



THE AUTHORESS.

The Radium Larger Series.

BY WAY OF THE EAST;

OR

GATHERED LIGHT FROM OUR TRAVELS
IN
PALESTINE, EGYPT, SMYRNA, EPHEBUS.

BY

AUGUSTA COOK,

Author of

"The Light that Never Went Out," "The Divine Calendar,"

"Light Ahoy," etc., etc.

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

THIS second edition is published at the request of many readers who wished for copies of "*By Way of the East*," at a popular price. It is, so far as its matter is concerned, the same as the first edition of 1908—except for several additional photographs, a few revisions, and a "*New Chapter*," which will be found at the end of the book; also a new *Appendix*, giving the deeply interesting and pathetic letter of the aged Rabbi in Jerusalem; and which, because of its importance as a sign of the times, and the first herald of an awakening among the Jews to the Truth of British-Israel belief, seems worthy of a place in this book that deals with various aspects of Israel and Israel's land.

The Resolution passed by the Central Committee of the Protestant British-Israel League will be found in Appendix II. Other new features of this volume are a recent photograph of the Authoress, and also a speaking photograph of the beloved friend to whom under God I am indebted for the visit to Palestine and Egypt in 1907, and to whom all readers, who find pleasure and profit in the perusal of the following pages, owe their gratitude, as without the late Mrs. Phillips' kindness, the tour would not then have been taken, and therefore no "*By Way of the East*" could have appeared from my pen.

It may not be out of place to mention here that my first acquaintance with Mrs. Phillips began towards the close of 1906 at a British-Israel meeting in old Exeter Hall. Sitting near to each other, we exchanged a few remarks, and some days later she wrote a short note on the subject of our five minutes' conversation. Apologising for the shortness of her letter, she explained she could not write at greater length because, said she, "I am preparing for my fifth Eastern tour." In reply, I expressed my pleasure at the prospect of her coming tour, and the wish I could also see Palestine. I did not expect another letter from her. Judge, then, of my astonishment when some days later I received a pressing invitation to go with her as her guest. She had read my books, and heard my lectures, she added, and would consider it an honour to be able thus to show her appreciation. The honour, as well as the pleasure, was on my side; but to refuse an invitation so kindly put was impossible; and so it came to pass that a few weeks later that which had been to me the dream of a life-time was fulfilled. Mrs. Phillips was then in earthly years seventy-nine; in mental and physical energy she was among the youngest of our party! Up, generally about six a.m., she was the foremost in almost every step of our journey, and the most cheerful in every enterprise. Never shall I forget her unstinted joy at every new scene in our progress through the East, and her spiritual and intellectual appreciation at every sacred site we visited. To her the chief charm of the journey lay in the fact that we were in the land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and rendered doubly sacred because it was also the land of our Lord's human life.

And now her earthly travels are o'er! "Jerusalem which is above" has been exchanged for the one below. We cannot wish her back; for much as we value the Holy Land down here, we know that the Holy City above, its golden streets, and tree of life, and its river of the pleasures of God are "far better"; because Heaven to the Christian is "to be with Christ."

Thither may He bring all my readers as well as

*Yours, for the whole
Counsel of God,
Augusta Cook.*





BY WAY OF THE EAST.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF PALESTINE AND EGYPT.



ONE of the first questions I was asked on my return from the East was, whether what I had seen and heard in the Holy Land had, to my mind, verified Scripture or otherwise? I unhesitatingly replied that the fact which had struck me the most was the *wonderful verification of God's Word*. All along our Eastern path we found it written--whether in stone or monument--in hill or dale--in customs that have survived the passing ages of the world--in the living representatives of prophecy fulfilled--everywhere the same incontrovertible decree: "Thy Word is Truth." This was the chief impression that I gained; and it is from this standpoint first of all that I would recall some of the happy memories of a never-to-be-forgotten tour.

There can be no doubt that the best commentary on the Bible is a visit to Bible lands. The most conclusive reply to scepticism is to be found amid the actual scenes and upon the very sites where the events, narrated in the Old and New Testaments, occurred. They who have read Scripture with the light

of the "sun rising" on it will unravel many a hidden significance, that to Western thoughts alone, might remain unexplained. Much of the Bible becomes clear when it is studied in the atmosphere of the never-changing East.

Another point which impressed me was the remarkable contrast between Egypt and Palestine. We visited the land of the Pharaohs first, and then went direct to the Holy Land. It was like passing from one world to another. Prosperity is stamped upon Cairo; desolation upon Jerusalem. The rich fabrics and vivid colourings of the flowing robes worn by the natives of Cairo present one unceasing, gorgeous, living picture; the dirt, the rags, of Judea's present Eastern population speak out eloquently that the Holy City is indeed "trodden down of the Gentiles." One lingers pleasantly over the unmistakable evidences of Britain's wise policy in Egypt; and with sadness over the humiliation of Palestine, where the unspeakable Turk reigns. The contrast, in the present condition of these two countries, is very impressive and suggestive.

The contrast also in nature's characteristics is very striking. Egypt is flat; Palestine is hilly. It rarely rains in Egypt; Palestine experiences drenching deluges of rain at certain seasons. The life of Egypt is the magnificent Nile, which irrigates and fertilises the land; Palestine looks eagerly for the early and latter rains. Its only river, the Jordan, is insignificant when compared with the river of Egypt. The land of Israel's oppression is different from any section of Great Britain; parts of Palestine, on the contrary, often remind the British traveller of his own "Isles of the West." And if the sweeping, flat landscape of Egypt, with its waving palm trees and cloudless horizon, is beautiful, even more lovely are the flowered vales of Galilee and the eternal snows of Hermon.

This brings me to the third impression which has stamped its indelible picturings on my memory—the landscape beauties of the Orient. Even from an artist's point of view, a tour "by way of the East" is well worth taking. How majestic, for example, stand forth amid

that desert silence the Pyramids of Gizeh ! How soft and impressive looks the passive face of the Sphinx, immovable all these ages back ! But it is in Palestine that the artist's eye will be the more delighted, especially if it be an eye influenced by the sacred associations of the places visited. There were many panoramic scenes which entranced me. These seem to rise up again before me as I write. Jerusalem, for example, from Mounts Scopus and Olivet, or the valley of the Jordan, with the blue hills of Moab in the distance ; the fertile vales of Samaria as seen from Mount Gerizim ; the blue bay of Acre from Mount Carmel ; the plain of Sharon from Jaffa ; the expansive stretch of the valley of Esdraelon from the heights of Galilee ; or the Lake of Tiberias, with the glistening snows of Hermon beyond ; or the glories of Lebanon on one hand, and the anti-Lebanon on the other, when our train bore us towards Damascus, that "pearl set in emeralds," amid its gardens and its groves. No wonder that Palestine was described as a "goodly land," and that Moses longed to see "that goodly mountain and Lebanon." The Holy Land is still in its hour of humiliation, but, all the same, its hills and plains, and its glorious landscapes, are unchanged, and never cease to delight the eye of the lover of the beautiful ; how much more the lover of the Bible !

If the contrast between Egypt and Palestine is marked, even more remarkable are the varied conditions which prevail in Palestine itself. Think what a little strip of land it is on the map of the world, and yet in its limited compass it possesses the snow-clothed heights of Hermon in the north, 10,000 feet high ; and the extraordinary depression in the Dead Sea valley, 1,300 feet below the level of the sea. Naturally, therefore, the climate of Palestine is very varied. The north gives us the cold of Northern Europe, the south, the heat of the tropics. Sharon and Esdraelon, those lovely plains, have the warmth of Egypt ; while the hills of Galilee are balmy with the air like that of Italy.

Remember, too, how vivid is the contrast between

the size of Palestine, and the immensity of the *events* which have taken place within its narrow limits. Only about 150 miles in length, and 90 in breadth, it has been the platform for the occurrences of earth's mightiest destinies; for it is the land of Abraham, of Israel, and of Christ. He who made the world dwelt there in human flesh, and some day will deign to erect His earthly throne upon its soil. Naturally, therefore, the history of the whole world has been, and is, and will be, influenced, or controlled, by the epochs that pass over the chosen land.

And though so small, yet it occupies, geographically, the most important place on the earth's surface. Scientists have said Jerusalem is the centre of our globe's surface; while a glance at the map will show us how it is situated at the point between Asia and Africa. Through it passed the old trade routes between Europe and Africa—between the West and the Orient. It is like a golden clasp, linking two worlds. Such a unique position is admirably suited for the rule of the whole world, and that is Palestine's destiny. Not of the Jews merely, for they are but a minority of the Hebrew race, but of all the twelve tribes of the Israel of God; and the lost ten tribes, favoured in their Isles of the West, and possessing an empire such as the world has never seen before, are being surely, though gradually, prepared for that world-destiny which, in union with their brethren the Jews, they are pre-ordained in God's immutable counsels to fulfil.

To every Christian a visit to Palestine is fraught with sacred interest, but the believer in Anglo-Israel Truth has a far keener enjoyment in its every detail; for he sees the past, the present, and the future through the powerful telescope of the (to him) unsealed secret of Jehovah. Those who understand British-Israel Truth find a unique joy in a visit to the Holy Land, realising that it once was possessed by their forefathers, and will some day become a part of the British empire, whose limits are foreordained to be only those of the whole earth, according to God's promise to Abraham, "*the heir of the world*" (Rom. iv.).

“The stone kingdom,” which will cover the whole earth, is as literal as the four kingdoms which have preceded it. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, have fallen ; but the fifth, which prophecy marks as that of the literal Israel, and which history declares to be the British Empire, is destined to last for ever. “The Promised Land” is the *whole earth* (Dan. ii.).



CHAPTER II.

VICTORIA TO CAIRO.



HAVE seen the Mediterranean in various moods: *blue*, as we saw it in the Bay of Acre; *calm*, as it often was, like a crystal sea, on our way to Egypt; or *grey and angry*, as we experienced it on our homeward journey. But I do not think I ever beheld it under more favourable circumstances than at 5 o'clock in the morning from the deck of the *Niger* on March 23rd, 1907. A loud knocking at our cabin had roused me and my two charming cabin companions. Throwing on wraps, we hastened above, where we found a fairy-like scene before us; we were just passing through the

STRAITS OF MESSINA.

We had embarked two days previously from Marseilles, and two days before that had left London, and now on that still, calm morning were gazing on one of the loveliest of nature's pictures. On one side lay Sicily, and on the other Italy, with Mount Stromboli shooting forth smoke and flames from its crater; while the peaceful sea, the rising dawn, the verdant beauty of the valley where cottages could be plainly seen nestling on the shore, all combined to make a scene that will long linger in my memory. A few hours later another treat awaited us, when Mount Etna, in its glistening robe of snow, came conspicuously to view. From its summit, clouds of smoke were bursting upwards. The whole landscape was so fairy-like that we should have been sorry to quit it, had it not been that we were longing to reach the land whither we were going.

Three days later we landed at

ALEXANDRIA.

But long before we had left the ship, brightly attired Arabs had boarded the vessel, who, with their flowing robes, their dark, handsome faces, and incessant jabbering, made us instantly realise that we had arrived amid the fascinations of the East.

Alexandria, founded by Alexander the Great B.C. 332, is one of the most renowned of ancient cities, and especially as a centre of learning, which it became under the Ptolemies. Who has not heard of its wonderful library and the terrible fire which destroyed 400,000 of its rare volumes? To the Bible student Alexandria's chief interest lies in its having been the place where were translated the Scriptures into the so-called Septuagint version. We all took a drive round the old picturesque town and then entered the train *en route* for Cairo. The

JOURNEY TO CAIRO

occupied about three and a-half hours, and was brimful of interest. The railway passes through one of the most fertile parts of Egypt, viz., through the Delta, which being well irrigated by the Nile is excellently cultivated, innumerable little canals marking the various divisions of the country. The Nile is a magnificent river! Our train often brought us by the side of one or other of its streams, giving us opportunities to watch the picturesque boats sailing along, or to see the quaint water wheels, turned by the ever-patient camel or bullock, for the irrigation of the land. Rain is rarely experienced in Egypt, hence the air is very dry and consequently bracing and healthy. It seemed to me a perfect, sun-favoured climate.

Our stoppages at stations along the line, enabled us to observe native life. All was bustle as our train drew up at wayside stations; Arabs, Egyptians, Turks, Nubians, Soudanese, all in bright coloured, flowing robes, hurrying hither and thither, and often struggling with each other to get hold of travellers' luggage, shouting for the inevitable *baksheesh*, and filling the calm, sun-laden air with a babel of (to us) confused and

incomprehensible sounds. When once the train was in motion, all was quiet again, while the various scenes we passed—curious mud-built villages, waving palm-trees, strings of camels often heavily laden (for it was the time of the clover harvest)—all made up a constantly moving panorama full of interest and instruction and as varied and changing as a kaleidoscope. When we landed at

CAIRO

I was surprised to see a so large and modern-looking railway station, and so many signs of Western civilization; while I was particularly pleased and struck with the numerous evidences of British trade and the predominance of British rule. What a busy scene it was through which we passed on our way to the Eden Palace Hotel! What a living, multi-coloured picture—the Arabs in their flowing white garments, or long robes of rich texture and red headgear; and the lower classes in blue or other bright coloured, cotton costumes. Only the women, or rather the absence of them, lent a saddening effect to the brilliant spectacle. One sees very few of them, for they are seldom allowed beyond the precincts of the harem, while even those who at rare intervals we saw driving or walking, were generally dressed in black, while the majority of them have their faces nearly covered by the unsightly-looking *jackmash*, a black contrivance which hides all the lower part of the face, while the nose is covered by a kind of metal ornament. No wonder that crushed woman in Egypt appears to slouch on, while her lord and tyrant sails along the highway with dignity and graceful ease. I doubt if I saw more than a dozen or two of Mohammedan ladies during the four days we were in Cairo, and yet there are over 200,000 women in that city! Where were they? Somewhere behind the bolts and bars of a prison-home, looking at us, no doubt, though we could not see them, and sorrowfully envying our Western ways of freedom. Most of them are well educated, for they have ample time for study; but knowledge only increases their misery, because it tells them of happiness in other lands that can never be



A STREET IN CAIRO.

theirs under the shadow of the present system of Mohammedan etiquette. Is it any wonder that some have sought release by poison? Flight is impossible, for the poor captives are carefully guarded and even an attempt to flee would bring death to the fugitive; for flight is an unpardonable sin among the followers of Mahomet. There is no cruelty to be compared to this system, except that of the convent cell, and the exclusive life, or living death, of a poor nun behind the walls of a nunnery. This phase of Eastern ways impressed me sadly, but I felt I must not dwell on it too much or I should have returned to England a man-hater! And after all it is not the man who is to blame but the devil that is in him, and which is incapable of being exorcised until the grace of Christianity has entered. Let us turn to a pleasanter topic.

In the afternoon of our arrival we visited the

CITADEL,

a handsome fortress now garrisoned by British troops. It is said to have been built in 1166 by Saladin, with stones brought from the smaller of the Pyramids of Gizeh. Near by is the spot where Mahommed Ali is said to have treacherously entrapped 460 Mamelukes and slaughtered them. Passing through some gateways we found ourselves on a beautiful terrace and near the famous

MOSQUE OF MAHOMMED ALI.

Before entering the Court we had to put on some clumsy shoes over our own, and which I found difficult to keep on, and fear that more than once my unholy English leather shoes desecrated the white marble with which the Court was paved! In the centre of the spacious Court we noticed a beautiful fountain of alabaster, at which the devotee performs ablutions before entering the sacred edifice. I watched a Mohammedan washing face, hands, and feet with scrupulous care. The Mosque itself is remarkable for its mixture of gorgeousness and simplicity. One is struck, on the one hand, by the alabaster, the handsome pulpit and the rich

carpets; on the other, by the utter absence of idols or any symbols of superstition. Moslems were praying there regardless of our presence; touching the ground with their foreheads, and directing their prayers (if such their rapid mumblings can be called), to the Unseen, without any outward or visible aid. There can be no doubt, I think, that the scourge of Islamism, at one time so great a curse to the nominal Christian world, was allowed to carry on its fierce and murderous attacks as a punishment on the apostasy of Christendom. This is quite apparent when we know that (*a*) its chief feature is a hatred of idols and idol worship; (*b*) that Eastern and Western Christendom was (and still is) in a large measure polluted with idolatry; (*c*) that Mahomet slaughtered the "Christians" because they used images and had multiplied their gods and mediators.

After leaving the Mosque, we visited the

NATIVE BAZAARS.

These were mostly little lanes covered overhead and consequently rather dark and decidedly mal-odorous. All the same, they were very interesting, with their numerous Oriental curiosities exposed for sale in open shops or booths—amber and turquoise trinkets, silks, perfumes and spices—which the Arab or Egyptian seller invites you, with many gesticulations, to purchase. If something attracts your attention he will immediately assure you how cheap it is, and ask you about treble its value. Not that he expects you to give the amount demanded, for bargaining is the chief feature of Eastern shopping, and you will meet his exorbitant demand by offering a ridiculously low price. He will then come down in price, and you will proportionately increase your offer, until after a considerable amount of talking, nodding and gesticulating, he will, amid many mysterious winks and whispers, assure you that to you and to no one else would he sell it at so low a sum, and you will carry off your purchase, having possibly paid more than you ought to have. Such is shopping in the Arab bazaars, and it is certainly a far more exciting experience than our tame Western ways of buying and selling.

STREET SCENES

in the vicinity of the bazaars are full of interest, especially those in which the Orient prevails. The vivid colourings and the variety of the native costumes, the noise and bustle, the street cries, the tinkle of the lemonade-seller as he rattles his two brass bowls, the cracking of whips, the shouts of the drivers, the white donkeys, the camels, and the general din of the crowded narrow thoroughfares, altogether have a curiously fascinating impression, and are as amusing as they are full of life and careless gaiety. The

ESBEKIYA SQUARE,

where our hotel—the Eden Palace—and many others of a type more Parisian than Oriental are situated, is quite a different locality. Here it is comparatively quieter, and with its excellent shops, good houses and charming public pleasure-grounds, seems to speak of the undeniable era of prosperity which has visited Egypt ever since the British occupation. I never felt more proud of my beloved land than I did when I saw the signs which abound on every hand in Cairo of the wisdom and success of British legislation so manifest in Egypt. No one has better deserved the tribute of gratitude lately shown to him by our Government and our people than Lord Cromer. “Blessed be Egypt” is a Divine promise, that has unmistakably begun its fulfilment in these days (Isa. xix. 25).

It was a delightful and stirring sight to see our British troops marching with strong and confident steps in the land of the Pharaohs.

On more than one occasion I heard expressions of appreciation at the work of Britain in Egypt; while, when later on we found ourselves in Jerusalem, it was said to me there, “We wish the English would take Palestine, because we see what good they have done for Egypt.” The discontented minority will, of course, be found even in Egypt, but they, like the Irish Nationalists, are their own worst enemies.

Among the recent examples of modern improvements in Cairo was that of the advent of the *steam roller*. I

shall never forget the wonder it created. We saw it one day as we were returning from Heliopolis. A motley crowd of excited natives were thronging it, and gazing, jabbering and gesticulating frantically at this latest marvel in Cairo. To us the Great Pyramid, or the royal mummies, had been objects of wonder; but our surprise melted into insignificance by the side of the astonishment of these *fellahin* at the sight of a steam roller. Even our driver stopped the carriage, and in broken English tried to explain to us this latest novelty. "For making the ground smooth," he exclaimed, suiting the action to the word by waving his arms along the road. It seemed so comical to have come all the way from England to learn the use of so common an invention that we could only receive his explanation with a shout of laughter, which I fear our obliging informant only regarded as the laughter of incredulity in the miraculous powers of the steam roller!



CHAPTER III.

THE PYRAMIDS OF GIZEH.



AMONG the many wonders of Egypt, and the chief sites of interest in the vicinity of Cairo, none are more important than the famous Pyramids of Gizeh, or rather the Great Pyramid; that one alone is, apparently, the model for all the others, which are only imitations of this unique and mysterious erection.

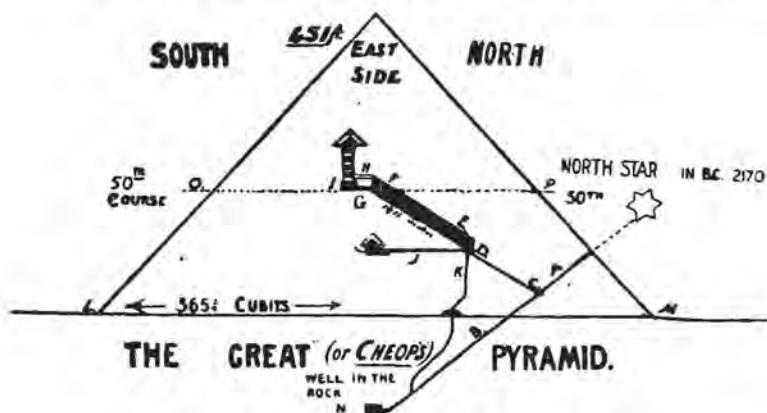
Leaving our hotel by carriage, we drove over the

KASR-EN-NIL BRIDGE,

the famous iron bridge over the Nile. Here one could linger long, watching the ceaseless flow of life—a motley crowd of natives always crossing and re-crossing it, mingled with other nationalities from various climes. We notice as we pass the jet-black face of the Nubian, the stalwart frame of the Arab, the dark countenance of the Soudanese, the olive tint of the Egyptian; we see Western-looking carriages and Eastern-looking carts—the heavily-laden camel or donkey, and among the hustling crowd several blind men and others evidently suffering from eye-diseases, for this is the very common complaint both in Egypt and Palestine, owing partly to dirt and partly to the fact that the Mohammedan will never drive off the flies that settle on the eyes, as he looks upon the insect as sacred. This insect scourge troubled the Egyptians 4,000 years ago, just as it does to-day. Other unpleasant sights are the beggars, who stretch out their hands for *baksheesh*, as our driver cracks his whip and our victoria rattles over the bridge. Beneath we notice a charming picture of Nile boats with white wings gracefully gliding over the historic river. At certain times the bridge swings open to allow

the larger vessels to pass. Once when we were on foot, we arrived just as the bridge was about to be opened, but we joined the hurrying stream of pedestrians and reached the other side just in time.

After quitting our vehicles we entered the electric tram, which bore us for about thirty minutes along a charming, shady road which, it is said, was hurriedly completed in 1868, at the time of the opening of the Suez Canal, in order that the distinguished visitors to Cairo might travel smoothly to see the Pyramids. It is now a very smooth and delightful ride, the twentieth



(For description see end of chapter).

century electric tramway strangely contrasting with those giant monuments of a hoary antiquity. Often had I read and heard about

THE GREAT PYRAMID,

and it was with no little awe and wonder that I gazed for the first time upon that mysterious pile of nummulitic limestone. There are many pyramids in Egypt, fifty in number, and extending themselves through the land for 70 miles; but, of course, the Great Pyramid is the most important as well as the largest. Its height is 451 feet, and each one of its four sides is 755 feet long

at the base, while it is believed to occupy an area about equal to that of Lincoln's Inn Fields, in London; and a French scientist has given it as his opinion that the stones with which the pyramid is built are sufficient to make a wall right round France, 4 feet high and 2 feet broad! The stones were brought from a quarry on the other side of the Nile, and the causeway along which they were conveyed is thought to be traceable even



THE GREAT PYRAMID.

now. Some of our party undertook the ascent, but as our limited time did not permit us to examine the interior as well as climb to the top, I preferred to go inside, although of the two experiences this is by far the more difficult. The ascent is easy, provided one is aided by Arabs, who haul or push one up the great blocks with remarkable dexterity, the climber enjoying fresh air and sunlight all the time, while the visitor to the

interior must endure pitch darkness, made visible by the little candles of their guides, and heat up to 79 Fahrenheit, and an altogether slippery journey. But it is well worth the trouble. Before we had started for the excursion our careful conductor had warned us of the difficulties in the way, and assured us that no one should attempt to go inside who suffered from apoplexy, heart disease, or was "in love!" As I had none of these complaints I determined to venture into the interior in spite of the advice of others, who declared that dirt and smells made the visit anything but agreeable. These fears however were groundless: the Pyramid is perfectly clean and not at all mal-odorous within; but there are other unpleasant experiences! Myself and another lady of our party entered together, each of us guided and upheld by three Arabs, which is essential for the safety of each person. The entrance is about 40 or 50 feet above the ground, and is an exceedingly dark and forbidding-looking little doorway. Let me take my reader in imagination through it. We have entered but must be careful not to knock our heads, for the passage in which we find ourselves is only 3 feet 11 inches high, and its width is still less. It is very slippery as we go down, down, and we are thankful for the strong hands and sure feet of our Arab guides, without whom it would be impossible to proceed. We descend slowly and in constant danger of falling, until we reach the great granite door, round which a way has been forced, for the enormous block was incapable of being moved. Our guides simply haul us up this over 6-foot step, and we now ascend with difficulty, for though the passage is loftier, it is very, very slippery. Our next experience is the most tedious of all, for the passage leading to the Queen's Chamber is only about 3 feet high, and consequently necessitates our walking, or rather crawling, in a stooping position, and almost on our hands and knees. When we emerge out of it we enter the *Queen's Chamber*, its 20 feet in height affording a pleasant change after our recent cramped journey. The great blocks which compose it are wonderfully welded together, while air shafts supply

sufficient ventilation. Returning through the same low, horizontal passage, we come to the *Great Gallery*; it is wide and lofty and affords us ample space to examine the wonderful joints of masonry. As we begin the ascent, our careful guides hold us as we pass along a narrow ledge to avoid slipping into the shaft, which falls into the subterranean chamber. It is like walking along a mantelpiece for a few steps, but as soon as this is passed our way upwards, though steep and slippery, is easier. This *Great Gallery*, is 151 feet long, 28 feet high, and 7 feet wide, and thus a striking contrast to the low, narrow passage which led us to the *Queen's Chamber*. At the end of the *Great Gallery*, we pass through the antechamber into the *King's Chamber*. It is large and lofty, being 35 feet high and about 19 feet long. Our guides illumine the chamber with magnesian light, thus enabling us to see and admire the marvellously constructed roof, which is made of nine slabs of granite, each slab being about 18 or 19 feet in length, and each one wondrously fitted to the other. No cement or anything of a like nature was used, and yet the great stones are perfectly joined together. The chief item of interest in the *King's Chamber* is, of course, the famous *King's Coffin*. How much I have heard and read about it, and here is our Arab guide lighting up this fine old granite curiosity with magnesian light! It has evidently passed through some troublous times, for a part of its red granite is broken. This is the coffin which Piazzzi Smyth found to be a measure of capacity, and whose dimensions contain secrets which only the wise can understand. As all know, the common tradition is, that it was the sarcophagus of Cheops of the fourth dynasty, who is believed to have been buried there about 4,000 years ago, but if that were so, would not his mummy have been discovered? If we make inquiries we are simply told that the Persians are supposed to have entered the Pyramid and to have carried off the mummy; but that is only a hypothesis. Piazzzi Smyth considered that—not the *King's Coffin* only—but the whole structure and place of the *Great Pyramid* were formed to be chronological

measurements. Professor Petrie looks upon these conclusions as mere "fantastic theories." Anglo-Israelites, as a rule, agree with Piazzzi Smyth, and much has been written on the subject. The question, however, does not affect British-Israel Truth. If there were no such monument as the Great Pyramid, the fact of our Israelitish origin would remain the same; for it is based, not on the Great Pyramid, but on the Atonement of Christ and the Oath to Abraham. But if Isa. xix. 19 does not refer to the Great Pyramid, it is difficult to know to what it does allude. Its topographical and mathematical position are there accurately described.

