

and cliffs. The summit of the Mount of Olives rises several hundred feet above the city, affording one of the most commanding views of Jerusalem, and its surroundings.

I ascended this mountain, and obtaining a favorable position upon the highest point on its summit, spent a happy hour in surveying the "Holy City," its environs, and the endless objects of rare and sacred interest, which formed the magnificent scenery around. Through the olive trees along the declivity could be discerned the white top of "Absalom's Pillar," and the grey excavated cliffs of Siloam; the high walls of Jerusalem appeared with their square towers; the Mosque of Omar, with its magnificent dome in the centre, occupying the site of Araunah's threshing floor, and Solomon's Temple, around it a grassy area, the whole encircled by olive and cypress trees; the two domes and the strong square tower of the church of the sepulchre, the massive towers of the citadel standing upon the Hill of Zion; in the distance a long line of high hills, and low broken ranges of mountains, with intervening vales, plateaus and wild ravines—the whole forming a marvellous picture of varied beauty and magnificence.

It is astonishing, the number of cemeteries we observed around about Jerusalem. It is truly said, that the "tombs of the Holy City" are more numerous than its buildings. Nearly every hill and valley are studded more or less with these monuments.

The slopes of Mount Moriah and Mount Olivet, and portions of the deep valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat form exclusive burying places. In viewing the multitude of tombs in the rocks and cliffs along the ravines of Hinnom, we were forcibly reminded of the prophecy of Jeremiah—

"They shall bury in Tophet till there be no place."

"They have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and daughters in the fire."

Here, at the bottom of the defile, amid its cliffs and rocky steepes and gloomy scenes, the Israelites performed their worship of Moloch, alluded to by Jeremiah. These heathen rites consisted in making a burnt offering of children in the following manner—

A statue of Moloch was erected, of gigantic proportions, consisting of brass, in the form of a man's body, with a head like that of an ox. The interior was hollow, in which was constructed a large furnace, by which means the whole statue could easily be made red hot. The children to be sacrificed were then placed in its arms, while drums were beaten to drown their cries. It is asserted, however strange it may appear, that Solomon was the first who formally introduced these fearful practices, though previous to this they had been performed occasionally by the Israelites.

Seeing no lake, pond, stream, rivulet, nor scarcely a living well or fountain, in or around Jerusalem, we naturally inquired how its inhabitants, especially its former dense population, were supplied with water. We were informed that within the walls of Jerusalem living wells and fountains, at present, were comparatively unknown. Three small fountains, in the lower part of the valley of Jehoshaphat, are said to be the only waters that can be depended upon in the region around.

The city is chiefly supplied by means of its cisterns, every house of any importance having one or more of these, so arranged that the winter rains can be conducted into them by means of pipes and ducts, from the roofs and court yards. With suitable care the water in them can be preserved pure and sweet during the whole summer. Besides these private cisterns, there are many public tanks, pools and reservoirs in the city and suburbs. We saw the ruins of aqueducts, cisterns and immense tanks, which showed that in former periods, great attention and a vast amount of labor had been employed to secure supplies of water.

In every quarter of the site of the ancient city, numerous reservoirs and cisterns are discovered—some of immense capacity, excavated in solid rock; others, formed upon the flat surface of the rock, built up around with stone, thickly lined with cement. One of these subterranean reservoirs was discovered eighty feet below the surrounding surface. Subterranean aqueducts

lead in various directions from the cisterns, frequently formed in the solid rock, extending many hundred yards. How these numerous cisterns were supplied is still a great mystery. Some imagine it was effected by conduits connecting with secret springs and fountains a long distance beyond the city.

The Jewish rabbi, with whom we conversed, stated that many springs and fountains, which formerly supplied the inhabitants of Jerusalem, had long since ceased to flow, but he expected the time was near when they would be revived into living waters.

Jerusalem occupies but a small space—its walls are but a little over two miles in circumference. Its population has been variously estimated; the following particulars, I believe, are tolerably authentic: Jews nine thousand; Mohammedans five thousand; Christians about four thousand; making a total of eighteen thousand.

The political and financial condition of the Jewish population is not very flattering nor prosperous. The people are generally poor and oppressed, without means or opportunity of improving their circumstances. They receive large contributions from Europe and America, to aid in objects of charity, and in making small improvements in the way of public buildings.

