

## CHAPTER XLVI.

## Outside the Walls of Jerusalem.

The Valleys of Gihon and Hinnom—Pool of Siloam—Fountain of the Virgin—Valley of the Kidron—Garden of Gethsemane—Tomb of the Virgin—Mount of Olives—View from the Summit—Tombs of the Kings—Tomb and Grotto of Jeremiah—Walls and Gates of the City.

RISING early, the morning after our arrival, we made a short excursion into the city, securing an accomplished guide and taking our bearings so as to be able to make estimates of the relative importance of various parts of the city to our primary purpose. I had resolved to comprehend fully Jerusalem as it is; to see it from every point of view and in every mood of which I am capable; to be, while there, the amateur explorer, the enthusiastic historian, the devoted antiquarian, the ardent believer, the cautious skeptic, the son of Abraham, the Gentile, the Mohammedan, without forgetting that I am a Christian and an American: for after reading uncounted books on travels in the Holy Land, and listening to many lectures upon Jerusalem, I had never been able to obtain a clear understanding of it, either as it was or as it is.

To the effort I was the more moved by meeting on our arrival a gentleman who had sailed from Port Said with us, and had reached Jerusalem twenty-four hours before. He was disgusted with the city and exclaimed: "There is nothing to see; it is the most abominable place I have ever seen; I shall not stay another night." To this resolution he adhered. He was a professional man, yet, being unacquainted with the Bible, and not familiar with the history of the country, he could see only what he brought with him—practically nothing.

Starting from our hotel, we descended into the valley of Gihon, where Solomon was crowned king, and walked along it until we came to the wall, on which was an old aqueduct that formerly conveyed water from the Pools of Solomon to the temple. The Pool of Gihon remains, five hundred and ten feet



Valley of Hinnom.



long, two hundred and ten wide, and apparently forty deep. This pool must not be confounded with the Pools of Solomon, which are more than two hours' ride from the city.

When the valley of Gihon turns eastward it becomes the awful Hinnom, which was a part of the boundary line between Judah and Benjamin. This is the most infamous depression in the world. When Solomon became an idolater, it was on the brow of the hill which forms one of the sides of this valley that he built places of sacrifice to false gods. Joshua determined to make the ravine a cesspool; all the offal of the city was poured into it, and there a fire burned constantly, whence came the name Gehenna. It was a hell ever before the people, whose smoke ascended day and night. Here no traveler would have difficulty in perceiving whence the Hebrew prophets obtained many of their terrible figures. Let him descend, as we did, into the depths of the valley of Gehenna, clamber along its sides, view them from the opposite point; let the eye take in the tombs, the crooked fig and olive trees growing among the crags, the wall on the summit; let him gaze into the various caverns, crevices, and excavations. Some locate within this chasm the Field of Blood, purchased with the money that Judas received for betraying Christ. Others have concocted the myth, that when the disciples all forsook him and fled, they came and hid themselves in a certain tomb called the Apostles' Cavern. One cave, peculiarly fitted to tragedy and the concealment of treasure or hunted, terrified human being, is now used as a stable. Here were buried the pilgrims of the Middle Ages who died in Jerusalem.

As we left the valley of Hinnom, we came to the rill described by Bishop Heber as "cool Siloam's shady rill," and by Milton as "Siloa's brook, that flowed fast by the oracle of God," and by Isaiah as "the waters of Shiloah that go softly." We followed the stream to the Pool of Siloam, fifty-three feet long, eighteen broad, and nineteen deep. It is never full, the stream that flows into it from the Virgin's Fountain flowing directly through it, water being retained to the depth of two or three feet.

Thither Jesus sent the blind man, saying to him: "Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam."



The Fountain of the Virgin is artificial, and when we were there the women of Siloam were carrying water from it in stone jars. We descended the sixteen steps, walked four yards to the second flight of thirteen, which conducted us to the water. The basin is about eleven feet square. All these hills are penetrated by ancient aqueducts and passages. Professor Robinson crept from the Fountain of the Virgin through an aqueduct to the Pool of Siloam; others have done so since; but after going a few feet, we concluded to accept their report.