If Piazzzi Smyth's deductions are correct, the age of the Great Pyramid dates from 2170 B.C., the time of Melchisedec; whilst its height, in pyramid inches, answers to the distance of the earth from the sun. His measurements of the King's Coffin are 77 pyramid inches in length, 26 in breadth, 34 in depth, while its cubic contents are the same as those of the Ark in the Tabernacle. Certainly we have entered a wonderful building!

But come, let us descend, for though air-shafts provide us with air, we would hardly like to make a long stay in this mysterious house of stone. Our Arab guides lead us warily back, constantly asking us, "Are you content, Madam? are you well, Madam? are you satisfied, Madam?" We can always reply in the affirmative, for nothing can exceed their courtesy and kindness.

An amusing incident happened as we were nearing the exit. Before entering the Pyramid I had followed the advice of a friend who had recently visited the interior, and who had assured me that I should be less liable to slip if I put an old pair of stockings over my shoes. This I did, but when scrambling along, one of them evidently fell off without my knowing it, and there, in the passage, sat, or squatted, an Arab holding the stocking in his hand and waiting for my return to restore it! How we laughed: it was so comical to see him in that dark, low gallery with my old stocking in his hand! The sunlight and the breeze were very welcome when we left the Pyramid, but how glad we were we had not missed such an uncommon experience. Having

satisfied our guides with *bakshesh*, I mounted a camel, and my friend a white donkey, and we rode towards

THE SPHINX.

There was the colossal figure, hewn chiefly out of the rock, somewhat disfigured by the mutilations of the Moslems and the rifles of Napoleon's soldiers, who made it a target; and yet looking much as I had pictured it, ever gazing towards the East with an expression of gentleness and loneliness. How old is it? Who made it? There can be no positive reply to these questions, but there can be no doubt that it served as an idol to heathen Egypt and that many ages have passed over it. There is a peculiar fascination in its weird beauty, due to a large extent to its surroundings, situated as it is amid the silence of the desert, near to the ancient Pyramids of Gizeh, and ever remaining somewhat of an enigma of immemorial antiquity. As I looked at its peculiar characteristics I could realise, in a measure, how seductive must have been the influences of Egyptian idolatry on the unregenerate human mind. Near the Sphinx is the

TEMPLE OF THE SPHINX,

a very curious construction, made of granite and alabaster. It is believed to have belonged to the second of the Pyramids and to have been built by Khafra, of the fourth dynasty, about 3500 B.C. We entered its passages and chambers, but the odour was too unpleasant for a lengthy stay in them.

EXPLANATION OF VERTICAL SECTION OF THE PYRAMID.

A-B.—Descending Passage; represents the Nations from the time of the Dispersion after Babel going away from God downwards towards the abyss. C-D.—Represents Israel at the Exodus turning towards God, and the subsequent history in the Holy Land. E-F.—The Great Gallery or Great Hall represents the Christian Dispensation from the Birth of Christ to the year 1911. G.—The Tribulation Passage, to be entered in 1911. H.—The "Way of Escape" for those who can go upwards. I.—The "King's Chamber" (so-called), where the coffer was found, which was thought by some to be the Royal Sarcophagus, and by others to be a Royal Standard of Measures. J.—The Pass age leading to an inferior Chamber, for those who do not enter the Christian Era. K.—The "Well," a sudden descent 354 inches from the beginning of the Gallery, suggesting the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. L-M.—The sides, from foundation socket to foundation socket, are each 3654 cubits (not inches). The four sides therefore represent four years, including leap year. N.—The Descending Passage through the rock foundation ends in a well or chamber a little above "high Nile" level. O-P.—Some have thought that the building of the Pyramid stayed awhile at the 50th tier, and was for a while an astronomical observatory, the great gallery being open to the southern sky and used for observing transits.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TREASURES OF EGYPT.



HE British-Israelite can best appreciate Egypt, associated as it is in his mind with much of the history of our Hebrew forefathers. He takes a delight, too, in knowing that Egypt is included in that portion of the Land of Promise guaranteed in Genesis xv. 18 to Abraham's posterity, and whose limits extend from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates. As he traces the course of the Nile from the Mediterranean to Uganda, he realises with a thrill of delight that British-Israel is already in possession of a large slice of it!

But to all Christians Egypt has a Biblical charm. Joseph, Moses, Israel, Christ, are all brought to our minds as we find their footprints in the sands of Egyptian antiquities. Joseph is connected with

HELIOPOLIS, THE CITY OF THE SUN.

It was the *On*, whose priest's daughter Joseph married. We drove there one day, a good road taking us through a beautiful olive plantation, passing the Palace of the Khedive, and out upon a well-cultivated plain. Of the city itself very little remains beyond the famous *Obelisk*, the oldest known monument of its kind in Egypt. It stands about 70 feet in height, and is covered with hieroglyphic characters, in the indentations of which generations of bees have made their cells, much to the chagrin of the Egyptologists. We find the fine old pillar in exactly the same position in which Abraham and Joseph must have beheld it. Even in their times it was not modern; for it had been reared in the twelfth dynasty, and about 700 years before the arrival of Joseph in Egypt. It is built in granite

brought from Assouan, and its companion Obelisk (for they were generally built in pairs), is the well-known *Cleopatra's Needle* now to be seen on the Thames Embankment.

The City itself is of extreme antiquity, and is believed to have been founded in the second dynasty, and between three and four thousand years before Christ. In the times of Joseph and Moses it was great and prosperous and second only to Memphis. And it was here, in Heliopolis, that Joseph ruled, and where Moses is believed to have studied "all the learning of the Egyptians." The College, or University, was renowned for ages, and there the great Hebrew legislator acquired "all the wisdom of Egypt." Like all other schoolboys in ancient Egypt he would have been placed under the protection of Thoth, the god of letters. Every encouragement was given to learning, and indeed scholarship was the chief means to success in life for the Egyptian. Without it he could never hope to acquire position or wealth, with it he might aspire to great things. Moses, with his natural aptitude for learning, and as the favoured protégé of Pharaoh's daughter, would have speedily found the "treasures of Egypt" at his command. One has only to let the imagination dwell in Egypt's past, and realise its fascinations when it was in the heyday of its ancient glory, to perceive the immeasurably vaster fascinations of Christ even in "reproach," and which lured Moses to forsake all to win Him.

It was in the same University that Herodotus studied philosophy, and Plato acquired knowledge. In the same locality Dionysius, the Areopagite astronomer, watched the darkness which arose when Christ was hanging on Calvary. Thus the shadow of "the reproach of Christ" reached even Egypt. May the dawn of the triumph of Christ also visit it some day!

Heliopolis was famed for its Temple of the Sun, or of *On*; its worship of Mnevis, or of the Sacred Bull, was well known to the ancient world, and was readily adopted by Israel in their idolatries. Now the Obelisk stands as the only remnant of the City's greatness, while

a few granite blocks inscribed with the name of Rameses II. are the sole relics of its great idol Temple. The magnificence of Heliopolis may be realised when we know that it was the parent City of Baalbec in Syria, whose splendid ruins of heathen temples show the wonders of ancient architecture. If Baalbec was so great, how much greater must have been Heliopolis, whose priests are said to have founded the Syrian centre of Baal worship, and how much more wonderful still must be the grace of God which kept Joseph free from the allurements of his surroundings, and enabled Moses to count the reproach of Christ of more value than all its treasures of wealth and art and power.

Not far from Heliopolis is an *Ostrich Farm*, which we also visited. Its chief interest lay in the magnificent view we obtained from the roof of the house. There towards the East lay the

DESERT OF ARABIA,

the very wilderness into which Israel asked leave of Pharaoh to go a day's journey to sacrifice unto the Lord. What interesting sites were about us! On one hand the fertility of the land of Goshen, on the other the sterility of that stretch of desert sand, while far away towards the North-east were situated the Treasure Cities, or Store Cities (Exod. i, 11), which Israel was compelled to make for Pharaoh. Ruins of great storehouses—probably military depôts for provisioning the armies of Egypt—have been found there, which experts state date from the reign of Rameses II., who is believed to have been the Pharaoh of the oppression. That Israel should have been commissioned to build cities for the storing of provisions can be realised when we remember that Joseph's wisdom was especially displayed in making "storehouses" for the storing of corn (Gen. xli.). Pharaoh "knew not Joseph," but the wise policy which he had inaugurated evidently survived in Egypt.

But we know that Egypt is associated not only with Joseph, but also with a greater than Joseph—our Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel narratives tell us that He

was taken to Egypt as an Infant in order to escape the murderous intents of Herod. Tradition says He was brought to the vicinity of Heliopolis; and as there was a colony of Jews then stationed there it is very probable that the holy family would have made first for this locality. About a mile from the Ostrich Farm is a village called *Matariya*, and near to this there are the

VIRGIN'S TREE AND WELL.

The tree is an old sycamore, and is said to mark the spot where they rested in their flight. But of this there is no proof. The well, says tradition, supplied the water in which Mary bathed the Holy Child. But this is probably a fictitious idea. The well was the Fountain of the Sun and served for the purposes of the Temple of the Sun. When we saw it, an ox was turning it. By the way, the cattle of Egypt are big, gaunt and ugly-looking slate-coloured beasts, but evidently useful animals. The one who turned the water-wheel seemed used to the monotonous tread round and round the wheel. Small wooden jars, or buckets, were fastened to the wheel, and as the ox turned the wheel they descended empty at one side and returned full of water at the other; and as they passed over to the top they discharged the water into a trough, which conveyed it into a cistern.

Heliopolis is not the only place in the vicinity of Cairo which tradition has connected with the infancy of our Lord. In

OLD CAIRO,

a Coptic church, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, contains a crypt in which she is said to have rested with her Son. The church itself is richly inlaid with ivory, marble mosaics, and mother of pearl, and is lavishly supplied with idols. The building is divided into three parts, and in one of them a Coptic priest was rapidly mumbling a service, attended by a small acolyte. I watched the mummery—for it was nothing else—and could not help feeling sad at the corruptions which have unhappily mingled themselves with one of the



EGYPTIAN WOMEN WITH WATER-JARS.

most ancient of the sects of Christendom, as the Coptic Church evidently is. Our two able guides were with us; one of them, who rejoiced in the name of "Solomon Moses," was a Coptic Christian, and the other, belonging to a long ancestry of Bedouins, was a Moslem and named "Mahmoud." While Solomon Moses showed us his church with evident pride, Mahmoud looked on with apparent unconcern, or contempt—and no wonder, if this was the only specimen he has known of the Christians' form of worship. To the Moslem any symbol of idolatry is odious, and so long as so-called Christian Churches cling to images, the Mohammedan world will not be persuaded to believe in Christianity. I had a chat with Mahmoud as our party was examining the church, and told him that images were as abominable to me as they were to him. Of the Protestant Reformation he had never heard, and listened with evident interest to the pure form of the Christian faith when it was—possibly for the first time—expounded to him. Alas! how deeply is nominal Chris-

tianity, through long centuries, guilty before God for the darkness that has prevailed in the world !

Old Cairo itself is exceedingly interesting, with its old gate and its quaint, narrow streets. It is situated about three miles out of modern Cairo and was founded in the seventh century by *Amru*, a zealous follower of Mahomet and equally zealous slaughterer of the Coptic Christians, of whom he is said to have massacred a large number. The Mosque called by his name is one of the oldest in Egypt. One of the most interesting places in Old Cairo is the site of the

ROMAN FORTRESS OF BABYLON.

Only ruins of its walls now remain ; but it once occupied a large area. To the Bible student it will be identified as the locality of "the Church at Babylon" mentioned by the Apostle Peter (I Peter v. 13). Evidently there were early Christians in that Roman castle—the first believers of the Gospel in Old Cairo. The present inhabitants are nearly all Coptics, viz., Christian Egyptians and followers of the faith which has become corrupted by idolatry through the intervening centuries, since the time that Peter conveyed the salutations, of "the Church that is at Babylon."

RHODA ISLAND

is a very pretty isle in the river, with gardens and groves, and upon it stands

THE NILOMETER,

a large square well, with a column inside which serves as a river barometer, viz., it measures the rise of the water during the period of the inundation. The height of the pillar, or column, is 17 cubits ; each cubit is about $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches. When the Nile is low, the water only reaches to about 7 cubits ; but when the inundation is at its full, about the end of August, it mounts to nearly the top of the column, and sometimes above it. The inundation period is always a very anxious one for the agriculturists. There is very little (if any) rain in Egypt,



A GLIMPSE OF THE NILE.

and consequently the inhabitants are solely dependent upon the Nile for irrigation. If it does not rise enough, the land will not be sufficiently watered and the harvest will in consequence be poor. If it rises too much the land will be oversoaked with water, which will have almost as bad results upon cultivation. From immemorial ages, the inundations, year by year, have been watched with care. In days gone by, as the river rose inch by inch, the news was carried as quickly as possible by messengers, who rode from village to village. In these times the same anxiety prevails, and the condition of the river is flashed by telegraph with a speed that would have astonished Pharaoh.

There is an interesting Arabic tradition connected with Rhoda Island, which tells us that the palace of Pharaoh's daughter stood on it, in which she

lived, separated from others, *because she was a leper*. If this were so, it would have been near the shores of this island that the royal lady was wont to bathe, and consequently near its banks that Moses was hidden and found. A tall palm-tree, named "Moses' Tree," is pointed out as the spot where he was drawn out of the water. When the conditions of child-life in Egypt are known, one can understand that the princess' heart was moved when "the babe wept." In its treatment of children, Egypt was different from all the other heathen nations of antiquity. In Rome and Athens new-born babes were cast out to die. Many and many a poor infant in those lands was left to die of cold and hunger, or be devoured of wild beasts. It has been said that just as the Nilometer indicated the fertility and prosperity of Egypt, even so the national estimate of childhood measures the stage of civilisation and culture reached by the people. If this be so, Egypt was ahead of all the ancient heathen world, for in Egypt, at least, the child was protected and revered. Had the infant Moses' lot been cast in the days and in the confines of the Roman Empire, the royal lady who beheld him in his cradle of papyri, would have looked on unmoved and suffered him to die unsuccoured. Pharaoh's order to kill the Hebrew children was the outcome of hatred for a foreign race, and was out of harmony with the spirit of Egypt. Pharaoh's daughter, in her solicitude for the weeping babe, exhibited the true feeling which the women of ancient Egypt felt for their children. Several remains of toys, books, etc., which Egyptologists have discovered tell how the pleasures of the little ones were provided for, as they are to day. Moses, dressed no doubt as the children of the rich were in those days in Egypt, would have been seen playing, half-nude, arms and ankles adorned with bracelets and charms, and his hair, thickly plaited, falling over the left ear. A bust of the kind-hearted princess who rescued him is to be seen in

CAIRO MUSEUM,

where the many curios of Egyptian antiquity link us so strangely with past millenniums. It would need a large

volume to adequately deal with the treasures which have been gathered together from various parts of Egypt, and are now carefully and systematically arranged in the Cairo Museum. It was wonderful to be able to gaze upon these relics of past ages, and to know that the eyes and hands of those who lived in the far-away vista of bygone eras had seen and touched them. Where are their spirits? One naturally asks that question when examining Egyptian antiquities; because the belief in an unseen world and in life after death was a conspicuous part of the religion of Old Egypt. One notices this phase of their faith indelibly imprinted upon many of the fragments of their ancient history, which the spade of the explorer and the excavator has brought to light. The well-known Egyptian "Book of the Dead" (or rather extracts from it), which tells the passage of the soul from this world to the next, etc., is often seen engraved on tablets, in tombs, or on sarcophagi. Among other objects which speak of their belief in immortality are, for example, *small funerary statues*. These were placed in the coffins of mummies and were called *answerers*, because their office was to answer, in the name of the defunct, any call that might be made on him; they were, in fact, regarded as visible representations of the invisible spirit and to act in his stead on earth. They were made of alabaster, granite, or wood, etc. Many other small articles were buried with the mummy—images of eyes, ears, heart, etc., which secured sight, hearing, life, etc., to the deceased in the world of spirits.

Perhaps even more curious were the provisions which the thoughtful friends of the mummy had placed by its side—dried ducks, little legs of mutton, etc. We saw several of these varieties of food, which had been found in the tombs, having been put there for the spirit of the departed to eat. Some of these ducks and legs of mutton were 5,000 years old! Several tombs have been discovered and conveyed to the museum. In most of them there was a so-called "false door," viz, the resemblance of a door, but which could not be opened. This signified the impassable gulf between this life in

the body and that of the disembodied spirit in the invisible world. The interior of the tombs was fitted up with all that the dead person was supposed to require, for he had to be fed in order to escape "the second death," which meant annihilation. In all this we see a grain of truth (Rev. xx. 14). And in order that these wants might continue to be met, the friend of the deceased would use a formula such as: "The king gives a table of offerings to the god X in order that this god may give a funeral feast of bread, water, oxen, geese, wine, milk, beer, cosmetics, garments, perfumes, and all the good and pure things upon which the god exists, to the *Ka* (double) of N., son of N."* Here also we see a slight glimmer of truth (Rev. xxii. 2). But time and space would fail me to refer to further details on this subject. I will pass on to what is of greater interest to the Bible student, viz., to the discoveries which have been made and are to be seen in the museum of history connected with the Israel of God. Among these should be specially noticed

THE ISRAEL STELA,

which we saw on the ground floor of the museum. It is a large granite slab, and was discovered by Professor Petrie in Thebes, in 1898. It appears that it was first set up in the tomb of the King Amenhetop III., and, about a century or two later, *Menetaph*, the Pharaoh of the Exodus, took possession of it, and engraved on it accounts of his wars and campaigns.—In the last paragraph the following remarkable passage occurs: "Now that the Libyans are conquered, the land of the Hittites is pacified, Canaan is taken with all that is evil in it, the people of Ascalon are led captive, those of Gezer are seized, they of Jenoaam have ceased to exist, the people of Israel are laid waste and their seed is destroyed." (See Maspero's *Guide to the Cairo Museum*, translated by J. E. and A. A. Quibell, p. 145).

The expression, *the people of Israel are laid waste and their seed is destroyed*, was evidently the vain boast of

* Maspero's *Guide to the Cairo Museum*, p. 74.

Pharaoh, who had wasted them with slavery and oppression, and whose father had sought to destroy their seed by casting them into the river.

The inscription is of great value, especially as it is the very first time (so far as is known at present), that the name of Israel appears on any ancient monument. The Bible student will perceive its importance as an undeniable indication of the veracity of the Pentateuch.

On the first floor of the museum the most interesting, though gruesome, antiquities are the

ROYAL MUMMIES.

There is something wonderful in the thought that Egypt's ancient custom of embalming enables us to-day to look on the features of the Pharaohs, who lived thousands of years ago. The finding of these mummies is described in *The Guide to Cairo Museum*, p. 393, from which I take the following extracts :

“From the early days of the twentieth dynasty the Theban police were charged with the duty of protecting the tombs of private individuals, as well as those of the monarchs and their descendants, from the attacks of the robbers . . . they had penetrated into the best secured tombs, opened the coffins, broken the mummies, carried off everything they could find in the way of jewellery, gold and silver, and other precious things. . . . The reigns of the Ramessides of the twentieth dynasty were mainly spent in trying to put a stop to them, but with so little success that, on the death of the last Rameses, the high priests of Amon, now lords of Thebes, resolved to secure the mummies which were most revered, such as those of the Pharaohs and the higher clergy, from the profanation to which they were exposed. They had these mummies taken from their tombs and hidden in groups in various parts of the necropolis of Thebes. The operations were conducted so secretly that they escaped the notice of the robbers ! Gradually the places were forgotten even by those who had selected them, and the Pharaohs who had been removed slept in peace until our own day. . . .

"It was in the summer of 1875 that a digger . . . discovered one of these hiding places." The account then goes on to state how the Arab finder sought to conceal his discovery, but who, after arrest and imprisonment, made a full confession, and eventually revealed the hiding-place of the mummies, which, upon inspection, turned out to be a tombful of Pharaohs. The writer continues: "Forty-eight hours of hard work just sufficed to haul up the whole, but the procession had to traverse the plain of Thebes and cross the river to Luxor. Some of the coffins required from twelve to sixteen men to lift them. . . . The museum steamboat arrived, and the moment it was laden, it started for Bulak with its cargo of kings! . . . On both sides of the Nile the fallahin women followed it, uttering loud cries, with their hair all dishevelled, while the men fired guns as they do at funerals. . . . It took four years of study to ascertain what the museum had secured. The unwrapping of the bodies was begun in the month of May, 1886, and was continued till the last days of June."

Subsequently other tombs containing royal mummies were unearthed, and among these weird echoes of past millenniums none are more interesting to the Bible student than the mummies of the Pharaoh of the Oppression and the Pharaoh of the Exodus. It was thrilling to gaze on the features of

RAMESES II.,

who is identified as the Pharaoh who enslaved and oppressed the Israelites over three thousand years ago. Now, the descendants of that very race of chosen Hebrews—for the Anglo-Saxons are the literal House of Israel—possess his land, while he himself is a shrivelled, silent object! What a strange and wondrous upsetting of human devices, even though they were a Pharaoh's!

The face of the famous monarch is thin, the cheek bones are high, some fair, curly hair is still on the back of the head, and the neck is curiously long and gaunt. Some seventy yards of rich wrappings were taken from



THE HEAD OF THE MUMMY OF RAMESES II.

his body, while an inscription on the shroud declared it was the mummy of Rameses II.

Another of the royal mummies which deserves particular notice is that of

MENEPHTAH,

identified as the Pharaoh of the Exodus. *The Guide to Cairo Museum* says: "M. Geoff was the first to affirm that it was Menephtah, and the cartouche, which is lightly written in hieratic on the breast, confirms the accuracy of his judgment. This is the more interesting in that according to one of the Alexandrian traditions, Menephtah is the Pharaoh of the Exodus who was supposed to have perished in the Red Sea."

I have met this same expression in other books on Egypt—*supposed to have perished in the Red Sea*. Why "*supposed*"? The reasoning is that as his mummy had been found he could not have been drowned! This is

not a logical conclusion. But was he drowned with the rest of the Egyptians? That he led the armies who pursued after Israel as far as the shores of the Red Sea is evident. It is not definitely stated that he himself personally conducted the further operations of his men who went after Israel into the divided waters; but there seems to be every indication that he did so, especially when we remember that he was the chief instigator against them, and that his heart was particularly hardened against Israel. There is every reason for the long-held belief that he perished in the Red Sea. How then comes it that his mummy is in Cairo Museum? Why not? Have you never heard of the simple fact that the bodies of drowned persons have often been washed ashore and recovered? And that this is what actually took place seems evident from the words in Exod. xiv. 30: "And Israel saw the Egyptians *dead upon the seashore.*" And if some bodies were washed ashore on the Arabian side of the sea, there is no reason why others should not have been similarly found on the Egyptian strands. Pharaoh's body would have at once been removed and reverently embalmed by the physicians of Egypt. And thus there is no occasion to use the word "supposed" in referring to his death in the waters; for there is nothing extraordinary in the present instance, that the drowned corpse of the Pharaoh of the Exodus should have been recovered, and his mummy discovered in modern times.

Time and space fail to enlarge upon more of the wonders to be seen in the Cairo Museum—the costly jewels, for example, which have been found in the tombs, many of which are of exquisite workmanship, and show us how valuable and beautiful were the "jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment" (Exod. xii. 35). The mention of "raiment" reminds me of the beautiful silks and linen which are to be seen in some of the glass cases in the museum; while the ladies' long gloves, very much like the ones that are in fashion to-day, show us the truth of Solomon's wise remark: "There is nothing new under the sun."

We left Egypt and its wonders on March 29th with

regret, but with glad anticipation of our approaching visit to the Holy Land.

The gallant ship *Niger*, from which we had disembarked at Alexandria, was now at Port Said, and thither our train bore us. It was a beautiful railway journey which took us right through the

LAND OF GOSHEN,

remarkable to-day for its fertility as it was in the days of Jacob and Joseph. We also passed by

TEL-EL-KEBIR,

noted as the place where Lord Wolseley defeated Arabi Pasha in 1882. There was a pathetic interest about the cemetery of British soldiers, which we could see from our carriage windows. Some miles further was to be noticed, in the distance, the remains of the ancient *Pithom*, or

STORE CITY,

built by Israel in the time of their oppression.

As we drew nearer Port Said, the line, for some distance, skirted the embankment of the

SUEZ CANAL,

which was opened in 1869, and over which England has the chief financial control; 176,602 shares were bought from the Khedive in 1875 at the instance of Lord Beaconsfield. It is noteworthy that, among the many vessels which pass up, or down, its length of 100 miles, the large majority of them are English; for while on an average about 200 or 300 French vessels make the passage and about 500 German, there are annually between 2,000 and 3,000 British ships steaming over its picturesque waters.

PORT SAID,

which we reached in four and a-half hours from Cairo, is not very attractive, though its situation is somewhat curious, standing as it does on a narrow strip of land between the Mediterranean and Lake Menzala, the

largest lake in Egypt and much frequented by wild birds. But though of no interest to the antiquarian—for it is of modern growth, and owes its importance to its position at the entrance of the Canal—yet it is of much value as a coaling station. As our ship steamed out of the harbour we noticed the statue of M. de Lesseps, the engineer of the Suez Canal. But on the vessel itself a still pleasanter sight was awaiting me. Only a few weeks previously I had bidden farewell to some dear friends in Hove, Sussex, who were bound for Egypt and Palestine. Not one of us had the remotest idea at the time that we should meet in the East; still less did we imagine we should see each other afloat on the Mediterranean. But so it came to pass; we discovered each other with surprised delight on board the *Niger*, and were soon rejoicing in the fact that we were all *en route* for the Holy City and the Holy Land.



CHAPTER V.

JAFFA TO JERUSALEM.



JAFFA was my first sight of Palestine. Though it is the main sea-gate into the Holy Land, its harbour is about the worst in the world, if it can be called a harbour at all. A dangerous belt of rocks makes it impossible for vessels of any size to come near the shore. Ours, which was a large steamer, anchored a mile or two from the land.

But long before we had dropped anchor, a fleet of surf-boats, manned by natives, surrounded us, shouting vociferously and, twirling their arms, invited us to enter their boats.

Fortunately for us the weather was fine and none of the troubles which had been prophesied by our well-meaning friends for our possible experience, came to pass. I had been told that if the sea was rough our landing at Jaffa would be anything but pleasant. I might, so I was informed, be swung down in a basket over the ship's side like so much cargo, or be obliged to jump into the arms of Arabs when their surf-boat was perched momentarily on the crest of a billow! Such have been the adventures of some who had the misfortune to arrive at Jaffa when the waves were high. But happily for us the sea was calm, the sunshine brilliant, and our native-manned boats glided smoothly over the waters, and, peacefully passing the dangerous rocks, landed us safely in Jaffa the Beautiful.

Those rocks, by the way, are famous in classical mythology. It was there that Andromeda was said to have been chained, to be offered up as a sacrifice to the great sea-monster. Perseus, however, delivered her from so terrible a fate. So runs the fable; in proof of which there used to be shown, many years ago, an iron

ring attached to the rocks, which was declared to be the identical ring to which the chain of Andromeda was fastened! We did not see the ring, but no doubt it was as genuine as some other mythical objects we saw in our tour. It is not impossible that the fable had its origin in the true narrative of Jonah and the whale—for Jaffa is the ancient *Joppa*.