In our interview with the chief rabbi, we learned that foreign influence is operating, in a small measure, in their favor toward softening the feelings and moderating the rules of the Turkish authorities; that they are allowed to purchase and hold title to real estate; but they have no money to expend in this direction, and if they had it would be discouraging under the present system of taxation. All kinds of property are heavily taxed, and all private and public enterprise is discouraged. A direct tax is levied on persons, cattle, land, and fruit trees; tobacco and silk pay about forty-two cents per pound, and all other articles eight per cent, either in kind or money.

Near where the temple formerly stood, is a small paved area, where the Jews have been permitted, during many centuries, to approach the precincts of the site of the temple of their forefathers, and lament and wail over the ruins, and the desolation of their nation and sanctuary. In this retired locality, each Friday, Jews of both sexes, of all ages, and from every quarter of the world are seen weeping, bathing the stones with their tears, and lifting up their voices in loud lamentation. No one can witness this scene without being touched with feelings of the deepest sympathy; and the poet may well say:

"Oh, weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,  
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;  
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken spell,  
Mourn—where their God hath dwelt, the godless dwell!"

LORENZO SNOW.

PALESTINE,

March 20th, 1873.

Editor Deseret News:

Among the variety of objects which claimed our attention while at Jerusalem, was the church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is an extensive building, with a host of sacred relics and holy places, grouped together within a few yards of one another; among others, the place of the Savior's crucifixion; the spot where his body was anointed for burial; where the Virgin stood, and witnessed the crucifixion; the place where his body was wrapped in linen clothes; the rent in the rock produced by the earthquake; the place where the soldiers cast lots for his raiment; the column to which he was bound when scourged; the place where he was stripped by the soldiers; and the prison in which he was incarcerated previous to being led to the place of crucifixion, &c.

In front of this building is a small area, occupied by a sort of bazar for the sale of sacred relics, and used also as a place of gathering for all classes of pilgrims. Within this building, near the door, surrounded by a low railing, is the stone of Unction, which consists of a marble slab, on which the body of the Savior is said to have been anointed for the burial. This, we were told, however, is not the real Stone, as that was concealed underneath to prevent devout pilgrims from carrying it off, or wearing it away by constant kissing, as was the case with the bronze toe at St. Peter's, at Rome. Several lamps are suspended over this sacred spot, and kept constantly burning. We proceeded to the apartment appropriated to the Holy Sepulchre, twenty-six feet long, by eighteen broad, ornamented by a dome. We entered, first, a small apartment, called the Chapel of the Angel, where it is said, he sat upon the stone which had been rolled away from the door of the sepulchre. A portion of this stone stands upon a low pedestal, though it is asserted that the real stone was stolen by the Armenians, and is now exhibited in their chapel. From this apartment, a low, narrow door opens into the vault of the sepulchre. It has a dome roof sustained by short, marble columns. The place, where the Savior's body is said to have lain, is covered by a marble slab, considerably worn at the edges by the continued kissing of pilgrims. A large number of gold and silver lamps are suspended over it, and kept constantly burning. It is fitted up as an altar; above it are costly gifts thickly set with precious stones presented by different sovereigns of Europe.

A Greek priest was officiating when we entered, who signified his recognition of our presence by scattering sweet perfumery in great abundance over our persons. All pilgrims were sprinkled in like manner, who were constantly crowding in upon their hands and knees, kissing the cold marble, sobbing and bathing it with their tears. This is said to have been hewn in the rock, but we could see no rock—the floor, tomb, and walls are all marble.

We ascended a flight of steps leading to an apartment or small chapel, which is said to cover the Hill of Calvary. Here was shown a rent or hole in the rock, as that in which stood the cross, while the Savior hung upon it. Many other places were shown, which it is needless to mention. After leaving this building, we went to the "House of Pilate," which is said to occupy the same locality as that of the Roman Governor; we saw but little, however, to satisfy us of the identity of the "Judgment hall." We came to a building said to cover the place where Jesus came forth wearing the purple robe and crown of thorns, when Pilate exclaimed to the people, "Behold the man." The place was pointed out where the Savior sank under the weight of the cross, when Simon the Cyrenian was compelled to take it up, and bear it after him; also the spot where Veronica appeared with a napkin to wipe the sweat off the Savior's brow, when his portrait was miraculously impressed upon it. This pretended relic is preserved as one of the chief in the Basilica of St. Peter's at Rome.

