

part of it, and reconstructs the letters ΑΛΓ . . . Α over the head of the female figure into ΑΛΓΕΙΝΑ—"sorrowful." On the assumption that the fresco illustrates a funeral procession, he suggests that the letters ΙΑ between the second and third figures permit of restoring another word of the same with plural termination, as for example :—ΑΝΘΡΩΠΕΙΑ "human."

The tomb is evidently a family one of four *loculi*, and as far as I can make out the plan is unusual about Jerusalem.

The tomb is nearly in the middle of a space surrounded by a wall of masonry 3 feet thick, which seems to be the remains of a building, which at one time covered the tomb. It is quite evident that the entrance to the cell was not made from the open air, as the bevelled opening shows no evidence of ever having been covered, and the plaster and decoration continue over the bevelled face of the first cover, as if intended to be visible from an interior. No pottery or other objects were found, and only a very few bones; the whole tomb appears to have been entirely robbed of its contents.

The three frescoed figures are so exceedingly classic in character that they seem to illustrate some mythological subject, but the rendering of the frieze is more conventional and lacks this vigorous feeling. In fact it suggests Christian art as readily as the other inclines towards a pagan origin. The work certainly belongs to a period when classic art still flourished in the country, but I will leave someone better acquainted with such antiquities to class it more definitely.

Another tomb was uncovered to the south, as shown on plan—only a simple sunk cell, 5 feet 3 inches long by 1 foot 6 inches wide, and in it are two bodies placed side by side, one with the head to the west and one to the east.

THE CAMP, JERUSALEM,

August 30th, 1896.

REPORTS FROM HERR BAURATH VON SCHICK.

THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

(A.)—*Its Present State and Condition.*

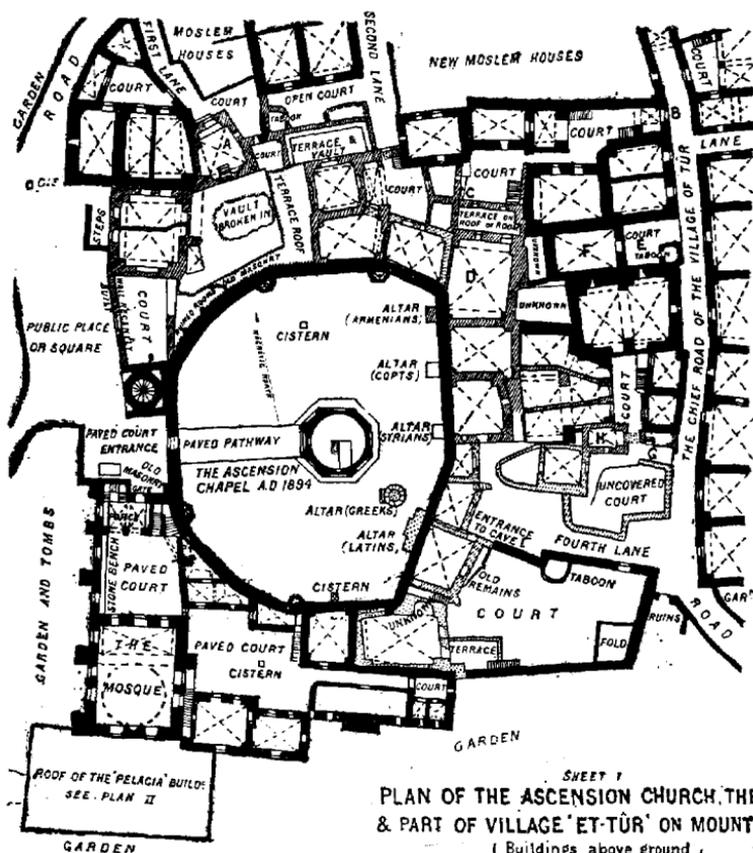
ON account of excavations on the Mount of Olives, I went, towards the end of last year, several times there. Once when there, it came into my mind to make also a visit to the present Church of the Ascension, which is situated in a courtyard in the centre of the village Et Tur, sometimes called Kefr et Tur. About 30 or 40 years ago I had often visited the place, and hence knew it then well, but now, on coming into the court, I

was struck with several things, as my observation had in this period of time become sharpened. At once I noticed the great irregularity of the court in respect of the lines of the surrounding wall, which must have some meaning, and not be simply the result of careless working when the wall was built. On coming home I searched in my books for a plan of it. The best I found was of the English Ordnance Survey, Plate V. on a scale $\frac{1}{3000}$, of which I enclose here a copy to simplify references. As will be seen, the court is neither round nor square nor eight-sided, or if it may be reckoned as such, the sides are of very different lengths,¹ and on some sides, especially the north western, a curve is plainly observed. I measured the court in all its details, and on making a plan on a scale $\frac{1}{3000}$, I found this curve to be a part of the line of the original round wall, as marked in dotted lines on the Ordnance Survey Plan; but it proves also that the present Chapel of the Ascension is not exactly in the centre but a little pushed to the south. There are on the southern part of the wall still two old bases of pillars *in situ*, and also two on the northern part, but at different distances, as the plan shows. These pillars stood in the corners of the eight sides, in groups of three, or even more. In the north-eastern base there are indications that there may have been five in each group. Or was it in this one only for some special reason? In some of the existing plans are inserted two bases of an inner row of pillars. I found them not as such, but as remains of a former pavement, which is now removed, except this piece, and a strip from the entrance door of the court to the Chapel of the Ascension. Under the court are two not very deep cisterns; their mouths are marked on the plan. Along the eastern side there are, attached to the wall, stone benches, forming altars for the various Christian denominations: the northern belongs to the Armenians, the next to the Copts, and the southern of the three similar ones to the Syrians. More south is the Latin altar of a different shape, and between it and the chapel is the Greek altar of a rather interesting form, for, as all the others are of common masonry of squared stones, this one is formed in its chief part of the top piece of a pillar shaft more than 3 feet in diameter. It is nearly 4 feet high from the surface of the ground, and enclosed to its full height with hewn stones cut in radius lines, so that the whole makes a round building 6 feet in diameter, to which on the west side are fitted a few stone steps. But the chief object in this court is the Ascension Chapel, which is so well known and so often photographed that it is not necessary to describe it here, only to say what was interesting to

