

Name.	Latitude.			Longitude.			Altitude.	Name.	Latitude.			Longitude.			Altitude.
	Deg.	Min.	Sec.	Deg.	Min.	Sec.	Feet.		Deg.	Min.	Sec.	Deg.	Min.	Sec.	Feet.
Wely Shuseh .....	31	51	43	34	55	18	850	Neby Rubin .....	31	55	29	34	42	32	
Kubab .....	31	51	53	34	57	10		Ramleh (Martyr Town) .....	31	55	21	34	52	1	
Yebneh .....	31	52	14	34	44	32	170	Jaffa .....	32	3	18	34	44	48	*
Nianeh .....	31	52	12	34	52	23	420	Jaffa .....	32	3	10	34	44	49	†
Zernuka .....	31	53	11	34	46	55	160	Neby Samwel .....	31	49	50	35	10	45	
Kebu .....	31	53	52	34	46	13		Tulil el Ful .....	31	49	15	35	13	50	
Neby Ghundeh .....	31	53	58	34	46	30									
Yebneh Port .....	31	54	45	34	41	32									

† The longitudes of these observations depend upon that of Jaffa's highest house, obtained by Admiralty.

6th September, 1871.

CHAS. WARREN, Capt. R.E.

## HISTORY OF THE HARAM ES SHERÍF.

BY E. H. PALMER, M.A.

(Continued from No. III.)

### § 6.—MOSAIC INSCRIPTION IN THE CUBBET ES SAKHRAH.

THE erection of the Cubbet es Sakhrah, Jám'i el Aksa, and the restoration of the temple area by 'Abd el Melik, are recorded in a magnificent Kufic inscription in mosaic, running round the colonnade of the first-mentioned building. The name of 'Abd el Melik has been purposely erased, and that of Abdallah el Mamún fraudulently substituted; but the shortsighted forger has omitted to erase the date, as well as the name of the original founder, and the inscription still remains a contemporary record of the munificence of 'Abd el Melik. The translation is as follows:—

“In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! There is no god but God alone; He hath no partner; His is the kingdom, His the praise. He giveth life and death, for He is the Almighty. In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! There is no god but God alone; He hath no partner; Mohammed is the Apostle of God; pray God for him. The servant of God 'Abdallah, the Imám al Mamún [*read* 'Abd el Melik], Commander of the Faithful, built this dome in the year 72 (A.D. 691). May God accept it at his hands, and be content with him, Amen! The restoration is complete, and to God be the praise. In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate! There is no god but God alone; He hath no partner. Say He is the one God, the Eternal; He neither begetteth nor is begotten, and there is no one like Him. Mohammed is the Apostle of God; pray God for him. In the name of God, the

\* Highest house.

† Symond's trig. points.

Merciful, the Compassionate ! There is no god but God, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God ; pray God for him. Verily, God and His angels pray for the Prophet. Oh, ye who believe, pray for him, and salute ye him with salutations of peace. In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate ! There is no god but God alone ; to Him be praise, who taketh not unto Himself a son, and to whom none can be a partner in His kingdom, and whose patron no lower creature can be ; magnify ye Him. Mohammed is the Apostle of God ; pray God, and His angels, and apostles for him ; and peace be upon him, and the mercy of God. In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate ! There is no god but God alone ; He hath no partner ; His is the kingdom, and His the praise ; He giveth life and death, for He is Almighty. Verily, God and His angels pray for the Prophet. Oh ye who believe, pray for him, and salute him with salutations of peace. Oh ! ye who have received the Scriptures, exceed not the bounds in your religion, and speak not aught but truth concerning God. Verily, Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, is the Apostle of God, and His word which He cast over Mary, and a spirit from Him. Then believe in God and His apostles, and do not say there are three gods ; forbear, and it will be better for you. God is but One. Far be it from Him that He should have a son. To Him belongeth whatsoever is in the heaven and in the earth, and God is a sufficient protector. Christ doth not disdain to be a servant of God, nor do the angels who are near the throne. Whosoever then disdains His service, and is puffed up with pride, God shall gather them all at the last day. O God, pray for Thy apostle Jesus, the son of Mary ; peace be upon me the day I am born, and the day I die, and the day I am raised to life again. That is Jesus, the son of Mary, concerning whom ye doubt. It is not for God to take unto Himself a son ; far be it from Him. If He decree a thing, He doth but say unto it, Be, and it is. God is my Lord and yours. Serve Him, this is the right way. Glory to God, there is no god but He, and the angels, and beings endowed with knowledge, stand among the just. There is no God but He, the Mighty, the Wise. Verily, the true religion in the sight of God is Islám. Say praise be to God, who taketh not unto Himself a son ; whose partner in the kingdom none can be ; whose patron no lowly creature can be. Magnify ye Him !” \*