Considerable mystery, contradictions and disputations exist in reference to the identity of these sacred relics and holy places. In regard to those embraced within the Holy Sepulchre, it is maintained by some intelligent writers, that none of these are genuine. Doubtless some of them, if not many, are strangely misplaced.

Religious enthusiasts of opposite sects, vied with each other in searching out relics, and places to be revered and adored by people of their respective persuasions, performing pilgrimages to the Holy Land, their zeal, in some instances, carrying them beyond the bounds of honesty, to practicing deceit and imposition. Many of these places had been remaining for centuries beneath the gradual accumulations of debris, and could not be identified, either by history or tradition; consequently, divine intimations were sought, miraculous tests applied, and other methods resorted to in order to establish their claims to genuineness.

Helena, the mother of Constantine, when about eighty years old, in the fourth century, is said to have been divinely impressed to proceed to Jerusalem and make sacred discoveries—to search out the true cross, the holy sepulchre, and other relics and localities connected with the crucifixion of the Savior. Accordingly, she went to Jerusalem and, enlisting the services of the inhabitants, instituted a search for the cross of the Savior. Digging through the debris, some twenty feet or more, at length three crosses were discovered, together with the tablet, the nails

and crown of thorns. The tablet or inscription, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews," being separated from the crosses, therefore the true cross could not be identified. At last a remedy was discovered. A lady of quality was confined upon her bed in Jerusalem, of a fatal disease. The three crosses were successively presented to her; the two first without effect, but on the approach of the third, she sprang from her dying couch perfectly restored. Thus the identity of the true cross was established. It is now partly concealed in the rock and secured from being stolen by pilgrims, who are only permitted to touch it with a small, round stick, some four feet long or more, kept for this purpose. This stick, after having one end put in contact with the sacred relic, is then kissed by the pilgrim with great fervor and vehemence. While present we witnessed many instances of this fervent and striking devotion.

We visited the reputed garden of Gethsemane which belongs to the Latin church. An opposition one has recently been established by the Greek Church. As soon as the trees have sufficiently grown, and other fixtures remained long enough to impart an ancient and venerable appearance, it will then be exhibited to devout pilgrims as the real genuine garden of Gethsemane.

The low, sunken condition of Christianity in Jerusalem, is pretty clearly illustrated in the following description of scenes enacted in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. On Easter eve, each successive year, it is pretended that holy fire descends from heaven, lighting up all the lamps in the Holy Sepulchre. On this occasion multitudes of enthusiastic pilgrims are assembled from every quarter of the globe, awaiting with burning anxiety to participate in its benefits, and to receive its holy influences. Just before the prescribed moment for this miraculous descent, the Greek Patriarch enters the tomb, alone, and presently gives out through a hole in the wall, the holy fire, to the eager and excited multitude.

In former years all the churches participated in the performance of these rites, but latterly have desisted, one after another, till, at present, this practice is continued only by the Greek Church. At these extraordinary scenes, very serious accidents frequently occur—old men and women crushed and trampled to pieces, or perhaps quarrels arise between rival sects, resulting in shooting and stabbing one another. In eighteen hundred and thirty-four, deplorable and fearful scenes were enacted in that sacred building. While the church was crowded with Christian pilgrims, a contention arose, in which the Turkish guards engaged; the confusion soon became general, and directly grew into a terrible battle. The scene of horror can not be described. Numbers were bayoneted or knocked down with the butt ends of muskets, and their blood and brains scattered upon the wall and pavement, each seeming intent to destroy his fellow, or save himself from immediate destruction. Many were pulled down and trampled to death while endeavoring to escape from the building. When order was restored, the dead were lying in heaps around, and even upon the "Stone of Unction" the bodies of the dead were piled up and in some places the wounded and dead were thrown together promiscuously, one upon another five feet high or more.

The Turkish government are obliged to keep a guard constantly watching at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to prevent these contentions and fightings between the rival Christian churches.

These contradictions, contentions, impositions by the rival Christian sects, in Jerusalem, render the Christian religion a subject of scorn and contempt, both by the Jews and Mohammedans, and it is certainly a matter of serious regret that, in this enlightened age of Christianity, such things should exist in this sacred locality where our holy religion was established, and our Savior martyred.

