

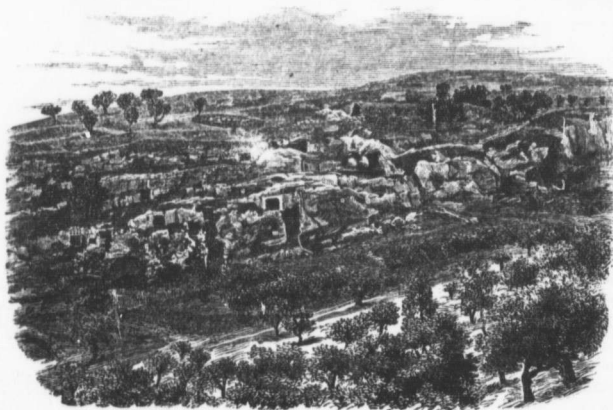
SUNDAY SCHOOL BARRER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

Vol. XXV.]

JANUARY, 1891.

[No. 1.]



ACELDAMA.

Aceldama.

BY THE REV. GEO. J. BOND, B.A.

As the traveller pursues the winding pathway past the tombs, in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, he comes ere long to a striking point. Before him the valley opens out, and just at its opening, half-built of squalid huts, half-burrowed out of ancient tombs, is the filthy Arab village of Silwam—the ancient Siloam—where vile dogs and even viler human beings render progress in that direction the reverse of pleasant. Away in front the view terminates in the rocky hills, on whose nearer slopes lies the traditional Aceldama—a gruesome region, where nature's laughter seems forever to have ceased. Indeed, all about in this Vale of Hin-

nom is material enough for gloomy thought, and it is little wonder that its very name should have become associated, even apart from its ancient fiery and unhallowed traditions, with the hopeless doom of the eternally lost. The valley curves below one on the left around the southern slope of Olivet, toward the east, and, on the right, around Ophel, toward the west. In it are the Pools of Gihon, the Upper Pool, some seven hundred yards from the Jaffa Gate, and the Lower Pool, less than a hundred yards farther east. As one stands facing the valley, Olivet rises in terraces on the left hand, while, on the right, rise the abrupt slopes of Zion, crowned with the serrated walls of the Holy City, which here present a particularly fine appearance, and reveal in their lower courses some of the massive stones used by Hiram's cunning workmen in the days of Solomon.