatican and its garden.

There are streets and fountains, and here these people dwell, with a strict code of laws for their government, and living and dying high above the world.—Mac D. Frazer in Boston Times.

#### Prayer Before Action.

During one of the numerous wars waged by France two centuries ago a strange scene took place near Saluzzo, a disputed outpost, which well illustrates the religious spirit which often prevailed among the soldiers of earlier times.

The French approached the besiegers' lines, and both armies were arranged for a fight. The sun shone from a cloudless sky; every detail on each array in the field was visible to the other, and both were beheld at once from the citadel.

There were three French marshals present, and it was Schomberg's turn to command. He drew up his 20,000 men in four lines, with skirmishers in front, and the regular cavalry were placed at stated intervals, ready to charge.

In this impressive order, and in absolute silence, the French advanced until nearly within cannon shot, when, at a signal, the mass halted and simultaneously knelt down to pray. Then followed the order to attack, which was silently and cheerfully obeyed.

The battle was not to be, however, for Mazani, amid a volley of musketry, suddenly appeared, rode at a gallop between the armies, and stayed the incipient fight by bringing acceptable terms of peace.

#### The Divine With the Human.

A recent writer has remarked that only one artist has painted Christ with anything approaching to perfection—namely, Titoret. While some painters have represented the Divine aspect of the Savior's life, and others its common humanities, he alone has succeeded in blending the "Divine with the human, and common with the wonderful."

In his picture of the Last Supper, for example, we behold a common room with the lamps lit, the servants bustling about, and a homely gathering of real fishermen; but in the upper air of the scene, the haze of the lamp-light has taken that wondrous azure tint with which afterwards the artist "filled the recesses of his paradise." The soft radiance of the heavenly light falls down full on the figure of the sad and weary and loving Jesus. It is this lustre of Divine majesty irradiating His lowly and homely humanity that we need to see in Christ that we may be drawn to Him as our great High Priest, who, while He has passed into the heavens, the almighty Son of God, is yet touched with the feeling of our humblest infirmities.—Rev. J. P. Rollo.

#### High Prices for Pew.

The following are the annual revenues derived from pew rents in some of the most important places of worship in England: St. Peter's, Eaton Square, London, £2,000 a year; Portman Chapel, £1,700; Christ Church, Paddington, £1,750; St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, £1,200; St. George's, Hanover Square, over £1,000; St. Michael's Church, Chester Square, London, £1,200; Immanuel Church, Streatham, £1,210; Emmanuel Church, Hove, £1,400; Christ Church, Cheltenham, £1,000. Two of the London West end churches have higher pew rents than any other churches in this country, namely, All Saints', Norfolk Square, W., and St. Paul's, Onslow Square, S. W. In both cases the income of the incumbents is entirely dependent upon the pew rents received. In St. John's Wood Synagogue many of the pews cost the seat-holders from £12 to £15 per individual sitting, while in the Great Portland Street Synagogue the prices are said to range higher still.

#### The Teaching of the Flowers.

The hem of the Lord's garment was all that was given to certain of the faithful to touch, and it glorified them. Isn't it the hem of the beautiful garment He puts on His earth that we see, who, living in cities, watch the budding of one tree in our backyard, the gradual greening of the bit of grass at our door and the blooming of the single potted plant in our sunniest window? Such things are all indications, and from them we can build according to our lights and conforming to our needs, and it may be better and more useful than a whole, which we might not comprehend or which would overpower us.—Donahoe's Magazine for June.

On the tower of the parish church at Bicknoller, Somerset, England, is growing a yew tree, now five feet high. It is supposed that it owes its origin to a seed dropped by a bird.

#### NEWS AND NOTABILLIA.

The largest church in the world is St. Peter's in Rome; the smallest a church 10 feet square, in the Isle of Man.

The largest Gothic church in the world is Cologne Cathedral. Its foundation stones were laid 1248 and the edifice was completed in 1880.

The Bishop of British Columbia (Dr. Perrin) has been presented by the clergy of Southampton with an episcopal lozenge shaped ring of massive gold, with the arms of the see engraved on an amethyst.

Monsignor Capel, the once distinguished divine and eloquent speaker, the original of Catesby in Disraeli's "Lothair," is living in the capacity of tutor in the family of an Italian lady, on a ranch seventy miles from Sacramento.

For 20 years Rev. Thomas McCulloch, D. D., father of Dr. McCulloch, Truro, was the only clergyman in the town of Fictou, N. S. He was inducted June 6th, 1804, and at that time the town consisted of 12 houses.

It imparts an abundant sweetness to any mercy to see it growing out of the root of a promise. The good things of the saints are not dispensed out of the basket of common providences, but out of the ark of the covenant.—Matthew Henry.

It is said that Pope Leo XIII., on hearing of the greeting extended to Verdi at Rome, exclaimed, "I should be glad to see this genius of Italian music." It is added that Maestro Mustafà, director of the Sixtine chapel, has been commissioned to express to Verdi the desire of the pope.

