

conversing with the doctors of the law in His boyhood, and here He taught the people in manhood.

The interior of the Mosque is somewhat dark, but the decorations are very rich. The stained glass windows are beautiful. The inside walls are also covered with tiles, and on both these and the outer walls are inscribed passages from the Koran. There are many things and places of little or no consequence pointed out in the building, but the one great attraction is the bare, rugged, unhewn piece of rock underneath the dome—a part of Mount Moriah itself. It is 60 feet long by 45 feet wide, and "stands about 4 feet 9½ inches above the marble pavement at its highest point, and one foot at its lowest." There are three steps cut down on one side and a chamber beneath, with which a circular hole communicates from above. The object in these things is not known, but it is now pretty generally believed that the Temple altar was formerly built over this rock and that these cuttings were used in that connection. Scores of legends hover over this rock, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim, which I have not time even to mention. As I walked about it and heard the legends of Mahomet's association with it, which seemed repulsive to me in the extreme, a strange feeling crept over me. I was oppressed by an emotion I cannot explain. The force of Christ's prophecy and warning regarding false Christs and false prophets (Matt. xxiv, 5, 11, 24; Luke, xxi, 8) so vividly impressed me; for there, right over the sacred spot where sacrifice had been wont to be made from the time of Abraham till the fall of Jerusalem under the siege by Titus, when Jewish sacrifices ceased—whence the smoke of thousands of offerings had risen to the skies—right on the very ground where had stood the Holy Temple of Israel; and perhaps within a stone's throw of where Christ himself had stood when he uttered these prophecies, was this noble building erected for and devoted to the worship of the greatest false prophet that ever lived—one who has indeed deceived many. But this, too, was part of

the Divine purpose, and prophecy must needs be fulfilled.

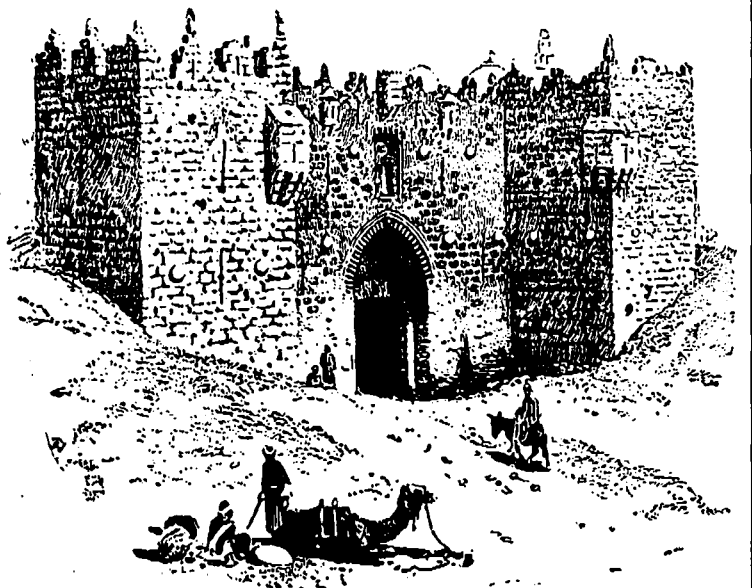
Between the "Dome of the Rock" and the Mosque El Aksa is El Kas (the Cup), a large marble fountain, beneath which are vast reservoirs hewn in the solid rock, and into these water was conveyed from the Pools of Solomon. The fountain is not now in use. It may have been here that Solomon placed the Brazen Laver. The Mosque El Aska is a group of buildings in the south-west corner of the Haram, the origin of which is uncertain. It may be, in site at least, identical with the Basilica, founded by the Emperor Justinian. Here, also, many things of little or no interest are shown the visitor. Some of the pillars and stones in the lower part of this Mosque are of great size and were once used in the Temple buildings. In the south-eastern corner of the Haram a flight of thirty-two steps leads to a small vaulted chamber, to which many legends attach, and thence the descent is made into the so-called Solomon's Stables, "a vast succession of pillared and vaulted avenues," bearing great resemblance to the workmanship of the builders of the first Temple. It is a wonderful place indeed, and it is puzzling to think how the Hebrews in those early days were able to handle such enormous blocks of stone. Most of the great columns were in a single piece. They certainly built well. Beneath this is another similar series of great vaulted passages, and, from the little excavating that has been done, it is believed a third exists below that again. All this was done on the steep slopes of Mount Moriah to build up the vast Temple platform. The Egyptians built massive and wonderful monuments but

never were they known to build such foundations, which certainly eclipse anything that ever existed. If the Hebrews made such foundations what must their buildings have been? No wonder the disciples looked in amazement at the Temple architecture and said, "Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!"

At the south-east corner of the Haram wall (which is identical with the city wall at that point) some of the large stones and masonry of the old original wall appear above the surface, as it does also at one or two other points, and is in striking contrast with the lighter work of the present wall above it. On the outside, at the corner referred to, a shaft was sunk beside the wall and revealed the fact that its foundations were 130 feet below! Unfortunately all such excavations and investigations are now stopped by the Turks.

Some of the lower courses of the western Haram wall (which lies within the city) are the stones, at least, of the ancient wall, and at one place, where the old stones are easily accessible, the Jews gather (on the outside, of course) to lament the loss of the Temple and pray for its restoration. This is called the Jews' Wailing Place. Here some of them assemble every afternoon and a large number Friday afternoon, at three o'clock, to bemoan the fall of their great sanctuary, and the scene is a most extraordinary one. Old men and women, the younger generation, too, and even children, stand or kneel before the wall, and, if not too crowded, with their heads leaning against it, weeping and wailing or reading passages from sacred Hebrew books. While some are not as earnest in their crying as they might be, there is no doubt about the sincerity of the majority—particularly the old men, some of whom cry as though their hearts would break, "the body waving to and fro and the lips muttering and wailing lamentation after lamentation."

The five or six courses of the ancient work here "are composed of enormous blocks of marble, fifteen feet long and three or four feet deep, with rough panelled surface and smooth bevelled edge," and bear smaller stones above. A little to the south of the Jews' Wailing Place, in the same wall, is the spring of an arch (called Robinson's Arch, after its discoverer), the fragment consisting of immense stones projecting from the wall near what is now the ground surface. This has proved to be a portion of a large arch of a viaduct which formerly connected the Temple with the south-western part of the city, the valley between being now filled with



THE DAMASCUS GATE.