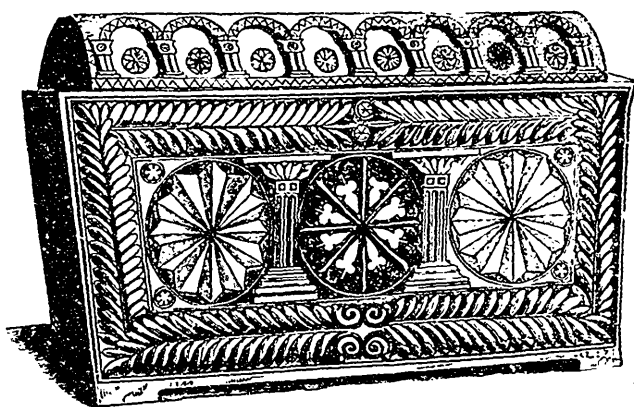


Lighting our candles we descended a short stairway to the entrance to these vaults. It was closed by a large circular slab, which could be rolled backwards or forwards in a groove or mortise in the rock, thus illustrating the Scripture, "Who will roll us away the stone from the sepulchre?" There are within, seven rock-hewn chambers which bear evidence of once having been closed with stone doors. They are lined with numerous cells opening from them, containing stone coffins for one or two bodies, and in some cases detached

The graves, crowded thickly together, are covered with brick or plaster masonry. At the head and foot are placed turban-crowned, upright stones to guard the body; one to represent the accusing, the other the guardian angel, which shall contend for the dead man's spirit on the resurrection day.

The custom of going to the grave to weep there (John xi. 31), is one which still largely continues throughout the East. On Friday, the Moslem Sabbath, the cemeteries are crowded with groups of mourners sitting on the ground



ANCIENT STONE COFFIN, JERUSALEM.

sarcophagi of the general design shown in the above cut. One of these is now in the Louvre in Paris.

About a quarter of an hour's journey farther are the Tombs of the Judges. A small sunken court leads to a vestibule seven feet wide with a gable, as shown in cut. Behind this another door admits to a series of tomb-chambers with receptacles for many bodies. There are also numerous other rock tombs in the neighbourhood. The myth that the Judges of Israel are buried here is of recent date.

Where interment in rock tombs is not possible, the common mode of burial in the earth is practised.

around the grave and wailing piteously beneath the cypress trees over the dust of their departed friends.

For the sheik of the tribe or any very holy teacher or saint separate low-domed tombs were erected. These were generally erected on the top of some hill, and being frequently whitewashed were very conspicuous from afar. Such a tomb our Saviour referred to in the words, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye are like unto whitened sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."