

near it the country house of some wealthy man, which certainly may have been the case. If it was an oil magazine it proves that in that time a good many olive trees must have stood here in this upper part of the plain. At present there are none, except those in the Greek gardens, to the north and the German colonists in the north-east.

7. The piece of Russian ground lying east of the Court of the Holy Sepulchre is a block of ground 37 feet from north to south, 36 feet east to west, and 14 feet above the level of the street. It seemed, before it was examined, to be a mass of earth facing the street towards the south and east and retained by walls, but towards north and west leaning against other buildings. Grass was growing on the top, and no opening or entrance was recognisable except a walled-up or closed arch in the northern building used as a magazine. Recently the earth has been removed, and under it various ruins have been found. Concerning these I have made the following notes :—

The magazine and buildings adjoining are ancient and of the same period, but have undergone considerable changes.

Six piers were found, two supporting a fine arch of nicely hewn stones, the other four, larger masonry and well cut, the support of a vault, the roof of which is now fallen in; they appear to be of the Crusading period, as they are similar to those in the Muristan and elsewhere.

A drain was also found, which passed under the buildings and pavement of the street.

Other ruins of walls and vaults were exposed, but of a later period, and there is still a heap of *débris* remaining to be removed later on.

From the position of the piers, vaults, walls, and arches we have, evidently, masonry belonging to three different periods.

The rock was not found, but I believe that it is not far from the surface. Probably the rock will be laid bare when further improvements are made.

C. SCHICK.

## A JERUSALEM CHRONICLE.

*Jan. 1, 1886, to March 31, 1887.*

THE municipality of the city has arranged with the hitherto proprietor of the ruined church and convent of Maria Mogadolio, generally called Mounnich, in the north-eastern Mohammedan quarter, and took it over from him. He had there a pottery and brick establishment, which as they now import these things from France is done away with. The municipality has now destroyed all that is above ground, and a new building will be erected for a Mohammedan school. I have been there, but found nothing remarkable. I was not able to visit the arches below, but the workmen and the foreman of the work tells

me there is, except large vaults, nothing of interest there. I will try to go in. But the Moslems will not like it, they are rather jealous, and try to do away with any sign or mark from former Christian works or buildings.

To bring in easily new stones to the new building, the closed door Bab az Zaharieh (or Herod's Gate) is now opened; and the stones are broken from the rock outside the wall, where the wall makes a bend inwardly, south of Jeremiah's Grotto.

Opposite (north) to the north-east corner of the Muristan, the Russians have a piece of ground, which was a ruin looking like a heap of earth, just where the letters C H I N on the Ordnance Maps (1864-65) scale  $\frac{1}{25000}$  stand. West of it is now a large new building belonging to the Greek priest of the Holy Sepulchre Church. This piece of ground has been cleared and all the earth removed outside the town, and some masonry of two or, as I think, of three different ages was found, although of no great interest, of which I will send a plan with some notes (see p. 158).

The Russians are developing a great activity in erecting new buildings. On the Mount of Olives during the last ten years a church has been in course of construction. It is now finished; and a small convent or pilgrim-house, trees planted and new roads and arrangements made there, and above all on the highest point of Olivet a square tower is erected, already brought up to a considerable height, quite a new feature of the holy city; it will be four stories high, of which three are already done, and it is hoped that on its top the Mediterranean might be seen. About twelve bells are already fixed up in it.

About 400 feet south-east from the Garden of Gethsemane, higher up the brow of the hill, and in the middle between the two southern roads going up unto the mountain, the Emperor of Russia and his brothers are building a small but beautiful and costly church as a memorial of their mother; it has greatly advanced, and is already near the roofing. The style is strange to us, decidedly Muscovite, and will have seven towers with onion-shaped cupolas. A little higher up they have made a very large cistern, the greater part above ground, built against a cliff of the mountain, so it looks like a building without windows and doors, having only one (somewhat concealed) in order to be able to regulate the running off of the water, when wanted, for any purpose, especially for gardening purposes.

In the Kedron Valley they have bought several of the rock-cut tombs.

At their large establishment or settlement on the height north-west of the town, they have bought outside their boundary wall a large fresh piece of ground, and on it are now erecting new pilgrim-houses, as those inside their enclosure is not sufficient, the latter being under Government rule; the new place is bought and made by the Russian Orthodox Palestine Exploration Society, of which Grand Duke Sergius, a brother of the Emperor, is president. They not only explore but build also churches and pilgrim-houses, and it seems they have plenty

of money. As the new place adjoins the old, they have made a new door in the boundary wall.

The Abyssinians have built a large round Church, very nicely and at great expense ; it is completed up to the roof, but the money has come to an end, so the priest started last week for Abyssinia in order to take reports and photographs of those things which have been already done to the King, and to ask for more money to finish the work. It will be covered by a dome, in a similar way to the Dome of the Rock. I myself made the plan of it, and it stands only a few hundred feet distant from my home. It is unlike the Dome of the Rock in the inside, as there is no rotunda, but there is a square place separated as the holy of holies, round which are two passages or round aisles, and curiously no door has to be opposite the other, so one cannot look straight into the innermost part when the doors are open.

This year we have had a good deal of rain, much more than in some years previous. It fell on 23rd January and lasted for about a week, and on the 10th February snow lay on the higher mountains beyond Bethlehem, and for several nights there was frost, and even thick ice, which damaged the roofings and walls of the houses greatly ; also the trees suffered.

On the 14th February the Crown Prince of Italy arrived, and stayed six days. Two arches were made over the street, one made by the Jews. It was situated 1,350 yards west of the Jaffa Gate, the other 300 yards nearer to the city by the Italians, of a Roman architectural design, from wood and canvas or cloth, and on it stood a figure made of pasteboard and gypsum, representing Italia, stretching out one arm, in her hand a laurel. When the Prince arrived it was a fine day, and the whole population of Jerusalem went out, standing and sitting on both sides of the road from the gate, for more than 2,000 yards. All the house tops, windows, balconies, garden walls, and town wall near the gate, were crowded with people. Soldiers kept order. On Sunday the 20th February the Prince left and went northwards.

In regard of examining the rock-cut old channel on the ground of the Dominicans north of the Damascus gate, the superior of their order had been here, and I had an opportunity of speaking with him on the subject. He promised me that he would speak to the master of the ground, now residing in Paris ; he will, perhaps, give me leave to excavate. May he fulfil his promise !

The old parapet wall of the ditch of the castle was broken down, and a new one erected of lower dimensions, so the place looks much more in order, and one can see much better each stone of the castle, especially those in the lower layers, on which I hope some day to report.

C. S.

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