

the name of the Tower of Antonia, in honour of his great friend Anthony, who once prevailed over the Romans.

In the western quarter of the enclosure of the temple were four gates. The first led to the king's palace; two more to the suburbs of the city; and the last to the city itself; with a descent of many steps down to the valley; and an ascent, on the other side, of as many steps, up to the top. The city stood over against the temple, in the manner of a theatre, encompassed, towards the south, with a deep valley. In the middle of the square was another gate, equi-distant from the two angles, with stately royal cloisters, with three walls, that reached, in length, from the east valley to the west; for they could not possibly reach any further. This afforded a most extraordinary spectacle; for the valley was so very deep, and the height of the building over it so stupendous, that it caused a giddiness in the brain to look down from the top of the battlements. This cloister had pillars that stood in four rows, equi-distant, with a stone wall wrought up betwixt those of the fourth rank. The pillars were as much as three men could fathom, being seven and twenty feet in length, and upon a double base. The number of them was one hundred and sixty-two. The chapters were exquisite beyond description, and the sculpture of Corinthian workmanship. These four rows of pillars included three intervals for walking in the middle of this cloister, two of which walks were made parallel to each other, and were contrived after the same manner, the breadth of each being thirty feet, the height fifty feet, and the length a furlong. The roof was adorned with curious sculpture, representing a variety of figures.

This was the first enclosure, in the midst of which, and not far from it, was the second, upon an ascent of a few steps, with a partition of stone, and an inscription upon it, prohibiting any strangers from en-

trance, upon pain of death. It had, on its southern and northern quarters, three gates, equi-distant; and on the eastern quarter one large gate, where men, who were purified, had admittance with their wives, but the women were not permitted to pass any farther.

There was a third enclosure, into which it was lawful only for the priests to enter. This was the temple itself, before which stood the altar, where the sacrifices were offered up. Into neither of these three did king Herod presume to enter, because, not being a priest; he was prohibited by the law, so that he committed the care of the holy work to the priests themselves, which they finished in eighteen months, when he himself was eight years in finishing the rest.

The temple finished.

The people were transported with joy at the completion of so glorious a work, returning thanks to the Almighty for his blessing upon the undertaking, and extolling the king for the alacrity he had shewn in the execution of it. The event was celebrated with festivity. The king sacrificed three hundred oxen, and the people according to their respective abilities; so that the number of oblations could hardly be computed. This memorable dedication of the temple fell upon the day of the king's inauguration, which added greatly to the solemnity.

Dedication.

There was an occult passage built for the king, leading from fort Antonia to the eastern gate of the inner temple, over which he erected a tower; this passage being designed as a private and safe retreat, either for himself or his successors, in case of any sedition against the government. It is reported, that, during the building of the temple, it never rained but in the night, so that the work was not hindered. This tradition has been handed down to posterity, and is, by many, deemed a peculiar interposition of Providence in favour of the work.

*End of the FIFTEENTH BOOK.*