The valley of Kidron has had many names. The word means the "black brook." In the time of our Lord it was called the winter brook, and by the Jews considered unclean. It is now spoken of as the valley of Jehoshaphat. According to tradition there was a prophecy that this is to be the scene of the last judgment. The Mohammedans, believing this, bury their dead on the east side of the Haram, and the Jews inter theirs on the west side of the Mount of Olives. At the resurrection the slopes of the valley are expected to move farther apart, in order to make room for the great assembly. The Mohammedan notion is that a thin wire rope will be stretched across to the Mount of Olives, Christ and Mohammed sitting on the opposite mounts as judges. There will be two blasts blown by the Angel Gabriel; the first will kill every living being, and the second will awake the dead. Every human being must pass over the rope; the angels will keep the righteous steady, and they will move with lightning speed; but the wicked will fall into hell.

As we passed through this valley we came to the alleged tombs of Zechariah, St. James, and Absalom. Absalom's is large and square, and has several fine columns; that of St. James is cut out of the rock, and has two Doric columns with several other ornaments. It is wholly uncertain whether there is any truth in the claim, and there is nothing remarkable about the tombs.

The generally accepted site of the Garden of Gethsemane includes about a third of an acre, surrounded by a thick hedge with a wall. The Franciscan monks control it, but though the gate is kept locked there is no difficulty in obtaining permission to enter. Seven or eight olive trees, about nineteen feet



The Brook Kidron.



in circumference, grow there, and it is quite possible that they sprung from the roots of those that were standing in the time of the apostles; besides these there are several beautiful young olive trees, and the monks cultivate flowers, which give the garden a pleasant look. On the inner walls is a series of colored reliefs portraying scenes in the life of Jesus, while inside is a passage with fourteen places for prayer.

The account in the New Testament says: "Jesus . . . went forth with his disciples over the brook Kidron, where was a garden, into the which he entered." The identity of the brook being established, the configuration of the country makes it almost certain that this must be the exact spot, or near it. The tradition agrees so well with the Bible narrative that there is little dispute.

The monks attempt to point out where important events took place. A rock immediately east of the door is supposed to mark the spot where Peter, James, and John slept while our Lord prayed. A few paces to the south, they told us, is where Judas betrayed his Lord with a kiss.

The olive oil produced from the trees brings a high price, and the monks manufacture rosaries from the olive stones.

The Greek Church claims that this is not the true site, and exhibits the "true" Garden of Gethsemane a short distance farther toward the summit.

We turned to the left of the valley of the Kidron to see the Tomb of the Virgin. The Greeks claim that this is the oldest Christian church in the world. Every morning, from seven to eight, a service is held, and during the festivals the building is open to visitors from morning to night. Unquestionably there was a church here in the fourth century, which continued until the fifth, but was destroyed by the Persians; nevertheless, when the city of Jerusalem was captured by the Mohammedans they found "another church of Gethsemane." This edifice is supposed to stand over the tomb, according to the general custom in oriental lands.

With the exception of the porch, the entire building is underground. The visitor descends by forty-seven marble steps; when twenty-two have been passed, the entrance to a side

