

care for their souls, feed them with knowledge, urge upon their acceptance the blessings of the great redemption, and interest themselves in their children that, when their fathers are removed, these may become noble pillars of the Church!

Miscellaneous.

THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

Now that the first gaze of curiosity had subsided, and the mere novelty of such sublime scenes of desolation had passed away, so far from being joyful at what I had accomplished, I felt something unusually heavy and humbled at the heart. The impression was so intense that a kind of faintness came over me, and without thinking of it or being able to prevent it, I first burst into tears, and then gave utterance to prayer. I saw already several aged and feeble Jews, mean and melancholy, engaged at their devotion, muttering the law aloud, and tearing at it as it were the stones of the street. With wild lamentations they were imploring the God of their fathers to restore to them the sceptre that had passed away, and to send them the Messiah that this land might be their own. I thought the coincidence remarkable, when I heard at the same time from the minarets of the Turks, the well known Mahometan cry sounded and sung in long triumphant chorus, "There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet."

In the evening I visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre,—certainly the most venerable in the world. It was remarkable to find this burial place of our Lord guarded by Mahometan soldiers. A great crowd was pressing for admittance, and their struggles were scarcely becoming their character as pilgrims. I entered the large circular hall supported by a colonnade of eighteen pillars, and surmounted by a large dome. Local tradition has fixed this remarkable spot as the centre of the earth. Immediately within the door there is a large flat stone on the floor, surrounded by a rail, and having lamps suspended over it. The pilgrims were pushing towards it, some of them even on their knees; and they all kissed it, and prostrated themselves before it, and offered up prayers in holy adoration. This is said to be the stone on which the body of our Lord was washed and anointed for the tomb. But every thing around is hallowed by events unparalleled in the theatre of this lower world. Turning to the left, and proceeding a little forward, I came to a round space immediately under the dome, surrounded with large columns that support the gallery above. In the midst of the space there is a pavilion containing the Holy Sepulchre. At one end it is rounded, and on the outside of it there are arcades for prayer. At the other end it is squared off, and furnished with a platform in front. The Sepulchre is thus enclosed in an oblong monument of white marble, ornamented with pilasters and cornices, and surmounted by a small marble cupola. Within there are two small sanctuaries in the front of which stands a black polished marble, about a foot and a half square. Here sat, it is said, the angel who announced the tidings of the blessed resurrection to Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James: "He is not here; he is risen, as he said: Come see the place where the Lord lay."

Going forward about a yard, a curtain is drawn aside, and I was told to take off my shoes. I then stepped down, and bending with my hands on my knees, I entered a low narrow door into a small apartment, lighted up with a profusion of golden lamps, and filled with an oppressive atmosphere of incense, and simply adorned with a variety of flowers. This, I was told, was the mansion of the Saviour's victory, where he burst asunder the fetters of death, and rose from the dust of mortality. On my right hand was the grave in which his body was buried. This cave, hewn out the rock, where the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was laid, has been covered with marble to protect it from injury by pilgrims chipping the rock with hammers and carrying away the fragments. Two young Greek women, dressed in white, with consumptive faces and a hectic flush, were bending over the tomb in the attitude of very fervent devotion when I entered. They seemed to be sisters, and down their pale marble faces, unmoving as statues, tears gushed in penitence. I kneeled over the tomb, trembled, wept, and muttered a short prayer for humility, repentance, faith, and mercy, for myself, my family, my flock and friends. And in so far as I knew my heart, I may say that the gratitude of it ascended with a risen Saviour to the throne of the Father on high. Alone and in silence, at the supposed centre of the world, and far, far from home, I tried fervently to remember my sins before God, and all the places and persons in the East Indies and in Europe most near and dear unto me. I rose, pulled a flower, which was afterwards sent home to my dear daughter Maggie, and came back from this scene of hope, joy, and sorrow, to give room to other visitors, for not more than three or four can be admitted at a time.

Without and around the door of the sepulchre, but still under the dome, there was a crowd of pilgrims, Copts, Abyssinians, Syrians, Maronites, Greeks, Armenians, and Roman Catholics, all prostrate on the marble floor. Deep silence obtained. Every body seemed pale, and as if struggling for breath. As each trembling traveller was admitted to the grave, he seemed to feel in the nervousness of his frame as if he were about to pass into the presence of God, face to face. When I entered, I felt almost as if I had been summoned by death to give an account of the deeds done in the body.