The general of the Jesuits has appointed the church of the Holy Name, at Manchester, England, the headquarters of the group of Jesuit churches in the Lancashire district, and has selected Father Bernard Vaughan, the celebrated preacher, who is a brother of Cardinal Vaughan, to be the rector.

A lively discussion has been going on in New York about the missions which Christians are carrying on there among the Jews, who now number 250,000. Influential rabbis attack them, as being both an impertinence and an imposture, declaring that honestly converted Jews do not exist, but are only pretenders. Christians, on the other hand, regard these attacks as a sign of sensitiveness to successful inroads upon Judaism.

Probably not another church in New York is so cosmopolitan in its membership as the Twenty-seventh street Methodist Episcopal church, of which the Rev. B. F. Kidder is pastor. In his church are Englishmen, Irishmen, Scotchmen, Welshmen, Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards, Italians, Greeks, Roumanians, Africans, Hebrews, and Chinese. Mr. Kidder says he is personally acquainted with these adopted strangers, but does not say he is on speaking terms.

General Booth has nominated his daughter La Marachale Booth-Clibborn, to succeed him in command of the army, though he has a son who would, according to the usual order of succession, take his father's place. But the old General says that "Women are the best rulers. If you refer to the capacity shown on several occasions by Queen Victoria you will agree with me that she acted while her admirers were seeking how to act. I am arranging that the work of saving human souls may go on after my death."

In the church of St. Onofrio at Rome is buried Cardinal Mezzotanti, the most marvelous linguist the world has ever known. He knew and spoke one hundred and fourteen different languages and at the propaganda, at Rome, where men are trained as missionaries for all parts of the world, Mezzotanti would converse with each man in his own dialect, passing immediately from one to another. Byron met him and wrote of him, saying that he ought to have lived in the time of the tower of Babel, to act as general interpreter.

Among English Wesleyans the efficiency of local preachers continues to receive attention, and for the first time information is being asked in the president's circular as to what is being done for their mental and theological culture. A proposal, which can hardly be regarded as serious, has been made to the effect that a certain proportion of the more experienced should be ordained, much after the manner of elders in the Scottish church, with authority to administer the sacraments, more particularly to meet the needs of the villages.

Professor Drummond spoke recently at Harvard College. Referring to the objection that Christianity is an unscientific thing, the professor would meet it by denying it, and with the challenge to name the scientific men who are opposed to Christianity. Huxley never said one word against Christ or His teachings and Spirit. Darwin, for the last few years of his life, gave \$25 annually to a foreign missionary society. Sir. William Thompson, the greatest scientist in Scotland to-day, always prefaces his lectures to students with prayer.

The Bishop of Jamaica (Dr. Eos Nuttall) has been elected Primate of the West India province, in succession to the late venerated Bishop of Guiana (Dr. W. Piercy Austin). The see of British Honduras being vacant by the lamented early death of Bishop Holmes, the provincial synod is at present composed of six diocesan bishops and two bishops-coadjutors. The votes of three-fourths of these having fallen to Bishop Nuttall, he has, in obedience to the Canons of the province, been declared to be legally elected. The Archbishop of Canterbury has been pleased to express his approval of the choice of the Synod.

The Sisterhood of St. Francis, in Canada, founded centuries ago, and that of the Gray Nuns, the oldest organization of catholic women in America, are devoted to the care of sick, homeless and fallen women. They never enter the lazaretto of the lepers. In the United States there are more than fifty orders of catholic women with a membership counted by tens of thousands. There are about 4,000 schools in this country under the care of catholic sisters. There are half a dozen organizations exclusively devoted to teaching the Indian and colored races. Among these is the one recently established by Katharine Drexel of Philadelphia. She has given her life and fortune to it. There are several orders of colored women, and St. Francis's Academy at Baltimore is conducted by colored women.

#### Messages of Help for the Week.

Sunday.—Psalm 138, 2: "I will worship toward thy holy temple."

Monday.—Psalm 105, 2: "Talk ye of all his wondrous works."

Tuesday.—Psalm 107, 8: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

Wednesday.—Psalm, 73, 21-23: "My heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish was I, and ignorant. Nevertheless, I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand."

Thursday.—Psalm 23, 2: "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters."

Friday.—Psalm 23, 3: "He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

Saturday.—5th verse: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; my cup runneth over."

#### She Was Good to Him.

Below the humor there is a touch of pathos in this from the San Francisco Examiner: "A boy at the California State reform school wrote an odd little letter to the superintendent the other day: 'Dear Sir,' he said, 'don't think me fresh, but I want to ask you a favor. Your wife wrote just died was awful good to me and she learned me to garden. Will you let me take care of her grave while I'm here? I know what flowers she liked, and I'd feel real good if you'd let me plant them on her grave. I'll take real good care of them. Hoping you won't think I am fresh, yours truly.'"

