

a mound of stones over the body and sat down to weep.

While he was weeping a wealthy hajji, or pilgrim, came along on his return from Mecca. He was surprised to see a man alone in this wilderness and asked him why he wept. Mohammed replied:

"O hajji, I have found the tomb of a holy prophet, and I have vowed to be its keeper, but I am in great need." The Hajji thanked him for the news, dismounted to visit the holy place and gave Mohammed a rich present. After he had gone, Mohammed hastened to the nearest village and bought provisions and then returned to the holy prophet's tomb. The Hajji spread the news, and pilgrims thronged to the spot with rich presents and offerings. As money came in, Mohammed brought masons and built a costly tomb, with a tall white dome that could be seen across the Jordan. He lived in a little room by the tomb, and soon the miraculous lights began to appear in the tomb at night, which Mohammed had kindled when no one was near. He increased in fame and wealth, and the prophet's tomb came to be regarded as one of the great shrines of the land.

At length Sheikh Ali heard of the fame of the new holy place in the desert, and as his own visitors began to fall off, decided to go himself and gain the merit of a visit to the tomb of that famous prophet. When he arrived there with his rich presents of green cloth, incense and money, he bowed in silence to pray towards Mecca, when suddenly he recognized in the holy keeper of the tomb his old servant Mohammed. "Salam alaykoom," said Sheikh Ali. "Alaykoom es salam," replied Mohammed. When he asked him how he came there and how he found this tomb, Mohammed replied, "This tomb is a great 'sirr,' or mystery, and I am forbidden to utter the secret." "But you must tell me," said Sheikh Ali, "for I am a father to you." Mohammed refused and Ali insisted, until at length Mohammed said, "My honored Sheikh, you remember having given me a donkey. It was a faithful donkey, and when it died I buried it. This is the tomb of that donkey!"

"Mashallah! Mashallah!" said the Sheikh Ali, "the will of Allah be done!" Then they ate and drank together and renewed the memory of their former life, and then Sheikh Mohammed said to Sheikh Ali, "My master, as I have told you the mystery of my prophet's tomb, I wish to know the secret of yours."

"Impossible," said Ali, "for that is one of the ancient mysteries, too sacred to be mentioned by mortal lips."

"But you must tell me, even as I

have told you." At length the old Sheikh Ali stroked his snowy beard, adjusted his white turban, and whispered to Mohammed, "And my holy place is the tomb of that donkey's father!" "Mashallah," said Mohammed, "May Allah bless the beard of the holy donkeys!"

"He Took the Vinegar."

Some two or three years ago, Mr. Talmage preached a sermon on the text, "He took the vinegar". Christ's life was reviewed, each sentence closing with "he took the vinegar". At the final scene, Mr. Talmage said:

"The wealthy women of Jerusalem used to have a fund of money with which they provided wine for those who died by crucifixion, a powerful opiate to deaden the pain, but Christ would not take it—he wanted to die sober. He took the vinegar."

"There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee," to which Jesus and his disciples were "called". There were six water pots of stone, containing about three firkins each. "Jesus said unto the servants, fill the water pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim." Then the first display of divine power clothed in humanity took place. Jesus turned the water into wine, better, of course, than man-made wine.

Jesus and his disciples used wine at supper, which may be inferred from the statement that Jesus at the last supper "took the cup and gave thanks" and, according to Matthew, said, "I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my father's kingdom"; according to Mark, "Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God"; according to Luke, "For I say unto you, I will not drink the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come." John says nothing about this supper.

Mr. Talmage says that Christ "wanted to die sober".

M. M. T.

Eleventh Annual Convention.

Pursuant to the call of the Executive Board, the Eleventh Annual Convention of the Oregon State Secular Union will be held at Dayville, Oregon, on the 10th, 11th and 12th of June, 1899. Much business of importance is to be transacted, and a good attendance is requested. Speakers from a distance have been invited, and a general good time is expected. A full program will be announced later.

E. STEWART, Pres.

KATE DEPEATT, Sec.

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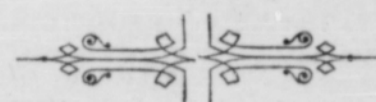
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