Jonah! Solomon! Dorcas! Peter! These are the names which make Jaffa of ever-increasing interest to the Bible student. It was from this port that Jonah took ship to Tarshish to flee from the presence of the Lord. It was hither that the cedars of Lebanon were conveyed on rafts from Tyre and Sidon, and thence on camels' backs to Jerusalem, to build the Temple of Solomon. It was somewhere, in the quarter of the town devoted to tanning, that Peter lodged "many days" and had his wondrous vision. It was in Joppa, too, that he raised Dorcas to life: "and it was known throughout Joppa; and many believed in the Lord" (Acts ix. 42).

Of the ancient city itself little or nothing now remains. It has been so often ravaged by war, so often destroyed by invading foes, so many times built and rebuilt, that practically all its ancient houses have been overthrown. Once a Phœnician colony, it became the southern boundary of the tribe of Dan; fell into the hands of the Maccabees a century before Christ; was destroyed by the Romans; rebuilt as a Christian city; taken by the Arabs; reconquered by the Crusaders; again brought to ruins, and again raised from the dust several times. It now belongs to the Turks, about two-thirds of the population being Moslems. Such is the brief record of the hurricanes of war, which have swept its beautiful shores.

Jaffa has been famed from very remote times. It was mentioned in a Greek papyrus, and what is even more interesting, in an inscription on a Phœnician sarcophagus, discovered in Sidon about half a century ago. It was the sarcophagus of Ashmunazar, king of Sidon, probably dating twelve or thirteen centuries B.C. Here is an extract from the inscription:—"King Ashmunazar, king of the Sidonians, spake, saying . . . It is we who

have built the temple to the gods of the Sidonians in Sidon by the sea: the temple of Baal-Sidon, and the temple of Astarte, . . . who bestowed on us Dor and Joppa, and ample corn-lands which are at the root of Dan . . . establishing them to the Sidonians for ever."

How limited is the "for ever" of even a king of Sidon! I have drawn attention to this inscription not only because it was found at Joppa, but chiefly because of the interesting remarks made on it by the author of "The Land and the Book," who states that the Phœnician characters in which it is written bear a remarkable resemblance to those of our own alphabet, as well as to the Greek and the Hebrew. He says:—

"Many of the Phœnician letters so closely resemble those of our own alphabet that we can scarcely be mistaken in tracing ours up through the Romaic and the Greek to that of Phœnicia; and this accords with and confirms the ancient tradition in regard to the origin of the Greek alphabet. Still more interesting is the fact that the characters on this stone are so like the old Hebrew as to establish their close relationship, if not their actual identity. If this be so, then we have on this tablet of Ashmunazar the very alphabet that God employed to preserve and transmit to us the priceless gift of His divine law. It further appears that the language of the two peoples, as well as their alphabet, was identical. And this, too, accords with our most ancient history. In all the incidental notices of intercourse between the patriarchs and their descendants and the inhabitants of Palestine this fact is assumed or necessarily implied. It was only in Egypt that they heard a language they could not understand (as David has it in Psalm lxxxi. 5), and conversed through an interpreter—a character and office never mentioned in Palestine. It is, perhaps, not necessary to suppose that either borrowed from the other, but that both inherited from their common ancestor."

The above asserted identity between the language of the Phœnicians and the Hebrews, and its alphabetical resemblance to our own, is too significant to escape the

notice of those who believe in the Israelitish origin of the Anglo-Saxon race. The famous sarcophagus is now in France, having been carried thither by Louis Napoleon.

To return to modern Jaffa and our visit there. As soon as we had landed we were driven to see the traditional

HOUSE OF SIMON THE TANNER.

I hope the roads were better in his days! The present authorities do nothing to keep them in repair, so we were bumped along over miniature hills and valleys until one of our horses had kicked his leg over the shaft, and we had to wait until he had kicked it back again. But that is a detail hardly worth notice out there. What was well worthy of attention was the quaint, narrow street of Jaffa, with its open bazaars on either side, and its motley crowd of busy natives buying or selling, or driving along, amid a babel of voices, their camels, mules, or donkeys.

Having arrived at the "house of Simon the Tanner" we ascended its rugged steps to the roof, where a glorious view greeted us of the calm Mediterranean beneath, and beyond the coast-lands towards the north the dim outline of Carmel, with the fertile plain of Sharon lying between. Such was the beautiful picture upon which the eyes of Peter must have rested, even though "the house" can hardly be identical with the one in which Simon lodged, considering how often the city has been laid in ruins. But quite possibly it may have stood on or near the site of the one we visited, especially as it is situated in that quarter of the town which is devoted to *tanning*. The reputed

HOUSE OF DORCAS,

where she is said to have lived and to have been buried, and which is located in the outskirts of Jaffa, was next inspected by our party, but there is no proof that it is the identical site. All the same, one is glad that the memory of so Godly a woman, and of the wondrous miracle performed by the apostle, is ever kept alive

there. Our guide, in somewhat broken English, recounted to us the narrative of Peter raising her from the dead, of which the following sentence is a characteristic sample: "And he said, *Tabitha, get up, and she risid!*" These words became quite a saying among us. How often afterwards did we hear at five o'clock a.m., "*Tabitha, get up,*" to which, as we struggled to obey, we replied, "*and she risid.*"

A magnificent view of the

PLAIN OF SHARON

delighted us as we beheld it from the roof of an adjacent Russian building. How fertile it looked, with its numerous orchards of fruit, and especially of its orange groves. It is not quite flat, like the Plain of Esdraelon, but has a few hillocks and sandy ridges. Its orange gardens number about 400, and as each garden measures from three to twelve acres, the fragrance of the orange blossoms as it comes wafted on the balmy breeze of spring, and the fresh beauty of the far-reaching plain, more than justify the inspired ejaculation of Isaiah: *the excellency of Carmel and Sharon* (Isaiah xxxv. 2); and when we notice that the Plain of Sharon extends to the base of Mount Carmel we understand why the prophet should have coupled the two names.

Jaffa has more than one prosperous industry, but in these days it is chiefly celebrated for its delicious fruit. Who has not heard of "the oranges of Jaffa"? Yes; you have them in England. But how much more luscious do they taste when eaten on the spot where they are gathered. We sat on the balcony of the hotel quenching our thirst that hot day with oranges from Sharon's gardens, a basketful of which can be had for a few pence. We lunched at this hotel—where, by the way, the various rooms are named after the twelve Apostles, and where a text hanging on the wall told us that what had been the dream of a life-time to so many would be fulfilled to us in a few hours: "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem"—an appropriate message. Travellers to Jaffa do not, as a rule, linger there, but having visited the sites I have mentioned

generally hasten on their way to the Holy City. And we can *hasten* thither to-day—not, perhaps, according to our western ideas of sixty miles an hour, but certainly “hasten” when compared with the slow modes of journeying long ago. There is a train from Jaffa to Jerusalem.

OUR TRAIN JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

was full of interest. How strange it seems—a train from ancient Joppa to the Holy City! What a curious blending of the West and East, of the present and the past, is that modern-looking railway station by the side of customs that linger from long ages ago! It is no doubt true that “the East never changes;” but it is equally evident that western thoughts and novelties are unceremoniously forcing their way into the midst of an ever-abiding antiquity.

But they are not too modernised yet. There is but one train a day, which, in the tourist season, starts at 2 p.m. We hastened to the station, wondering at the native porters, who carry such enormous weights. I saw two heavy boxes on the back of a man one of which, in England, would have required at least two men to lift. Indeed, it is remarkable what ponderous burdens are borne out there by man and beast, and which help one to realise such words as “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ,” which, understood in the light of the East, means bearing a considerable portion of another’s cares.

The journey to Jerusalem occupied about three and a-half hours by train, and was deeply interesting, teeming as it does with Biblical associations; though from a picturesque point of view the landscapes in that region are not so beautiful as many other places we visited later. Much of the way assumed a more or less stony and barren appearance. There is a vast difference between Judea and Galilee; between Southern and Northern Palestine. The latter is very fertile, the former not so.

Here is a brief record of the places passed in our train journey.



RAILWAY PORTER AT JAFFA.

Having emerged from the beautiful plain of Sharon, passed by *Beit Dejan* (the House of Dagon and evidently the place to which the Philistines took the Ark of God), our first stoppage was at

LYDDA,

which some think to be identical with the Lod of Neh. xi. 35. It was here that Peter cured Æneas of the palsy: *and all that dwell at Lydda and Saron (Sharon) saw him and turned to the Lord.* The flat-roofed village, enshrined in orchards, is believed to have been the birth and burial place of St. George of England.

RAMLEH,

which we next reached, has been identified (some say erroneously) with the Arimathæa of Joseph, in whose tomb our Lord's body was laid.

Soon after, from our carriage windows, we had glimpses of a Jewish settlement, founded by Baron Rothschild and situated on, or near, the site of ancient

EKRON,

whither the Ark of God was taken from Ashdod. To our left was pointed out to us

GEZER,

the site of a Canaanitish city of vast antiquity. Excavations by the *Palestine Exploration Fund* have discovered there a great "High Place" and various idols; also skeletons of children and other victims who were evidently offered up as human sacrifices. These idolaters were the Canaanites, who were not driven out in the days of Joshua (Judges i. 29). The city appears to have remained unconquered until the king of Egypt "burnt it with fire," and gave it as a dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife (1 Kings ix. 16).



ZORAH.

After passing through the

VALLEY OF SOREK,

identified with Samson (Judges xvi. 4), and crossing the first metal bridge ever built in Palestine, we reached

ZORAH,

the birthplace of Samson.

One of the most interesting plains we saw on our way was the

VALLEY OF AJALON,

where, along its expansive stretch, Joshua routed the Philistines, when sun and moon stood still until victory was assured, because "the Lord fought for Israel," One could only look with awe upon a spot thus so miraculously immortalised.

As our train mounted upwards to the heights of Judea we passed such Biblical sites as

ESHTAOL,

near to which was situated the "Camp of the Danites," where "the Spirit of the Lord began to move Samson" (Judges xiii. 25). Also the ruins of

BETHSHEMESH,

whither the Ark of God was brought from Ekron, so that we had travelled along almost the identical route over which the Ark was conveyed after it had been captured by the Philistines, until "the two milch kine" brought it to Beth-shemesh (1 Sam. vi.). *Kirjath-Jearim*, to which it was then taken, and where it abode twenty years, was a few miles to our North-east.

These, then, were the chief places we passed by, or saw from our carriage windows. The whole way teemed with Biblical associations, chiefly those connected with the wars between Israel and the Philistines. Indeed, the *Plain of Sharon* was the Plain of Philistia, and included the entire territory of the Philistines.

As our train approached nearer our destination it carried us upwards, mounting through deep and im-

pressive-looking gorges. On either side of us were steep, precipitous hills, in the clefts of which are caves which served as hiding places for Samson and others from their foes. Leaving the deep, rocky gorges, we merged out into the open

PLAIN OF REPHAIM,

where David defeated the Philistines (2 Sam. v. 18—25), and found ourselves at our journey's end at the modern railway station and only a mile from Jerusalem. Carriages of the "Victoria" type crowded round us as soon as we had left the station, their picturesque drivers in their Oriental dresses and red fez, all shouting at once in an incomprehensible tongue, while with a twirling of arms, that might have done credit to a wind-mill, they beckoned us to mount their vehicles. It was delightful, this strange scene and this babel of voices. But what a jolting we got as we were driven recklessly over the main road, through the Valley of Jehoshaphat, passing the pool of Gihon, and inwardly congratulating ourselves we were not upset! It was about 6 p.m., on March 30th, 1907, that we were landed, outside the Jaffa Gate, at *Hughes' New Hotel*, a favourite hotel for British tourists.



CHAPTER VI.

THE HOLY CITY.



"JERUSALEM, the Holy City," sang Isaiah (chap. lii. 1). *The Holy City!* That is the name I love best for Jerusalem. It is the title which Scripture applies to it, and it is the only city which has been divinely styled "Holy." An apostate Church has usurped the sacred appellation, but it has no divine authority for doing so. The title which the inspired Word has given to Rome is "Great," and instead of being holy, the Apocalypse describes it as "the Mother of Abominations of the earth" (Rev. xvii.). Jerusalem, and Jerusalem only, has the right to be called *the Holy City*.

It is "Holy" because it has been chosen before all other cities of the earth, and set apart to be the spot upon whose surface our planet's greatest tragedy and most momentous events have occurred; and where the mightiest of the Divine triumphs have been achieved, so far as this world is concerned. It is still "Holy"—though for a while in the dust of humiliation—because it is predestined in the immutable counsels of God to play a great and sacred part in the annals of the future.

Hughes' New Hotel is situated without the city. I felt I could not think of retiring to rest, that first night of our arrival, until I had really stood within the city's gates. So after dinner a few of us, with a guide, ventured out, though it was raining heavily; and walking down its deserted and dimly lighted streets we passed through the Jaffa Gate. Since the German Emperor's visit none of the gates are ever shut at night. Is this fact a beginning of the fulfilment of the prophecy in Isa. lx. 11: "Thy gates shall be open continually"?

There are several "Stores" just inside the gate, where curiosities in olive wood and such like can be purchased. We entered one of them and made several selections, I buying a beautiful English Bible bound in olive wood. For hours I sat up that night reading that Book, especially the many familiar chapters which narrate our Lord's human experiences in Jerusalem. Every text seemed to stand forth with a fresh power as I re-read them on the very spot they speak about.

Next morning was Easter Sunday, and we attended Divine Service in Christ Church, which is the first church of England ever built in Palestine, and where hundreds of Jews have been baptised. England has done a great work among the Jews in Jerusalem. Britain is the chief means of evangelisation in the Holy Land as she is everywhere else.

CHRIST CHURCH

is on Mount Zion, and is in every way a thoroughly evangelical church. Never shall I forget that Easter; it is among the most precious and the most memorable I have ever spent. To be actually on the "Mount Zion which He loved," joining in prayer and praise to the King of Israel! To find oneself at the Lord's Supper within but a short distance of Gethsemane and Calvary! Never had God's goodness seemed more overwhelming in its convincing reality, nor the Bible a truer Book than in that hour.

Next day we began sight-seeing in earnest. Before I pass on to detailed description of what we saw, it may be well to take a general view of the city, its surroundings, condition, etc.

One cannot get a better idea of the general life of Jerusalem of to-day than to stand near the

JAFFA GATE,

so-called because the road from Jaffa leads into it, and which is the main gate into the city. All its present seven gates were built by Sultan Suleiman in 1542, and all of them are open except Herod's Gate on the north

and the Golden Gate on the east. It is exceedingly interesting to stand near the Jaffa Gate and watch the ceaseless flow of busy life which continues from early dawn until the darkness suddenly falls ; there is little or no twilight in the East.

Jerusalem is no longer a typical Oriental city ; Western thoughts and European customs have forced themselves right into the midst of the unchanging East, and this blending of the West with the Orient is curious and impressive. Outside the city walls a new town seems to be growing up, houses of Western architecture have been erected, and others are in course of erection in the suburbs. And this entrance of Western ideas is finding expression also in the dress of some of the natives. The Moslem still adheres strictly to the picturesque garb of antiquity, but those who are Christians are adopting modern modes. But the most striking and curious blending of the West and East just outside the Jaffa Gate is found, to my mind, in that modern cab-stand stationed beneath the shadow of the Tower of Hippicus, whose massive stones in the lower portion date from Herod's time. How often the Idumean prince must have driven his chariot on the site of the very spot, where those hackney carriages congregate to-day, waiting to be hired, just as they do on a London cab-stand !

But let us pass within the gate, and on doing so I noticed two peculiarities—(1) the eye of the Needle ; (2) the gate's elbow shape. The *eye* is merely a little door within the big one—a small entrance through the gate itself. It is intended for pedestrians that when the gate is shut, they may be able to pass through this aperture into the city. It would be impossible for a laden camel, or any beast of burden, to get through it, without first having all the goods taken off his back. Even then the camel would find it very difficult to pass through, and would need to bow his head and bend his back to do so. Our Lord's metaphor therefore was very appropriate—the rich man must get rid of his burden of the love of money, which is the root of all evil ; he must bow his will to the Word of God and bend his proud heart before he can enter life eternal.

The *elbow shape* of the Jaffa Gate is peculiar to many Oriental gates. We passed through the first part of the gate and stood in its centre watching the natives squatted in open booths or shops, selling dates and fruit and various messes of food which to them may be savoury, but to us looked anything but appetising. We then turned sharply to the left and found ourselves within the city.

Oh what an entrancing hour can be spent in that busy market thoroughfare just inside the gate, watching the motley crowd as it comes in or goes out ceaselessly from early dawn till the sun sets beyond the vale of Rimmon. Stand with me in imagination there, and watch the moving panorama, as I saw it, of Oriental pictures drawn from life. There goes the native peasant of the land, moving with steady strides, his well-built frame robed in a loose striped cloak which hangs gracefully from the shoulders, while his bare feet are encased in red and rather ragged leather shoes, and his head is covered with a bright kerchief, which hangs down the neck. Altogether, he is a picturesque-looking object and walks through the gate as if he were master of the land. It is significant that the two Mohammedan Powers which are in Palestine are both descendants of Abraham; the Turks are the Edomites (children of Esau) and the Arabs are Ishmaelites. But Edom, not being in the covenant, cannot hold the land for ever. There follows in vivid contrast the slouching figure of the Jew. The long robe of better texture than is worn by the ordinary Jew, and the velvet cap trimmed with fur, pronounces him to be a Pharisee, or a Rabbi. As in our Lord's time, he is particular about his outward appearance and is careful to distinguish himself from the common herd; a lock of hair exquisitely curled hangs over each cheek. These "love-locks" always reminded me of "tear-bottles" I have seen, and to which David referred, as little receptacles for his tears. Certainly the sad and often woe-begone expression of the Jew's face, as he wanders through the streets of Jerusalem, a reproach and a by-word in his own city, harmonises with this thought. Never have I seen such apparent examples of anæmia



A TYPICAL JEW OF JERUSALEM.

and pathetic sadness as are displayed in the pale, thin faces of the sons of Judah as I saw them in Jerusalem. Oh what an irrefutable evidence that the rejection of Christ is the secret of all misery! Here comes next a Mohammedan woman; her dress is black and we cannot see her face, for she is thickly veiled and reminds us of one of the saddest phases of life in the East—the oppression of woman. I am thinking of London’s “suffragettes,” and what a lot they would find to put right here, when I am suddenly aware of what appears to be a ghost appearing. It is another woman clothed entirely in white from head to foot, with the exception of her veil, which quite hides her face and which is ornamented with some flowers imprinted on its surface. The whole effect is weird and unearthly, and I feel thankful I am an Englishwoman. We now notice that the busy crowd is moving aside to let pass a string of camels. Each beast is heavily laden and each one is tied to the one in front, thus making a long procession,

and, strangest part of all, the leader is a donkey. This custom has given rise to a riddle: "Why is the Turkish Government like a string of camels?" Answer: "Because it is led by a donkey."

But time fails to note every passing detail of this panoramic scene. There goes a Turkish soldier in fez and uniform, and there a Greek priest with flowing hair and a curious hat something like the London "chimney-pot" turned upside down; here are swarthy Arabs and there, a group of Russian pilgrims in their shaggy coats. What a busy scene it is! and, though everyone seems intent on something, no one is in a hurry. And though many nationalities are represented before us, we cannot see a single case of drunkenness; the religion of the Moslem prohibits him from taking alcohol. The open coffee-house is his place for refreshment. There he loves to lounge, cross-legged most likely, sipping black coffee, smoking his long "hubble-bubble," or *argeleh*, as it is called. It is a pipe with a long leather tube, corded with silver wire, fastened to a large thick glass bottle half filled with water. Through this he lazily draws the smoke, every now and then, while he discusses the affairs of the day. Altogether this is a more edifying sight than the repellant spectacles often associated with Western civilisation. But there are sad scenes here too; we cannot go far without being followed by beggars in filth and rags. If we give to one we shall be surrounded with a dozen, holding out skinny hands for *baksheesh*, or pointing to bare, scraggy bodies that tell of poverty and disease. Some of them are professional beggars, but many of them are honestly poor and find it very hard to exist. The Turkish Government does nothing except tax them, and that it does heavily. Their chickens, their olive trees, their children—all are taxed. Add to this cause of poverty the unsanitary condition of the streets—the mud, the heaps of accumulated débris, the dirt, the stench in many a narrow lane—and you will realise indeed that Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles. Instinctively we turn our thoughts backwards to long ages ago. We think of the "Holy City" as it was—"the joy of the whole earth." We picture



MOHAMMEDAN WOMEN. A STREET SCENE IN JERUSALEM.

(From a snapshot.)

Solomon's gilded chariots moving along these streets amid every sign of prosperity. We can imagine the pride with which Herod moved about the city which he had done so much to embellish. Ay, we think reverently also of Him Who trod these scenes—not just here, but ten, twenty fathoms below; for ancient Jerusalem lies buried far beneath, and until excavations are allowed on a more extensive scale, it is impossible to see the city as He loved and wept over it.

We shall get a better idea of Jerusalem if we consider its

GENERAL TOPOGRAPHY.

Two parallel hills running from north to south divided ancient Jerusalem into East and West. The eastern hill was *Mount Moriah*, on which stood the Temple. The western was known as *Mount Zion*. Between these two ridges was a deep valley called *the Valley of the Cheesemongers*, called also *the Tyropean Valley*. Accumulated débris has nearly filled up this Valley, but indications of it still remain.

Between Mount Moriah and the Mount of Olives, to the east of the city, is another deep valley called *the Valley of Jehoshaphat*, or *the Valley of the Kedron* (where Gethsemane was located).

To the west and south of Mount Zion lies the *Valley of Hinmon* (where is the Field of Blood where Judas hanged himself).

To the north of Jerusalem has been discovered *the Hill of a Skull* (which many believe to be the place of crucifixion). The City is divided into

FOUR QUARTERS

which are easy to remember.

North-east and East are the Mohammedans.

South-east live the Jews.

North-west the Latin and Greek communities.

South-west is the English Christ Church on Mount Zion.

Of these four quarters, the Jewish is the poorest and the dirtiest. To walk through its crooked lanes, stepping

from one mud heap to another and seeing the filthy, tottering hovels on either side, amid the most offensive odours, is an experience calculated to fill one with disgust and sorrow—sorrow that Judah, which was once His sanctuary and His chosen tribe, should now be found in such depths of degradation. But how could it be otherwise seeing they have crucified the Lord of glory?

I have sometimes thought that the

WILD DOGS

of Palestine remind one of the present condition of the Jew. In England we think of our canine friends as the pet and companion of man. It is not so with the dog of Jerusalem. There he is an outcast, roaming the city by night, and seeking for the refuse of the houses which has been cast into the streets at sunset. He has no other way of subsistence and does not always find it easy to live; other dogs will fight with him over miserable morsels of food, and the strongest will carry off the coveted prize. The weaker ones may be killed in the night quarrels, or die of starvation. By day these wild, unlovely creatures will be seen lying and sleeping about the streets, dirty, unkempt and only tolerated because they are the sole scavengers of the city. But they will not hurt you. They will only lift tired, pathetic eyes to your face as they crouch on doorstep or in the gutter, and you will not think of disturbing them. If they are stretched across the footpath the passers-by will merely step over them, or walk round them, without touching them; and if there is a dead dog or two which have succumbed to the night brawls with their fellows, the natives are in no hurry to remove the bodies. Altogether the dogs of Palestine, of Syria, and of Constantinople are a curious and often loathsome sight. It is only in the light of this Eastern peculiarity that we understand such words as "Beware of dogs" (Phil. iii. 2), "Without are dogs" (Rev. xxii. 15)—the outcast animal being a fit symbol in the first quotation, of the outcast Jew; and in the second, of the outcast and shut-out souls from the pearly gates of the heavenly Jerusalem.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE SUMMIT OF OLIVET.



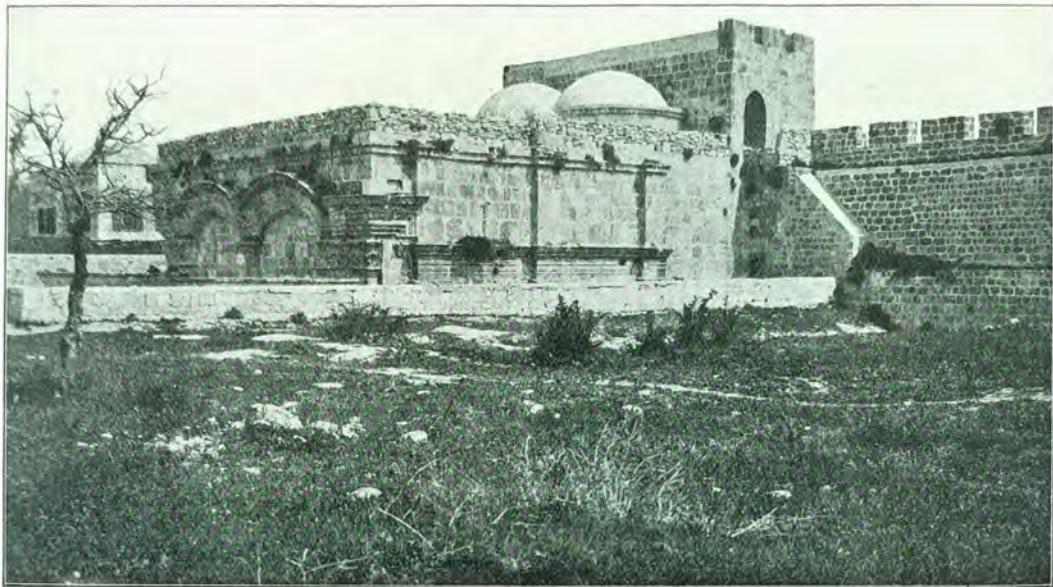
WE all drove up to the summit of the Mount of Olives, whence a magnificent panorama was spread beneath us. Mount Scopus is practically one with Mount Olivet, only a slight depression uniting the two hills. We stood first on

MOUNT SCOPUS,

on the exact spot where Titus is said to have wept over Jerusalem—wept that he should have been called to destroy so beautiful a city. One can realise such grief, for even in its desolation Jerusalem looks “the joy of the whole earth.” What must it have been in its glory! Looking at it from Mount Scopus one sees it corner-wise, viz., on its Northern and Eastern sides. The city lies four-square. It is set on a hill and yet surrounded with hills, thus having a remarkable topographical position. It is stamped conspicuously as a site which could never escape the eyes of nations, nor the records of history. Such a city must have had a momentous past; it must be destined for a mighty future. It was evidently from Mount Scopus that David described it as “on the sides of the north, the city of the great King” (Psalm xlviii. 2).

From the MOUNT OF OLIVES

a different but equally fine view is obtained of the Holy City. One looks across the deep valley of the Kedron right into the Temple area and beyond; for the place where the glorious sanctuary stood faces directly East towards Olivet. The Golden Gate was just opposite to us where we stood. This was the gate (or rather it stands on the exact site of the gate called “Beautiful,”



THE GOLDEN GATE,

The Turks have barred it-up with masonry to prevent its being opened.

Acts iii. 2), through which our Lord made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The present one dates only from the 16th century and is never opened, the Moslems having a tradition, that the prince who will wrest the city from them will come through that gate—hence they have taken the precaution of barring it up with masonry, thus making its opening impossible. In the fact that it is always shut some have found a fulfilment of Ezekiel xliv. 1, 2.