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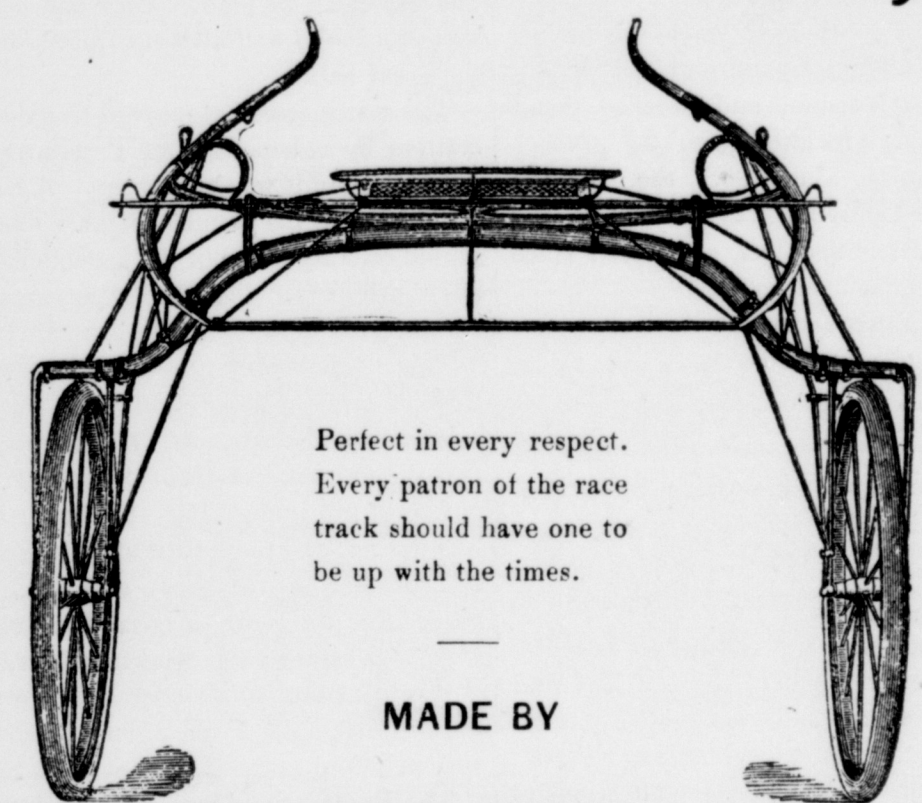
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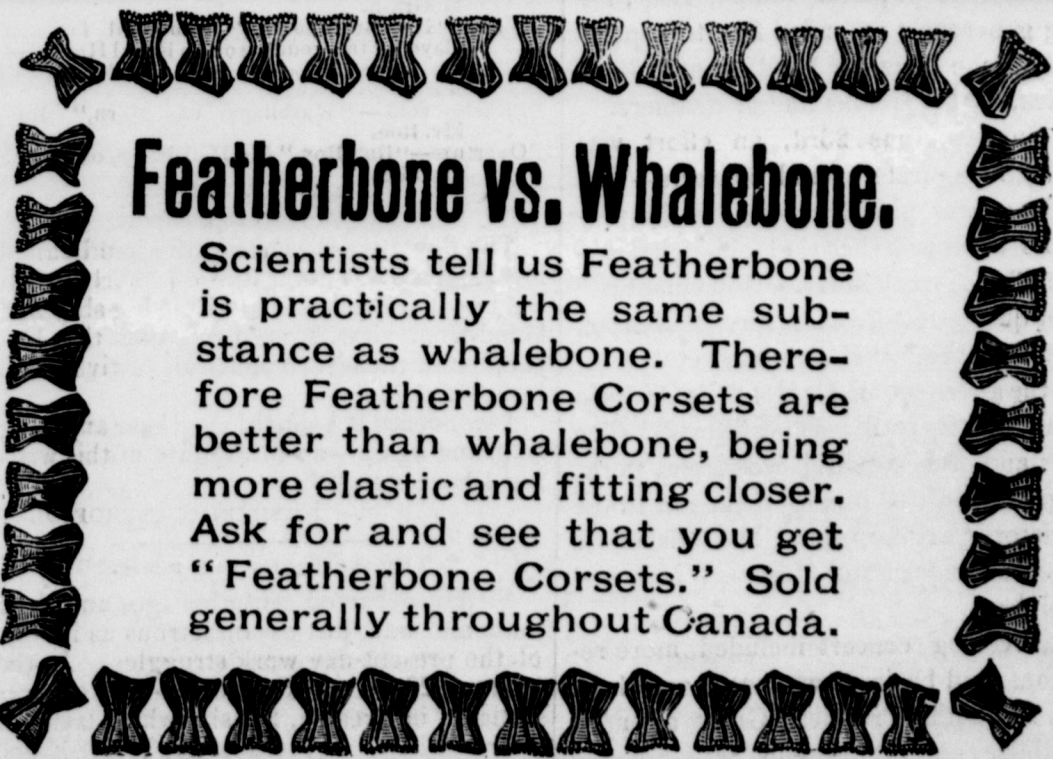
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