### § 7.—WALÍD, SULEIMÁN, AND MEHDI.

‘Abd el Melik died on the 8th of September, 705 A.D., and was succeeded by his son Walid. During that prince’s reign the eastern portion of the Masjid fell into ruins ; and as there were no funds in the

\* This inscription, which is composed chiefly of Coranic texts, is interesting both from a historical point of view, and as showing the spirit in which Christianity was regarded by the Muslims of these early times. It has never before been published in its entirety. Its preservation during the subsequent Christian occupation of the city may occasion some surprise, as the Latins (by whom the Cubbet es Sakhrah was turned into a church) could not but have been offended at quotations which so decidedly deny the Divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity. It is probable, however, that the Cufic character, in which it is written, was as unintelligible to the Christian natives of that time, as it is now, even to most of the learned Muslims of the present day.

treasury available for the purpose of restoring it, Walíd ordered the requisite amount to be levied from his subjects.

On the death of Walíd, the caliphate passed into the hands of his brother Suleimán, who was at Jerusalem when the messengers came to him to announce his accession to the throne.

He received them in the Masjid itself, sitting in one of the domes in the open court—probably in that now called Cubbet Suleimán, which is behind the Cubbet es Sakhrá, near the Báb ed Duweidáriyeh. He died at Jerusalem, after a short reign of three years, and was succeeded (A.D. 717) by ‘Omar ibn Abd el ‘Agíz, surnamed El Mehdí. It is related that this prince dismissed the Jews who had been hitherto employed in lighting up the sanctuary, and put in their places some of the slaves before-mentioned as having been purchased by ‘Abd el Melik, at the price of a fifth of the treasury (El Khums). One of these last came to the caliph, and begged him to emancipate him.

“I have no power to do so,” replied ‘Omar. “But look you, if you choose to go of your own accord, I claim no right over a single hair of your head.”\*

In the reign of the second ‘Abbasside caliph, Abn Jaafer Mansúr (A.D. 755), a severe earthquake shook Jerusalem; and the southern portion of the Haram es Sheríf, standing as it did upon an artificially-raised platform, suffered most severely from the shock. In order to meet the expense of repairing the breaches thus made, the Caliph ordered the gold and silver plates, with which the munificence of ‘Abd el Melik had covered the doors of the Masjid, to be stripped off, converted into coin, and applied to the restoration of the edifice. The part restored was not, however, destined to last long; for during the reign of El Mehdí, his son and successor, the mosque had again fallen into ruins, and was rebuilt by the Caliph upon a different plan, the width being increased at the expense of the length.

The foundation, by the Caliph Mansúr, of the imperial city of Baghdád, upon the banks of the Tigris, and the removal of the government from Damascus thither, was very prejudicial to the interests of the Christian population of Syria, who were now treated with great harshness, deprived of the privileges granted them by former monarchs, and subjected to every form of extortion and persecution.

\* The following extract from Reynolds’s “Temple of Jerusalem,” purporting to be a translation of this passage, will, I hope, excuse me from again quoting or referring to that *valuable work*:—“The Jews purveyed the furniture (necessaries) for the temple, but when Omar-Rudh-Ullah-anhu-ibn—Abdul Azíz—ascended the throne, he dismissed them, and placed therein some of the tribe of Khims (of Arabia Felix). And then came to him a man of the family of Khims, and said unto him, ‘Give me some present.’ But he said, ‘How can I give thee? for if thou shouldst strain thine eyes in staring, I have not a single one of thy dog’s hairs (to give).’”

And this astounding display of ignorance was “published under the auspices of the Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland!”

## § 8.—HARÚN ER RASHÍD.

In 786 the celebrated Harún er Rashíd, familiar to us as the hero of the "Arabian Nights," succeeded his father, El Hadí, in the caliphate.

This prince was illustrious alike for his military successes, and his munificent patronage of learning and science; and although his glory is sullied by one act of barbarity and jealous meanness—the murder of his friend and minister, Jaafa el Barmaki, and the whole of the Barmecide family—he seems to have well merited his title of Er Rashíd, "the Orthodox," or "Upright."