LORENZO SNOW.

#### THE CHIEF JUSTICESHIP.

THE long suspense over the Chief Justiceship of the Supreme Court of the United States was over yesterday, by the appointment of the Hon. Roscoe Conkling, of New York. Mr. Conkling is an old member of Congress and a Senator

therein. His congressional record is esteemed enviable. He is a man of bright parts, and in the prime of life. A great many people throughout the country will regard his appointment with disfavor, as a political and partizan one. But even if the appointment is of this nature, the appointee, after assuming his new responsibility, may discharge it in a manner much surpassing expectation, as is not infrequently the case, and then the natural sequence would be that the appointer "built better than he knew," or than he intended.

The chief justiceship of the Supreme Court of this great nation ought to be filled by one of the ablest and best men in the nation—thoroughly non-partizan, upright and impartial, dead to prejudice and bias on any account, holding the scales of justice with an even and unswerving hand, and dispensing law and justice without fear or favor. In many respects this high office is the most important under the government, more so than that of president, for the chief justiceship is for life or good behavior to him who holds it, and its office is to pass upon law, liberty, and life, the greatest, most momentous, and far reaching questions, private and public. Hence the necessity of having one of the very best of men for the position.

#### Til Skandinaverne i Utah.

Længe have Skandinaverne i dette Territorium indseet Gavnigheden af at have et Organ i deres eget Sprog, hvorved de fleste af dem lettere kunde tilegne sig Kirkens Lærdomme og Dagens Nyheder, end som naarsamme fremsættes i det engelske. Mange, især de Ældre, kunne aldrig lære Engelsk; Andre have kun lært det ved Hørelsen, men kunne aldeles ikke læse det, og desuden er der hos Alle nedlagt en Kjærlighed til Modersmaalet, som aldrig vil blive et fremmed Sprog tildel.

For endel Aar siden søgte Under tegnede at begynde Udgivelsen af et dansk Blad i denne By, men Kostbarheden ved Transporten af Materialer og Mangel paa Penge i Landet gjorde, at Planen ikke kom igang. Nu derimod synes alle ydre Omstændigheder at tegne sig gunstigere for et saadant Foretagende gennemførelse, og ifølge Tilskyndelse fra mange Sider tilhader jeg mig herved at indbyde til Subskription paa "UTAH POSTEN" et Ugeblad, hvis Pris vil blive tre Dollars om Aaret. Det vil indeholde Taler af Kirkens Præsidentskab, Efterretninger fra Hjemmet og den øvrige Verden belærende Artikler om forskellige Emner, underholdende Fortællinger, Notiser o.s.v. I Salt Lake City have vore Landsmænd taget sig af Sagen med rosværdig Iver, og i Haab om at den samme Interesse rører sig paa Landet, anmodes herved indflydelsesrige og paahdelige Mænd i alle Byer og Settlementer godhedsfuldt at fremlægge denne Sag for vore Södskende samt paatage sig Besværet med at samle Navne paa Subskribenter og Penge, hvilke bedes indsendt hertil snarest mulig under Adresse "UTAH POSTEN, Salt Lake City." Det første utindgaalige Udleg er fem hundrede Dollars til danske Typer og andre Fornödenheder, som maa forskrives fra San Francisco, men ved Hjælp af Brödrene Virksomhed haaber jeg at kunne udgive første Nummer midt i November.

At et saadant Blad ikke blot vil blive læst med Interesse her i Utah, men ogsaa blandt vore Slægtninge og Venner i Staterne og Skandinavien er saa indlysende, at intet Mere behöves at siges derom.

Haabende at mine Brödre ville yde mig deres kraftige Understøttelse for dette Foretagendes hurtige og sikke Gjennemførelse, tegner jeg mig Elders Broder i Pagten

P. O. THOMASSEN.

Salt Lake City,  
den 27de September 1873.

The Southern Methodists have discontinued the probation system, and their ministers bear witness to the general benefits to stability of membership which has resulted from the innovation. A prominent minister writes that he has never to his recollection heard a solitary minister or layman express any regret that the probation system was abolished in the southern part of the great Methodist family; but on the contrary, in comparing views with pastors and people, he has everywhere heard unqualified gratification expressed.