¹ "Survey of Western Palestine," Jerusalem Vol., p. 398: "An enclosure of irregular polygonal form, measuring about 40 feet (it is 95) north and south by 30 (it is 78 feet) east and west." Tobler, "Siloah and Oelberg," St. Gallen, 1853, p. 100: "It is rather a square court"; and the same author in "Dritte Wanderung," Gotha, 1859, p. 355, says: "The wall forms an eight-sided court, but very irregular." And Sepp, "Jerusalem und das Heilige Land," Schaffhausen, 1873, p. 689, says: "The eight sides are very different. It is a very rough imitation of the old."

me. The 16 pillars at its corners (two at each) are very fine ones, bearing arches, and over the latter a ring of projecting *consoles* bearing the tambour; the latter and many of the *consoles* are a later restoration, but the old ones are nicer, and the whole formed originally an open hall. The filling of the side openings with masonry was done later, and the one towards the west furnished with a door with wooden wings, so the chapel is generally locked up, but will be gladly opened by the guardian for a small bakshish. Inside the floor is paved, and at the southern part is a small space of a square form and surrounded with stones projecting a little. The bottom of this space is formed by a rock-like stone on which people see the footprints of our Lord! It is a reddish stone, and the print is natural, not chiselled, and shows, not very perfectly, the sole of a human foot or feet—for some people make two feet of it, as was done in former times. More interesting (in respect of archæology) was to me the large and very ancient-looking flagstone on the side of the footprint space (if it may be called so), which is 9 feet long and 4 feet broad, having at its northern part, just east of the footprint, a bowl-like hole about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep in the middle, where (as the old Sheikh told me) the Prophet Moses had put his staff when consulting with Jesus! South of it is the small *mikrab* or prayer niche in the wall without special decoration. The stone slab is cracked into many pieces, as if from fire. A similar flagstone of the same size is found west of the entrance gate to the enclosure. So one may suggest that the old pavement consisted of such throughout. The enclosure wall shows marks of having been erected or restored at various periods. The curved portions are in their lower layers the most ancient, consisting of comparatively small, squared stones, the straight parts are also in their lower layers old, having rather larger stones, but the rest and the whole eastern part are comparatively modern. Higher up, in many parts, repeated restorations are visible. This wall is higher in some parts than in others, as the buildings on its outside demanded. Its average height is about 21 feet from the present level of the ground. The entrance is on the west side, and there outside stands a minaret, with a square solid base 16 feet wide each way, and about 18 feet high, above which the minaret becomes hollow and has a winding stair inside. On the outside it is eight-sided. It must have been once destroyed, as even on the basement a restoration is visible. I think the basement was originally built by the Crusaders for a bell tower, and am convinced that the straight sides of the court were also made by the Crusaders, whilst the curved parts are Byzantine. To the south, opposite the minaret, is a rather well-built Mohammedan building. Going towards it from the paved court, one sees in the corner old masonry looking out from the ground, and, passing the entrance gate, one comes first into a porch or hall, and further on to an open paved court of some 25 feet each way, with a long stone bench on its western side, where the wall is high, and has two windows. From this court one can go in three directions: southwards into the mosque, which is 32 feet long and 24 feet wide inside, covered with a semicircular dome, and having

windows on all four sides (*see* Plan I). Going eastwards, one comes to the dwellings of a few Mohammedan families of some ecclesiastical order. First there is a paved court, with the mouth of a cistern and rooms on both sides, also a kind of garden with two olive trees—all standing over old buildings below. Northwards from the mosque court steps lead up to a higher story, where there are only one or two rather small rooms.