The cordial relations between the East and West, brought about by his alliance with the Emperor Charlemagne, were productive of much good to the Christian community in Syria and Palestine, and more especially in Jerusalem, where churches were restored, and hospices and other charitable institutions founded, by the munificence of the Frank emperor.

In the year 796 new and unexpected troubles came upon Palestine. A civil war broke out between two of the border-tribes—the Beni Yuktán and the Ismaelújuh,—and the country was devastated by hordes of savage Bedawín. The towns and villages of the west were sacked, the roads were rendered impassable by hostile bands, and those places which had not actually suffered from the incursions of the barbarians were reduced to a state of protracted siege. Even Jerusalem itself was threatened, and, but for the bravery of its garrison, would have again been pillaged and destroyed. The monasteries in the Jordan valley experienced the brunt of the Arabs' attack, and one after another was sacked; and, last of all, that of Már Saba—which, from its position, had hitherto been deemed impregnable—succumbed to a blockade, and many of the inmates perished.

## § 9. EL MAMUN.

On the death of Harún, his three sons contended fiercely for the throne; the Mussulman empire was again involved in civil dissensions, and Palestine, as usual, suffered most severely in the wars. The churches and monasteries in and around Jerusalem were again laid waste, and the great mass of the Christian population obliged to seek safety in flight.

El Mamún having at last triumphed over his brothers, and established himself firmly in the caliphate, applied his energies with great ardour to the cultivation of literature, art, and science. It was at his expense, and by his orders, that the works of the Greek philosophers were translated into the Arabic language by 'Abd el Messiah el Kendí, who, although a Christian by birth and profession, enjoyed a great reputation at the Court of Baghdád, where he was honoured with the title of Feilsúf el Islam—"The Philosopher of Mohammedanism."

Since their establishment on the banks of the Tigris, the Abasside

caliphs had departed widely from the ancient traditions of their race; and the warlike ardour and stern simplicity which had won so vast an empire for 'Omar and his contemporaries, presently gave way to effeminate luxury and useless extravagance. But although this change was gradually undermining their power, and tending to the physical degeneracy of the race, it was not unproductive of good; and the immense riches and careless liberality of the caliphs attracted to the Court of Baghdád the learned men of the Eastern world. The Arabs were not an inventive, but they were eminently an acquisitive people, and,

“Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit,”

the nations conquered by their arms were made to yield up intellectual as well as material spoils. They had neither art, literature, nor science of themselves, and yet we are indebted to them for all three; for what others produced and neglected, they seized upon and made their own. Born in the black, shapeless “tents of Shem,” and nursed amidst monotonous scenery, the Arabs could conceive no grander structure than the massive tetragonal Kadbeh; but Persia was made to supply them with the graceful forms and harmonious colours suggested by the flower-gardens of Iran.\* The art of painting, cultivated with so much success in Persia, even at the present day, found but little favour with the iconoclast followers of Mohammed; but its influence is seen in the perfection to which mural decoration, writing, and illumination have been brought by the professors of Islam. Calligraphy has been cultivated in the East to an extent which can be scarcely conceived in this country; and the rules which govern that science are, though more precise, founded on æsthetic principles as correct as those of fine-art criticism here.

A people whose hereditary occupation was war and plunder, and who looked upon commerce as a degrading and slavish pursuit, were not likely to make much progress, even in simple arithmetic; yet when it was no longer a mere question of dividing the spoils of a caravan, but of administering the revenues and regulating the frontiers of conquered countries, then the Saracens both appreciated and employed the exact mathematical sciences of India.

“The Arabs’ registers are the verses of their bards,” was the motto of their Bedawin forefathers, but the rude lays of border-warfare and pastoral life were soon found unsuited to their more refined ideas; while even the cultivation of their own rich and complex language was insufficient to satisfy their literary taste and craving for intellectual exercise. Persia therefore was again called in to their aid, and the rich treasures of historical and legendary lore were ransacked and laid

\* Nearly all the technical terms used in Arab architecture are Persian, an additional proof that the so-called Saracenic style is of foreign and not native origin.

bare, while, later on, the philosophy and speculative science of the Greeks were eagerly sought after and studied.