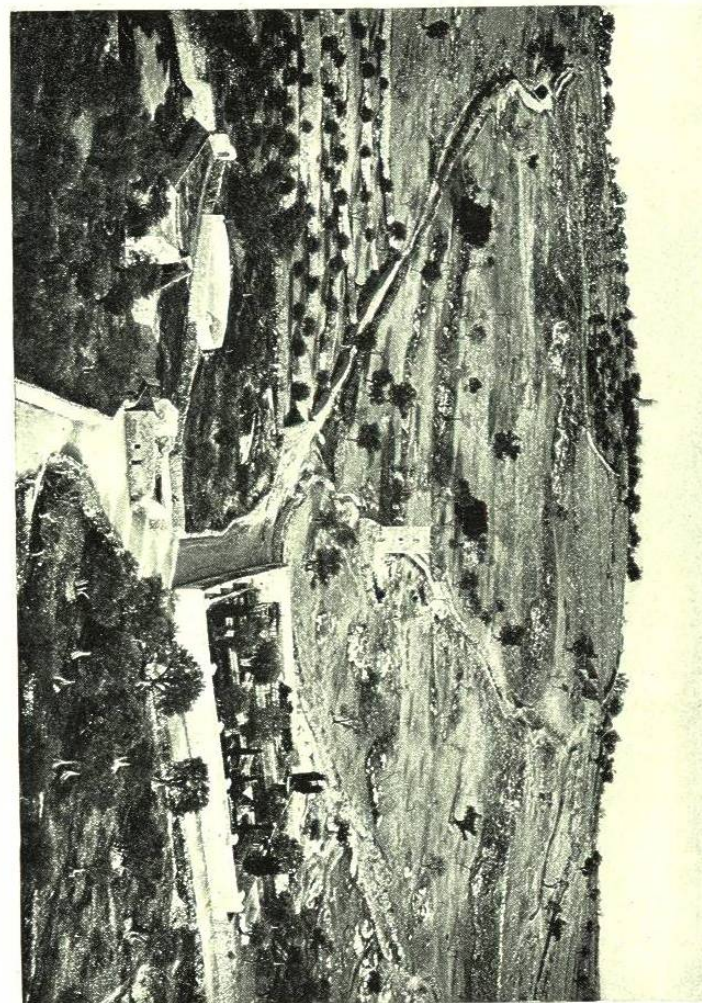


chapel on the right is reached, in which are two altars and the tombs of Joachim and Anna, the father and mother of the Virgin Mary. Another chapel contains the alleged tomb of Joseph, the husband of Mary. The supposed tombs of her father and mother were in the Church of St. Ann until the third or fourth century. The known antiquity of the church inspires reverence even in those who doubt whether any of the persons were originally buried there or whether any of their relics exist.

Sometimes the Mount of Olives has been described as resembling one of the Alps. Other writers, content with simply giving its height, have made an equally misleading impression. Its highest point is twenty-seven hundred and twenty-three feet above the level of the sea; at its center it is about ninety feet lower. When we consider that the highest elevation in the city of Jerusalem is twenty-five hundred and fifty feet, and that the temple itself is twenty-four hundred and forty-one feet above the level of the sea, the central point of the Mount of Olives can only be one hundred and ninety-six feet higher than the temple plateau. But it must be remembered that the valley of the Kidron, five hundred feet deep, exceedingly steep, not more than a hundred feet in greatest width at the bottom, intervenes between Jerusalem and the mount. This produces the effect of much loftier height than exists, besides requiring a precipitous descent and a laborious ascent either going to the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem or returning to the city. From the Tomb of the Virgin to the top of Olivet did not require a walk of more than twenty minutes.

The base of the mountain is limestone, its surface not being very irregular, though not destitute of depressions. It was fresh with the grass and flowers of spring. The olive, fig, and carob trees were in leaf, and there were a few pines and hawthorns. The paths are stony, and the climb in the afternoon sun was exhausting on account of the peculiar quality of the heat. Indeed, pedestrianism in that country is much more fatiguing than at the same temperature in Europe or the United States.

To obtain the best impression ascents are necessary at



Mount of Olives.



different hours of the day. The names applied to the mount are noteworthy. It is the "Mount of Olives" in Zechariah; in other parts of the Old Testament, "the ascent to the Olives," "the mount facing Jerusalem," "the mount which is on the east side of the city;" in the New Testament, the "Mount of Olives," the "mount called the Mount of Olives," and the "mount called Olivet."