From where we stood an observer in the days of the Temple could have looked right into the various courts, and even into the Holy of Holies when the priest drew aside the curtain on the great day of Atonement. How solemn it must have seemed to the reverent Israelite to have watched the smoke ascending from the brazen altar day after day. Not less conspicuous was the sacrifice of the Lamb of God on that green knoll to the north. How deeply significant, how thrillingly real, does the Bible become when it is studied amid the actual scenes of the occurrences it narrates!

Now a mosque enshrines the Rock of Mount Moriah, and innumerable minarets, whence the call to prayer is shouted out five times a day, tell plainly that a foreign faith is master in the chosen land.

The view of the surrounding country from the summit of Olivet is one of those grand panoramic scenes which entranced me. It rises before me as I write. To the east, beyond the near hills and the desolate wilderness of temptation, lies the fertile valley of the Jordan. There, amid those woods of balsam and tamarisk, the famous river flows; while beyond I see the mountains of Moab, which seem to be changing colour in every varying ray of sunlight and every passing cloud, sometimes presenting a purple pink, and the next moment a misty, mauve tint, which seems to fade away again into cerulean blue. There, at their base, I catch now and then a glimpse of the shining waters of the Dead Sea, and I realise afresh what wondrous historic and religious associations cluster round those scenes. I turn towards the south and am in the direction of Bethlehem; and to the south-west towards Hebron, and the plain of Mamre.

To the west lie the hills of the wilderness of Judæa, where nestles *Ain-Karim*, the supposed birth-place of John the Baptist; while further towards the N.-W. I see the mountains of Gibeon "in the portion of Benjamin."

In our Lord's time Olivet was no doubt thickly covered with the dusky groves of beautiful trees. To-day comparatively very few of the time-honoured trees remain. Every tree being taxed, the owners are obliged to cut them down; soon Olivet will be denuded of all its olive trees if some wiser legislation cannot prevail. I noticed on the summit some wild "hyssop that springeth out of the wall" (I Kings iv. 33), and also some locust beans, which some think may have been the "locusts" which John the Baptist eat; but it is more probable that his meat was the insect of that name, which is used for food in some parts of the East.

And yet more sacred associations are connected with the Mount of Olives. There it was that a Greater than



ST. STEPHEN'S GATE.

Titus wept with an intensity that the Roman General could not have done ; only Jesus could know the ages of sorrow that were to roll over the Holy City. There is not much difficulty in ascertaining where Jesus bewailed, with human tears drawn from the depths of a wounded human heart. We know He was coming up from Bethany on that occasion ; and the ordinary foot-path of to-day is the one He trod so often with His disciples. Coming up from Bethany, there is a place on the hill at which point the city suddenly bursts upon the view of the climber. It must have been there that "when He beheld the city He wept over it."

How much is signified by that word *Beheld!* It was not merely that He saw its outward characteristics, its ramparts, its bulwarks and its strong walls, its olive groves and cypresses, its rich buildings and marble fountains, its splendid arches and palaces ; above all, the white roof of the golden temple glistening in the calm sunshine. He beheld more than that ! *He saw its history*, some pages written in the beauty of holiness and joy, some red with the blood of massacre and war, or black with the record of guilt. Now high in Divine blessing, with the sounds of song and jubilee floating through the years gone by, and then the midnight of a God-forsaken people, and the cries of the slaughtered and the din of battle. He beheld it as it had been in the days of Solomon's splendour ; as it was in its seventy years' captivity ; and as it rose again from the dust, embellished by Herod, and throbbing once more with life and jubilation, even though the Roman Eagle had spread its unclean wings above it. The memories of a history unique in the annals of nations had made Jerusalem different from all other cities ; and especially because all its viscissitudes are inseparably and closely interwoven with its religious life. It was the favour or disfavour of a pleased, or angry, Almighty, that had brought those calms of glory, or those hurricanes of woe. No wonder He wept as He beheld ! For tragic as the city's past had been, its sorrows were light compared with the miseries which He saw appearing from the north. Evil is said to come from the north

(see Jer. i. 14). When Titus besieged the city, he encamped on the north side and laid siege to it from that quarter. This is full of significance if, as some affirm (as I shall show in a later article), that the place of crucifixion was on the north side. Just as the desolation of Jerusalem is bound up with the rejection of Christ, so also will its future prosperity be conditional on the recognition and acceptance of "the King of the Jews." I do not believe in any repossession of Jerusalem by the Jews in their present unbelieving condition. Those who have settled there must undergo the tribulations which will be connected with the overthrow of Turkey, and the re-occupation of Palestine by the House of Israel.

On the Easter Sunday (1907) we spent in the Holy City, the Germans were laying the foundation stone of a new building on Mount Olivet. It was laid amid a storm of wind and rain, a type of the storms of battle that will yet be outpoured on Jerusalem. Some said the new building would be a Lutheran church, which appears unnecessary, as there is already a large German church in the city, whose conspicuous, towering steeple goes by the name of "Willie's Extinguisher!" Others informed me the proposed erection would be a hospital, and they added, *sotto voce*, it was intended to use it as a military barracks when need required! The fact that there is a Russian group of buildings, with a bell-tower of great height that makes it visible from all surrounding points, and that it is on the summit of Olivet, and has (if report be true) been erected with an eye to the future, and a possible struggle for the possession of the land, is another significant sign of the times. How the trend of the age, in some quarters at least, is towards "the pleasant land," "the glorious land," as Daniel speaks of it! Hostile non-Hebrew powers have always desired it, "the glory of all lands," and according to Zech. xiv., it will yet be the prize which all nations will fight to obtain. If the Russians and the Kaiser knew prophecy as well as they know politics, the first would not have erected their buildings on Olivet, and the second would not have troubled to send his Court Chaplain to lay the foundation stone of a building that



JERUSALEM FROM MOUNT SCOPUS.

(From a snapshot.)

will share the fate of all such erections when Zech. xiv. finds fulfilment. Olivet is destined to be rent with an earthquake that will not leave one stone upon the other.

There are many buildings on the Mount which seemed to me to disfigure it. We examined some interesting remains of Roman art in one of them, including some beautiful Mosaic pavements. Among other designs I noticed that of the *Fish*, which, as many know, was the ancient Christian symbol, the word *Fish* in Greek containing the initial letters of Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.

Of course one is shown on the summit of Olivet the exact spot whence Christ ascended up to heaven. A church, called the Church of the Ascension, is built upon the traditional site; but which site may be taken to be as genuine as the "footprint," which is pointed out as the last impression made by the foot of the Saviour! It is far more probable that the sacred place of

HIS ASCENSION

is not on the summit at all. We are told "He led them out as far as Bethany" (Luke xxiv. 50); while in Acts i. 12 we find He ascended from Olivet. Those who have been on the spot and examined the locality cannot fail to notice, that there is a spur of the mountain which, though a part of the Mount of Olives, is yet within the outskirts of Bethany. This, then, was evidently the hillside whence He ascended from earth. The plateau just there would have been an ideal spot of observation, whence the men of Galilee could have gazed upward to the cloud which received Him out of their sight. There seems to me there can be no doubt that this spur is the genuine spot of the Ascension. I am glad there is no building upon it, but that we can see it, green and untouched as it probably was on that eventful day.

There are yet other buildings on the slopes of Olivet, which I can only remember with sadness. I mean the Latin (Roman Catholic) church of the *Paternoster*, where the Lord's Prayer is inscribed in thirty-two

languages, in the mistaken idea that our Lord taught His disciples that prayer on that spot. But as our Lord was then in Galilee, we have here another example of the many fictitious sites which abound in Jerusalem. Near to this church is another Roman Catholic one called the *Church of the Creed*, in the supposition that here the apostles compiled that statement of belief. But as that summary of belief was not drawn up until after their death, we must place this site also in the category of fiction. The saddest phase, however, of this particular locality is the existence of a convent for enclosed nuns. I was told they are of the Carmelite order. A shudder passed through me when I saw that strong iron grating in the church, near the chancel. Behind that grating only do they ever appear when service is held. I was further informed that among other austerities to which these poor victims of a cruel system submit, is that of lying periodically in their coffins or graves. And thus they hope to win heaven and buy eternal life! And this dark superstition exists within but a short way of Golgotha, where He cried: "*It is finished.*" Ah me! that the darkness should be so dense after nearly 2,000 years of the preaching of the Gospel which proclaims a finished Atonement!



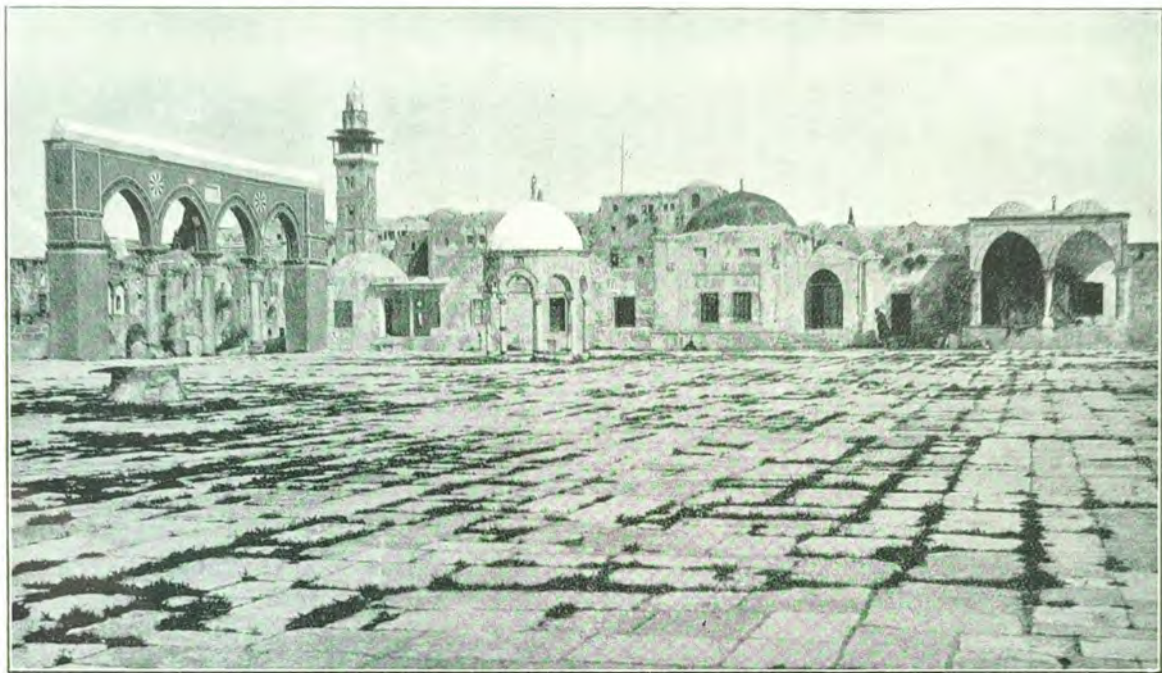
CHAPTER VIII.

THE TEMPLE AREA.



NE of the sites of which there can be no doubt at all is that of the Temple area. *The area only*—of the Temple nothing remains. What an object lesson does this present to us of the potent fact that the age of the old Mosaic covenant and Levitical ritual is for ever passed away! No need again for sacrifice or altar: *It is finished* has resounded from Golgotha. All the same, the site where Solomon's golden temple stood—where Zerubbabel had erected the second structure; where Herod had outrivalled all these efforts by the embellishment of a third temple, magnificent in its outward adorning of white marble and pinnacles of gold—cannot fail to be of keenest interest to the Bible student. Though now in the hands of the Turks, there is no difficulty in obtaining admittance to the famous site of the Temple. A dragoman, the consular Kawass, and a Turkish soldier, however, must accompany the visitor, and shoes are provided which must be put on before entering the mosques.

The area of Solomon's Temple was much smaller than that of Herod, and it is the latter's extensive platform which we see to-day. The area was formed in terraces, and there are undoubted evidences of these to-day, and of the steps which connected them. The lowest terrace was the *Court of the Gentiles*, and, in our Lord's time, was the place where oxen, sheep, and doves were sold for sacrifice, and where, also, the money changers sat whom He drove out. Magnificent colonnades extended along this lower court, at the southern end of which a massive bridge arched the deep Tyro-



A PART OF THE TEMPLE AREA. THE CASTLE OF ANTONIA IN THE BACKGROUND.

From a snapshot.

pœan valley, and thus connected Mount Moriah with Mount Zion. "Robinson's Arch" (so-called because it was discovered by Robinson), was pointed out to us as a part of one of the arches which had supported the bridge. "Solomon's Porch" also skirted the lowest terrace of the Temple area. This was where our Lord walked when the Jews took up stones—some of the stones lying about, for the porch was not finished then—to throw at Him (John x.). It is said that about double the length of York Cathedral was the length of that colonnade.

The second terrace was the *Court of the Israelites*, to which no Gentile was permitted to enter under penalty of death. A part of this court was the *Court of the Women*, to which women, if they were Israelites, were allowed access.

The third terrace was that of the *Court of the Priests*, where stood the Temple, with its altars, etc. The brazen altar was on the summit of Mount Moriah. It is over that rugged spot, generally called

THE ROCK,

that the Mosque of Omar is erected. It was in A.D. 640 that the Arabian conqueror, Caliph Omar, swept with his wild followers towards Jerusalem. Rome and Persia had already felt the strength of his attacks, yet he was but a plain-looking figure as he neared the Holy City—a Bedouin to look at in his shaggy coat of sheepskin, and mounted on a camel. The Moslems have always venerated such names as those of Abraham and David. The rough warrior made at once for the old Temple area. It was then nothing but a dunghill, for the corrupt form of Christianity which had settled itself in Jerusalem, had treated the ancient Temple court with indignity out of derision to the Jews. But Omar, dark though his soul may have been, had more respect for a site whose associations had rendered it for ever sacred. There he built a shrine, which some years later was considerably embellished by his successor. It is a dome, covering and protecting the holy rock. It is a magnificent building, this

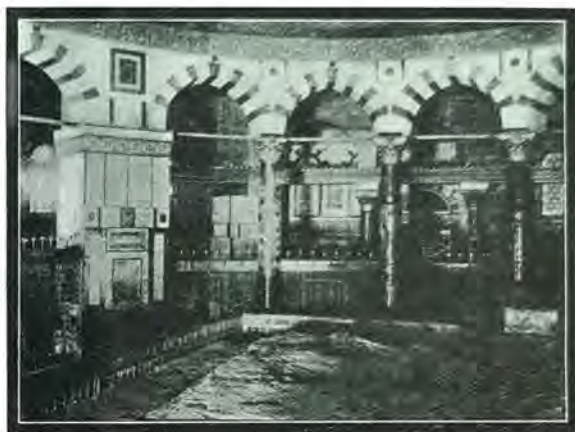
MOSQUE OF OMAR,

with its choice marbles of varied colours; its windows filled with mosaic glass; its lofty dome of exquisite Oriental workmanship. Beautiful as it all is, its simplicity is its chief charm. No idolatrous symbols, no imageries are there to mar this noble shrine. The rock which it overshadows is, of course, the chief thing of interest there. Surrounded by a railing, that no one may tread upon it, the solid, rugged mass is visible to all as an indisputable reality, showing forth with silent but convincing force, the truth of the Word of God.

The Holy Rock is about 57 feet long and 43 feet wide, and rises over 6 feet above the ground. As I stretched forth my hand through the railing and touched the hard, ancient substance, how thrilling it was to know that there Abraham had offered up Isaac. There, the friend of God had stood, with uplifted knife, to slay his son—his only son that he loved, and the only link that stood between him and the promises of God. There it was that the Divine voice reached him, bidding him refrain his hand, for God was satisfied with the obedience of Abraham, and because of it He uttered that Divine oath, swearing by Himself because He could swear by no greater. That oath is well known, but it is very little understood.

“By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thy only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice” (Genesis xxii. 16—19).

“Thy seed which is Christ,” explained the apostle Paul. Yes; but “the oath” links, with the promise of the Christ, the promise of multiplicity of seed and the possession of the gate of their enemies to the posterity of Abraham. These are the two halves of the one



THE HOLY ROCK, INSIDE THE MOSQUE OF OMAR.

"oath." They must stand or fall together. But as certainly as Christ has come, so as certainly is the promise of multiplicity of seed and the possession of the gate of their enemies fulfilled to the descendants of Abraham—the British-Israel people. Characterised by great multiplicity, they are also identified by their possession of the gate of all who hate them. "I will set his hand on the sea." *The command of the sea is "the gate,"* giving us a predominating power over all the rest of the world.

How thrilling it was to think of all these sacred truths as we stood on Mount Moriah and touched the grim old rock! It was there, also, that David had built the altar on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. There, also, had been placed the brazen altar in the temple, where, for centuries, the smoke of sacrifice ascended, pointing forward to the Lamb of God, who should come. Could anyone, realising all this, gaze on its solid grey mass unmoved? And, that the Brazen altar really stood just there is proved by the existence of a hewn

CAVE

beneath. We descended to that cave, and while standing in it, clearly saw the large, round hole in *its roof*, which penetrates right through to the rock above. It was through that hole that the blood of the sacrificial victims was poured. A large, circular slab of stone covers the centre of *the floor* of the cave, and there is evidently a cavity beneath it, as it gives forth a deep, hollow sound when stamped upon. This was, no doubt, a yet lower receptacle for the blood of the animals, into which a sewer flowed to carry away the refuse of the sacrifices. "Thou shalt pour out the blood at the bottom of the altar" (Leviticus iv. 7, 8). Some time before visiting Jerusalem I had been writing about the vision in Revelation vi. 9—11, where John beheld the souls of martyrs "under the altar." I realised more than ever its deep significance when I stood in that cave beneath the site of the brazen altar.*

We will now leave the Dome of the rock and pass on to another portion of the Temple area, for where now stands the

MOSQUE EL-AKSA

was a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The Mosque is a splendid building containing a wonderful pulpit of ivory and mother-of-pearl. It stands on the lowest terrace, and on the site of the great colonnade of the Court of the Gentiles.

Near this mosque is the so-called

CUP,

supposed to mark the place of Solomon's "Great Sea," the water of which was thus stored, as in a reservoir, for the necessary sacrificial ablutions connected with the Temple services. This "Sea" was supplied with water by means of an aqueduct from *Solomon's Pools*, which the reader will find described in the chapter on *Hebron*. There are other spacious reservoirs which were supplied with water from the same source. It may be in

* See my *Divine Calendar*, Vol. I., p. 57.

reference to these cisterns in the Temple area, that Ezekiel drew his beautiful allegory of the living waters of the gospel of salvation flowing to heal the spiritual deserts of the land—"their waters they issued out of the sanctuary" (Ezek. xlvii.).

There are many more points of interest in the Temple area—such as Solomon's Judgment Throne, or rather the site where it stood—also fragments of a series of steps believed to be the relics of "the ascent" by which Solomon went up to the house of the Lord, and which so astounded the Queen of Sheba. This "ascent" is believed to have extended from the Pool of Siloam to Mount Moriah.

Leaving the mosque, we descended a narrow, dark, stone staircase into some extensive subterranean vaults and passages known as

SOLOMON'S STABLES.

Their massive columns and arches support the platform of the Temple area above, viz., that portion of it which has been constructed on a level with the rock. It was in this underground refuge that thousands of Jews hid themselves when Titus besieged the city.

Before quitting the subject of the Temple, it will be relevant here to refer to

SOLOMON'S QUARRIES,

because from these quarries was taken the stone wherewith the Temple was built. I never understood the meaning of 1 Kings vi. 7 until I stood within those spacious, lofty and extensive rock-caverns. We are told that the stones were "made ready" before they were brought to the Temple site, and that "there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building." These quarries extend so far underground that any work done within by "iron tool" could not have been heard from without. Some of the mason's work is left in an unfinished condition, such as part of a pillar hanging from the roof. It is believed that the quarries once communicated, underground, with the Temple area itself. The stones, there-

fore, having been cut and made ready in the caverns, were (unknown and unheard by outsiders) conveyed silently and secretly to their places in the erection of the sanctuary. How fitting a symbol of God's way of working very often! Does He not many times work mysteriously, planning and executing His wondrous counsels in methods beyond our ken and our sight? All His great purposes have been executed thus, and then, when all is ready, some marvellous manifestation of His power is given to His people. Let us not then think that God ever leaves His work undone; if we cannot perceive all His doings, it is because He is carrying out His designs unknown to us. Let us trust until we can see "face to face," whether it concern ourselves personally, or whether it has to do with His people Israel. So silently, so secretly, has He been carrying out His will concerning the House of Israel, all these many centuries back, that only comparatively recently have we begun to recognise His handiwork, and even now the bulk of the Anglo-Saxon race is blind to its position as the literal race. It matters not. He Who has been and is a secret Constructor of the House of Israel, has His own time and way for their full manifestation. Some day He will unveil them in glory far greater than ever had Solomon's sanctuary on Mount Moriah.

It is interesting to note that our brethren, the Jews, pray at the Wailing Place, not only for their own restoration to the Holy Land, but also for the recovery of the House of Israel—their brothers of the lost ten tribes. Unknown to them, God has been building up this great "House." We visited that

WAILING PLACE

on Friday afternoon. I have never seen a more pathetic sight. All classes of Jews congregate there week after week—some in rich velvets and furs, others in rags and dirt. But all are there to wail—to utter long cries for the desolation of Jerusalem. It is quite a narrow space, but it was crowded four deep by the sorrowing sons and daughters of Judah. It is a strange irony that, the Jews who forbid the Gentiles to enter the Temple, are now

themselves debarred from the sacred precincts. But the stones of the Wailing Place are said to be some of the actual ones belonging to the wall of the Temple; and therefore they have the melancholy satisfaction of touching, with reverent hands and lips, these (in all probability) genuine relics of the ancient sanctuary. Some of them, the day we saw them, had their Hebrew Old Testaments with them and were reading from the Book with lamentable voice, the tears rolling down the faces of many; while others, who could not get near enough to kiss the stones, put forth a hand or finger and touched the wall and then pressed to their lips the hand which had come in contact with those sacred stones. It was a most pathetic and pitiable sight. The next chapter will tell the reason why.



CHAPTER IX.

THE VIA DOLOROSA, OR WAY
OF SORROWS.

THE whole history of Palestine—ay, of the whole world, too—centres round one Person, and that Person is Christ. “For Him and by Him are all things.” And all that He was, and is, and is to come (so far as we are concerned), revolves round one stupendous act of His—and that act was His *Atonement*.

The Atonement comprises two distinct halves—the first, death, the second, life; the first, battle, the second, victory; the first, humiliation, the second, exaltation; the first, sacrifice, the second, resurrection.

A visit to the Holy City is of little value, if it does not make Christ the Divine Centre of all Jerusalem’s history. All the past, from the hour of the Fall in Eden to the midnight of Calvary and the glory of the Resurrection pointed forward to Him; and all the ages that have since run their course point backward to Gethsemane, and Golgotha, and the empty tomb. If that be so, there must be a deep interest, to the Christian, in the identification of those solemn and holy spots which witnessed His agony and His triumph.

There are two sites—one inside and the other outside modern Jerusalem—which have claimed to be the place of crucifixion and of the tomb of our Lord—that of the *Church of the Holy Sepulchre* and that of the so-called *Skull Hill and the Garden Tomb*. The first has been an attraction to pilgrims ever since the fourth century; the second is of only comparatively recent discovery.

Therefore the *Via Dolorosa*, or Way of Sorrows, trod

by Christ in His passion, is not the same in both cases. If Calvary be the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, He would have turned to the left; if the Skull Hill be the genuine site, He would have gone to the right. I propose to take the reader both these ways; for a certain distance, at least, they will both run over the same ground.

Where did His way of sorrows begin? Our dragoon, or our guide-book, may tell us it began at the *Ecce Homo* Arch; but the Bible does not say so. It rather lets us see that all the human life of Christ was a way of sorrows, and that the shadow of the σταυρος* was over Him all the time of His earthly pilgrimage. But the spot where His fiercest victory was won, was not Calvary, but previously, in

GETHSEMANE.

Here, then, let us begin our examination of the *Via Dolorosa*.

The site of this spot is not definitely known. That it was somewhere here in the Kedron valley there can be no doubt; but the well-kept, stereotyped garden, surrounded by an ugly wall, is too near the public highway to have been the genuine place where Christ was wont to retire privately; and which evidently was a secluded spot not known to the general public. The garden which is shown to tourists as "Gethsemane" belongs to the Franciscan monks, who (with the Roman Church's usual method of trying to improve the Divine by the addition of the human element), have laid out the plot of ground in a manner that would well become a London park, but which, to my mind, is altogether out of harmony with the associations of that most sacred of all gardens. "The Grotto of the Agony" and the "Virgin's Tomb," etc., are shown to visitors, none of which are genuine. The real Gethsemane was probably nearer Bethany. It was no doubt a private enclosure, and who would

* See my *Radium Series*, No. 2, "Which Mark?" for an explanation as to the Cross of Christ, 2d.

be more likely to throw open their garden to Christ than Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, to whose house He was always welcome? But we cannot know accurately where it was except that it was over the Brook Kedron; and that somewhere beneath the overhanging branches of olive groves which in those days thickly covered the slopes of Olivet, our Lord withstood the direst temptation of His life, and did not put away the cup of agony. Betrayed in Gethsemane, He was led first to the

HOUSE OF CAIAPHAS.

An Armenian church and monastery are said to occupy the site where stood the High Priest's house. But the place may be as genuine as the stone inside the church, on which the astonished visitor can gaze on the impression of the foot of the cock which crowed when Peter denied Christ! From the house of Caiaphas, Jesus was led to Pontius Pilate, whose official residence was in the

CASTLE OF ANTONIA.

Here at least we have a genuine site of which there can be no doubt. It is now a Turkish barracks and stands on exactly the same spot where was, "the castle" in our Lord's time. It was then a barracks for Roman soldiers and had been erected by Herod as a strong, handsome fortress, and which was so near the holy sanctuary that it overlooked the Temp'e area. This is the "castle" that is mentioned in *Lcts* xxi. 34, from which the Roman soldiers hastened to the Temple area to rescue Paul, as recorded in that chapter. It was on the "stairs" of the castle that Paul made his speech; and it was in that same building that Christ was condemned to death. Probably nothing now remains, except a few stones, of the ancient castle, but of the site there can be no doubt. Near to it is the so-called

ECCE HOMO ARCH,

which overarches the street. We entered the convent of the Sisters of Zion quite close to it, in order to

see a smaller arch which now stands in their Church ; and which we were told was the principal entrance into the great Court which stood in front of Pilate's palace. It is called the *Ecce Homo Arch* because it is believed that Christ stood under that archway when Pilate said, "Behold the Man." The archway, however, is of much later date, but it may be on the site of the entrance to the quadrangle. What is more interesting, because there can be little or no doubt of its genuineness, is the remains of the *Gabbatha*, or Pavement, where stood Pilate's judgment seat and where he exclaimed: "Behold your King!" Even the chequer marks where the Roman soldiers played dice are easily recognisable. There is strong reason to accept this as a remains of the actual *Gabbatha*, and therefore a genuine part of the *Via Dolorosa*. It is situated about 70 feet below the surface of modern Jerusalem. One of the nuns led us down to see it. The sad faces of some of those poor "sisters" in that convent still haunt me, especially of the one that opened the door. Never have I seen an expression of deeper misery. She evidently was treading a way of sorrows, knowing perhaps nothing (to judge by the unsatisfied look on that poor, pale face), of the finished work of Him Who trod it that we might rejoice and be healed by His stripes alone.