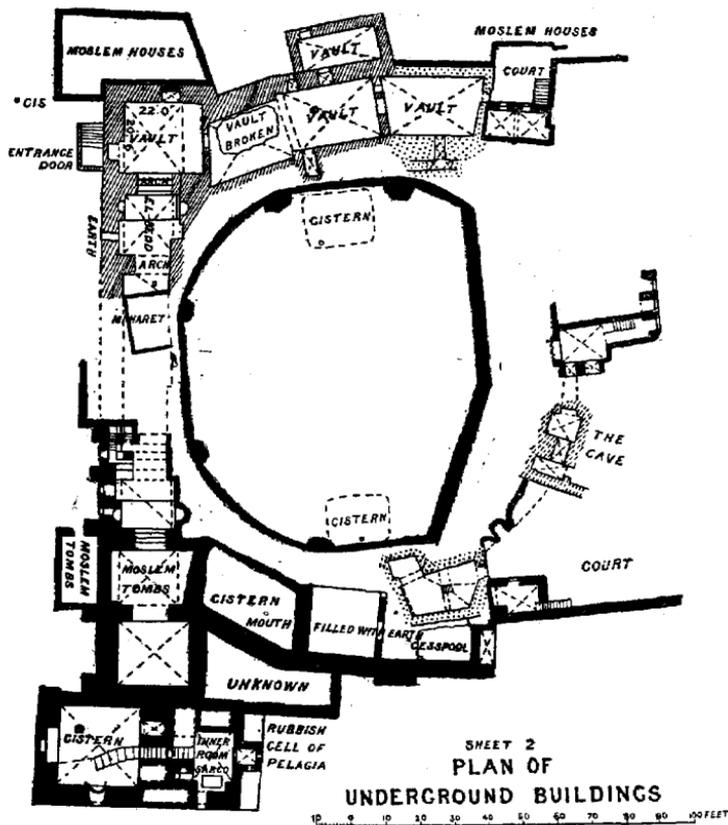
In front of them is a terrace, from which a narrow pathway leads on to the top of the wall north of the minaret. These buildings attached to the wall of the court take up about one-third of its circumference, whereas the other two-thirds are occupied by what may be called fellahin houses, all of which I have visited and examined, and will now partly describe.

(B.)—*Examination of the Village and the Parts Underground.*

When studying the subject of the ancient Church of the Ascension I found there was a celebrated cave, and several vaults round the inner rotunda, so I came to the conclusion that one at least, but probably two, of these vaults must be looked for outside the present court wall, and the cave underground. As I had observed windows lower down than the flooring of the porch and the large court north of the mosque, it was clear that there must be some underground vaults there; and as there is a flight of steps west of the village and north of the minaret leading down to a locked door, apparently there were underground vaults there also, and these I wished to see, but the people told me that this latter is Armenian property, and I could not go in without leave. It was strange for me to hear this, but I went one day to the Armenian Convent and explained my wishes to the Secretary. He was rather glad about my intentions, and on the condition that I should afterwards give him a copy of the plan I intended to make, he ordered the man having the charge of their property on Mount Olivet to show me everything there. This man was for many years engaged in the Armenian Convent as a *cavass*, and by Ibrahim Pasha, more than 50 years ago, when he was still a young man, was made the sheikh of the village Et Tur. So a few days afterwards, when showing the houses, &c., of the village to me, he carried his official sword, and with a loud voice commanded the people to open their doors and to let me in and examine and measure the places. I had two assistants with me; they measured and I made the notes. We began west of the village, and going down the steps there, and through the opened gate, came into a large vaulted room, dark, and with stores of wood, &c., in it (*see* plan, Sheet II). From it southwards five broad steps brought me down into another vault, which they called *El Bedd*, *i.e.*, an oilpress. Here I found a regular oil-press, its long beam going through a former window. But, what was of much more interest to me, there were two small apses, one in the east and one in the west wall, built of very nicely cut stones, but now to some degree decayed. This place was on the south shut up by the underground masonry (or foundations) of the basement of the minaret, which, as well as parts of the eastern wall there, are of quite another kind of masonry, and I think are Crusaders' work, whereas the rest (*i.e.*, the main parts) are Byzantine. In the arching, near the base of the minaret, is a skyhole for ventilation.

As the door east of the first vault was blocked up we had to go back, so I measured round the houses along the road to and with the first lane (*see* plan, Sheet I), and then the room A, which is used as a passage and as a stable. Going up by a few steps from this we reached a large free space, a kind of terrace, in the middle of which is a large opening into a vault beneath. Turning to the right hand we came to two rooms inhabited by Mohammedans, who pay rent to the Armenian Convent. These rooms were originally one, but are now divided into two by a thin wall; the rest there are ruins. We next went eastwards, and measuring

over the terraces came to the second lane, and through a door southwards in a court surrounded by rooms; three, and a kind of stable, belonging to the Armenians, and one to the Roman Catholics. All these rooms were apparently situated on vaultings below, which I afterwards found to be the case. The two southern rooms in this court are attached to the wall of the court of the Chapel of the Ascension, and over the northern two stand upper rooms—the western belonging to the Armenians, the



eastern to Moslems. There are steps leading up to them. When done here we had to go out into the second lane and to the main road, going along the northern edge of the village, and so eastward until we came to the third lane or main street of the village. There are many new and nice-looking houses, which I did not measure, as they have no bearing on the old church. At the door B we went in, measuring westwards through a court till to the second court, and the rooms on both sides of it. Meanwhile, the door C (see Sheets I and II) was opened, and on entering