From the Mount of Olives Christ began the triumphal procession when a great multitude cried, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" Upon the Mount of Olives he sat when his disciples came to him and asked what should be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the world. He stood on the slope of this mountain and wept over the city; and it is generally believed that he ascended from the Mount of Olives, though the two accounts given by St. Luke of the ascension do not seem to agree as to place. Luke (xxiv, 50, 51) says: "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." But in the first chapter of the Book of Acts it is stated that the apostles, after having continued to gaze up into heaven for a time, and being addressed by the angels, returned "unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey."

This is but a slight discrepancy when we consider that Bethany is only fifteen minutes' walk from the top of the Mount of Olives. It is not steep on that side; it is in the highest degree possible that the apostles and our Lord were walking as they conversed, and that the ascension did not take place in the village of Bethany, but in the suburbs toward the Mount of Olives. Hence, in view of the nature of the country, they would be spoken of as returning from the Mount of Olives. If so, Luke's observation in the gospel may mean that Christ led the apostles out to the Mount of Olives by the Bethany road. It is believed that the entire summit of the mountain was, in Christ's time, covered with buildings. There were many monasteries upon it when Jerusalem was taken by the Mohammedans. At present, among the buildings on the Mount of Olives, is the Church of the Ascension, which is sup-



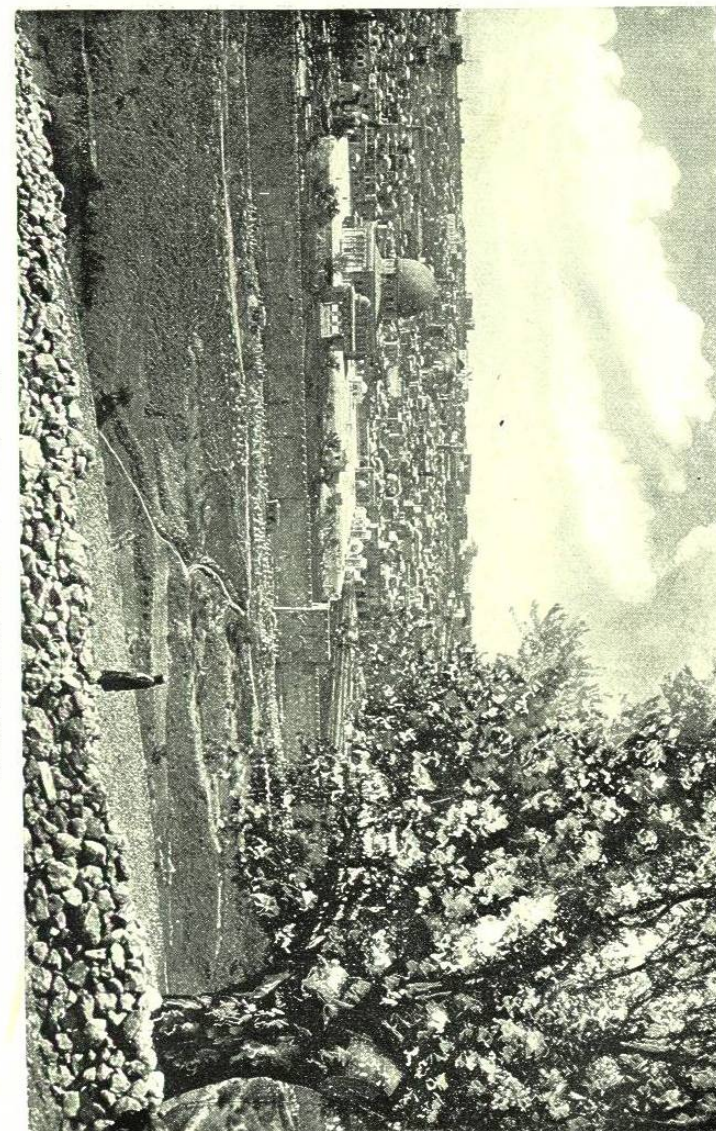
posed to mark the site, there being near it a cave which tradition declares was frequented by Jesus for the purpose of teaching his disciples the mysteries of his doctrines.