After leaving the *Ecce Homo Arch*, our way descended for some distance into the old Valley of the Cheesemongers, called also the Tyropæan Valley, which separated Eastern from Western Jerusalem. Arrived at the foot of the hill we must, if we desire to follow the way which it is believed was trod by Christ, turn either to the *left* if we would go the road to the old traditional site in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, or to the *right* if we would reach the more probable place of crucifixion on the "Skull Hill" outside the Damascus Gate.

Personally, I do not believe at all in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, while the Skull Hill and Garden Tomb seem to me to have a good deal in their favour. But it is a subject on which it is impossible to dogma-

tise. Here are some reasons which seem to exclude the site in the

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

1st. It is very doubtful if it is situated without the wall of our Lord's time. On this question there are divergences of opinion, and until excavations can be carried out more fully, the exact line which the wall took in our Lord's time must remain a matter of uncertainty. Some think that the remains of a wall which have been discovered place it within the ancient city. But even if it were ascertained that it was without the gate, that in itself would not be a sufficient proof that it is the actual Calvary; there were several rock-hewn sepulchres outside the precincts of the city.

2nd. The circumstances under which the tradition was founded point to fraud and deception. The finding of the true cross by Helena, the mother of Constantine, and the fable of it curing a sick lady as soon as she touched it, and other similar tales, all point to one of those ecclesiastical tricks for which the Roman Church is famous. And though the apostacy was only in its infancy in the fourth century, yet it was sufficiently developed to have produced what has been called "The fraud of Christendom." The advantages which ecclesiasticism has reaped from this traditional site have been enormous; if "the fraud" has not benefited Christianity, it has at least enriched "the Church"—and probably that was all its first promoters aimed at.

3rd. To visit the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is, to my mind, quite enough to convince one that here are *not* the Golgotha nor the tomb of Christ. Being Easter time when we went there, *idolatry*, which is the chief characteristic, was specially to the front, as it always is at that time. The numberless prostrate pilgrims, all bowing before stocks and stones, kissing the pavements of the church and literally worshipping the supposed tomb, stone of anointment, etc., could only fill one with sorrow and disgust. Even from a sanitary point of view it must be very harmful; how much more from a spiritual! If we know anything of

the ways of God as revealed in the Scriptures, we there see that He would never give the care of the sepulchre of Christ into the hands of those who would make it an object of superstition. Does not His Word tell us that the sepulchre of Moses was purposely hidden—and for what reason? " (Duet. xxxiv. 6). Was it not in order to prevent it becoming a cause of idolatry? No wonder the devil contended for it! (Jude 9). No! if the real Calvary and tomb be discovered, I shall expect to find it in the care of those who will preserve it from superstitious uses.

We need not linger longer over the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, except to remark that its extensive precincts are partitioned among various religious sects—the Roman Catholics, the Greeks, the Coptics, the Armenians, etc.; and these are apt to indulge in a quarrel, especially at Easter time. The Greeks hold their Easter later than the Latins, and on that occasion practise the great deception of the so-called "Holy Fire," which the priests tell the people comes down from heaven, and as such is exhibited to the gaze of the deluded multitude. Of course, it is merely lighted by the priests themselves. Mohammedan soldiers are posted in various parts of the church to prevent serious fighting among the various religious rivals, which conflicts have at times ended in bloodshed!

Mentioning about the Greek communities in Jerusalem, reminds me of the reception we attended; which was given by the Greek Patriarch. The gentlemen were seated down one side of the long room, and we ladies, as silent as mummies in a row, sat on the other side! The Patriarch, looking cheerful and dignified in a comfortable armchair, carried on conversation with some of the English gentlemen, who spoke to him through an interpreter. These receptions appear to be held periodically for the sake of English and American tourists, and the now late Canon Marriott (for he was drowned a few months later while bathing at Haifa) and who was Chaplain to Bishop Blythe, of the English cathedral at Jerusalem, seems to have been the leading escort on such occasions. Having heard about the

Greek Church's annual deception of the "Holy Fire," I could not feel any particular respect for his "Beatitude," as the Patriarch is styled. I went only to see and hear all I could, having heard that English clergy constantly attend such receptions; and I am interested in their manœuvres. The reception was very Oriental—light refreshments were handed round at short intervals, of which I did not partake. Several gentlemen got up to say a few words through an interpreter—mostly fulsome flattery. Then a prayer was said at which I did not kneel; cards with some Popish design were handed round which I did not accept; the gentlemen bowed and went out, and the ladies advanced to the Patriarch, who placed a pretty chain round each neck. But neither the "Beatitude" nor his gift had any attraction for me, and I had no intention of letting anyone place a chain on me! And on the whole I felt disgusted, as it appears to me that the "Union of Christendom," even if it be not the object aimed at, is likely to be promoted, which no true Protestant can desire; for Christ and Belial will never agree. Those, however, who have a leaning towards mediævalism and the various corrupt sects of Christendom, generally find it possible to believe that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre covers the site of Calvary. But to my mind the idolatrous practices there are an insuperable barrier against its being the genuine place. I cannot believe that God would allow Golgotha, and the Holy Tomb, to pass into such unclean hands.

Let us visit the other site, turning to the right and passing out of the city through the

DAMASCUS GATE,

so-called because the road from Damascus leads into it. Of all the gates of Jerusalem this is the most beautiful. It stands on almost the identical site of the ancient one. This has been proved by the discovery of the top of the archway of the old gate, which protrudes above the ground, quite near the modern gateway. The Damascus Gate of our Lord's time was very important, because it was the starting point whence all the Roman milestones

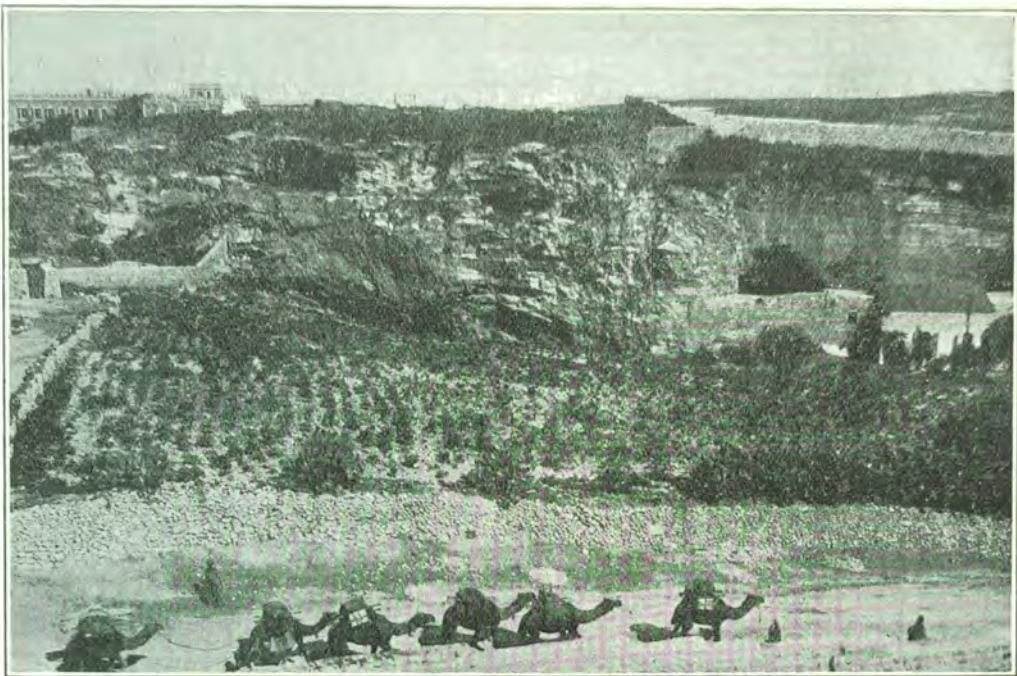
were reckoned. It was, moreover, the central spot where met all the various roads from the surrounding country. This latter statement should be noted, for it throws emphasis on the gospel narrative, which tells us that as He was bearing His cross there met Him Simon of Cyrene *coming out of the country* (Mark xv. 21). This fact enhances the probability that the *Via Dolorosa* led through the Damascus Gate: that was the very gate towards which anyone coming out of the country would be naturally making his way. Now near the gate, after having just passed out of it, the road for some distance is an incline. It is therefore easy to realise that about there our blessed Lord felt the weight of the stake too much for His already stricken frame. His murderers, therefore, fearing that their Victim would succumb before they could have the gratification of crucifying Him, caused this man coming out of the country, and who was nearing the Damascus Gate as the death procession passed out of it, to bear the heavy burden. How real the gospel narrative seems when one treads the very scene! Turning to the right "the place of a skull" shortly is reached. The first time that I saw the

SKULL HILL

was on Easter Tuesday, as we were nearing the city on our return from Jericho. I had heard of it, but no one had then pointed it out to me. I was looking about at the scenes our carriage was passing on the main road, when my eyes suddenly encountered that rocky knoll with its marked resemblance to a human skull. I could only gaze at it with awe and wonder. That there should exist anyone with so dull a sense of discernment as not to perceive its striking likeness to a human rotting skull seems incredible. *Is this really the Golgotha?*

To dogmatise is out of the question, but at the same time there is a good deal to be said in its favour as being the actual site of crucifixion. Here are a few reasons:—

1. It was in our Lord's time the place of public stoning; and as Christ was regarded as a common



GOLGOTHA OR THE SKULL HILL.

The Skull will be seen about the centre of the photograph—two large caves marking the eyes. To the left is the Garden Tomb enclosed by a wall. To the right is a cave where Jeremiah wrote his "Lamentations."

malefactor, it is likely they would execute Him on that spot.

2. There were two thieves, common criminals. It is improbable that these would have been put to death anywhere but in the ordinary place of execution, which, apparently, the Skull Hill was.

3. The time at which our Lord suffered was during the Passover Festival; and when Jerusalem was overflowing with pilgrims from all parts of Palestine. It was impossible to accommodate them in the city; consequently, nearly all the surrounding places outside the walls were covered with encampments of pious Israelites who had come from Judea in the south, or Galilee in the north. These were stationed as follows: to the east of the city were the Galilæans; to the west were gathered the pilgrims from Joppa and Sharon; to the south were the Judeans from the valley of Jordan. There seems to have been, however, one empty locality, and one only, and that was to the north of Jerusalem, and which was reserved for the Samaritans, with whom the Jews had no dealings. But the Samaritans, with their rival place of worship on Mount Gerizim, never came to the Feast in Jerusalem; and consequently the locality reserved for them was not occupied at all, and in that empty place is the Skull Hill. It was the only space outside the city walls which at that crowded season could have afforded room enough for the public execution of three criminals.

4. The name *Golgotha*, or *place of a skull*, is suggestive. It may have been so-called not only because of its being the place of stoning, but also because of its peculiar resemblance to a human skull.

5. Anyone crucified there could have been distinctly seen from the walls of the city and from the public highway, thus fulfilling the requirements of the Gospel narrative.

6. Those who have been on the hill state that the rocks on it have evidently been *rent* by a severe earthquake, which we know took place at the crucifixion of Christ.

7. The Skull Hill has only within comparatively

recent years been discovered as the possible Golgotha. Thus its identity has been kept hidden for many centuries; thereby preserving it from all the desecrations of superstition and idolatry, and at the same time securing it from destruction by the agency of unbelievers; for a long time it has been a Moslem cemetery.

It has occurred to me—I have not seen it suggested however elsewhere—that the place of crucifixion was not on the summit of the hill, but at the

BASE OF THE SKULL HILL.

There is a level place at the foot of the hill, which would be more in accordance with Scripture designation, which describes the site of crucifixion as a "*place*," and nowhere as a hill. With the rocky skull as a background; the public roadway as the near foreground; and voices of the scoffing passers-by easily heard from that little distance, the Gospel narrative requirements seem to be quite met.

If the hill, or the foot of the hill, be the identical spot of the crucifixion, then the tomb of Joseph of Arimathæa must be somewhere near: "In the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which was man never yet laid. There laid they Jesus because the sepulchre was nigh at hand" (John xix. 41). This brings us to the so-called

GARDEN TOMB,

which was discovered accidentally on Nov. 17th, 1867. Even if the Skull Hill be the true Golgotha, it does not of course necessarily follow that this is the Holy Sepulchre. Many, who hold strongly to the Green Hill, do not in all instances believe in the genuineness of the tomb. Here are a few reasons which can be advanced in its favour.

I. It is quite near the place of crucifixion. It would have taken the disciples only a few minutes to have conveyed the body thither.



THE EXTERIOR OF THE GARDEN TOMB.

II. There are three loculi for human bodies in it. Of these only one was quite finished ; and thereby pointing to the probability that it was indeed "a new tomb in which man was never yet laid."

III. It is beautifully hewn out of the rock and appears to have been the family sepulchre of a rich man, which we know Joseph of Arimathæa was.

IV. Experts say it is hewn in the Jewish Herodian style of our Lord's time.

V. The sepulchre is large, and space is there enough for the occurrences to have taken place as narrated in Luke xxiii. At that hour there were at least two women in the sepulchre, and there may have been more, for we read of "other women" with the two mentioned by name (ver. 10). Also there appeared to them, as they stood in the sepulchre, "two men," before whom "they bowed down their faces to the earth" (vers. 4, 5). All this would have required considerable space, of which there is sufficient in the garden tomb ; and this disposes altogether of the theory of "the Church of the Holy Sepulchre." The tomb there is very cramped for space. Only two persons can stand comfortably there at the same moment. There certainly would not have been room for two women and two angels, the former bowing before the latter. The smallness of the tomb in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to my mind, entirely dispenses with this old traditional one ; while the ample space of the garden tomb is much in its favour.

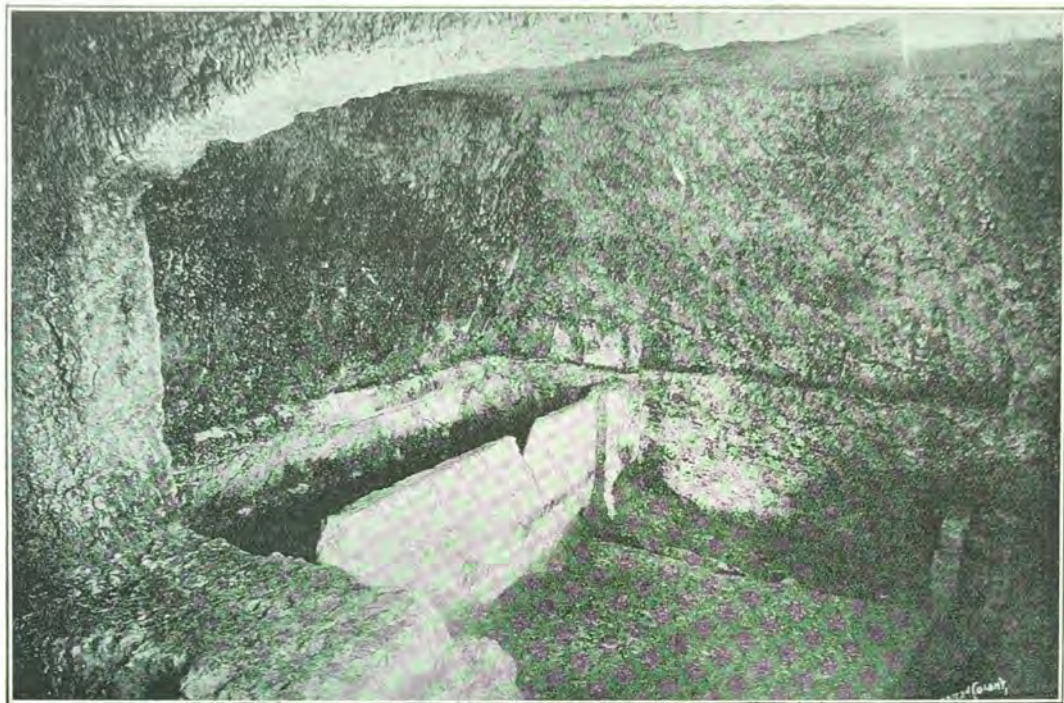
VI. There are two recesses upon which the angels could have sat, one at the foot and the other at the head of the tomb, as narrated in the Gospel. There are no such in the rival sepulchre.

VII. In the enclosure near, belonging to the Dominican monks, several Jewish tombs have been discovered, which shows that this was originally a Jewish cemetery, although the inscriptions on some of the tombs tell that it was afterwards converted into a Christian burying-place. One of these inscriptions runs : "To Nonus and Onesimus, Deacons of the Church of the Witness of the

Resurrection of Christ." Another says: "Buried near his Lord." These interesting details throw a striking side-light on the question of the tomb. They seem to show that the church bore the above title because it was in the locality which witnessed the resurrection of Christ, and that he who was "buried near his Lord" was buried, in other words, near the tomb where His body had lain.

VIII. Finally, the tomb, reverently preserved amid the sweetness of a suitable garden of wild flowers, is in the purchased possession of British people, and if, as we believe, the Anglo-Saxons are the literal House of Israel, into whose hands but theirs is an over-ruling Providence likely to entrust the custody of the Holy Sepulchre of Israel's risen King and Redeemer; especially when we bear in mind the undoubted fact that the House of Israel has never rejected Christ as the Jews have done? The trust-deed has this gratifying assurance as one of its main objects: "That the garden and tomb be kept sacred as a quiet spot, and preserved on the one hand from desecration, and on the other from superstitious uses."

Changes must have taken place in nineteen centuries, and therefore, even if this be the real tomb, it is very likely that it has been altered since the time that Christ was laid in it. There is evidence that the sepulchre has been used as a place of worship by the Crusaders, Latin crosses having been discovered embossed in the wall, and who can know to what other uses it may have been put? I had the privilege of twice visiting the tomb, and among all the deeply interesting sights it was my happiness to see in our beautiful Eastern tour I do not think there was anything that impressed me more than "Gordon's Calvary," so called because General Gordon had great regard for the Skull Hill and the Garden Tomb. And yet, after all, it is not the place of a skull nor even the genuine tomb that are the chief points of importance, but rather the facts of which they speak—Golgotha of sacrifice once for all accomplished, and the empty tomb of the receipt in full from Divine Justice. There are millions of Christians who



THE INTERIOR OF THE TOMB.

can never visit Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre ; but each one, if he be a Christian, has laid hold of the finished Atonement wrought outside the gate of the Holy City and can, and does, rejoice that his debt is paid in full—Christ is risen indeed. Thank God the tomb was empty !



CHAPTER X.

TO BETHANY AND DOWN TO
JERICHO.

ES, it was decidedly a going *down* to Jericho. We left Hughes' Hotel early in the morning amid a downpour of rain—at least, in England we should call it a downpour, but out there they merely say it is a “drizzle”—and after descending into the Valley of Jehoshaphat and over “the brook Kedron” we ascended the western slopes of the Mount of Olives, and just before we began the descent on the other side a fine view of the city was obtained—or at least it would have been a fine view if umbrellas and hoods and sheets of rain had not marred the effect. On a bright day—such as it was on the morrow on our return journey—the sight is very impressive of the Holy City from that point; and is evidently the spot where Christ beheld the city and wept over it as He journeyed up from Bethany.

As the Mount of Olives is 2,720 feet *above* the level of the sea, and as Jericho lies 1,292 feet *below* the Mediterranean, we were obliged to descend about 4,000 feet. Is not the Scripture accurate therefore in saying: “a certain man went *down* to Jericho”? It is true also in its statement of the existence of *thieves* in the locality of that downward journey. They still abound there, and consequently an armed Arab escort is advisable. We had two mounted soldiers who, in their bright Oriental garbs with gun slung on the back, looked very picturesque. The constant going to and fro of these armed men keeps the robbers at bay. When I was lecturing the other day on our excursion to Jericho, a gentleman, after the lecture, assured me that he had

made the journey to Jericho without any escort at all, and yet had not fallen among thieves. This may be so ; others can do the same. We passed a number of Russian pilgrims on their way to the Jordan and they had no protection ; but that does not alter the fact that if all the armed men were withdrawn a safe journey to Jericho might become impossible. Some can go down alone because so many others take the precaution of having an armed escort, and the thieves know that these soldiers are constantly passing to and fro. In spite of this, however, unprotected caravans are sometimes attacked and robbed.

Soon after leaving the slopes of Olivet, we passed on our left the dirty and squalid village of

BETHANY.

No doubt in its days of prosperity it was very different. To the Bible student it cannot fail to be, even now, a site of deepest interest. It was here that our Lord's dear friends lived and at whose house He was always welcome—Martha and Mary and Lazarus. What an oasis in the desert must that sweet homestead have been to Him Who had not where to lay His head. How refreshing to His lonely human spirit must have seemed the faithful fellowship and sympathy of those He loved in Bethany ! And though the fragrance of Mary's box of sweet spikenard from the far-off Himalaya Mountains of India, with which she anointed our Lord, is no longer in that townlet, yet the odour of her love has never waned all these centuries. We think of all these precious scenes as we alight from our carriages and enter the village. Of course the ruins of the traditional houses of Martha and Mary and Simon the leper are to be seen, but there is no proof that they are genuine. The tomb also of Lazarus was shown to us ; it is now a Moslem shrine. And though it may well be doubted if it be the genuine tomb whence the Lord of Life called back His servant from the dead, yet the tomb itself helps one to realise our Lord's miracle.

The next object of interest on our way was the

APOSTLES' FOUNTAIN,

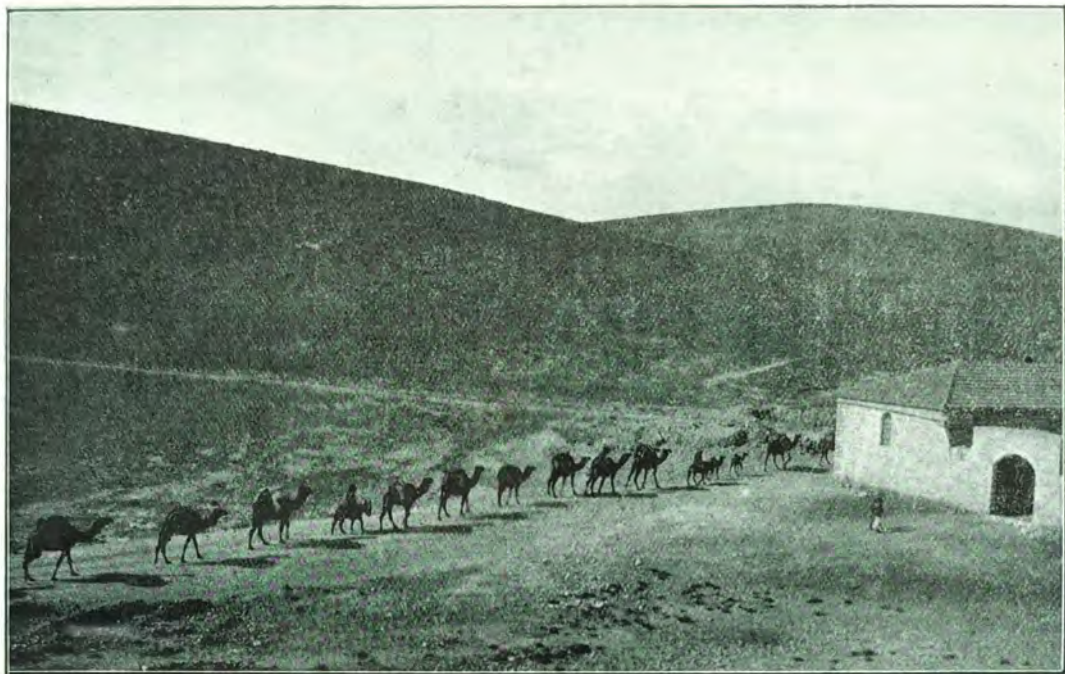
so called because here our Saviour, and His disciples, must have halted on their journeys to or from Jericho. Here, at least, we have in all probability a genuine site. This is the last supply of natural water between this point and the Jordan, and therefore travellers on that hot and dusty road would no doubt not miss this opportunity of slaking their thirst; and thus our Lord must have stopped and drunk at this fountain. Some believe it to be "the waters of En-shemesh" mentioned in Josh. xv. 7.

Some distance further on we arrived at the

INN OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN,

which is supposed to stand on the spot of the inn of our Lord's parable. In olden times, however, there was a so-called "Desert Inn," and this may have been the one of our Lord's day. It was erected higher up the hill than the modern one at whose door we stopped our carriages, alighted, and entered; viewed the curiosities for sale, bought presents to take home, and, of course, the ever indispensable picture post-cards.

Higher up the road stand the ruins of an ancient mediæval castle, which was evidently a stronghold of the Crusaders. It was built in a very commanding position; and the view from it of the desert hills and of the fertile valley of the Jordan beyond, backed by the far-away blue mountains of Moab, was as lovely as it was extensive. It was another of those panoramic scenes which so enchanted me in Palestine. Some think that this hill, with its red strata of rocks near the summit, is, in all probability, the "going up to Adummin" mentioned in Joshua xv. 7. The "waters of En-shemesh," in the same verse, I have already alluded to as identified with the "Apostles' Fountain" favour this view. It was about here, on our return journey, that we met some small lads slinging stones in the primitive sling of Palestine. It is a simple contrivance, knitted in cotton or wool, and was used with wonderful dexterity by the young Arabs on that occasion. No doubt this was the



A STRING OF CAMELS PASSING THE "INN OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN" ON THE ROAD BETWEEN
JERUSALEM AND JERICO.

kind of sling which David used to slay the giant. The sling is first quickly and forcibly twirled or slung round, and the stone shoots forth to its mark with great impetus.

The scenery, as we descended into the valley, becomes wild, grand, and desolate. To our left is a deep and rugged gorge, with the

BROOK CHERITH

bubbling far away down in the great silent depths. It is never quite dry, and is believed by many to be the brook where Elijah was fed by the ravens. Wild birds still hover midway among the rocks of the precipitous defile, and at the other side, clinging, as it were, to the steep cliffs, is a monastery named after Elijah. The monks, I should think, must have a lazy and melancholy life amid that wild solitude; but some, I was told, go forth at times, bent on archæological discoveries. Near by is the

VALLEY OF ACHOR,

where Achan was stoned for having taken the "accursed thing" out of Jericho (Joshua vii.). As we continue our way—slowly, for the road, though a modern one, is intolerably rough and bad—our thoughts are solemnised by the reflection that we are passing through the

WILDERNESS OF TEMPTATION.

The present road does not run over the old way, which our Lord and the people of His day—as well as travellers within comparatively recent years—trod in going between Jerusalem and Jericho. But the modern road often winds near it, and there can be no doubt that somewhere amid these scenes of gloomy grandeur the devil tempted Christ. There is many a spot in that wilderness, of lonely barrenness and rocky desolation, that would lend itself to the assaults of Satan. Here is Nature seen in its wild and most unsympathetic mood, while those numerous stones which we passed, lying all around, would deepen the pangs of hunger; many of them have the appearance—and more so to the imagina-



A SCENE IN THE WILDERNESS OF TEMPTATION.

tion rendered keenly sensitive by privation—of loaves of bread. How easy, by one Divine fiat, to have changed them into bread! None but the Lord could have resisted such a test, and neither can any of us withstand the temptation of evil except in that same Divine strength—that indwelling grace which makes to us the life eternal which springs from the Word of God of far more value than the bread that perisheth. The highest peak in the wilderness has been called the

MOUNT OF TEMPTATION,

as it is believed to have been the high mountain to which the devil took Christ, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. Think for a moment of that temptation. It was offering Christ only that which was predestined for Him in the purposes of God—all the kingdoms of this world are to be His. But the serpent's subtlety lay in the fact that He desired Christ

to seek for them *without the pain of death—without the Atonement*. That was impossible. It was by death and resurrection that Christ has won His glory and His kingdom on this earth. But as Satan tempted Christ, so he tempts us in the same way. He would have us seek eternal life without the Atonement of Christ. But it is impossible. Only by the death and resurrection of Christ can we obtain that which He has bought for us by His blood. Never let us lose sight of this fact; neither let us forget for a moment that all the promises to Israel are based on the Atonement. He died to redeem Israel nationally, quite as much as He died to save us individually. The fact that the Atonement—the death and resurrection of Christ—is the basis of all our claims to be the literal House of Israel, and of all our reiterations that the oath made to Abraham has been fulfilled in us, is a fundamental truth that cannot be too often emphasised in our lectures, our literature, and our work generally.