we had to light our candles, as this vault was entirely dark and filled with *netsh* (a kind of brushwood). Yet I was able to take the measurements with rods, and the bearings with the compass. On the south there is a kind of opening or recess in a thick wall, which seems to consist of two walls, as there is a joint in the middle of it, and inside a narrow passage blocked up on both sides. I cannot tell what it has been for, I was thinking of a staircase, but saw no steps. This vault, and a room already mentioned, which is over it, belong to the Latins. When finished here we measured the adjoining room, and then up the steps and the rooms of the upper story. What is under the room D I cannot tell, as I found no entrance to it, nor to the adjoining place marked in plan, Sheet I, as "unknown." We next went up to the roofs of all these rooms, measuring them, and the outside of the court wall of the chapel, which rises about 7 feet higher than these roof-terraces. Then we had to go down and back into the main street of the village, measuring court E and room F, and to the lane G, measuring there all round about. On the room H stands another room as second story, belonging also to the Armenians. Interesting in this court are the three doors, one near to the other, leading to long and curious-shaped vaults, all quite dark, and forming partly two stories, *i.e.*, one vault above the other. The rooms behind (on Sheet I), and attached to the court wall of the Chapel of the Ascension, are situated somewhat higher, and it seems there is now nothing underneath them, except earth. There are next towards the south some inferior rooms and courts belonging to the Greek Convent, and the cave, as they called it, old walls very strong and still arched. Then comes the fourth lane, from which a door leads into a large open court, apparently part of the former Augustinian Convent, to which several of the rooms already described also belonged. On the west side of this court there are several rooms, in two stories, belonging to the Latins, who have put the Jerusalem cross over the doors. Then we had to go back again into the road, and thence into the field, or garden, in order to measure the outside of the walls and the south side of the place as far as the gate of the "Pelagia" chapel. When this was done we examined the latter inside, and then continued along the outside of the walls northwards to the minaret and the steps beyond where we had begun some days before. I wished now to see and measure the underground vaults on the south side under the mosque and its court, &c. But I could not effect it, as there are tombs of Mohammedan saints there, and it is not lawful to let any Christian go in. But they showed me the door and the stairs leading down to the tombs as I have put them in the plan, Sheet II. They said the vaults are exactly like those on the northern side¹ (or *El Bedd*), and not extensive, only under the court of the mosque, and not fully reaching to the wall of the latter, and that all further vaultings, if there are any, are walled up, which I think is true, as there are in the walls no windows or other opening visible. A large

¹ Hence I have entered them so in the plan.

piece of vault is converted into a cistern, and others are filled with earth, and trees growing in it.

I wish especially to remark that in these measurings and examinations I *did not meet with the rock*—not even at the deepest points. All is masonry, so I think the rock with the footprint, which is the highest spot of ground, is not rock, but a stone, and that there is so much accumulation of earth and *débris* at the Ascension Chapel, the village, and all around, that the present floor of the church court is about 15 feet higher than the original surface of the ground.

(C.)—*The site of the Ascension of Our Lord.*

In St. Luke xxiv, 50, we read : “ And he (Jesus) led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them . . . and he was parted from them and carried up into Heaven.” Accordingly some think the Ascension took place in the neighbourhood of Bethany ; but in Acts i, 9–12, the same Evangelist mentions the Mount of Olives as the site, and has certainly not contradicted himself. It is also remarkable that in the earliest Christian time, at least in the fourth century, the top of the Mount of Olives was considered by the Christians to be the spot whence Jesus went up to Heaven, and so through all ages until now. And it is at the same time the most probable spot. At the foot of the mountain, He underwent the deepest humiliation and agony, and from its top went into Glory. St. Luke says also in one of the passages quoted, that the moment of the Ascension was, when he was blessing the disciples ; in the other : “ when he had spoken these things ” (narrated in Acts i, 4–8) “ he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight.” Taking this and all other circumstances together, I picture to myself this event as follows : Jesus, when staying at Jerusalem, went often out to Bethany and to the Mount of Olives, and looking carefully to all the passages telling this, one Evangelist says Bethany (Matt. xxi, 17), the other the Mount of Olives (Luke xxi, 37), so that both are synonymous ; and so apparently were taken by St. Luke. On the last walk of our Lord with His disciples, he went the way towards Bethany, not over the top of the mountain, but by the road going round the southern slope, which was broader, so that the disciples could walk round their Master, whereas on the road over the top, one would have to walk behind the other. Coming to the neighbourhood of Bethany the company went northwards over the hill situated west of that village to the traditional Bethphage, and thence to the road going westwards over the top, which they followed, and, on arriving at the point where the view of the city opens, Jesus stretched out his hands and blessed them, already rising from the ground, and the disciples saw him rise higher and higher over the top of the mountain¹ until a cloud received him out of their

¹ The disciples had to look toward the north-east, and Christ had his face towards the south : hence the footprints are shown so.

sight, and they, going also higher and towards the west, and looking upwards towards Heaven, in the hope to see Him once more; then descended a little the western slope of the mountain, when the two men in white apparel appeared to them, saying: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus . . . shall so come again as you have seen Him go into Heaven." The buildings standing at that time on the top of the Mount Olives extended more to the north than now, so that the Ascension took place very near, but south of them, where one had already a view of the city. This wandering of Jesus from place to place before the Ascension actually occurred reminds one of Elijah, who went from place to place, till at last he was taken up. Thus it seems to me that the site on which in later times the church was built may be the right one, and if not, it cannot have been far from it. The exact spot did not so much matter; the church was to be a monument of the glorious entering of our Lord into Heaven; and it would have been most remarkable if in these centuries such a memorial monument should exist without a *cave*!