The Russians have erected a tower from which is the finest view. Toward the east I saw the Dead Sea. It appeared near, but was many miles away and nearly four thousand feet below. Beyond the sea is a chain of mountains in the territory allotted to Reuben, and among them, though not positively identified, is Nebo. To the east and north are the mountains of Moab and Gilead and the valley of the Jordan, the dark green of whose vegetation contrasts strongly with the barren limestone hills on every side; Gibeah, where Saul was born; Ramah, the birthplace of Samuel; and Mizpah, the lonely mountain peak, his burial place; Nob, mentioned in the Old Testament from the earliest times; and the valley of the Kidron, extending almost from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea.

At our right was the hill Scopus, over which Titus led his forces; immediately beneath, the Garden of Gethsemane and the valley of the Kidron until its intersection with that of Hinnom; and opposite, rising out of the sheer abyss, Jerusalem, its sacred hills easily distinguished, its walls, gates, minarets, towers, domes, making an imposing view, the only one worthy of the fame of the city. When Lieutenant Lynch, to whom modern exploration owes so much, coming from his explorations in the Jordan valley, obtained a glimpse of the city, no language could describe the impression which this view made upon him. A noted traveler, who speaks disparagingly of the view from the north, west, and south—and not unjustly—declares that no one can be disappointed who first looks upon Jerusalem from the east.

Those who have visited London know that it is impossible to realize the grandeur of St. Paul's without leaving the mass of buildings which surround it, and viewing it from across the Thames. The cathedral at Cologne seems more imposing a half a mile up the Rhine than in the city. So is it with a number of the finest buildings in Jerusalem, notably the Mosque of Omar.

Descending from the Mount of Olives, and proceeding to the northwest around the city walls, the Tombs of the



View of Jerusalem from Mount of Olives.



Kings were reached. They were carefully constructed, and are genuine rock tombs, but improved externally by skillful architectural constructions. There is no evidence that they existed prior to the Roman period, or that they ever had any connection with Old Testament characters or times. More interesting are the Tombs of the Judges, but everything which relates them to the remote past is mythical; even the legends are of recent origin.

The tomb and grotto of Jeremiah consist of a series of rock tombs, cisterns, and other curious antiquities in the possession of the Mohammedans, who maintain a sanctuary. Having passed through a yard containing fruit trees, broken pieces of columns, and other ruins suggestive of earthquake and siege, we came to the caverns, which are more than a hundred feet long, and were used hundreds of years ago as a retreat for Mohammedan monks. It is such a place as a gloomy prophet might desire in which to meditate. As we entered what is called the Tomb of Jeremiah, and in which he is said to have written his Lamentations, we were saluted by the sonorous bray of a donkey.

In the neighborhood are subterranean quarries of unknown depth and equally unknown date. So vast are the excavations that it is not improbable that they were begun before the time of Solomon, and that the stones used in the temple, which were prepared so that there was neither hammer nor noise of any tool heard in the house while it was building, were quarried and polished here. It was but a few hundred yards back to the point of departure, the Jaffa Gate.

