

TRAVELS IN THE HOLY LAND.

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The climate of Jerusalem surprises us. It is pleasantly cool at night, and, although hot at midday, it is decidedly cooler than we had expected to find it. The mountain air is very pure and invigorating. Jerusalem is a mountain city – in the tops of the mountains. The four mountain-tops or hills within the present walls evidently represented four small cities at one time, each with its own wall – Mt. Moriah, Mt. Zion, Mt. Acra, Mt. Bezetha, all surrounded by a general wall. The city at one time may have been nearly a half larger than at present, including more of Bezetha on the northwest and more of Zion on the southwest. The difficulty in determining arises from the fact that the city has been destroyed and rebuilt so many times. Excavations in various directions continually reveal old fragments of [R1389 : page 108] walls or cisterns or other ruins, sometimes fifty or even seventy feet below the present surface. The Tyropean valley is now almost level full of *debris* upon which houses have been built and inhabited these many years.

At first the city of Jerusalem is disappointing. It is built after the manner of Arabian cities generally. The streets are mere alleyways, and are not depended on for ventilation, except for the small shops or bazars. The dwellings merely connect with the street by a door or an occasional window. The inhabitants seem to rely for light and ventilation upon inner courts from which access is had to the various apartments. The present buildings, aside from those of the various religious societies and government and hotel buildings, are generally very inferior; yet one is sometimes surprised at the contrast between the outside and the inside of some of them. Nor need we be surprised if, as the people become degraded, their ideas of architecture also depreciated. Certainly the

very ancient ruins from time to time uncovered exhibit more of art and dignity than do the modern stone structures.

The present population is said to be fifty thousand. To suppose that it ever contained a million people, as Josephus intimates, one would be obliged to conclude [1] that the city was larger than at present; [2] that then as now the people here lived more closely than in American or European cities (except in the quarters of the very poor); [3] that the siege was at the time of a feast which drew many people to Jerusalem from all parts of Palestine and from outside countries; [4] that the people from suburban villages crowded into the [R1390 : page 108] city for protection from the Romans; and [5] that Solomon's quarries and stables would, in such an emergency, shelter fifty thousand people.

One is impressed from the first with the fact that Religion is the chief business of Jerusalem. Our guide informs us that there are over seventy convents. These, representing various religious factions, all seem to be imbued with the one error – viz.: that their duty in life is to pray much and often and to *do nothing*. Each sect thanks God that it is not as the others and especially not like the poor people who do a little honest work, and, according to divine arrangement, earn their bread by sweat of face. Few of them esteem very highly the great apostle who wrote against those "forbidding to marry" and those "who labor not at all." These very religious people all claim to live by faith; but the opinion of "the common people" is that they enjoy many of the substantials and even of the luxuries of the present life. Of course all claim that they trust to God for food and clothing; but from their craftiness many believe that their faith rests largely upon the credulity of their fellowmen, whose large and warmer hearts are moved by misplaced sympathy to assist them. These, without exception, we believe, claim to practice celibacy. They are supported by friends and religious orders in Europe and America, and by the liberal donations of visitors, who regard them as martyrs. They include

Catholics of all shades, Greek, Roman, Armenian and Syrian, "the Americans," "the Germans" (or Society of the Temple) and Mohammedans. The Armenian convent on Zion Street is the largest. It can accommodate with lodgings about eight thousand pilgrims. The pilgrims, especially of the Greek and Armenian churches, come in great numbers at the Passover anniversary of our Lord's death.

We enter the city at the Jaffa gate, the nearest to our hotel, on the way passing large numbers of new buildings erected by Jewish societies and others, and much more modern looking than those within the walls. The new outside portion is known as *new Jerusalem*. The Jaffa gate is the busiest of the city's gates: it is thronged with people and camels and donkeys and trades-folk carrying and crying their wares, especially eatables, and with cripples and blind seeking alms. Our dragoman leads the way to clear a path for us, and must repeatedly shout "O-ah!" (*i.e.*, "Look out!" or "Take care!") to camel and donkey drivers, to prevent our being run over or jammed between a donkey's and a camel's burden and the wall; for we are not, like the natives, accustomed to looking out for ourselves and dodging.

