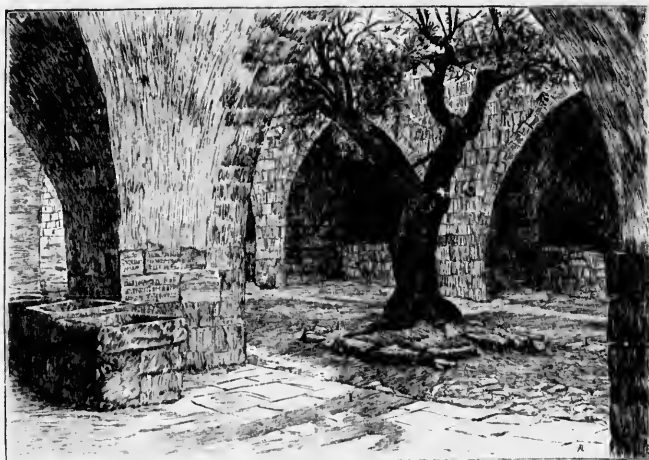


The custom had originated in memory of the Captivity in Egypt, during the beginning of which the women of Israel used to withdrate for their confinement to the Desert, in the hope of saving their offspring from death; but the Egyptians having noticed this, the mothers resorted to hiding their babies in subterranean refuges. In commemoration of this fact, and of the wonderful way in which the children thus hidden throve under the direct protection of God, it became usual to dedicate a certain number of the boys, brought up as described above, to the service of the Temple. They appeared at the various ceremonies, contributing by their presence to the éclat of the services.

The soil of Jerusalem is at the present time far loftier than it was in former days, and the reason is not far to seek. Ever since its early days as a stronghold of the Jebusites, that is to say, for some three thousand years, materials of every description, with the necessary provisions of all manner of kinds for its inhabitants, have been pouring in whilst nothing has ever been taken out again, with the result that perfect mountains of tilth and rubbish have been piled up here and there, serving as a foundation for the later buildings. These hills grew, in fact, to such a height, especially after the sieges and sackings to which the Holy City was subjected, that they are now loftier than the walls, and, on the side known as the Jewish quarter, they project beyond it and eject their surplus rubbish upon the slopes of Ophel.



Out-buildings of the Armenian Convent at Jerusalem.

J. J. I.



Capital from the El-Aksa Mosque.

J.-J. I.