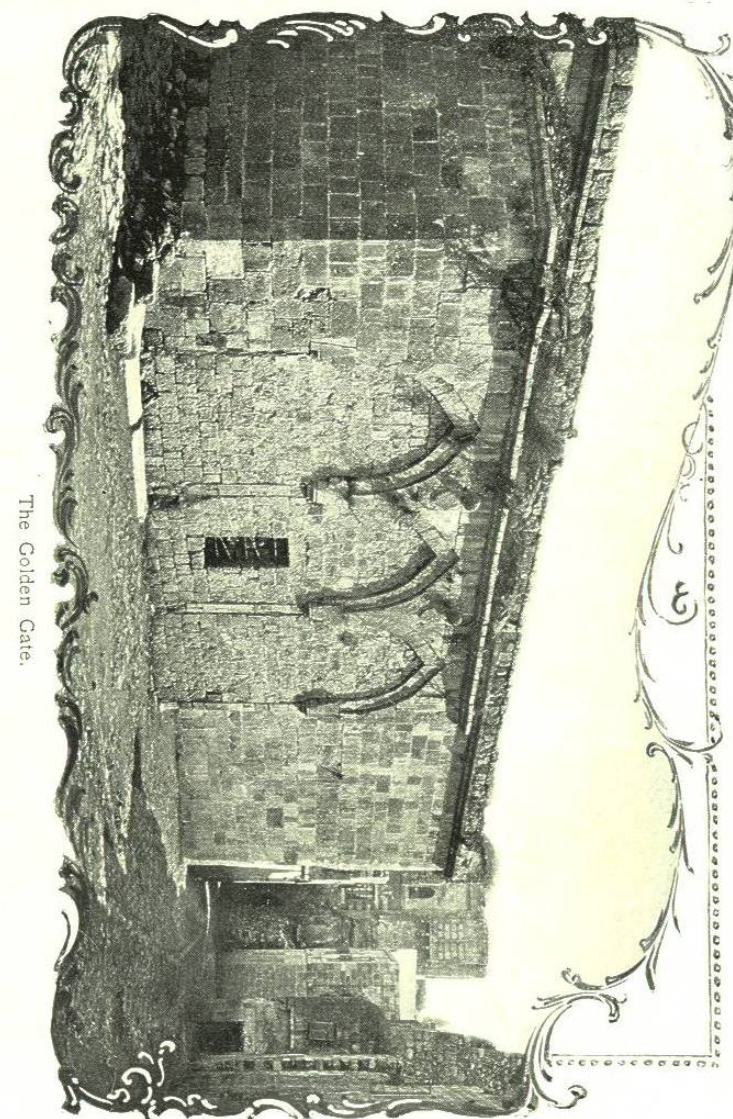
In this tour around the outskirts of Jerusalem we were constantly within sight of the city wall, the entire length of which is a little over two miles and a half. The average height is thirty-eight and a half feet, and above it rise thirty-four towers. These were undoubtedly built before gunpowder and cannon came into use. In the wall are seven gates. The Jaffa was but two hundred yards from our hotel. The Arabs call it the Gate of Hebron, as all travelers to Hebron pass through it. This is the only gate opening to the "west." On the "north" is the Damascus Gate, irregular, having several pinnacles, and known as the "Gate of the Columns,"



from slender columns covered by a gable. It is the custom of travelers to listen for the rushing of an ancient water course beneath the gate, which at certain seasons can be plainly heard. This is the only really handsome gate in Jerusalem. Herod's Gate is between the northeast corner of the wall and the Damascus Gate; has been known as the Gate of Herod only about two hundred years, and for fifteen years had been kept closed, but is now opened for a few months in each year.

The road to Samaria and Damascus leads through the Damascus Gate, and the path to Olivet and Bethany through the Gate of the Tribes, otherwise known as St. Stephen's. The Gate of the Western Africans, which has another name indicating the fact that the offal of the city is carried out through it, is also on the south; the road passing through it leads to the village of Silwan. The Zion Gate, or "Gate of the Prophet David," near the alleged site of David's tomb, and the Golden Gate complete the seven. The Golden Gate has long since been walled up by the Mohammedans on account of the tradition held among the Christians that when the Saviour returns to earth a second time he will make his entry into Jerusalem through this gate and take the city from the followers of the Prophet. Another tradition is that it is the Beautiful Gate of the temple, where Peter and John healed the lame man; but there is no ground for this belief. Another tradition says that Christ entered the city through this gate on Palm Sunday; accordingly the Crusaders opened it for a few hours on that day, and the patriarch rode upon an ass, while the people spread their garments along the road.

Within these walls is inclosed the modern city of Jerusalem.



The Golden Gate.