Here, near the gate we have entered, is the Tower of David or the stronghold of Zion. **[R1390 : page 109]** (2 Sam. 5:7.) Opposite is a large new building erected in 1886. It is occupied by stores below and a hotel above, and was the first modern building erected in Jerusalem for other than religious purposes. In excavating for its foundations the ruins and foundation of the Tower of Hananeel were discovered, and it is built partly upon the old wall of the Tower. Now read the Lord's promises – Jer. 31:27,38-40: Zech. 14:9-12.

Passing along Zion Street we come to a building with a black dome said to be built over the cave where David, Solomon and many others of Israel's kings were buried. (1 Kings 2:10.) The

tomb is in the possession of the Mohammedans, who permit no one to enter it. A large room above it, thirty by fifty feet, is accessible, however, and we enter it. This "upper room" is reputed to be the one where our Lord ate the Last Supper with his disciples, and where they tarried after his ascension and were anointed with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. It is supposed that it was here that Peter preached the discourse in which he remarked that David's sepulchre was still with them. (Acts 2:29.) In memory of the Lord's washing of the disciples' feet in this "upper room," Roman Catholic monks now wash the feet of some pilgrims, yearly, on the Anniversary.

Our guide says that a splendid view of the city can be had from the housetop of "the Americans." They welcome us to enter, and we thankfully avail ourselves of their kindness. They invite us to sit down, and our conversation naturally drifts into religious channels, the Lord's promises to the land and the people. They give us a poor account of the missionaries, and declare that they do harm rather than good to the natives, all of whom, they aver (except those in their employ), despise them. As to the nature of their sins, we can learn no particulars, except that they are haughty and lordly in their bearing toward the poor natives. The Bishop of the Church of England (imitating the Patriarchs of the Greek and Roman Catholic churches), when passing through the streets, is preceded by two servants, one of whom carries a whip to clear the way while the other shouts to make way for the superior. Among independent-minded people, such as the Arabs, we can readily see that such a course would win but few hearts, even though long accustomed to such treatment from Turkish government officials. The Americans declare that they are there to *live* before the people true Christian lives, and believe they are doing more for the cause of Christ than the missionaries. This seems good, and we are greatly interested in them and inquire concerning the nature of their work. To our surprise, they have "*no work,*" no mission among the poor, ignorant people who so much need instruction and help.

Their idea seems to be that living *good lives* consists in living as "a unity" – as one family, trusting in the Lord to supply their needs. They claim that thus they follow Christ's footsteps, who had not where to lay his head, and that the early Church had formed a unity. (Acts 4:32-37.) We answer that the Lord went about *doing* good and had to be about the Father's business; point out that the principle of community, tried in the early Church, had not been taught by Christ; that it had failed; and that the Apostles nowhere taught that such communities were to be formed. In proof we cite Paul's advice that men labor with their own hands, that they may have to give to those in need (Eph. 4:28), and that for charities each should lay by him, on the first day of the week, according as the Lord had prospered him. (1 Cor. 16:2.) We urge that these instructions are opposed to "community." They do not like Paul so well, so we refer to our Lord's dying words to John, in obedience to which John took Mary to "*his own house*" (John 19:27), proving that our Lord had neither taught nor practised communism, although that will be more nearly the practice of the future. But when they find the sword of the spirit too sharp for their theory, they say they fear that discussion is not profitable. We realize the shrewdness and worldly-wisdom of their leader in this and other matters, and, remembering that the Lord had said, He that *hath an ear*, let him hear, we conclude that it is his will that we say no more to these who, at present, have no ear for the truth.

(To be Continued.)