The *Mons Quarantania*, as the Mount of Temptation was called in mediæval times, belongs to a weird range of hills, which, rising up perpendicularly, stands forth, like a colossal giant, protecting the entrance to the Pass, which was the main road towards Ai and Bethel. It was along that route and up that rocky ascent that Joshua's victorious army marched after the fall of Jericho—of ancient Jericho, for we must bear in mind there have been *three* Jerichos. The site of the

FIRST JERICO

is marked by a two-headed mound, with *Elisha's Fountain* springing at its base. This abundant supply of fresh water is said to be the water that Elisha healed and rendered pure (2 Kings ii.). If it be so, his prophecy that there should be no more dearth nor barrenness there has been fulfilled: the land around is very fertile amid luxuriant gardens and groves. And if this be the site of ancient Jericho, one cannot help admiring its strategic position at the head of the plain. Its conquest was absolutely essential before Israel could have penetrated into the country. The

SECOND JERICO,

or the Jericho of our Lord's time, lay about three miles from the ancient one, and nearer to Jerusalem. Nothing but a few ruins mark the existence of its former greatness; it was an important place in those days. Herod had done much to make it prosperous. Amid its olive groves and belts of palm trees, it must have looked beautiful; architecturally famous with its heathen temples, its colleges, baths and theatres. It was more Greek than Roman. In Palestine at that time there were several of these Greek cities, which were generally haunts of Oriental vice. Now nothing remains but a few indications of its ruined walls.

MODERN JERICO

is a miserable looking village. Its present inhabitants are said to be of Egyptian descent; while there is nearly always an encampment of Bedouins. There are, however, a few good buildings, including a couple of hotels, and a Russian hospice where the Russian pilgrims remain, who have come all the way from the far North to bathe in the Jordan. The number of Russians who yearly crowd the Holy City is remarkable, and is a sign of the times when viewed in the light of Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix. Who are "Gog and Magog"? (see chap. xiv.).

On arriving at Jericho we alighted at the *Jordan Hotel*; and after lunch drove for some miles, mostly over a level and sandy track, to visit the famous

DEAD SEA.

I had always pictured that great stretch of salt water as lying amid very gloomy surroundings. I was pleasantly surprised to find it just the reverse. The morning which had broken so stormy had now merged into a glorious afternoon, and the sight that met our gaze was a very lovely one. The vast lake—forty-seven miles long and five broad—was shining beneath that brilliant sunlight, while a fresh breeze was stirring its blue waters into waves and ripples, that were breaking gently on the pebbly shore. To the right of us rose the mighty range

of the mountains of Moab, to the left the sacred hills of Judæa, and behind us the extensive fertile plain of the Jordan. I thought of Moses on that lonely height of *Pisgah* to the east, on the other side Jordan, viewing the promised land that he could not enter then. Did he ever enter it? (see chaps. xvi., xvii.). I remembered Abraham also far away to the west on the hills near Hebron, looking towards Sodom, when the smoke of its destruction went up as the smoke of a furnace.

The exact site of Sodom and Gomorrah, the evil cities of the plain, is still a disputed point. Some say they were situated at the southern end of the lake, and that a "pillar of salt" is to be seen there which bears out this hypothesis. Others declare they must have been at the northern end, and on the spot where we stood and viewed the sea. The reason given for this latter opinion is that Abraham could not have beheld the smoke of their burning had the cities been at the south; the mountains intervening would have impeded his vision. Perhaps they lie, after all, buried beneath the Dead Sea itself, fathoms below the salt water, and hiding the relics of their past existence deep under those blue waves, that are never long the same—calm to-day may be, but at another time lashing themselves boisterously upon the shore.

The Dead Sea, with its grand surroundings, is unique. I have never seen anything just like it anywhere. It has characteristics that are found nowhere else, and a charm that is all its own. So also is the peculiarity of its waters, whose density is remarkable. They are so salt that no fish can live in them, and so buoyant that it is difficult, if not impossible, to sink in them. Then there is the wonderful fact that the Dead Sea is the *lowest known spot* on the earth's surface, lying nearly 1,300 feet *below* the level of the Mediterranean. It can be easily imagined that at such a low altitude its temperature in summer is very hot, much too hot for Europeans. But when we were there—April 1st—its dry and balmy air, cooled by the storm of the morning, was delightful. Perhaps the most extraordinary fact about it is that, though millions of tons of water flow into it daily from

the Jordan and other streams, and can never find an outlet, yet the lake does not overflow. This phenomenon is explained by the fact that the level of the water is maintained by the tremendous *evaporation*, which is continuous in that very dry atmosphere, and which leaves it more, rather than less, saline every year. Yes! altogether the Dead Sea is as remarkable as it is beautiful; and I am glad I have seen it.

Leaving its shores, we re-entered our carriages, and in about an hour found ourselves by that most famous of all rivers, the

RIVER JORDAN,

famous because of its associations rather than for its natural characteristics, for it is insignificant looking. Its waters are muddy, though its current is rapid, flowing as it does to such a depth as the Dead Sea, from its source in the far away, eternal snows of Mount Hermon, 1,700 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, and thus descending nearly 3,000 feet. The Jordan means the *Descender*; and well does it earn its name! It is a narrow river, but deep, opposite Jericho, where Israel crossed it on dry ground.

One is struck by its many contrasts. It is rapid and yet noiseless; insignificant to look at, and yet its associations have rendered it the most remarkable in the world. It is muddy, and yet Naaman, the Syrian, washed in it to be made clean of his leprosy. It runs straight through Palestine for about 130 miles, dividing the land into its ancient territorial partition of East and West; and yet it flows in zigzags.

When I saw, some weeks later, the magnificent river of Damascus, I did not wonder that Naaman despised the Jordan. Yet it was Jordan, and not Abana, that God chose to be a means of the revelation of His power and goodness. And in this we learn the spiritual lesson that God often passes by the proud and the great in order to manifest Himself through the little and the despised.

We entered a boat and were rowed up the Jordan. The bend up higher, with the river-banks luxuriant

with tamarisks and green foliage, is very picturesque. The modern bathing-place, where pilgrims immerse themselves, is pointed out as the spot where Christ was baptized by John; but the site is doubtful.

We stayed the night in Jericho at the Jordan Hotel, and after dinner some of us strolled out to visit the

BEDOUIN ENCAMPMENT.

It was a glorious evening—the firmament above looked like an overhanging canopy of deepest black, set with brilliant myriads of resplendent worlds that glittered with a refulgence that can be seen only in an Eastern sky, and must be seen to be realised.

Beneath this gorgeous curtain of the night we witnessed a curious sight—a Bedouin dance. Round and round a drawn sword the dancers twirled, wildly singing some strange, weird song. These wandering people will remain in Jericho until, perhaps, the intense summer heat of the Jordan plain drives them to the hills. They seem to be a free, happy (if lazy), tribe—very dirty, and incorrigible thieves. There is truth in the belief that finds in the Bedouins the descendants of Ishmael—their hand against everyone and everyone's hand against them.

There must be a fascinating sense of liberty about their nomad life; even the women enjoy a freedom that is denied to the Turkish ladies. Untrammelled by veils, or tyrannical etiquette, they had a free and happy, though dirty, appearance in their blue flowing dress.

Their tents are curious, but their spread-out roof gives ample protection. If it rains they light a fire, and the smoke makes the camels'-hair cloth covering quite waterproof. The Bedouin tents, like the Eastern houses, are flat—not bell-shaped nor slanting like our tents. They have generally two partitions; in one live the women and children of the family, and in the other, the men. Their dark appearance (for they are dyed black) is alluded to in Cant. i. 5: "black as the tents of Kedar." It was such tents that the Israelites pitched and struck in their forty years' wanderings. "How goodly are thy tents, O Israel!" exclaimed Baalam. It

was such tents that the Apostle Paul made. It was in such tents that the Patriarchs lived, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Heb. xi, 9).

Next morning—Easter Tuesday—we began our return journey upward to Jerusalem. We were up very early, and as I stepped out upon the balcony the sun was just rising over the mountains of Moab, tinging the chain of blue hills with a golden glory. Later on, as our carriages were slowly bearing us back to the Holy City, we obtained a magnificent view. The hills of Moab were a deep purple, the waters of the Dead Sea were stretched at their base and shimmering in the sunlight, while the deep green of the Jordan Valley, the beauty of the Judean hills on one side and the lonely grandeur of the wilderness on the other, all combined to make an unrivalled, panoramic picture which must long linger in the memory.



CHAPTER XI.

BETHLEHEM.



RAVERSING the same road from the Jaffa Gate of Jerusalem to Rachel's Tomb, as described in the next chapter, we passed, on our way, the traditional WELL OF THE MAGI.

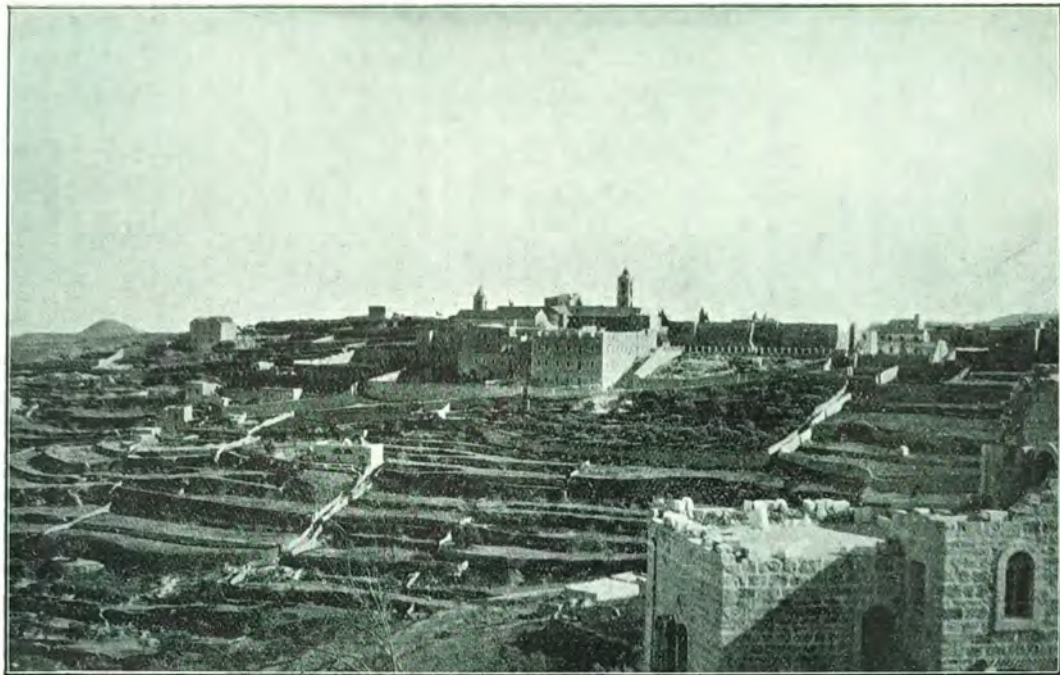
That the "wise men" on their way to Bethlehem really beheld "the Star" which guided them to where the Young Child was, near this spot, is not improbable; because soon after leaving the Well and descending the hill, the houses of Bethlehem, prettily perched above, appear to us in the distance. Arriving at

RACHEL'S TOMB,

we continue our road towards Bethlehem instead of branching off to the left, as we did to go to Hebron. This spot, where undoubtedly rest the ashes of the beloved wife of Jacob, is a little way from Ephratah, and soon after leaving this way-side Tomb we find ourselves entering the quaint, narrow streets of

BETHLEHEM.

As we passed through them one of the first peculiarities that struck me was the fair beauty of the women: they look different and altogether superior to the women in other parts of Palestine. All have heard of the lovely costumes supposed to be worn by the women of Bethlehem, but in reality very few of them appear in this attractive attire. Only once, during all the time we were in Palestine, did I see a woman in full Bethlehem dress; and that was, not in Bethlehem, but in the train when going from Jaffa to Jerusalem. Sitting opposite to us



BETHLEHEM, SHOWING CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY.

(From a snapshot.)

was an elderly woman with silver-streaked hair and beautiful features, and looking altogether charming in her long striped gown, red coloured and silk embroidered short jacket, while the high head-gear was concealed by a white shawl. We made a sign that we should like to see her bonnet. Immediately she threw back her veil, revealing a red, high hat elaborately adorned with gold and silver coins, that were fastened to it securely, while several more of the coins were linked together, falling like a chain under the chin and down the neck. These coins were current money, and were the old lady's fortune, and probably had been her dowry. This picturesque, though to us unsafe, custom of making the hat the bank, is a very ancient one. Other women, in similar fashion, string the coins thickly together, and wear them encircling the head over the brow and temples. We saw many who are retaining this old fashion of the unchanging East. I especially recall to mind a Syrian woman we had a chat with, by means of an interpreter, in Jericho. The dark-tinted complexion, black eyes and perfect features were well set-off by the clinging circlet of silver coins. This quaint custom—the survival of many centuries—throws light on our Lord's parable of the woman losing one piece of silver. As I looked at that white-haired dame in the train from Jaffa, and the dark Syrian beauty at Jericho, I could well understand that, if either lost a "piece," diligent search would be made "until she find it," and great joy expressed when it was recovered.

But to return to Bethlehem.

It is noted, not only for its lovely women, but also for its industry in mother-of-pearl work. We saw many of the Bethlehemites busy at this trade as we passed their open shops, and making beautiful ornaments, etc. But Bethlehem's greatest fame and chief charm are its Biblical associations. Near the entrance to the town we saw, in a courtyard, the traditional

DAVID'S WELL.

This is in all probability the well near the Gate, of whose waters David so ardently longed to drink in the heat

of battle (2 Sam. xxiii.). To-day it is in such an insanitary condition that all would do well to avoid drinking of it. In David's time, no doubt, its waters were good and wholesome, and therefore fit to be poured out as "an offering unto the Lord." How the piety of those Old Testament Christians—for they followed the same Christ as we do and Who is everlasting—stands forth conspicuously when one treads the scenes of their holy doings!

Bethlehem itself is beautifully situated. Its name means *House of Bread*, and has possibly derived its origin from the fact that the town lies amid olive groves and vineyards. The natural soil in its vicinity is very rich, thus presenting a striking contrast to the districts beyond, which are unfruitful and stony. Bethlehem, indeed, lies like an oasis in a desert, or a house of plenty in the midst of surrounding barrenness.

We stood on an elevation in the town and looked down upon the

SHEPHERDS' FIELDS.

It is a most fascinating bit of the landscape, so fresh and fertile. Though there may be some doubt as to the genuineness of this spot, there is every probability that in that charming valley the shepherds were watching their flocks, when the beauty of an Eastern star-lit night was rendered yet more glorious by the vision of heavenly messengers, and the calm air became jubilant with angels' songs.

Christ! David! Boaz! Ruth! These are the names for ever linked with Bethlehem. And it was there, in that same shepherd's plain, that Boaz reaped and his maidens gleaned. The East changes rarely if it changes at all; where the corn grows to-day is just where Ruth followed the reapers. Far away, beyond the Judean hills, appears the blue outline of the Mountains of Moab. That is where Naomi, Ruth and Orpah climbed, and, when they had reached a certain point, stood and wept together. Orpah returned to her people and her gods; lowly Bethlehem had no attraction for her. But Ruth, unconscious of the honour that would

be hers in becoming the ancestress of Christ, gave to the broken-hearted old woman and threw in her lot with her; and so Orpah is lost to memory and to fame, but Ruth and Bethlehem are for ever united in the sacred annals of the greatest human life of this earth—the life of the Babe of Bethlehem, the King of Israel, and the Saviour of the world. We never lose anything by following the right at all costs.

There can be no doubt that Boaz, whom Ruth married, was the great Sheikh of Bethlehem in those days. I like to picture him in the head-dress that the Sheikhs wear to-day—a bright kerchief hanging down his shoulders, and bound to the head with a circlet made of goat's hair.

Now, where did Boaz live in Bethlehem?

The answer to this question is a very interesting one. We know that Christ was laid in a manger belonging to the

INN OF BETHLEHEM.

It is said that the name of that inn was the *Inn of Chimham*.

Who was Chimham?

He was the son of Barzillai, who showed kindness to David when he was suffering persecution from Absalom. When David desired to return the kindness of Barzillai by inviting him to live with him, Barzillai replied that he was too old, and therefore *Chimham* went instead of him to live with the king (see 2 Sam. xix. and 1 Kings ii. 7).

About 400 years later we again meet with the name of Chimham, viz., in Jer. xli. 17, where it is said that some of the Jews, when they were seeking to flee into Egypt after the king of Babylon had conquered Jerusalem, "dwelt in the habitation of Chimham which is by Bethlehem to go to enter into Egypt." This house of habitation of Chimham had evidently by that time become the Inn of Chimham, where the refugees were able to procure all necessities for their long journey. If it was the House of Chimham it was no doubt also the habitation of David, of Jesse, of Boaz. And when Chimham died it became the Inn of Bethlehem.

The sidelights which the above Scriptures throw on the question seem to point to the fact that "the inn" which was too full to receive the Son of David, when He entered this world, was the old house, or habitation, of Boaz and David. Who, then, had more right than Christ, of the house and lineage of David, to a place in that old building? But "there was no room for them in the inn." A town of the size of Bethlehem would not have possessed more than one khan, or inn. Therefore, we may not be far wrong in accepting the statement of Jerome that the

CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY

built by Constantine the Great, was indeed erected on the very site of the Inn of Chimham—the khan of Bethlehem. Jerome lived and died in Bethlehem—the cell where he translated the Scriptures, and his tomb are shown in the Church. We cannot, therefore, refuse his testimony that in the fourth century there were inhabitants of Bethlehem who could remember the old inn of the town, and that on the site where it stood was erected the building dedicated to the birth of Christ. Here, then, is yet another of the genuine sites of Palestine. The church stands at the end of a broad, open square; and one can only regret that it is in possession of the Roman Catholic, Greek, and Armenian communities, with their usual accompaniments of altars, lamps, idols and superstition. One is shown the "Grotto of the Manger," where the Babe of Bethlehem is supposed to have been laid; but this, as well as other traditional, ecclesiastical curiosities, is but apocryphal. It is enough for us to know that somewhere in that broad, open square, and where stands the church, once was found the old Inn of Bethlehem, and that therefore here, near at hand, Christ was born nineteen centuries ago.



CHAPTER XII.

TO HEBRON AND THE PLAIN OF
MAMRE.

THE Jaffa Gate, which is the main gate into Jerusalem, has another name, which is very beautiful—the *Gate of the Friend of God*. It is so-called because the road from Hebron leads into it, and Hebron is in the near vicinity of the Plain of Mamre, and moreover contains the cave of Machpelah, where lies the dust of Abraham, the “Friend of God.” The road to Hebron is also the road to Bethlehem—so far as the Tomb of Rachel. There the road parts, leading us, on the one hand, to Hebron, and on the other, to Bethlehem.

As we stand outside the Jaffa Gate, we can see the main road stretching before us. Come with me in imagination along that highway. Crossing the bridge at the *Lower Pool of Gihon*, we pass the boundary line which divided Benjamin from Judah, and enter the territory which belonged to the latter. Jerusalem stands in that of the former. Let us pause for a few minutes on this bridge : many sights of interest lay around. We are in the

VALLEY OF HINNOM,

a narrow, stony gorge ; and there, in the deeper part of the valley, was the place where the image of the god Moloch was set up. There, between two and three thousand years ago, idolatrous Judah passed their children through the fire and sacrificed them to that hideous idol.

To the North of us we see the cliffs of Zion, surmounted by its grey walls and towers. To the South lies *Tophet*, where all the refuse of Jerusalem was cast to be consumed in always smouldering fires. It was



THE VALLEY OF HINNOM.

Tophet that our Lord referred to in Mark ix.—a fit type of Hell: “where the worm dieth not, the fire is not quenched.”

Beyond Tophet rises the *Hill of Offence*, a low brown elevation. It was there that Solomon is said to have lodged his numerous wives, many of whom were heathen idolaters. It was there also—so says tradition—that Judas took counsel with the chief priests to betray Jesus. Half way down the valley, we see a rocky plateau with a precipitous front; it was there that Judas is said to have perished by his own hand. Below is a field—Aceldama, or the Place of Blood.

As we continue our drive a hill arises before us. Near its summit is the English Ophthalmic Hospital. Diseases of the eye are very frequent and severe in the East. It is a common thing to meet people partially, or wholly, blind. To the right we notice some almshouses, built for poor Jews by the late Sir Moses

Montifiore. A mile or two further along the road we pass a wayside well called the

WELL OF THE MAGI,

where the wise men, on their way to Bethlehem, are supposed to have seen the Star which guided them to where the young Child was. Descending rapidly the hill-side our carriages bring us to

RACHEL'S TOMB.

Here the road forks, heading in one direction to Hebron, and on the other to Bethlehem. Here, then, we are at a very pathetic parting of the way. There can be no doubt that this is the actual spot where Rachel passed away; and that this Moslem shrine by the way-side covers the "Pillar" which Jacob reared over her grave—when there was but "a little way to come to Ephratah, which is Bethlehem" (Gen. xxxv.).

Branching off to the right *en route* for Hebron our carriages bore us along the main road, which runs through a delightful country—vineyards and pasture plains. It was on this excursion (April 6th) that I twice saw some peasants ploughing the land with an ox and an ass; but this is forbidden in Deut. xxii. 10, and shows how the East, in its evil as well as in its good customs, changes not. The plough is a very primitive one, and renders the labourer's work a very slow one. The ploughman keeps but one hand on the plough, and with the other holds the long goad with which he pricks the animals to make them go, and which pricking they sometimes naturally resent. What light these details throw on Luke ix. 62, where the "hand" (*not hands*) is mentioned as being put to the plough; and on Acts ix. 5, where Paul is said to "kick against the pricks."

On our way to Hebron we passed by

SOLOMON'S POOLS,

which in modern language would be called *reservoirs*. There can be no doubt that they were built by Solomon,

for the purpose of supplying Jerusalem with a sufficient quantity of good water. They are three in number and were magnificently made—partly constructed by masonry and partly excavated out of the rock. The finest of the three is 582 feet in length. Two aqueducts carried the water to Jerusalem. One ran past Rachel's Tomb and entered the city near the Jaffa Gate. The other conducted the water right into the Temple area to supply the requirements of the sacrifices, etc. Solomon's "Great Sea" in the Temple area was probably a reservoir which stored the water for the purposes of the Temple ritual (see chap. viii.)—water which had come from those pools we visited on our way to Hebron. In those ancient times Jerusalem must have been well supplied with good water—it is very different now! The late Baroness Burdett Coutes—so I was informed—offered to defray the cost of putting the pools into proper order, and repairing the old aqueducts. But though the Turkish Government was quite willing to take the money (and required, too, to be paid for allowing the Baroness to give it!) yet they would not guarantee to do the work; hence Jerusalem is still very badly off for good wholesome water, or water of any kind. And here I would take the opportunity of warning all intending tourists to the Holy Land to refrain from drinking water there. Many have contracted fever and died through neglecting this precaution. There is, however, no necessity for the total abstainer to break his total abstinence rule. The water is safe if it has been thoroughly well boiled; or failing this, *Apollinaris Water* can be had practically everywhere along the tourist routes. This is the safest drink; the ordinary mineral waters are often made with the unboiled water of the land and had better be avoided. I am a pledged total abstainer, and never found it necessary to relax my total abstinence principle—*Apollinaris* water and scores of juicy oranges quenched my thirst as much as anything could do so in that warm, dry climate.

There was a good deal of barren, stony land after leaving Solomon's Pools. But as we neared Hebron we found ourselves amid luxuriant olive-groves and vine-

yards. It was probably about here that the spies gathered the

GRAPES OF ESHCOL.

The vineyards of Palestine present a very different appearance to those we are accustomed to in the West. I have seen the hillsides along the Rhine clothed with vines, carefully trained to grow upwards; but in the Holy Land they trail on the ground, lying quite flat and without any support to keep them up. We were much too early for the time of grapes. At the vintage season, watchmen stand on the top of the hills and scrutinize the sides of the mountain and the valley beneath, lest thieves and enemies should endanger the security of the vineyards. There will be many such watchmen—one stationed at one point, his eye able to survey a certain expanse of the country. Where his vision cannot reach, another watchman on the next hill will keep a look-out over a further stretch of the vine-clad hills and dales. Thus "eye to eye" they will see all the outspread land that needs to be watched. When danger appears one will call to the other, and he will lift up the voice to the next watcher, and so on until all the watchmen have heard the message. In the light of this Eastern custom, what a significance is thrown on Isa. lii. 8, which describes the perfect future safety of Zion: "Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

Before entering Hebron we drove on to the

VALE OF MAMRE,

and had a picnic beneath the shadow of a beautiful oak grove. It was a very hot day, which made me think of Abraham sitting before his tent in that very Plain "in the heat of the day" (Gen. xviii.). I wonder if then a cooling breeze was blowing through the lovely vale, as it was in the hour that we sat on the green sward and discussed cold chicken and oranges. As we lingered under the overhanging branches of the oak trees, who could help thinking of Abraham and Sarah and the

patriarchs of old? Here we were on the genuine site where God revealed Himself so wondrously to our great ancestor. Before us, railed round with a much-too-modern iron railing, and carefully propped up, was the famous old

OAK OF ABRAHAM.

It is certainly a very ancient tree—probably 1,000 years of age—but not old enough to have been the one under which Abraham pitched his tent. Yet in all probability it is a lineal descendant of the oaks of Mamre, mentioned in Genesis.

After our picnic we sang an appropriate hymn, and then joined in prayer and praised God for His faithfulness to the oath made to Abraham. But I fancy that only the Anglo-Israelites of our party could have fully realised how minutely faithful God has been to his covenant!*

Wending our way “in the heat of the day” through the green valley, we reached the ancient town of

HEBRON,

which reposes in the Vale of Mamre. Ancient indeed! so ancient that the date of its foundation is lost amid the mists of antiquity. All we know is that it was “built seven years before Zoan in Egypt” (Numb. xiii. 22). Hebron teems with Biblical associations; its old name was *Kirjath-Arba*, which means a city of four divisions. These divisions are still existent. It appears to have been the metropolis of the Anakim, or giants (Josh. xiv. 15), the sight of whom frightened the men that accompanied Joshua and Caleb (Numb. xiii. 22—34); with the result that Israel feared to attack them, and Israel had to wander forty years more in the wilderness for their lack of faith in God. But to Caleb, who followed the Lord wholly, Moses promised the land on which he had trodden. Years after, Joshua fulfilled this pledge, and “Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb”

* On this matter see my “Christianity Vindicated,” 2d. (Banks and Son).

(Josh. xiv. 14). The historic old town is very dirty now, especially the Jewish quarter, which should not be visited without the aid of a bottle of Eau de Cologne!