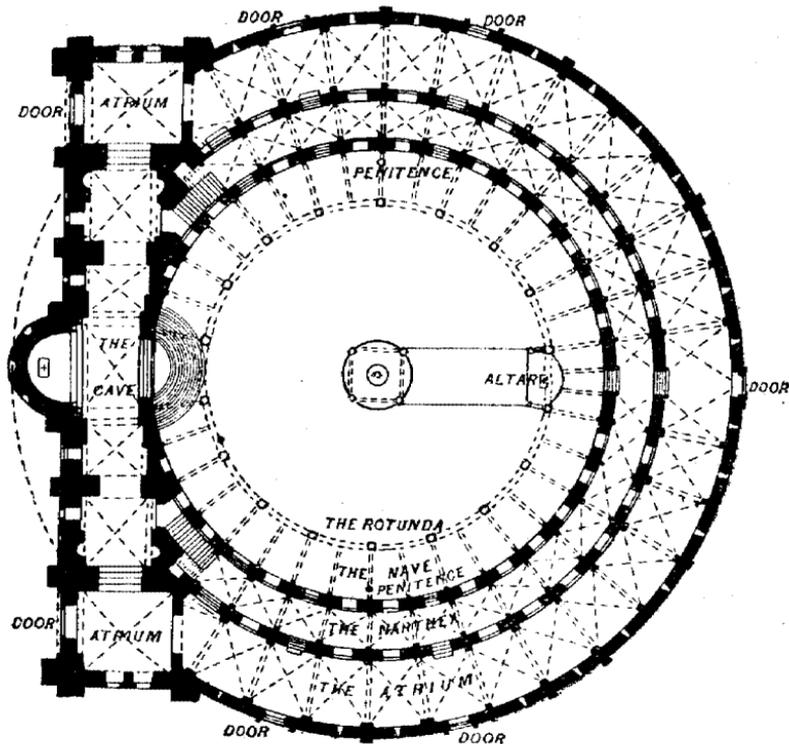
(D.)—*The Byzantine Church of the Ascension.*

In the fourth century, when Christendom had got the rule, many churches were built in Palestine. In Jerusalem the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in Bethlehem the Church of the Nativity, and on the Mount of Olives the Ascension Church. We have no description of the first church built on the top of Olivet, but it is called a *basilica*, and as such had in general a quadrangular form, so some think. The first Ascension Church also was quadrangular, and Modestus afterwards built a round one. But I should think that the Constantine Church was also round, and that the name *basilica* was applied at that time to any large church. It was natural to form a round enclosure about the spot where Jesus was standing in the midst of his disciples, and from which he went up to Heaven; a square would have seemed less appropriate. But strange to say they first made a mysterious *cave* which was adorned and decorated in a costly manner, and over it was built a large and high temple. In the middle it had no roof, but grass was growing there, it was not paved, and the footprints of the Saviour could be seen in the dust. It appears that this first church was after a time partly destroyed, so the Patriarch Modestus, in the first quarter of the seventh century, built it, for the most part, new, and of this new church we have a description and plan, by Arculf (*see* the plan); he says that "on the highest point of Mount Olivet, where our Lord ascended into Heaven, is a large round church having around it three vaulted porticoes. The inner apartment is not vaulted and covered, because of the passage of our Lord's body; but it has an altar on the east side, covered with a narrow roof. On the ground, in the midst of it, are to be seen the last prints in the dust of our Lord's feet, and the roof appears open above where he ascended . . . Near this is a brazen wheel as high as a man's neck, having an entrance

towards the west, with a great lamp hanging above it on a pulley, burning night and day. In the western part of the same church are eight windows, and eight lamps, hanging by cords opposite them, cast their light through the glass as far as Jerusalem." ("Bohn's Transl.," p. 5.)

SHEET III
PLAN OF THE ASCENSION CHURCH
 ON MOUNT OLIVET
 as built by Modestus A.D. 640-50: or
THE BYZANTINE CHURCH

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 FEET



This Restoration is made by Baurath Schick after examining the place and studying the subject. Decbr. 1894.

¹ Cf. Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, "The Pilgrimage of Arculfus in the Holy Land," 670 A.D., translated and annotated by Rev. James R. Macpherson, B.D.,

Willibald some years later (A.D. 722), says :—"In the middle of the church is a square receptacle beautifully sculptured in brass on the spot of the Ascension, and there is on it a lamp in a glass case, closed on every side, that the lamp may burn always, in rain or in fair weather ; for the church is open above, without a roof." ("Bohn's Transl.," p. 19.) Now by aid of these descriptions, and from what I found on the spot, I have reconstructed this church (*see* plan on Sheet III), and have to make the following explanatory remarks :—

There are three vaulted "porticoes" mentioned by Arculf going round the uncovered rotunda, their width and extent according to remains found on the spot. The inner one will correspond with the nave of the ancient churches, the middle with the narthex, which is narrower than the others, and the outer one with the atrium. Of the two latter (or outer ones) the circle is not complete, but brought to straight lines, and in the middle of them is the celebrated cave, which is still existing. Not a cave in rock, but all of masonry, similar to the one in Bethlehem, the floor lying several steps deeper than the level of the main building around. It is true I have not *seen* this large apse, with its steps, pillars, altar, &c., but the circle of the outer corridor or portico *demand*s something there, as I show in dotted lines, and as Arculf's plan has the outer circle complete, and no entrance there, as afterwards the Crusaders' church had, so nothing else than an apse could have been there. From the cave, processions could be made not only into the rotunda, going up by about 12 steps, but also through the three vaulted porticoes, which were also connected one with the other by many openings, especially by doors with steps on the north and south sides. In regard of these doors I wish to remark that in the plan of Arculf, brought down to us by Quaresimus, are shown three doors on the north side—but in that brought down by Mabillon they are on the south side, so I conclude these doors were on both sides, three on the north and three on the south side, which answers also better to symmetry and the whole design. The points for fixing them in the plan (Sheet III), besides following Arculf's plan, I ground on the corner A, in the middle wall, still existing as Byzantine work. As afterwards in the Crusaders' church there was also a door on the east side, so I think it was also in the Byzantine church.

