

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER IN JERUSALEM.

Under this heading, "E. C. S." contributes to the *Guardian*, London, Eng., a wonderfully vivid account of the manner in which this holy season is observed in the city where the awe-inspiring events themselves, which we commemorate year by year, took place nineteen centuries ago. We reproduce the more salient features of the article:—

There is no city in the world like Jerusalem, and there is no possible combination of circumstances that can result in a similar experience to that of Jerusalem at Eastertide, associated as it is with three separate festivals—the Jewish Passover, the Mohammedan pilgrimage of Neby Mousa (the reputed tomb of Moses), and the Christian feast, all of which are of intensely passionate interest to those who assemble to take part in them from every corner of the world. There are more languages spoken, and more separate types of mankind in Jerusalem at Eastertide to-day, than there were on the first Whitsunday. Christian interest naturally centres in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and its ceremonies, some of which I will attempt to describe as I saw them, although there is much in the city and its surroundings, that makes such a description necessarily a mere glimpse of a portion of the whole.

Passing through the great iron doors of the church, we are in a kind of vestibule, with solid walls in front of us, and a long corridor on each side of us. To the left of the entrance, and immediately behind the door, is a wide bench of stone, cushioned and carpeted, and here, to our surprise, sat two Turkish guards, sipping coffee and furtively smoking cigarettes. These are the guards that are popularly supposed to be necessary to keep the Christians from flying at each others' throats. I have watched their behaviour and that of the scores of soldiers who are introduced into the church to keep order during the Easter ceremonies, and I assert most positively that their only difficulty lay with curious and eager Moslems, whom they belaboured soundly at times for pushing into the ceremonies, where they freely made way for the Christians to come. On Easter morning it is true that the crowd of Russian pilgrims have to be forcibly kept back to allow the ceremonies to proceed in the limited space to which every one has free access, but the soldiers are necessary merely as police are necessary to regulate traffic on any day when the streets are congested, and I saw no reason whatever for that slanderous calumny that the soldiers are necessary to preserve the peace between the rival Christians whose altars are under the same roof.

The deepest impressions are those for which one is unprepared. In the vestibule in front of us is a canopy hung with lamps, and under it a broad flat marble slab, round which a few tapers were burning, and a few people kneeling and kissing the stone. I shall not forget the awe that came over me when the dragoman said: "This is the stone where Jesus Christ was embalmed." The impression is so deep, and the feeling of contact with what may have been the place of anointing is so realistic, that the shock to a reverent nature is almost sure to be severe. From that moment one feels a sense of nearness to the earthly Presence of our Lord, that is as new as it is wonderful. It is this that gives the Holy Sepulchre its strange fascination. Turning to the left, past some huge pillars, you stand under a lofty dome, with galleries running round it, and open at the top to the air and light. Under the centre of this dome stands the beautiful little chapel that covers the sepulchre itself, hung with many costly gold and silver lamps, and many rich and gorgeous offerings of devotion from all parts of the world. Entering this chapel you pass through an ante-chamber under a low door, and here is the sepulchre hewn out of a rock, covered now with marble to preserve

the stones. On coming out again under the dome, you find the central large chapel of the Greeks facing you, with corridors running all round outside its enclosing walls, containing various altars, and leading to the chapel of St. Helena underground, where the true Cross is said to have been discovered. Coming right round this corridor, almost back to the stone of the Anointing, a flight of steps leads up to the chapel of the Calvary, where in the solid rock the holes are shown in which the crosses stood, and the rent in the rock caused by the earthquake.

