

on it, as the angel held it back from following Mohammed to heaven, when the prophet sprung thither from it, on his horse El-Barak; and the hole in the floor of the cavern they call the Well of Spirits, into which all spirits descend, and whence they are ultimately to be lifted by the hair of their head. But the traveller pays little heed to guide-book lore or dragoman's loquacity, as he stands beside that brown, bald hill-top, set in its gorgeous shrine—his thoughts are busy with memories of the mighty certainties of the centuries by-gone.

To the right of the Dome of the Rock, and at some distance



THE MOSQUE OF OMAR.

from it, stands the next most important building in the Harem area, the Mosque el Aksa. It is a large building, cruciform in shape, and divided into seven aisles by columns and piers of different styles of architecture, and different grades of workmanship, united by architraves of roughly squared timber. For the most part covered with whitewash, the interior is cold, crude and uninviting; but there are a few good windows, and some elaborate arabesque work and marble casing under the dome, while the pulpit is finely carved in wood and inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl. Of course, the legendary places are numerous, and to Moslems doubtlessly, interesting; but the Christian visitor, as a rule, has been more than surfeited with that sort of thing,