The walls of the latter were thinner and the stones more nicely worked than those the Crusaders built. The axis of the first or Byzantine church, when extended westwards, strikes the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, meeting the axis of that church, whereas (as will be found by comparing both plans) the axis of the Crusaders' church, if extended, would strike the Templum Domini, or the Dome of the Rock ;

1889, pp. 22-26. Version there given differs from Bohn's translation, and a plan of the church is sketched, p. 25, from the original MS.

¹ Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, "The Hodeporicon of St. Willibald," 754 A.D., translated by Rev. Canon Brownlow, M.A., 1891, p. 22. Version differs from Bohn's translation.

the difference or declination being five degrees. In the outer wall I put seven doors: two on the west or front side, leading into the atrium or outer corridor, to the right and to the left; two on the north, and two on the south side, opposite those in the middle and inner walls, making three for each side, as Arculf states; and then one behind, or in the east, making up the seven.

In regard of the brass "receptacle" round the footprint place, which Arculf gives as *round*, and Willibald as *square*, I think both are right from their point of view, the railing "about as high as a man's neck," was *round*, but the ever burning light in a lantern hanging *over* the footprints, had to be fixed on something higher up, and as there was not any roofing, it could only be done by means of posts on, or over, the railing, and if they were four in number, made a regular and conspicuous square; opposite in the east was the altar with the "narrow roof."

In regard of the eight lamps giving such a great light and shining towards the Holy City, the real arrangement cannot properly be seen from Quaresimus's copy of Arculf's plan. They are put as openings in the third circular wall, with rounded projections on the inner and outer side, whereas Mabillon's plan shows some connection with the second or more outlying wall, indicating that the lamps were hung between them, which I think was really the case. So I have in Sheet IV¹ given a plan of a higher story, forming there a kind of covered corridor in which the lamps hung, and which had in front of it a terrace, and at both ends towers, as the church was at the same time fortified, like the Bethlehem church. The two large doors I give, of the same shape as the still larger ancient door of the Church of the Nativity, at Bethlehem. On the apse outside I put three mihrab-like niches, in order to break the bareness of the wall on its outside, as windows could not have been there, because they would have lighted the apse and diminished the glittering of the inside, caused by the lamps burning there. Such places for glittering show wanted some darkness, and hence the place called "cave," even as that in the Bethlehem church, which is also *built*. (I may, perhaps, mention here that the floor of the old Nativity Church at Bethlehem does not rest on the natural ground, but on vaultings throughout, which were once used as a cemetery, for when I examined them I found them full of human bones and mould.) The roof of the inner corridor round the rotunda consisted, I think, of timber and a covering of metal—and so very likely also the outer ones, but this is not so certain, though probably nearly all large old churches were covered so.

(E.)—*The Crusaders' Church of the Ascension.*²

The Byzantine church on Mount Olivet was, in the eleventh century, destroyed. The Crusaders found there, instead of a church, a "wall,"

¹ Sheets IV and VI are not published with this paper, but are preserved in the office of the Fund.

² See "Memoirs," Jerusalem Volume, p. 398.

walls, which are on the outer side not round nor eight-sided, but rather twelve-sided, as Sheet No. V shows, tombs or other small chambers may be inserted, but which I have not detected.) The vaultings of the inside were so, that an eight-sided uncovered space, or rotunda, remained, 86 feet diameter, as it is given in Sheet VI, with the respective supports, and in dotted lines. As there are a few of the bases of the supports still *in situ* along the wall, I was able to introduce the missing ones, and the shape of the inner or free-standing row. Each of these supports consisted of three or five¹ pillars, with a pier. In the centre of the uncovered part stood an octagonal porch on 16 small pillars, with small piers at the corners, on which were arches, a tambour, and a dome, just as it is still; only that the sides are now filled up with masonry, a door being left in the west. This building stood over the *footprints* of our Lord, but something deeper down than the general flooring of the church, so that people, in order to see it, had to look down into a round shaft. This was caused by the accumulation of *débris*, &c., from the former church. The new flooring was about 6 feet higher than that of the former church. The space of the former outer corridor, or the "atrium," was converted into a number of vaults, as shown in No. V, for use of the convent, and as no longer properly belonging to the real church. Outside them was built a further row of vaulted rooms for the convent, with the necessary stairs, &c. On the outer side of the church wall (or place of the former narthex) a number of cells or chambers for the monks were built, as shown in Sheet No. VI, as a kind of higher story, in such a manner that in front of them the roof of the large vaultings below formed a terrace going round, on which, towards the outside, were other and larger rooms of the convent. It may be that on the inner row of the five-pillared piers, or on the eight-sided rotunda, a dome was put up, with a large opening in the centre, like the rotunda of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but this is not certain. I have not found any indication of such. At the chief entrance to the church, situated in the west, one came first into a porch, from which three doors led into the church, smaller doors on the three other sides leading from the convent.

