

was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, and at the first rising of the sun reflected back a very fiery splendour, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's own rays," while to strangers who viewed it from a distance "it appeared like a mountain covered with snow, for as to those parts of it that were not gilt, they were exceedingly white." As the outer wall possessed gates admitting to the larger quadrangle or court of the Gentiles—on the west, four; on the south, two; on the north, one; and on the east, one: so the inner wall had nine gates, three of which, on the north, south, and east, allowed access to a smaller square, called the "court of the women," while from this again another gate, opposite the first of the three just named, conducted to the court of the Israelities.

It is uncertain to which of these gates the designation "beautiful" applied. Bengel and Alford, with Conybeare and Howson, follow the traditional belief that it was the gate Shushan of the Talmud, on the east side of the outer wall, which led into the court of the Gentiles. Lightfoot, Delitzsch, Olshausen, Schürer, Stapfer, and Geikie advocate the claims of what is sometimes called the Corinthian gate, which opened from the court of the Gentiles into that of the women. Ewald,¹ Lechler and Gerok,² with others, prefer the gate Nicanor, between the women's court and that of the men. Conder³ selects "the entrance from the Tyropœon bridge in the south-west to the beautiful southern cloister built by Herod." Wilson⁴ suggests a gate which was approached by a flight of steps from the modern Bab el-Kattanin or Gate of the Cotton Merchants in the west wall of the Haram, "a handsome Saracenic portal at the end of the old Cotton Bazaar, said to have been repaired in A.D. 1336." In favour of the first, or Shushan gate, may be urged its proximity to the colonnade called Solomon's porch, which, according to

¹ *The History of Israel*, vol. v., p. 322, note 2.

² Lange on the *Acts*, *in loco*.

³ *Handbook to the Bible*, p. 385.

⁴ *Picturesque Palestine*, vol. i., p. 42.