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The first service of special note is "The washing of the feet," on Maundy Thursday. The Greek ceremony is performed in the courtyard of the Holy Sepulchre, the Latin under the dome just outside the chapel. The Greek ceremony is the more picturesque of the two. The Patriarch, a man of noble presence, with a flowing beard, in full canonicals, sits at the head of a quadrangle formed by a number of other Bishops and priests, surrounded by monks and choristers, who again are surrounded by a band of soldiers to keep back the crowd that throngs and presses on every side, climbing the steps, hanging from windows, standing thickly on surrounding house-tops, and watching even from the minaret of the mosque that stands opposite the church doors. The scene is most picturesque from the brilliancy of the light, the beauty of the vestments, and the varied colour of the dresses of the crowd in their Syrian costumes, seen against the dark background of the solemn grey walls. The ceremony of washing the feet is simple enough. Men who are to be specially honoured, some of them being very poor pilgrims, are seated in a row on a low bench, and the Patriarch washes their feet one by one in a basin of water, and wipes them severally with a clean towel, which is handed to him by his attendant. There is, of course, a special office for the occasion, and each pilgrim receives a memento, in the shape of a card, commemorating the honour he has received. The Latin ceremony is somewhat similar, but, being held within the building, it is more quietly performed, because they have the privilege of locking the church doors, which they refuse to open for several hours after the ceremony is finished. Consequently few care to remain beyond those immediately concerned. I witnessed the ceremony without knowing the result, but when I tried to leave the church with my friend, the Turkish guard told us that "the King of Asia" would not be allowed to leave the church if he were inside. And so we remained. And, indeed, it was a great privilege to have a few hours to spend in meditative quiet, undisturbed by sightseers, in some one or other of the many quiet corners where one might wander unperceived. The Latin monks and priests meanwhile sung during nearly two hours, unaccompanied, and in the most perfect harmony, some wondrously beautiful penitential service, set to Bach's Passion music. Their voices echoing through the lofty galleries, and carried from dome to dome and chapel to chapel of the great building in which I felt myself a willing prisoner, made an impression upon my mind which is still so vivid that I can almost recall it at will in all its weird and solemn intensity. When the doors were unlocked and we went out into the evening light through the half-deserted courtyard, the reality of life seemed to jar unpleasantly upon the feelings after the quiet of those strangely solemn hours, which were continued with heightened solemnity by an open-air English service at Gethsemane, "beneath the olive's moon-pierced shade," at about 10 p. m., by the light of lanterns, with the Paschal moon shining on the city walls across Kedron.

Good Friday in Jerusalem is a day I find it difficult to describe, since the whole life of the city is permeated with devotional observances. The most prominent features of the day are the processions along the Via Dolorosa, the wailing

of the Jews at the remains of the Temple wall, and the wonderful drama of the Crucifixion in the evening at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. One feature of the day is the silence of the bells, in marked contrast to their usual almost constant ringing and chiming, a feature of the Holy City that exasperates the Jews, many of whom have migrated to Safed, where there are none, since they think there is the influence of spirits of evil in the sound of Christian bells—an unconscious tribute, perhaps, to the power connected with them. The Via Dolorosa processions are much like the ordinary procession of the Cross in the Latin Churches; only the traditional spots are selected for the observance in this case. But the "wailing of the Jews" that has been often described is more intense, strangely enough on Good Friday than on any other day of the year as it falls within their Passover solemnities.

To be Continued.

WHY AM I THANKFUL THAT I AM A CHURCHMAN?

(From W. I. Guardian)

Because I am thereby made a member of the Body of which Christ is the head (1 Cor. xii. 27.—Col. i. 18), grafted upon the True Vine (John xv. 5), born of the Spirit into the Kingdom of Heaven (John iii. 5).

Because the Church is the appointed Witness and Keeper, Interpreter and Teacher, of the Holy Scriptures to me, according to the purpose of Christ, "the Pillar and ground of the Truth" (1 Tim. iii. 15, 16).

Because so long as I strive to live in faith and holiness I have in the Church "the continual pledge of God's love" in the Holy Communion, wherein I find access to Him in Christ by the appointed Memorial of His eternal sacrifice, and do "verily and indeed receive the Body and Blood of Christ" for my soul's spiritual food at the hands of the ordained "Ministers and Stewards of His Mysteries."

Because in the Church "God has given power and commandment to His Ministers to declare and pronounce" to me, if I am penitent, "the absolution and remission of my sins."

And, Because these great blessings and privileges are not offered to me anywhere else with the same well-founded confidence or certainty.

WHY DO I BELIEVE IN THE CHURCH?

2. Because it is the Church of GOD'S making and not man's.

Because it is the "One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church," which received its life and authority, its visible form and order, from Christ himself through the Holy Spirit descending upon the Apostles above eighteen hundred years ago; "Holy," because it is the Temple of the *Holy Ghost*, who continually sanctifies and guides it; "Catholic" [not Roman Catholic], because it holds fast the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints, and *universally* received and believed by the whole united Church;—"Apostolic," because it was "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone," and its Bishops, Priests and Deacons have received their ordination and authority from the *Apostles* in unbroken succession from the beginning by the laying on of hands (2 Tim. i. 6). These are my reasons for believing in the Church, and holding fast to it.

Not just because the Church is ancient or honoured, or because it is respectable to be a Churchman.

Not just because I like the clergyman of the parish where I live.

Not just because I like the Church services; though I do like them for they teach me and