It seems that the pilgrims made no special distinction between *round* and *eight-sided*, as some use the expression *round* for the same building which others describe as eight or even (Gumpenberg)² twelve-sided. The size or circumference of the building is very seldom mentioned by the pilgrims, but Gumpenberg (about A.D. 1200), when the buildings were already partly destroyed by Salah Ed Din, gives the circumference as 225 steps, and says: "I measured the ring on the top, and found 225 of my own steps," which we may estimate to be about 560 feet. As the Crusaders' church was not completely eight-sided on the outside, but according to this very writer twelve-sided, I think he measured the

¹ Some of the remainder show three pillars, one even five, which is rather the right number.

² Tobler, "Siloh und der Oelberg," St. Gallen, 1852, p. 98, note 3.

line the terrace describes towards the walls of the buildings of the convent outside; the very number of feet comes thus out. This line corresponds also with the *outer* round wall of the Byzantine church. Surias gives 130 steps, or about 340 feet, and means the wall of the church *itself* without the surroundings, and Ladoir's 50 steps *diameter* will be nearly the same if we allow that all the steps of these various men were not all of equal length. Why do I say all this? Answer: to prove that this church with its surroundings was much *larger* than it is generally believed to have been, and that even the Byzantine church had a much larger extent than that of the present enclosure of the court, even if the piece in the east, cut off by a wall, be added to it again.

The difference of the Crusaders' church from the Byzantine was, that it was built entirely of stones, with no wooden roof, and hence with much thicker walls. It had only one row of porticoes, and instead of the two others, an enlarged convent, with gates, towers, small gardens, &c. The axis declined five degrees, and the chief entrance was in the west, whereas the former building had the entrance in the north and south. The flooring was some feet higher, and the chief apse was in the east.

(F.)—*The Convent connected with the Ascension Church.*

We find some notices that even at the Byzantine church there was a convent, if not immediately connected with it, yet close in the neighbourhood, but not so extensive as it afterwards became. As we do not know any particulars about it, I have not put it on the plan of the first church, but on that of the second or Crusaders' church. In the Byzantine period, these convents were rather small, built on the ideas of the Ascetics, and similar to the "Lauras" of the time. But later on, when the church had become more worldly and had an inclination to *rule*, such edifices were built under *these* ideas and for these purposes, and the churches were now fortified. When the Crusaders built their church, they apparently built the convent at the same time, especially those parts immediately outside the reduced church, perhaps also the outer parts, and formed a kind of castle with towers at the corners and in the middle of the sides, over the gates, as I have shown in the plans on Sheets V and VI. The convent consisted of large vaults round the church, and many other rooms in two stories, intermixed with small gardens, terraces, stairs, &c. In the year A.D. 1484 it was already a good deal broken and destroyed, but many walls, vaults, and heaps of *débris* were still standing. Fabri tells us that he found the east end of the church destroyed, and a wall made across the middle of the church, outside of which stables for animals and dwellings for husbandmen had been built.¹ In the beginning of the fourteenth century there were on the Mount of Olives many prayer places, chapels, convents, and hermitages, beyond the convent, which was close to the large round church, which had then in the centre a small chapel over the footprints.

¹ Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, "The Book of the Wanderings of Brother Felix Fabri," translated by Aubrey Stewart, M.A., 1892, vol. i, pp. 484-500.

In the ruins of the convent the Mohammedans erected on the south a convent and a mosque of their creed, and at the former entrance to the church a minaret, which, as well as their convent, is still in existence.

(G.)—*Saint Pelagia Chapel.*

This is called by the natives the "Cave of Pelagia," the "Hermitage of Adawi, or Bint Hasan"; and the Jews call it the "Tomb of Huldah." It is situated south-west of the Ascension Church, on lower ground, as shown in plan, Sheets I and II. It is a chapel-like room with another one smaller, and situated still lower, formed of immensely thick walls and vaulted (*see* "Memoirs," Jer. Vol., p. 399). Pelagia was a sinful woman of Antioch, who became converted, went to Jerusalem, and as a penitent lived several years in a small cell, continually praying and fasting, in the disguise of a monk. Deacon Jacobus from Antioch paid a visit to her cell, and on his knocking at the small window, she opened it and said: "From whence come you, brother?" He answered: "I am sent by Bishop Nonnus." She said: "May he pray for me, he is a truly holy man," and then shut the window again, and said the third *hora*. Jacobus says: "Her beauty had gone, she looked like a dead person, the eyes lying in deep holes." After a few years she died (A.D. 457). The cell in which she lived is (now) 6 feet 2 inches long, 4 feet wide, and 6 feet high. The entrance is rather narrow and low. A little window was either in the east or the south side¹ (*see* plan, Sheets II and V). There were apparently more such cells in the neighbourhood, each built *single*, with thin walls of *nahry* stone (such as can still be seen in the old Luras at Khureitûn and other places in the wilderness), which at a later time were all brought under the roof of *one* building, as it stands now; and hence the extremely thick walls; that between the outer and inner rooms is 16 feet thick! Besides the Pelagia cell, there are remains of one in the south-western corner of the smaller or inner room, and a complete one, nearly of the same size as Pelagia's, in the east wall of the outer larger room (the chapel). There is also a cistern, indicating that at the time when the cells were occupied there was a kind of court, over which afterwards the chapel (or, as the Crusaders called it, the "church") was erected, in a period prior to the Crusades; it had then a wide entrance, and was, therefore, a kind of hall (as shown in Sheet V), which at a later restoration was walled up, leaving only a small door (Sheet II). North of it, there had at this time been erected another vault over tombs (Sheet V), but it became destroyed and was not restored.

