

after plucking a few olive leaves as a remembrance of this most interesting spot, from trees many centuries old, we crossed the Kedron, and directing our steps to the northward, rode about a mile, most of the way through a grove of olive trees, and visited what are called "the tombs of the kings." These are extensive subterranean structures, excavated in the solid rock, the doors of the different apartments having been cut, each from a single block of hard limestone, and beautifully carved. The whole must have been a royal work, but what kings were here interred, and even to what age the work should be attributed, is very doubtful. From this place we returned to Jerusalem, and completing the circuit of the city, entered by the Bethlehem gate, (also called the gate of Jaffa) by which we had gone out in the morning.

*Excursions in the Vicinity—Bethlehem—Jericho—Jordan.*

27. Sabbath. Attended the service of the English church, performed at the residence of the British consul, by the Rev. Mr. Nicolayson, of the London Jews Society. Mr. L., our travelling companion from Beyroot, preached an edifying discourse. At one, p.m., Mr. Lanneau had an Arabic service, at which about a dozen natives were present, most of them from neighbouring villages. They listened with apparent interest to Mr. L. and frequently expressed aloud their assent to his remarks.

28. Rode in company with some English friends to Bethlehem, Rachel's tomb, and the pools of Solomon. The latter, three in number, are a truly grand and royal work. The largest is about a furlong in length, and the smallest not much less. The breadth is perhaps half the length, and the depth, I should think, from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet. They are filled during the winter with water from the neighboring mountains, which is conveyed from them to Jerusalem by an aqueduct skirting along the edges of the hill, after the ancient fashion, in order to preserve the level. The pools contain water still from last winter, though the rainy season is just about to commence.

Bethlehem is of course one of the most interesting spots on the face of the earth, as having been the place where that grand event occurred which occasioned the song of "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men," to be proclaimed by the voices of the heavenly host. But the interest of the christian traveller in Bethlehem is not a little marred by the character of the statements made to him on the spot. He is led down several flights of steps, and is showed the very spot of the Saviour's birth in a cave, into which horses or cattle could scarcely be brought by force—a place consequently not very likely to have been used for a stable. Besides the manger, (now cased with marble and adorned with pictures and lumps,) he is shown the spot where

the magi opened their treasures, the tomb of the innocents, or children slain by Herod's order, the number of which, according to tradition, amounted to fourteen thousand! the study of St. Jerome, where they say he translated the Scriptures, the tombs of Eusebius, Paula Eustochia, etc. This grouping of so many things together, and particularly the idea that all the innocents were gathered together and buried here, excites doubt and tends to a suspicion of every thing stated by the monks. Were I to visit Bethlehem again, I should feel inclined not to enter the so called grotto of the nativity, but to ascend the hill and look simply at the natural features of the place and of the surrounding country; to reflect that here my Saviour was born, and to indulge in those delightful emotions which that thought is capable of inspiring. All these emotions are liable to be disturbed, at least in the mind of a protestant, by a visit to the grotto.

29. Walked with Mr. Lanneau and Mr. Sherman to Mount Zion. On the highest part of that mount which lies within the walls of the city stands the Armenian convent. Its grounds and buildings are very extensive, and the church is the most splendid that I have seen in the East. There is a small printing-press, which was occupied, when we visited it, in printing, for the use of pilgrims of their church, a list of the holy places which they are accustomed to visit. Oh when will they understand that the time has come that "neither yet at Jerusalem shall men worship the Father!" On the part of Mount Zion which lies without the walls of the modern city stands a mosque, called the mosque of David, and supposed to cover his tomb. Near it are the burying-grounds of the Latins, Greeks, and Armenians, and now also that of the American mission. The latter is the only one which has a wall built round it. As serious difficulty was experienced in the last instance in which permission was obtained to enter the remains of a protestant in the Greek cemetery, we deem it an occasion of gratitude to God that the mission has now a burying-place of its own, and that it has at length been inclosed without serious molestation. The remains of Dr. Dodge and of sister Thomson will be removed, as soon as convenient, to the new cemetery.

31. Started for Jericho and the Jordan, in company with some English friends who were with us in the quarantine at Jaffa. We took two tents, kindly furnished by our friends at Jerusalem, beds, and provisions, and we found them all very necessary. The road to Jericho is a constant descent, so that one may well be said to "go down" from Jerusalem to Jericho. The country is generally barren, and unfit for cultivation until you come to the plain of the Jordan. As this bursts upon the sight from the summit of the mountains, the eye is refreshed by an extended green. The plain stretches for many miles to the north, and