Hebron has two industries—that of *tanning* and that of the *manufacture of glass ornaments*. We inspected both. With regard to the former, skins of sheep, or other animals, are filled with water, with which has been mixed the bark from the oaks of Mamre. Thus inflated, the skins are left to dry in the sun until they are tanned. Rows and rows of them have a somewhat repulsive, though comical, appearance. When sufficiently tanned they are used as “bottles” for holding water, and the water-drawer, or water-seller, carries the skin-bottle slung on his back. These are the “bottles” referred to in our Lord’s parable of the old and new wine. One can easily understand that an injudicious use of the “bottle” would make it “burst.”

The glass manufacture is of a very primitive description. We entered a dark room off a squalid lane and there watched the men at their very hot work of melting the glass and rapidly turning it into bracelets, rings, etc., of various colours. If the women of Hebron are satisfied with such simple jewellery, they are not hard to please. We bought some for a few pence.

One of the most interesting sights in Hebron is the

POOL OF HEBRON.

This is no doubt the Pool over which David hanged the murderers of Ishbosheth (2 Sam. iv. 12). The Pool is a fair size and is built round with masonry. The water is of a dirty yellow colour.

Of all the sights in Hebron none can equal in Biblical interest the

CAVE OF MACHPELAH,

and especially as this is one of the undoubted genuine spots of Palestine. Not that we could visit the cave itself; it is covered by a building, which is a Moslem mosque. Beneath that structure is the Cave where repose the dust and ashes of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebekah, of Jacob and Leah. It is the



AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE MOSQUE OF HEBRON.

(From a snapshot.)

burying-place which Abraham bought of the sons of Heth after the death of Sarah.

The Mohammedans of Hebron are very fanatical, and do not permit those of another creed to enter their mosque. We were only able to go up some of the steps leading to the entrance, where we were shown a hole in the wall, through which we were suffered to thrust an arm, with the assurance that the hand, at least, had penetrated into the cave and that the hard substance

it touched within was one of the tombs. Our guide did not think it safe to allow us to venture further towards the entrance to the mosque; and when I noticed the black looks of some of the Moslems who were watching our every movement, it was easy to believe that many a muttered curse was being cast at the "infidel dogs," as they call all Christians.

It is said that only four persons, other than Mohammedans, have entered the cave of Machpelah—Dean Stanley, King Edward VII., when he was Prince of Wales, the Kaiser of Germany, and Mr. Krikorion, a photographer in Jerusalem. The last-named entered the cave by command of the Sultan to photograph the Patriarchs' tombs, but at the risk of his life. Whether they really saw the actual cave may be doubted. It seems that Machpelah has two caves—an upper and a lower one. In the latter are the remains of the Patriarchs and their wives, while the upper cave is said to contain merely facsimiles of the tombs. Some day, no doubt, the cave will become accessible to all. In the meanwhile the Moslem custodians will guard it carefully; they value the memory of Abraham and the Patriarchs and will not allow any superstitious desecration; for they repudiate idolatry.

In the vicinity of Hebron, as in many another spot all over the world,

BRITAIN'S MISSIONARY WORK

is conspicuously evident. The Free Church of Scotland have a medical mission in the Vale of Mamre, which, against many odds, is doing a valuable work among the dark followers of Islam—the reaping will come sure enough in due season.



CHAPTER XIII.

THROUGH SAMARIA.



HAT was called *Samaria*, in our Lord's day, was, in Old Testament times, the territory of the tribe of Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh. To the south of Ephraim was located the tribe of Benjamin, at the southern border of which was the Holy City. A glance at the two maps of Palestine will show a vast difference.

- (1) As divided among the Twelve Tribes.
- (2) As it was in Christ's time.

In the first map all Israel are in the land. In the second map the provinces of Judæa, Samaria and Galilee compose the only partitions of the country west of the Jordan.

In Judæa dwelt the tribe of Judah. In Galilee was located the tribe of Benjamin. In Samaria were the descendants of those foreigners whom the King of Assyria brought from "Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria and dwelt in the cities thereof" (2 Kings xvii. 24).

From the above facts it is evident that while all the tribes possessed Palestine before their captivities, two only occupied it when Christ came, viz., *Judah*, to the south, in Judæa, and *Benjamin* to the north, in Galilee (and the *Levites* who had no land). Samaria lay between, and belonged to a people of foreign extraction. This great change in the territorial divisions of Palestine was due to the fact that, after the captivities, two tribes only—*Judah* and *Benjamin* (with a remnant

of the *Levites*) returned to the land. The other tribes have never as yet, nationally, gone back to the Holy Land.

Therefore, when we bade good-bye to Jerusalem soon after break of day on April 8th, 1907, our carriages bore us rapidly through lovely country and over what was once the southern kingdom (or kingdom of the House of Judah), *en route* for that portion of the land which was the territory of the northern kingdom (or House of Israel).

I have drawn attention to these details because, though they are among the most elementary points of Bible study, yet many learned theologians and Biblical students and teachers of long standing have failed to perceive and to grasp this distinction between Judah and Israel; and often erroneously apply the term "Jews" to the whole of the Twelve Tribes—a mistake that the Bible never makes!

Among the various sites of interest passed on our journey that day was

BETHEL,

which was on the border line, in Old Testament times, between Benjamin and Ephraim. The country around is hilly, stony and desolate; but how many Scriptural associations occur to the mind as one looks on its terraced hills! There Jacob slept and dreamed his sacred dream. There Jeroboam set up the golden calves and made it a centre of idolatry, turning Bethel (the House of God), into Bethaven (the House of Vanity). The town itself, of which nothing remains but ruins and miserable hovels, was once an important place, owing to its strategic position, occupying as it does a prominent point where the two main Passes of Palestine meet—the one coming from the Mediterranean and through the Valley of Ajalon into the interior, and the other from the Jordan Valley and along the main highway towards Ai. This latter Pass was the one trodden by Joshua and the Israelites after their conquest of Jericho.

But Bethel to us has far more than strategic interest. Its charm lies in the fact that, somewhere from its stony



THE PRIMITIVE PLOUGH OF PALESTINE.

(From a snapshot.)

hill-sides, has come to us the historic stone—"Jacob's pillar"—which rests in Westminster Abbey, and upon which the royal representatives of the Davidic dynasty have been crowned for thousands of years. I thought of all this as our carriages bore us along—Jacob anointing it with oil; committing it to the care of the House of Joseph (Gen. xlix. 24); Moses smiting it in Horeb, and again in Kadesh; of its typical characteristic to Christ in its wanderings (1 Cor. x. 4); of its being the pillar throne, or platform, for the coronation of the kings of Judah (2 Kings xi. 14, R.V., margin); of Jeremiah and his royal charges, "the King's daughters" (Jer. xliii. 6); of the Irish chronicles in verse and prose that have traced the *Lia Fail*, or Stone of Destiny, from the East to Ireland; and of subsequent history that has brought it from thence to Scotland and from thence to England.* All these thoughts crowded to my mind as I noticed many a stone lying about, such as reposes in Westminster Abbey; and saw the terraced nature of the hills which, to the resting Patriarch, could have taken the semblance of a ladder, while the golden beauty of the setting sun towards the West, above the hills, might have aided him as he closed his eyes to dream of glory at the top of the ladder. God often uses natural environments as a channel for His revelations.

The country through the territory of Ephraim was beautifully wooded and fertile. There can be no doubt that, even amid the limitations of the Holy Land, Ephraim must have begun to enjoy Jacob's prophetic blessing of a "fruitful bough." Every mile of our journey northwards became more and more lovely as we entered into fruitful districts and fertile valleys; while here, or there, the scene was enlivened by fellahin (peasants) driving the primitive plough; and the air made musical by the sound of the shepherd's pipe as he led the sheep, which followed him and his music, wherever he chose to take them.

The greater part of our journey was by carriage, but

* See "*The Coronation Stone and England's Interest In It*," by Mrs. A. Rogers.



A HALT FOR LUNCH—JERUSALEM TO NABLOUS.

(From a snapshot.)

about mid-day we left our vehicles and descended on foot into a green plain, where we found a tent pitched and a picnic lunch being hastily prepared. It was a hot day, and the rest on the green sward was very refreshing. In the afternoon we continued our journey on donkeys, a part of the ride being a very rough one down a steep and stony valley with a difficult ascent on the opposite side. Emerging, after a hot and tedious ride, on to the high road, we there found other carriages awaiting us, which bore us, without delay, towards the lovely vale of Shechem, where is

JACOB'S WELL.

Here we were again at one of the genuine sites of Palestine so sacredly associated with Jesus Christ. The little building, once a church, which covers it, stands in a walled enclosure belonging to the Greek community.



A HOT AND TEDIOUS RIDE.

(From a snapshot.)

The well itself answers all the requirements of the Gospel narrative in John iv. Its round mouth is not very broad—between two and three feet in diameter, as well as I can remember it. The stone sill around it may be the original one on which our Lord rested; though at that time the well's mouth would have been much more above the level of the ground than it is now. The land has risen during the centuries that have intervened, chiefly owing to the rush of winter torrents from the adjacent mountains, and also to the fact that for a long time the church was filled with debris, which has been removed only in recent years.



WOMAN AT JACOB'S WELL.

The well is deep, said the woman of Samaria, and she spoke truly. They let down a light that we might see its great depth, and then drew up a bucket of water for us to taste, or take away in little bottles as a memento. It was impossible to stand beside that sacred spot without picturing the holy scene which has immortalised it. But I should have preferred to have seen it without the addition of a church above it, and with no other roof than the blue vault of the sky as it was in our Lord's time.

The well stands in a vale, amid the most lovely natural surroundings. To one side rises up Gerizim—the mount to which the woman of Samaria alluded when she said, “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain.” To the other rises up Mount Ebal, at the base of which is seen the village of Sychar. The way leading past it to the north is the ancient caravan route. It was along there that our Lord and His disciples continued their journey to Galilee, after leaving the Samaritans. It

was along there also that Saul hastened towards Damascus, armed with letters for the arrest of the Christians. And many centuries before, on the same road, had travelled Abraham, coming from Chaldæa to Canaan. There, too, had ridden Rebecca on her camel; and along the same route once fled Jacob to go into Padan Aram.

Near to the well is

JOSEPH'S TOMB.

There is every reason to believe that the white-domed tomb does indeed cover the mummy of the great patriarch. The tomb and the well are both "on the parcel of ground" that Jacob bought for 100 pieces of silver from Hamor, and where he had spread his tent (Gen. xxxiii. 11, and Josh. xxiv. 32), and where Israel buried the embalmed body of Joseph, which they had brought with them out of Egypt. Where else would they be likely to bury him but in his own "parcel of ground"? There was a righteousness and a patriotism in the soul of Joseph when he directed that his bones should be carried out of Egypt (Gen. l. 24). He had been a great ruler, second to none but Pharaoh in the world's then mightiest kingdom. But he had no ambition to rest with the mummies of Pharaoh in their gorgeous tombs. Faith pointed to a land of promise, and he preferred that his "bones" should be borne to the parcel of ground and be laid in the valley where Abraham, the friend of God, had walked with the God of his forefathers. And that is why that among the royal mummies discovered in Egypt, that of Joseph has not been found. His bones rest near to Jacob's Well.

It is generally supposed that Jacob digged the well himself, though the Bible narrative does not say so. It may have been already there when he bought "the parcel of ground." Be that as it may, it is quite evident he needed it—but why? The whole valley abounds in water springs; therefore, he could not have required it from any lack of water. Probably his own words before



A VIEW FROM JACOB'S WELL, SHOWING MOUNT EBAL, WITH SYCHAR AT ITS BASE, TO THE RIGHT.
THE WHITE DOME IN THE MIDDLE OF PICTURE IS JOSEPH'S TOMB.

he died throw light upon the subject. The ground was secured to him—not merely by the peaceful means of payment—but also through the necessity of fighting. Jacob said to his son Joseph, "I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow" (Gen. xlviii. 22). Whether the strife occurred before or after the purchase of the field we do not know, but it shows us that the inhabitants of Shechem were at enmity with him, and that therefore they would not have allowed him to water his flocks at their fountains; hence it was essential to dig his own well. The woman of Samaria was right when she said that Jacob "drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle." But she was wrong when she affirmed that "our father, Jacob, gave us the well." The evangelist in the fifth verse states the case differently: "The parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph." But the woman of Samaria only maintained what the Samaritans believed in her day, and what they still hold now—that they are descendants of Joseph and that therefore Jacob is their forefather. There is significance in the fact that Christ does not contradict her, though He knew that the Samaritans were the descendants—not of Joseph—but of the foreigners imported by the King of Assyria. But when the woman's immortal soul needed to be saved, the Saviour did not spend time over a non-essential. What a lesson for us!

Now, the well lies in a valley, and as the lower slopes of Gerizim are cultivated, it is necessary to literally look *up* in order to obtain a full view of the harvest fields. The expression "lift *up* your eyes" in this instance is as accurate as the statement: "A certain man went *down* to Jericho." Points such as these struck me forcibly as proofs of the faithfulness of Scripture language even in details. "Thy Word is Truth" was written along every step of our way, and nowhere more so than in Samaria.

Here is another interesting tribute to the veracity of Holy Writ. As all Bible students know, Gerizim and Ebal were the mountains respectively of blessing and

of cursing. Now, it is noteworthy that while Gerizim possesses luxuriant foliage up its slopes, Ebal is comparatively barren and desolate. Towards the eastern extremity of Nablous—the ancient Shechem—the valley becomes much narrower, being hedged in on either side by the projections of these two mounts, while the natural amphitheatres of these hillsides show that it must have been just there that the blessings and curses were pronounced. The over-hanging precipitous cliffs, acting as sounding-boards, would (as has been tested and proved), cause the voice to be distinctly heard on the opposite hill, or in the valley beneath. Jotham, the son of Gideon, is said to have addressed “the men of Shechem” from Mount Gerizim (Judges ix. 7). From any of its projecting cliffs his voice could have been heard by those in the city beneath.

The town of Nablous, or

SHECHEM

is very ancient and teems with Old Testament associations. The first mention of it is in connection with Abraham. In was there that God gave him the promise of the land of Canaan, and there that he built an altar unto the Lord. For centuries, after the conquest by Joshua and the Israelites, Shechem remained the capital of the Holy Land. David made Jerusalem the metropolis in his days; but after the death of Solomon, Israel was divided into two distinct kingdoms, with separate dynasties reigning over them. And this political change necessitated two capitals; thus while Jerusalem remained the capital of the southern kingdom of the Jews, Samaria became the royal city of the northern kingdom of the House of Israel. Shechem had some time before lost its importance as chief city. Nearly the whole district is extremely fertile and luxuriant, though, as I have already noted, there is a vast difference between the fertility of Gerizim and the barrenness of Ebal. This contrast was apparent as we drove between the parallel ranges.

Some of us decided to ascend to the top of

MOUNT GERIZIM,

a climb that was well worth the trouble notwithstanding the unpromising weather. The rain fell in torrents when we had reached the summit ; but that did not prevent us from appreciating the magnificent panoramic scene spread beneath us of the lovely vale of Shechem, and the fertile region through which we had travelled the day before. The Mount, which is not quite so high as Ebal, rises about 1,000 feet above the valley. Those who have seen the Temple area at Jerusalem cannot fail to notice, that the extensive plateau at the summit of Gerizim has been artificially levelled in imitation of the one on Mount Moriah. Indeed, Gerizim was the rival place of worship. The woman at Jacob's Well exactly expressed the true position of religious discord when she said, " Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but ye say that in Jerusalem men ought to worship." The Samaritans believe that Gerizim is the place where Abraham sacrificed Isaac, and in accordance with the tradition, they erected a temple there, making also a cave beneath the rock like the one which was under the brazen altar in the temple court in Jerusalem. Our Lord by His reply, " Salvation is of the Jews," clearly settled the question in favour of Mount Moriah ; though, at the same time, He showed that a more spiritual dispensation was shortly to be inaugurated. The glorious temple on Mount Moriah, and its less brilliant rival on Mount Gerizim, were both destined to be destroyed : " Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, worship the Father." The Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem, where the temple no longer stands, and the ruins of the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, are eloquent testimonies to the truth of that immortal conversation at Jacob's Well. But if wells and stones and mountains declare the veracity of Scripture, how forcibly also does that little

COLONY OF SAMARITANS

in Shechem irrefutably bear witness to the accuracy of God's Word. We visited this living testimony to

the Truth, and found them deeply interesting. They have a small synagogue, and attached to it is a tiny school, where a dozen or so of little black-eyed children were squatted on the floor, learning Hebrew lessons. They lifted smiling, dark-tinted faces to us as we entered. The Samaritan colony is a very small one, at present numbering only about 150 adults. They never intermarry, but keep themselves rigidly exclusive and separate from all other people. They have no dealings with the Jews, and the Jews hate them as heartily as they did in our Lord's time. Nothing has altered!

The most interesting personality in that little band of Samaritans is undoubtedly the old Rabbi, who calls himself "Jacob, son of Aaron, High Priest of the Samaritans at Shechem." The old man greeted us cordially. Tall, dark, and erect, he does not look his age of seventy-four. He has been High Priest for nigh on sixty years, having been consecrated at fifteen years of age. The Samaritans, like the Jews, do not enter the priesthood until they are thirty years old. But an exception was made in his case, because the High Priest having died without any son to come after him, Jacob, his nephew, was the only possible successor.

With dignity he conducted us into the little bare synagogue, and showed us, with reverent care, the Holy Scroll of the Pentateuch. We examined the ancient parchment, yellow with age, and wound on two rollers and enclosed in a cylindrical case, which was opened on hinges to let us see a column or two of the Roll. The beautiful writing is on rams' skins; the skins being sewn together end to end must make the entire Scroll nearly 100 feet in length. Did we see the real Samaritan Pentateuch, said to be the oldest known existing copy in the world of the five Books of Moses? That we saw a very ancient Scroll is evident; but as the genuine one is guarded with jealous care, and only exhibited, as a rule, once a year and to the Samaritans only, we could hardly have beheld the genuine, but possibly only a very old copy of it.

The real Samaritan Pentateuch is claimed by its owners to date from the days of Joshua, and to have been made by the son of Eliezer, the son of Aaron. Miniature rolls in little tin cases, reduced facsimiles of the Great Roll, were on sale, and many of us bought them as mementos and curiosities of a certainly very interesting visit.

Jacob the High Priest and other Samaritans whom we saw, have a very different aspect from the Jewish Rabbis and Pharisees in Jerusalem. The latter seemed characterised by an expression of melancholy and hopelessness, but the Samaritans seemed to me to look happy and contented, though no doubt poor and very few in number. The rejection and crucifixion of Christ cannot be laid at their door; they were never upbraided by our Lord, and do not appear to have ever joined in any persecutions against Him. They do not believe in Christ as the Saviour, or the Son of God; but they regard Him as a wise Prophet, and do not exhibit that hatred to Him which unhappily characterises the bulk of the House of Judah. Christians they regard in a friendly spirit, because of the kindly conversation Christ held with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's Well.

The dignified old High Priest is also an author. He has written a work called *The History and Religion of the Samaritans*. This book, of course, expresses the Samaritan view of the case, which is not the Scriptural one. I have read an English copy of a part of it, by Abdullah Ben Kori, and edited by W. E. Barton. The work shows that the present attitude of the Samaritans towards the Jews has undergone no change at all. Neither have their ideas of the Old Testament altered—they believe only in the Pentateuch. The statement of the woman of Samaria to our Lord, is just the same as that held to-day by the Samaritans—*our father Jacob* was her erroneous expression. They imagine to-day, as they did in her times, that they are descendants of the House of Joseph; while their rival temple on Gerizim is held to be the true one, and the one on Mount Moriah the false one.

Nehemiah, Ezra and Zerubbabel are looked upon as enemies and persecutors, while Sanballat is described as *kind, learned and wise!*

Truly this little colony of Samaritans at Shechem, with their unalterable adherence to the false claims of their forefathers, remains an undeniable, living witness, and irrefutable evidence to the truth of the sacred Scriptures, and especially of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, and the Gospel of John. Yes! nothing has altered. This unchanging East makes one



ONE OF OUR CARRIAGES. TO THE LEFT ARE OLIVE TREES.

(From a snapshot.)

realise what "a little season" is nineteen centuries in the annals of the world's history, and how much less in that of eternity! In Palestine the bygone of millennials seems strangely blended with the present. Amid these echoes of antiquity, one feels that only a moment, as it were, has separated the lapse of ages from to-day!

We left the *Hotel Nablous*, where we had spent two nights, and on April 10th bade farewell to ancient Shechem with its narrow, dirty, and often over-arched streets; its fanatical Mohammedan population; its glorious valleys, mountains, and luxuriant fields; its solemn white tomb of Joseph; its sacred well; its little colony of Samaritans, and its countless pungent associations interwoven with the history of millenniums, that are ever living, and never silent, to the reverent observer. Added to these testimonies may be mentioned the valuable work which at Shechem—as nearly all the world over—is being done by British and American missionaries. The C.M.S. have a splendid mission there.

Our carriage route took us in a north-westerly direction, and after driving down the Vale of Shechem—whose beautiful olive-groves looked so fresh in that early morning—we noticed, when about three miles from Nablous, the city of

SAMARIA

perched on a hill in the distance. This elevated position gave the city a splendid strategic position and therefore more suited to being the capital of Northern Palestine than Shechem, which lies in a valley. It was Omri, King of Israel, who bought the hill from Shemer, and there built his royal city, calling it *Samaria*, after the name of the man from whom he had purchased it (1 Kings xvi. 24). From henceforth it became the capital of the House of Israel until the King of Assyria besieged it about 200 years after and carried Israel into captivity (2 Kings xvii. 23, 24). But nothing now remains of this ancient capital of Northern Palestine. Herod re-built it with the magnificence that he loved to lavish on his architectural endeavours. Some of the

columns of his splendid palace are still there, telling, amid the squalid condition of Samaria to-day, the glory of a royal city that has long passed away.

To the British-Israelite, especially if he be a Welshman, there is a deep significance in the fact that the ancient name given to the Israelites, when they inhabited Samaria, was *Kymru*. This has been ascertained, beyond all doubt, by the discovery of the Assyrian monument which speaks of them as *Beth-Kymru*, or House of Omri. From this word *Kymru* is derived the word *Cymru*, the name by which the Welsh are known. As the migrations of the *Kymru* have been traced by historians from the cities of the Medes (whither Israel was carried captive) to Europe and Britain, the logical conclusion is that the *Cymru*, or *Kymru*, or Welsh, are the descendants of Israel from Samaria.



CHAPTER XIV.

MOUNT CARMEL, THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON, AND
THE BATTLE-FIELD OF ARMAGEDDON.

VERY lovely drive, through a fertile country, luxuriant with wild flowers, brought us through Samaria to the Jewish colony of

ZEMMARIN,

where we put up for the night in a very primitive hotel. This colony of about 1,000 Jews was founded by Baron E. de Rothschild, of Paris. The Jewish inhabitants are agriculturists, and evidently successful ones. We took a walk to the top of the cliffs, whence we had a magnificent view of the plain beneath with its green fields, its orchards and vineyards, and its exquisitely cultivated farms, while the Mediterranean, stretching beyond, completed a landscape of surpassing beauty and restfulness. But one could not help feeling sad that the inhabitants were all Christ-haters and Christ-rejecters. We chatted with some of the bonnie-looking children in the village; we entered their simple synagogue, and noted the look of thrift and prosperity on every hand, and could only grieve that "the King of the Jews" is unknown among them. And yet how superstitiously they seek to observe the details of their law! The little hotel we stayed at is kept by Jews solely, and we were solemnly enjoined by our dragoman not to put butter on the same plate with meat lest we might be guilty of infringing the prohibition: "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk"! Amid this sad religious blindness it was nice when we all—our party—met to sing some Christian hymns. The Welshmen of our company struck up

some Welsh songs, making the balmy air (for we were sitting on the verandah of the hotel, facing the village street), of that April evening sweet with the sound of sacred harmony. These recollections bring me to the interesting but (to many) complicated

JEWISH QUESTION.

That many Jews have returned to Palestine is evident, though it is estimated that *there are more Jews in the East End of London* than at present in all Palestine. Jeremiah distinctly tells us that the Jews must first walk to, and with, their brethren of the House of Israel before they can nationally return to possess their own land (Jer. iii. 18). They are coming over to us of the literal House of Israel in large numbers. Alien Bills to try and stop them have proved ineffective.

But they are going also (though not in such large numbers), to Palestine direct from Russia and elsewhere. What will this migration lead to? We can only reply to this question in the light of prophecy. Zech. xiv. is yet future. It foretells wars and troubles which are to overtake Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the era of the Second Advent of our Lord. Therefore, the Jews that have returned before these tribulations occur will have to pass through a fiery furnace. Undoubtedly there will be great political convulsions, severe religious earthquakes, that will adjust all contrary forces at work to-day. The troublous events foretold in the first half of Zech. xiv. will have the effect of annihilating or driving the Jews out of the land, to which they have no right in their condition of national unbelief; and of shaking out also all the foreign elements that have settled in the Holy City and elsewhere. If the Jew or the Gentile understood prophecy, Palestine is the last place he would think of settling in, until Zech. xiv. has been fulfilled.

Palestine is ours, for we of the Anglo-Saxon race are the literal "lost sheep of the House of Israel," and in the light of God's Word it is clear to me that circumstances must work round to give us again the possession of our land. It is under our protection, and it is in "the

ships of Tarshish" (an old name for England), that the Jews, or House of Judah, will nationally be re-instated in the land. When I was at the Palestine Exhibition in London in June (1907) I constantly met the mistaken expression: "Palestine for the Jews!" As well say: "The British Empire for the Welsh!" The Jews form only a minority of the Hebrew race, just as the Welsh are only a section of the British people. Palestine will belong to all the twelve tribes of Israel. There is no fact clearer than this in the Bible. The term "Jews" is never, in Scripture, applied to all the tribes, but only, at the very most, to three tribes—Judah, Benjamin, Levi. At the present day the term does not include at the very most more than two tribes, for Benjamin, which belonged only temporarily to Judah (1 Kings xi.) fled the city (Jer. vi. 1) at the siege of Jerusalem A.D. 70, and has long since reached its Isles in the North-West and joined the other tribes located here.

Five-thirty on April 11th found us after a hasty breakfast driving away from Zemmarin *en route* for the North: we were making for Haiffa and Mount Carmel. Passing through very fertile country, and admiring the abundance of wild flowers on either hand, we crossed the *Plain of Sharon*, and visited on our way the

CASTLE OF ATHLIT,

which was the last stronghold of the Crusaders. The ruins are very fine, and have a most picturesque appearance, perched on a promontory above the Mediterranean. Once the fortress of the Knight Templars, it must have witnessed many a stirring scene in the Middle Ages. Now, amid its beautiful ruins, are the squalid hovels of wild, uncivilised Arabs, who looked more like animals than human beings. They peered at us wonderingly as we wandered among the broken walls and massive relics of past glory and strength. A soldier—in dirty, ragged uniform—watched us suspiciously, and never took his eyes off us until we had re-entered our carriages and had started to resume our journey. I wonder if he thought we might take away that great prostrate

column in our pockets, or carry off some of the ruins of the magnificent banqueting hall! Anyway, his old rifle was by his side ready for use had we attempted any such pranks!

Athlit is not, I think, mentioned in the Bible; the Israelites never possessed it.