Over the entrance to the Pelagia cell, on the east side of the inner room, are some decorations carved in the stones in relief; but plaster is now over them, and so I could not see what they represent. On the south side stands a stone sarcophagus, half intruded into a low niche, over which, higher up, there is in the wall a window giving some light to the

¹ As the walls of the whole buildings are *plastered*, the former openings cannot be recognised.

somewhat obscure place. This sarcophagus is mentioned by the pilgrims of the twelfth century, who used the narrow passage between it and the wall, as a path of penitence ; for if one had not confessed all his sins, and he went along this path, the stones moved and narrowed it, so that he could not go on until he confessed. Tradition says that the body of St. Pelagia rests in this sarcophagus, which bears a Greek inscription ; this was copied by De Saulcy (2,282), and hence I did not look for it, as the stone is covered with a green cloth, and the sheikh who was with me treated it with the greatest veneration—always whispering prayers as long as I stayed with my men in the room. The outer or larger chamber is considered as a mosque, but very seldom used ; the lock is in disorder, and could be opened only with difficulty. The floor of the smaller or inner room is situated 7 feet lower than that of the outer one ; twelve steps lead down to it, as the plan shows, and I think two stories of small cells (tombs) may be found in the thick walls.

(H.)—*The Footprints of Christ.*

As I have mentioned these above, and also introduced them in the drawings, I should also say something about them, but will do so very briefly. In the course of the centuries, *two*, i.e., prints of both feet, were spoken of, but also only of *one*, as the other was taken away and brought to the Aksa mosque. Sometimes they are described as if Christ had his face towards the south ; in other reports in some other direction. In the first centuries they were in earth or dust in a round hole, a few feet deeper than the general church floor¹ ; later on in rock, and in the various centuries of various size. Originally a little lower than the level of the ground, in the Crusaders' times, as the church floor was then higher than before, the footprints were deeper, and one had to look down to them in a round shaft or pit. Afterwards there was only *one* foot, on a level with or even a little higher than the Crusaders' church floor, in a *stone* (not rock), and of the natural size, whereas in former times it was double the natural size, and people accounted for that by the many rubbings and kissings. Felix Fabri tells us that one of his fellow-pilgrims put wine into the hollow formed by the footprints, and the rest licked it out.² Both Christians and Mohammedans still venerate the spot. (*See* Tobler, "Siloah und Oelberg," St. Gallen, 1852, pp. 105-114, where all this is minutely explained.)

(I.)—*The two Pillars in the Ascension Church.*

Willibald, A.D. 722, says : "Two columns stand within the church, against the north wall and the south wall, in memory of the two men who said : 'Men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven ?' And the

¹ This hole was surrounded by a brass railing, and if one put his hands through the lower part he could take some of the earth.

² "Felix Fabri," vol. i, p. 487, Palestine Pilgrims' Text-Society.

man who can creep between the wall and the columns will have remission of sins." (Bohn's "Early Travels in Palestine," p. 19.)¹ In the fifteenth century these pillars were still standing and "smooth," and it was believed that if any one was able to embrace them, so that the ends of the fingers (or only the middle fingers) could touch, it was a proof that he was a good man. They were still standing in Mejer Ed Din's time, and I should think the pillar in the centre of the Greek altar, described above under heading A, might be one of them, but removed and brought to this place, as it is now a good distance from the wall.

(J.)—*The Cisterns.*

The two cisterns in the present court are not deep nor cut in rock, but *built* at the time when the level of the floor of the church was made higher by the Crusaders. But their lower part may be still older; for as the rotunda had no roof the rain water had to be led into some reservoir. Other cisterns I have not found in the ruins, or in the village, except one in the court of the mosque, made from an old Crusaders' vault when the mosque was built. There is a good number of other cisterns outside round the village and the other buildings, even near the road crossing the mount south of the village, chapel, and place of Pelagia. They are all deep and cut in the rock.

Conclusion.

I could have said much more on all these matters, but was careful not to become too long; and yet the reader has a great task before him, for which I beg excuse, and wish the reader may enjoy it, as much as I have enjoyed writing down these lines and making the plans.

KERAK IN 1896.

By REV. THEODORE E. DOWLING.

THERE is no necessity to attempt to write the history of Kerak, the ancient capital of Moab, down to the siege of Saladin, A.D. 1188. Canon Tristram has told the story in "The Land of Moab."² But the Old Testament references may be mentioned:—

Kir-Haraseth (Isaiah xvi, 7);
 Kir-Hareseth (2 Kings iii, 25, R.V.);
 Kir-Hareseth (Isaiah xvi, 11);
 Kir-Heres (Jeremiah xlviii, 31, 36); and
 Kir of Moab (Isaiah xv, 1);

¹ "Hodæporicon of St. Willibald," p. 22, Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society.

² Chapters v, vi.