

Erzeroum is the largest city. Its houses are built of mud dried in the sun; and the flat roofs overgrown with grass appear in the distance like a meadow.

A portion of Armenia belongs to Russia.

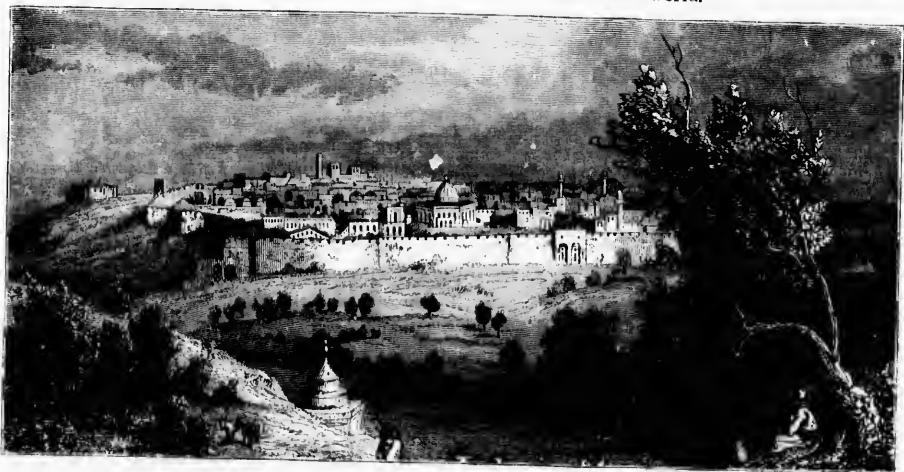
673. **Syria** is on the east of the Mediterranean. The *Mountains of Lebanon* are near the coast; and on the east of the mountains is a low plain.

In the middle of this plain, surrounded by beautiful gardens and orchards, is the city of *Damascus*, the oldest city in the world, and often spoken of in the Bible. It manufactures silks, and is the centre of a large caravan trade. *Beyrout* is an important port.

674. **Palestine**, the ancient land of the Israelites,

situated in the south-east of Syria, is the most interesting part of Turkey.

675. About forty years after the Jews crucified the Saviour, they were expelled by a Roman army from the country which their forefathers had occupied fifteen hundred years. *Jerusalem*, the capital of the country, had a strong, high wall around it, and the Jews from all the land ran to this city for protection. The Romans beat down the wall, destroyed the city, and burned the beautiful temple. The Jews are now scattered throughout almost all the countries of the world.



679. JERUSALEM.

676. Palestine is quite a hilly country. The *Jordan*, a comparatively small stream, is the only river. It rises in the Mountains of Lebanon, flows southerly through the lowest valley in the world, and empties its waters into a remarkable lake called the *Dead Sea*. The *Dead Sea* contains so much salt and other mineral substances that fish cannot live in it. In the upper part of its course the *Jordan* forms a fresh-water lake, called the *Sea of Galilee*, or the *Sea of Tiberias*.

677. Palestine was once exceedingly fruitful; but except in some fertile valleys, it is now an unproductive country, and agriculture is greatly neglected.

678. Christians love to travel in Palestine, and visit the places in which occurred so many of the great events recorded in the Bible. But travelling in this land is toilsome and somewhat dangerous. Travellers employ armed guides to show them the way and protect them from robbers. There are no carriage-roads, so that they must journey on horseback; and the animals to be obtained are generally very inferior.

679. *Jerusalem* is built on the ruins of the ancient city. The streets are narrow and the houses gloomy. Half the people are Mohammedans. Six miles to the south is *Beth-*