Jerusalem also profited by Mamún's peaceful rule and æsthetic tastes, and the Haram buildings were thoroughly restored. So completely was this done that the Masjid may be almost said to owe its present existence to El Mamún; for had it not been for his care and munificence, it must have fallen into irreparable decay. I have already mentioned the substitution of El Mamún's name for that of the original founder, 'Abd el Melik, in the mosaic inscription upon the colonnade of the Cubbet es Sakhráh; inscriptions, implying the same wilful misstatement of facts, are found upon large copperplates fastened over the doors of the last-named building. Upon these we read, after the usual pious invocations and texts, the following words:—"Constructed by order of the servant of God, 'Abdallah el Mamún, Commander of the Faithful, whose life may God prolong! during the government of the brother of the Commander of the Faithful, Er Rashíd, whom God preserve! Executed by Sáleh ibn Yahyah, one of the slaves of the Commander of the Faithful, in the month of Rabí el Akhir, in the year 216." (May, A.D. 831.) It is inconceivable that so liberal and intellectual a prince should have sanctioned such an arrogant and transparent fiction; and we can only attribute the mis-statement to the servile adulation of the officials entrusted with the carrying out of the restorations.

The Christian patriarch Thomas now sought for an opportunity to restore the ruined Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the occasion was not long wanting. One of those great plagues of locusts, which from time to time devastate Jerusalem, had just visited the city; the crops entirely failed in consequence of their depredations, and as a famine appeared imminent, every Mohammedan who could afford to do so quitted the city, with his family and household effects, until a more convenient season. Thus secured from interruption, the patriarch proceeded to put his plan into execution, and aided by the contributions of a wealthy Egyptian named Bocam, set about rebuilding the church. The Muslims, on their return, were astonished and annoyed to find that the Christian temple had risen again from its ruins with such magnificent proportions that the newly-restored glories of their own Masjid were quite thrown into the shade. The patriarch Thomas and other ecclesiastical dignitaries were accused of a contravention of the treaty under which they enjoyed their immunities and privileges, and were thrown into prison pending the inquiry. The principal charge against them, and one which embodied the whole cause of complaint, was that the dome of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre overtopped that of the Cubbet es Sakhráh. By a miserable subterfuge, suggested, it is said, by a Mohammedan inhabitant of Jerusalem, the patriarch threw the onus of proof upon his accusers, and declared that his dome had been restored exactly upon the original plan, and that the dimensions of the former one had been rigidly observed. This deliberate falsehood the

Mohammedans were unable to disprove, notwithstanding the direct evidence of their senses to the contrary, and the prisoners were perforce set at liberty, and the charge abandoned. Equity, either in its technical or ordinary sense, is not a distinguishing characteristic of Muslim law-courts, but in this case no one suffered by the omission but themselves.

Mamún's brother, El Mo'tasim Billah, succeeded him upon the throne. In the year 842 a fanatical chieftain, named Temím Abn Hareb, headed a large army of desperadoes, and, after some temporary successes in Syria, made himself master of Jerusalem. The churches and other Christian edifices were only saved from destruction on the payment of a large ransom by the patriarch; after receiving which, the insurgents vacated the city, and were shortly afterwards entirely defeated by the caliph's forces.

A wonderful story is told of the great earthquake which took place in the year 846 A.D.; namely, that in the night the guards of the Cubbet es Sakhras were suddenly astonished to find the dome itself displaced, so that they could see the stars and feel the rain splashing upon their faces. Then they heard a low voice saying, "Gently, put it straight again," and gradually it settled down into its ordinary state.

(*To be continued.*)

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## AMERICAN EXPLORERS IN PALESTINE.

THE first impulse towards the exploration of Palestine, in recent times, was given by Dr. Edward Robinson in 1838. Dr. Robinson went through the Holy Land, not as a mere traveller making notes of his passing observations, but as a student of Biblical History and Antiquities making researches upon a well-defined method, with the scientific motive of preparing a work on Biblical Geography. He had fitted himself for the journey by the special studies of fifteen years, had mastered the whole literature of his subject, and had mapped out distinctly the points of inquiry which previous travellers had left undetermined. But he had also qualifications for his task such as are seldom combined in any one man;—a discriminating judgment, a retentive memory, comprehensive and well-digested knowledge, accurate powers of observation, the habit of patient and cautious investigation, and a rare faculty of common sense in sifting facts and weighing evidence. The most eminent geographers of Europe at once recognised the great value of Dr. Robinson's researches in a geographical point of view; but controversy was awakened by his opinion touching the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and other places of reputed sanctity, and by his broad canon of historical research—

\* From the *Quarterly Statement* of the American Exploration Society, No. 1.