

meeting next year of the Evangelical Alliance in Jerusalem. He spoke of the duty of the Protestant Churches to unite in establishing a great central Missionary College in Jerusalem for the Evangelization of the Shemitic races—Jews and Arabs, Hebrews and Mahomedans. To the right he pointed out a piece of rising ground that commanded a noble prospect of the country, that could be procured for the purpose. That idea may yet be realized, and in a higher sense than has yet been perceived by Jew or Gentile, Jerusalem may become the centre of Asia's faith, life and hope.

But what small building is that to our left? We draw rein, alight and walk round the sepulchre of Jacob's beloved Rachel. "Rachel," the sacred story tells us, "died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem." And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day" (Gen. xxxv. 19, 20). The site of this grave, "on the border of Benjamin," has never been questioned, for Moslems, Jews, and Christians agree in keeping it sacred. The question naturally occurs,—Why did not Jacob bury Rachel in the cave of Machpelah, along with the rest of his father's house? On his dying bed Jacob charged his sons to bury him in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah: "there they buried Abraham, and Sarah his wife: there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife: and there I buried Leah." But why was Rachel separated from the rest, and laid in her solitary grave by the roadside?

This is a question that is easily answered, and the answer to which is a proof of the honesty of the sacred story. The deaths of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah and Leah occurred in the natural course of things, which gave full time for the disposal of the remains in the family vault: but the death of Rachel came on Jacob with the suddenness of a clap of thunder out of a clear sky, prostrating him to the earth as

does one's first great grief; it came while he was on a journey with his family and flock, it came with a motherless child needing every care lest he also follow to her untimely grave, it came in all probability at a hot season of the year, when it is necessary to bury within a few hours of death, if the help of the embalmer is not at hand. In these circumstances the slow and sorrowful journey to Machpelah was a physical impossibility, and the wayside burial was one of the dark things in this dark dispensation, to which Jacob submitted as an additional trial of his faith and patience. To show the reader how difficult it was to bury in Machpelah at such time, and in such circumstances, let me quote here the words in which Dr. Robinson describes his journey from Hebron (Machpelah) to Jerusalem, which is only about 3 miles further than Rachel's tomb:

"This was the most fatiguing day of our whole journey (which was through the desert of Sinai) we had been for sixteen hours almost constantly upon our camels: yet the exhaustion arose more from want of rest and sleep than from any great exertion. The distance between Hebron and Jerusalem is definitely given by Eusebius and Jerome at twenty-two Roman miles, equivalent to seventeen and a half geographical miles. Our time between the two cities was eight and a quarter hours, with camels."

But there was another reason, further back in God's chain of second causes, for the way-side burial. The whole fabric of symbol, type and prophecy in the Old Testament, down to the smallest nail in the vast structure, were arranged beforehand by the Divine Architect with a special reference to Christ and the events of His first and second comings. Rachel's death bringing forth her son was prophetic of the death of the Jewish dispensation bringing forth our Benjamin,—the Son of the Father's right hand. The way-side tomb of Rachel (on the very border of that son's heri-