Very intense indeed were my feelings when I approached Gethsemane, and the solemnity was elevated when I noticed that no adorning what-

ever had been attempted at the spot where the Man of sorrows suffered agony in the garden. With the exceptions which shall be mentioned, and with which the heart of every pious man will sincerely concur, the grove, the rock, and the whole garden of Gethsemane, still present almost the same appearance they probably presented in that awful night "when the heathen raged and the people imagined vain things." The only material alteration effected has been the building of a wall of stone and lime fifteen feet high round the sacred spot, by the Mahometan authorities, to prevent Christian pilgrims from destroying the olive trees by carrying off twigs and even branches as relics of the spot. Turning the northern corner, with face eastward, I came to the door of the garden, which I found locked. But I had procured a Turkish permit, and had been told the hour at which I would be received; and thus although nobody answered my first call at the door, I knocked loud and long, when at last a bandy-legged, bronzed, siney Arab opened the door from within, rubbing his eyes to convince me that he had been sound asleep. But before taking me into the garden, I was shown the spot where Peter, James, and John, were said to have tarried, and to have fallen asleep, while Jesus went from them about a stone's cast to pray. It is exactly opposite the door, and upward a little on the slope, and it presents a small flat of stone raised a little from the rest of the rock, apparently of not much more extent than would admit of three or four men sitting or lying in the way in which they are said to have been.

The principal feature in the garden was eight olive trees gnarled and time-worn, probably the most aged, and undoubtedly the most venerable in the whole world. Their large trunks much decayed, and small tops of foliage, still survive the lapse probably of two thousand years or more.

The Jew will bend, but he will not break. I saw him walking down the south and eastern slopes of Zion towards the tombs of his fathers. His step was firm, his face erect, and his frame unbending. Stern and steady was his eye, his upper lip was well drawn back, and his teeth were set like a victim's under the torture. He stepped past with stately stride, lending me but one glance of his eye, quick and restless, and then, lifting it up in defiance, it appeared to take in the whole valleys of Jehosaphat, and Hinnom, and the site of the temple at a look; and giving his head a toss, he seemed as if to say, this holy city and that land is mine and was my father Abraham's. And you are a Nazarene intruder. I wandered round the valley and over the brook Kedron, and down past the garden of Gethsemane, and found myself among the tombs of Absalom and Zechariah. I heard here some moaning, muttering sounds of anguish and supplication. I followed it up, and there on his bowed and bare knees, with his mouth biting the dust, I found the same Jew lamenting the captivity of Israel and praying for the coming of the Messiah.

Still the Jews as a body fervently expected their Messiah to come, according to their own interpretations as a temporal Prince, to redeem Israel and trample the Gentile nations under foot. There was a conviction, I was told by the English Consul, amounting almost to a certainty, that he was to appear last year according to the Scriptures. And great was the mortification of Israel when the year 1850 run out, month after month, and still no signs appeared, no stir in Palestine, and no movement among the nations, or any of the isles afar off. It was noticed by one who stated this fact to me that last year, on the morning of new year's day, the salutation of the Jews to each other when they first met, was, the Messiah shall come this year, and the land shall now be ours. But their salutation this year, it was noticed, was *my* the Messiah come this year, and the land be ours. As the coming of the Messiah is understood and admitted to break all contracts,—in every house let in Palestine from one Jew to another, a saving clause to this purport is inserted in every lease. Nobody seemed to be able to explain from law or tradition or how this notion first began to obtain, but through use and wont it has now become universal. It probably originated in the shrewd conception for which this strange people are remarkable above all other, that on the return of the Jews to their promised land, heritable property will rise greatly in value. And of this there can be no manner of doubt.—*Extract from the Rev. Dr. Aiton's Lands of the Messiah, Mahomet, and the Pope.*

POPERY—BLASPHEMOUS PANTOMIME.

In the little town of San Lorenzo in Campo, forty miles distant from Ancona, the following procession takes place on the Good-Friday of every year. The line of procession extends from the town, through an almost open country, for about a mile and a half, the whole way having been previously prepared for the purpose. On platforms, erected at certain distances, the different stages of our Saviour's passion are represented. On one of them you see the judgment-seat, and Pilate condemning Christ to death; on another, Christ crowned with thorns; on a third, Christ falling under the load of the cross on his way to Calvary, and so on. Next comes the crucifixion, represented in four different acts. The first exhibits Christ with one of his hands nailed to the cross; the second, with both his hands nailed; the third, with both hands and feet; and in the fourth, our holy Redeemer is exhibited as expiring, and with his breast pierced by a spear. At the foot of the cross may be seen the three Marys. All these personages chosen to represent our Lord's passion are picked out from the very dregs of the people, and are paid more or less, according to the uneasiness of the posture which they are made to assume. He who personates our Saviour receives the greatest pay, a crown; while the respective representatives of Pilate and Mary obtain the smallest named, eighteenpence. All these sacrilegious pantomimers are