About ten or eleven miles further north lay our destination for the night. The road thither was very rough and bad (as it is in most places in Palestine), and as our Arab drivers were reckless, caring nothing for holes and ruts or any obstacles in the way, it was not surprising that at least one of our carriages was upset, the three horses falling down. Happily no one was seriously hurt, and our Jehus resumed their driving with a little less speed and more care, landing us without further mishap at the *Grand New Hotel* at

HAIFFA,

a beautiful harbour in the Bay of Acre, and overshadowed by the heights of Mount Carmel. As about half of its 10,000 inhabitants are Christians, Haiffa is in some parts altogether cleaner and more civilised-looking, than many other towns we had visited in Palestine. It is also fairly prosperous with its corn export and its manufactories of olive oil soap, and its German colony. On the whole, it was a pleasing contrast from the town of Shechem, which seemed never to have left bygone ages. Shechem, too, was fanatically Mohammedan, our dragoman warning us not to go out alone, or we should be stoned; but Haiffa, with its large Christian population, was quite safe to all.

We wandered through its streets and market-place and looked at its *prison* as we passed. It was quite a curiosity that prison. Only a small space separated it from the public thoroughfare, and in the view of all who cared to inspect it. An official sat on a chair outside and made no objection to anyone approaching the cage, for such it looked like. The prisoners were behind bars, like animals in a Zoo; while their friends or foes, or whoever they might be, stopped on their way to have a look and exchange a few words, in something of the

same manner in which we might inspect the beasts in a menagerie. Most of the prisoners looked pleased to be taken notice of; and seemed to be whiling away the time chatting among themselves, or exchanging a joke with the small crowd that was generally to be found looking at them. On the whole, it seemed a more congenial domicile than the lonely prison cells in English prisons. But here, as elsewhere in the East, the man had the better portion. He was in the front cage, where light and fresh air reached him well enough, and where he could chat with the outsiders; but the poor women were kept in an inner cage, only iron bars separating them from the men. Their prison looked dull and dismal so far back, where it was difficult, or impossible, to enjoy the benefits accorded to the men. No wonder the poor women seemed less cheerful than the men!

Of course, the most interesting spot in Haiffa is

MOUNT CARMEL.

The carriage road to the summit was well made and well kept—a delightful contrast to the generally intolerable roads of Palestine. Near the top of the hill is the Carmelite Monastery, and in its church is a cave said to be the one in which Elisha lived. There is a large cave lower down the sides of the mountain, which tradition says was one of the “schools of the prophets” under the care of the prophet. But these are apocryphal theories. It is far more likely that dwelling-place was at the other—the southern—end of the Carmel range and overlooking the Plain of Esdraelon. Otherwise, how could he have seen the Shunamite woman from “afar off” when she came to him from Shunem, and which village was situated in that vast plain? (2 Kings iv. 25). We did not visit that end of Carmel, but we saw it from the distance on our way to Nazareth.

There are a few other buildings on Mount Carmel. Altogether, it looked an ideal site that afternoon, with the sun shining brilliantly on the blue Bay of Acre and on the opposite coast lands, where the town of *Acre* is situated; and further northwards, where *Tyre* and *Sidon*

once were great and glorious and full of animation, when their ships sailed along the very waters upon which we gazed from the Carmel modern lighthouse. Now the mighty cities are but insignificant little seaports.

Next morning we left Haiffa and began one of the most picturesque portions of our tour, viz., a drive through beautiful and ever sacred Galilee; for it is intimately associated with the work of Christ.

Galilee is very different from Southern Palestine. The latter is in many parts stony and barren, but Galilee is in most places remarkably fertile and fruitful.

Our route from Mount Carmel to Nazareth was very lovely. Emerging from the town of Haiffa, our carriages took us across the Plain of Acre, with its beautiful palm groves, and, skirting the base of Mount Carmel to our right, crossed the bridge over that "ancient river, the River Kishon." The water was low where we saw it, while innumerable frogs were holding a loud and unmusical concert in it. Passing a small oak forest, and admiring the abundance of wild flowers of every hue and colour, we soon began the ascent up the Galilean hills. When we had arrived at a good height, we alighted to admire the view. A scene of great panoramic loveliness was spread below us and beyond us—its natural beauties enhanced by its Biblical associations. The scene rises before me as I write. Beneath us stretched the vast

PLAIN OF ESDRAELON,

looking in the bright sunlight of that clear April day like a spread-out carpet of brilliant green variegated with rich colourings. To the right was visible *Mount Tabor*, and in the valley were *Endor* and *Nain*. Nearly facing us was *Little Hermon*—very "little" indeed, when compared with the snow-covered heights of its great namesake. Near to it in the vale was

SHUNEM,

the home of the Shunamite woman; so that, standing where we did, we could follow with the eye the whole length of her journey to Mount Carmel, and, as already

noted, Elisha, looking across the Plain from the southern end of the Carmel range, could have perceived her hurried approach afar off in that clear Eastern atmosphere.

Opposite to us was *Mount Gilboa*, and at its base the site of the royal city of

JEZREEL.

Near to it, and welling out from the base also of Mount Gilboa is the spring of water called "Gideon's Fountain," where that "mighty man of valour" chose his followers by the test of "lapping the water" (Judges vii.). There also, running towards the Jordan in the East, was the old carriage road, along which Jehu rode furiously from Ramoth Gilead to Jezreel.

To our right rose the range of Samaria's mountains, and at their base the site of ancient

MEGIDDO.

This once famous city is mentioned several times in the Old Testament (Judges v. 19; 1 Kings ix. 15; 2 Kings ix. 27; 2 Kings xxiii. 29). But the name is now applied, not only to the city but also to the plain above which it is situated—the Plain of Esdraelon. Now in Rev. xvi. 6 we have the statement that the yet future battle to precede the second advent is called the

BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON,

and Armageddon is said to be identical with Megiddo. If this be so, then that great warfare will take place in the Plain of Megiddo, that is, in the Plain of Esdraelon. Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix. describe that terrible event, or series of events, when Gog and Magog (believed by many to be Russia), and other allied nations are said to come in vast hosts against "the mountains of Israel"—those glorious ranges of Gilboa, Galilee, Samaria and Carmel, which fringe the vast Plain of Esdraelon or Megiddo. The geographical position, too, of this Plain seems indicated in Ezekiel xxxix. 11: "*the valley of the passengers on the East of the sea.*" It is located to the east of the Mediterranean, and is now, as it always has been, "the valley of the passengers." As I mentioned

just now, by this plain ran the ancient highway, and thus in Old Testament times it was a "valley of the passengers," a way of traffic. But how much more is it so to-day, when a modern railway every day conveys passengers right through the valley, or Plain, of Esdraelon!

This Plain, too, is Israel's old battlefield. There it was that Sisera routed Barak from Mount Tabor to Harosheth of the Gentiles on Mount Carmel, thus pursuing him through the entire length of the great Plain, which measures 20 miles in length and about 12 in breadth (Judges iv.). It was in this same "valley" that Gideon overcame the Midianites (Judges vii.), and there also that Saul was defeated by the Philistines. *Bethshan*, to whose wall the body of the hapless king was fastened, is in this same Plain (1 Sam. xxxi.). In Megiddo also the good King Josiah was slain by Pharaoh-Necho (2 Kings xxiii. 29). But Megiddo's valley and Esdraelon's Plain have been the scene of battle in more recent times than these. It was near Mount Tabor that Napoleon with a small force routed the Turks in 1799. Probably the next great battle on the historic Plain will be that of Armageddon. That warfare will finally settle the question, Who will get Palestine? There is a phrase as fallacious as it is misleading: "Palestine for the Jews." But the Jews comprise the House of Judah only, and are but a minority of the Hebrew race. There are twelve tribes to whom Palestine belongs. The Plain of Megiddo is situated in the territory of the House of Israel, or northern kingdom. The great battle of Armageddon will be directed against them; it will be the last attack of the non-Hebrew nations before the second advent against the Holy Land. Signs of eager desire on their part to possess the chosen land are not lacking. The thousands of Russian pilgrims which throng the churches and the streets of Jerusalem make one ponder. Has perhaps the land of their birth an eye to the future? And on this subject it may not be out of place here to give the following facts, which a correspondent lately wrote me when we were discussing these matters. His

communication, which he calls *A Peep behind the Scenes*, and which he gives me permission to copy here, is as follows:—

“Somewhere back in the middle of the last century there was terrible commotion in Syria, and the whole country was on the eve of an outbreak. The French were compelled to send a large body of troops to keep order. Large Russian, French, and Austrian fleets were then in the Mediterranean, and quite an Armada was off the coast of Syria, a powerful British fleet keenly watching the whole line of coast. It was at this time that a survey took place of the Gulf of Alexandretta (Iskanderoun Bay) and ports in the vicinity; many conjectures were afloat. Here it was that Alexander the Great fought his first battle against the Persian power. Could we be contemplating a landing of a British force for a flanking movement in the event of an enemy descending at any time upon Palestine? It could not be the French who were in the mind of the Admiralty at that time, for they had given their word to clear out by a certain date, which they did.

“Years rolled on, and eventually the Russo-Turkish war compelled Lord Beaconsfield to strategically induce Turkey to yield up the care of Cyprus to the British Government.

“When lecturing on the subject which the writer has at heart, after the meeting, a clergyman said to him, ‘Do you know, I have had a friend (a general in the army), whose son was a secretary in the War Office. He has just informed me of a meeting of naval and military authorities to consider the best position from which to strike an enemy who might at any moment conceive the project of a descent upon Palestine. After many deliberations, the Plain of Esdraelon (or Bay of Acre) was selected. One of the officers ventured the remark, ‘Why, then, that must be Armageddon! for the Bible alludes to this as the site of the last great battle.’ This officer gave it as his opinion that they all said, ‘And so much the better.’”

Evidently the time had not arrived for that great

battle, neither has it arrived as yet. Before it comes the Turk will have received a considerable defeat, and by the hand of Israel! Ezekiel xxxv.—xxxix. describes the restoration of the land of Israel to the chosen people, and shows the overthrow of Edom. There can be no doubt that Edom, or Mount Seir, are the Turks of to-day and the descendants of Esau. How accurately is the Turk's occupation of Palestine expressed in chap. xxxvi. 2: "The ancient high places are ours in possession." But the same chapter foretells the overthrow of the Edomites, or Turks: "Surely in the fire of My jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the nations, and against all Edom, which have appointed My land unto themselves for a possession with the joy of all the earth, with despite of soul, to cast it out for a prey."

How well do these words describe the Turks' exultation over the Jews they have so humiliated. Chapter xxxv. unmistakably foretells the coming overthrow of the Turkish power: "I am against thee, and I will stretch out My hand against thee and I will make thee most desolate."

By whose hand will God work to do this? Balaam, who was an Edomite, gives the answer in his magnificent prophecy, which deals with "the latter days" (Num. xxiv. 14). "Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies, and Israel shall do valiantly" (verse 18).

It is Israel, then, who is destined to overcome Edom, or Turkey, in Palestine. The Jews are not in a position to overthrow their enemies; British-Israel, therefore, will be God's "battle-axe" to subdue the Turk and capture the Holy Land. But other powers—Russia and Germany chiefly—have their eyes on the chosen land and covet it already, and will, without doubt, yet engage against us for its possession at the Battle of Armageddon. Ezekiel xxxv. to xxxix. throws considerable light on the series of events which will occur during the era which brings Palestine into our hands.

Briefly they are as follows:—

Chapter xxxv. foretells the overthrow of Edom or Turkey.

Chapter xxxvi. deals with the re-occupation of Palestine by the House of Israel. There is no mention of the Jews in this chapter, but the House of Israel—the British-Israel Empire—is mentioned six times. Hence Edom or Turkey is subdued by their hand.

Chapter xxxvii. deals with both Houses, and shows that both the House of Israel and the House of Judah re-possess the land and become united into one nation when they are re-instated there. This chapter also emphatically reveals the re-possession of the land *by means of the House of Israel*. They are described as lost for a time, and buried out of all recognition and remembrance; but when the breath of God blows upon them “they stood upon their feet an exceeding great army.” It is this people, strong and warlike, that God is said to “bring into the land of Israel.” There is no reference here to the Jews, for they are not “standing” but are down-trodden; they have never been “lost” nor “buried” out of sight, and they are not “an exceeding great army,” but a despised and persecuted people. It is the House of Israel only that is in a position to recover Palestine, and to re-instate Judah there with themselves. It should be noted that the return to the Holy Land is preceded by the phenomenal revival, strengthening and increase of the House of Israel, and that the return does not take place until the Ten Lost Tribes have been discovered, and have become “an exceeding great army.” The fact that we are the lost House of Israel, and that we are characterised as a great Empire, is a proof that the return to the land of our fathers is rapidly approaching. But if, as our ignorant opponents affirm, the twelve tribes are included in the down-trodden Jews, or are still lost among the Afghans or other barbarous pagans, then the return is still very far off. The theory of our opponents puts back the clock for centuries; but the teaching of British-Israel truth shows, that the events that will usher in the Second Advent are even now at the door. The present emigration of Jews to Palestine is not the return itself, but it is a

preparation for it, and an unmistakable sign that it is near at hand. And if near at hand, then the House of Israel must be existing somewhere as "exceeding great," and strong enough to re-capture the Land when the time comes. This chapter should be read with Isaiah lx., which shows that the Jews return in the "ships of Tarshish" (an old name for England). The Jews, who have returned before then, will experience the terrible tribulations through which Palestine must pass when it leaves the control of Turkey, and comes into the possession of the House of Israel. That troublous time will either drive them out, or annihilate them.

Chapters xxxviii. and xxxix. deal with the last great battle before, or at, the Second Coming of Christ. It will not come until we have regained possession of the land, or are on the point of regaining it. That will be the time of "Jacob's Trouble," and will be the most awful war the world has seen; but we shall be "saved out of it," and the terrible conflict—for Russia, with many allied nations, will be the foe—will be finally decided in our favour on the Plain of Megiddo, or Esdraelon. The same event is described in the first portion of Zech. xiv., and again in the symbolic language of the Revelation—the *Seventh Vial*, which shows that it will synchronise with, and be the cause of, other political and religious convulsions of vast importance; which will usher in, and lead up to, and be contemporaneous with, "the great day" of our Lord's personal Advent on the Mount of Olives.

The fact that the warfare will be by means, to some extent, of *airship warfare*, seems clear in the light of prophecy. We are living under the outpouring of the sixth vial (Rev. xvi.) which is followed by the *seventh vial*, and which (unlike all the preceding vials), is poured out on the *air*. Compare this with Ezekiel xxxix., in which Israel, the conqueror at the battle of Armageddon, is compared to birds of the air, as well as to animals on land, met to devour the enemy. There may be an intimation here that Israel's *air-navy*, as well as their land forces, will be requisitioned for the final conflict after their occupation of Palestine

has taken place. These events are in the era of the Second Advent, an event that is connected with mighty religious and political upheavals in this world, and in which the return of the Houses of Israel and Judah to Palestine will play a conspicuous part. The coming of Christ will be *in the air* (1 Thess. iv. 17). Our meeting with Him will be *in the air*; the devil, whose power will then be overthrown, is the *prince of the power of the air* (Eph. ii. 2). The symbolic language of the seventh vial, poured out *into the air*, seems to show that the conflict will be between Christ and Satan in the air, at His coming, and which conflict will synchronise with similar warfare on earth. That we are now in the era which is the *preparation* for these great events which will wind up the present age, and inaugurate the millennial peace, when Jerusalem shall be restored, and Israel dwell safely, is apparent to those who are watching the signs of the times in the light of prophecy, and who recognise that the present advance in *aerial navigation* and the building of *air-warships* is one of the most remarkable evidences that "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," and that the humiliation of the Holy Land is nearing its closing phases.

"Even so come, Lord Jesus."



CHAPTER XV.

NAZARETH.



NAZARETH, as we see it to-day, is beautifully situated on the hill-side, and yet seems to nestle in a basin, as it were, among the hills.

Ancient Nazareth was but a hamlet, but modern Nazareth has a population of about 10,000, most of whom are nominally Christians.

To the Bible student what a charm clusters round the very name of this secluded spot, where our Lord spent thirty quiet years—quiet in comparison to the three prominent years of His public ministry, and yet always holy years. Was it not concerning His home and business life that those words were spoken on Jordan's banks: "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased"? It was the comparatively uneventful life in an obscure village that drew forth that Divine commendation; even the humdrum every-day round has its reward if it be spent as Jesus spent His.

Have you ever thought that Nazareth had no recorded *history* when the Son of God chose it as the abode of His human boyhood and early manhood? We know not who built it, nor by whom its first foundation was laid. The Old Testament is silent about it; except, perhaps, in the narrative of Samson, who was called a *Nazarite* because he was separated unto God, and thereby became a type and prefigurement of a Greater than himself, Who was also separated unto God, and Who dwelt in Nazareth that it might "be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, He shall be called a Nazarene."

But so obscure was Nazareth that even Josephus does not mention it, though he alludes to other villages in

its vicinity. Had it not been our Lord's home it would in all probability have remained unnoticed, and practically unknown, or non-existent, at the present time. It evidently bore an ill-repute in Christ's days; Philip was only voicing the popular idea when he said: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

Of ancient Nazareth—the Nazareth of those days—nothing now remains except the village spring of water, which flows just as it used to do thousands of years ago; and perchance also the old synagogue, which *may* be the one He immortalized by His presence and His words. But the hills are the same, and the valleys have not changed, and the flowers in glory more wondrous than Solomon's, bloom and fade and bloom again year after year in wild profusion, just as they did when Jesus walked among them.

We climbed to the brow of the hill and looked towards the scenes upon which His eyes must often have rested. The Plain of Esdraelon, which I have already described, lay beneath, with Carmel at its North-western end; while in the far distant horizon can be seen, in that clear, transparent atmosphere of Palestine, the silver gleaming of the Mediterranean, with its coast towns of Acre and Sidon and Tyre, which were all busy in those days with their shipping traffic across the great sea.

To the East the hills around the Lake of Galilee were visible (though the Lake itself cannot be seen from Nazareth), with *Safed*, "the city set on a hill," perched on its rocky height, while far beyond lay the eternal snows of Mount Hermon. Nearer at hand, and only about four miles from Nazareth, was the Greek city *Sepphoris*. To-day nothing but ruins remain of its ancient greatness; but in our Lord's time it was the flourishing capital of Galilee, adorned with Greek architecture, Greek baths, theatres and heathen temples. There were several of these Greek cities at that time in Palestine, but our Lord never showed His power in any of them; He never preached nor dwelt in them. He came unto His own—the Jews—and they received Him not. He was not sent but unto "the lost sheep of the House of Israel"—the sheep that were far away beyond

the Euphrates, but who had their representative in Benjamin, "that David might always have a light" (1 Kings xi. 36)—for Benjamin, with one exception, never persecuted Him.

In Nazareth itself, the traditional home of the Virgin is to be seen, over which the Church of the Annunciation has been erected, belonging to the Latin community (Roman Catholic). We were shown Mary's kitchen, Joseph's workshop, the exact spot where the angel Gabriel stood, etc.—all of which are apocryphal. The site of that house where dwelt the Holy Family is not known. Anyway, it would have been a simple home, in accordance with the Oriental customs of the working class of Palestine.

How did Christ spend those thirty years of sequestered life in Nazareth? We ask the question, and perforce must leave it unanswered; an impenetrable veil hides the story of that period of His human pilgrimage. People have often wished to lift it, hence the spurious Gospels which pretend to recount miracles, etc., performed by Him then. But the Word of God says nothing of them, and the silence of Scripture here is perhaps meant to show us that Christ's life, until He publicly declared Himself the Messiah, was spent without any special manifestation of His Godhead. But we have four glimpses, four sidelights, thrown upon the mysterious obscurity of those thirty years, which tell us as much as we need to know at present. Some day "we shall know as we are known," which will reveal to us all fulness of knowledge in all its detail. In the meanwhile we must be satisfied with the few gleams of light as follows:—

1. His being found among the Doctors in the Temple at Jerusalem. This gives us a side-light glimpse on the piety of the Home at Nazareth. It shows us that Jesus, like most other Jewish lads, had been brought up to learn the Holy Scroll of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms which comprised the Old Testament. We must remember that He increased in *wisdom* as well as in stature, and that His supposed father evidently put no obstacle in His way to acquire a knowledge of the Scrip-

tures; and that His pious surroundings and constant heart-communings with His Father gave that early subtle charm to His sinless every-day life, which caused Him also to increase in favour with man, as well as with God.

2. He worked in all probability at the same trade as His reputed father—that of a village carpenter. As we wandered through the streets of Nazareth we saw the carpenters' open workshops, and the carpenters at their work. It was a very honourable calling, and one that would have caused Jesus to be held in high respect by His fellow-townsmen. The carpenter of Palestine does not confine himself to his workshop, for the requirements of his trade will take him to many another house, and into many another village for miles around. Thus, Jesus, the Carpenter, must have been well known in His own locality.

3. There is a side glimpse, too, in Mary's words at Cana of Galilee: "His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." The sentence seems to come from her lips with a firmness and certainty that, show it was no haphazard thought begotten of the impulse of the moment; but a suggestion to the servants given by one who had had experience in the line of obedience she indicated for their guidance. Possibly it was not the first time that Mary had called in His help in an hour of difficulty. We do not know. Be that as it may, when the time came for Him to leave Nazareth and its home-life for ever, to perform His three-and-a-half years' public ministry, she had no further part in His work. If in the Holy Child, subject to his guardians' wishes, we see the perfect humanity of Christ, quite as much in His isolation when He bade good-bye to the hill-sides of Nazareth and the home of Mary and Joseph, we perceive His Godhead. He stands alone—unique, unapproachable and impenetrable, majestic in Deity, almighty in sacrifice and death, treading the wine-press of the wrath of God alone, all-triumphant in resurrection and ascension; one with us in our humanity, but unreachable and beyond us in His eternity and co-equality with the Father. Mary, no

more than we, can penetrate there: "*Woman, what have I to do with thee?*"

4. And lastly we have yet another side glimpse into His life at Nazareth in the last scene which closes His connection with His village life there. We entered the synagogue which is believed to have been the one in which He declared His Messiahship. It is now a Greek Church and is unfortunately marred with the usual idolatrous accompaniments to that form of worship. But a synagogue in its Jewish condition is entirely devoid of all images and pictures, or other religious symbols. Their 70 years' captivity in Babylon had cured the Jews of all leaning to idols. Neither does, nor ever did, a synagogue possess altar, priest, or sacrifice. These were to be found in those days in the Temple at Jerusalem and nowhere else. Now that Christ has died and risen, the genuine Christian Church knows not them: the Temple ritual has passed away and the whole of the Epistle to the Hebrews shows that they will never be restored. A perfect Christian building for Divine Service is as simple as the synagogue of the Jew.

Whether the one we entered is identical with the synagogue our Lord was wont to attend, it is difficult to say; but there can be no doubt it is a very old one, and it is not likely that there was more than one in the little town. As all synagogues are much alike we can picture the scene on that memorable occasion. A bare room—a pulpit—a reading desk—at one end a kind of wooden cupboard containing the Sacred Rolls of the Scriptures—at the other end and over the entrance, a gallery where women only sat apart from the men—near the centre a sort of railed, round pew for the Rabbi and the Elders. The presence of at least ten men (the women did not count) were necessary to hold a service, but there were only two officials: the Chazzan and the Interpreter. The duty of the first was to open the wooden cupboard and to take out of it the Holy Scroll, and to hand it to the Reader. The other was there to interpret his words into the Aramaic tongue if necessary, which was the language then spoken in Palestine, and was a Chaldaic dialect.

Now we are told that it was our Lord's "wont" to stand up and read; and this shows us that, even before His public ministry, He had attained to a degree of honour and trust in His native town. If He had found favour with man as a Child, He had equally gained their respect as a Man. So far He could please all. But when He aspired to a position such as that of the long-expected Christ, He raised a storm of resentment which would have ended fatally; but He exercised His Divine power and miraculously escaped them, because His hour was not then come to die.

"The brow of the hill," over which they sought to hurl Him, is distinctly stated to be the one on which "their city was built." It could scarcely then be the one which an ecclesiastical tradition locates as the site, and which is therefore named "The Hill of Precipitation"; unless as some have alleged, the town, or a part of it, was built on that rocky, precipitous elevation. The object of His enemies in seeking to hurl him over the hill was to kill Him by stoning. The custom of stoning was always carried out by first throwing the victim down a hill, and then casting stones at him until life was extinct.

The cliff behind the synagogue is pointed out as the likely spot of execution; others say it is situated on the height above the

PROTESTANT ENGLISH ORPHANAGE

—a charming institution which I cannot omit to mention. We visited it and saw and heard something of the splendid work which the C. M. S. is doing there. One of the lady missionaries welcomed us cordially, refreshed us with English tea, and gave us some interesting details of their labour among Mohammedans and other girls. The house is beautiful and delightfully situated on an elevated terrace above the town; and as we inspected their work and labour of love, one felt that though Christ was no longer a Carpenter in Nazareth, yet in a spiritual sense the text hanging up in the spacious hall had a depth of reality in it.—"He came to Nazareth" (Luke ii. 51).



WOMEN AT MARY'S WELL, NAZARETH.

(From a snapshot.)

Next morning we started early from Nazareth—or at least that portion of our party who objected to Sunday excursions, even on the Lake of Galilee, and among whom were all the Anglo-Israelites among us, which is as it should be. No one more than believers in our Israelitish origin should be uncompromising in the strict observance of the Lord's Day; for they realise in a peculiar way that the Sabbath is a sign between us and God (Ezek. xx. 12). We hastened to reach Tiberias that day that we might spend Saturday afternoon, instead of Sunday morning, on the Lake.

On our way out of Nazareth we passed by

MARY'S WELL,

of the genuineness of which there can be no doubt. As

there is but this one well in the basin of the hill in which Nazareth is situated, and apparently never has been but this one, we may be fairly certain that this was the village well to which Mary came to draw water, or to wash the clothes of her household. We saw the women of Nazareth at this work just as they would have been then. Some with straight, erect figures were filling their pitchers and bearing them off upon their heads, walking with a light, graceful step that even a Western master of deportment might have envied! These heavy weights, poised upon the head, give them not only a beautiful carriage, but also a strong back—spine complaint is unknown among them. Others were washing clothes in the water that was overflowing from the fountain, while chatting and laughing among themselves. Here then is a real glimpse of the village life of the Holy Child. How often must He have witnessed such a scene! How often, perchance, have accompanied His mother to the well as the children do to-day! Such a simple sight, so Eastern, so ancient, so true to the Oriental life of centuries ago as it is now, helps us to realise how wondrously the God-man took upon Him the limitations of our common humanity.



CHAPTER XVI.

THE LAKE OF GALILEE.



HE morning was glorious, and the air clear and cool as we left Nazareth. Ascending to the summit of the hill we gained a magnificent view, and then descending on the other side we crossed a few more hills, and passed by a village or two. Eastern life is astir early and the natives on their way to work in their bright attire presented a picturesque scene. A new road was being made, and here many were already at their day's labour. My note-book tells me that about here I saw some women breaking stones by the way side, and another driving the primitive plough—evidently the spirit of tyranny that excludes womankind from liberty does not debar her from oppression and hard toil! The peasant women do not veil their faces—this fashion only belongs to the higher classes. But the peasant has, in my opinion, the better life: to break stones by the road-side, unburdened by that agonising veil, must be preferable to the imprisoned life of the veiled lady of the harem.

A drive of about an hour and a half from Nazareth landed us at

CANA OF GALILEE.

A group of dirty little children were playing round a well—probably the well from which the water must have been drawn at the marriage feast, and which our Lord turned into wine. The village, which is anything but clean, possesses various supposed sacred sites; but all of them are apocryphal. There is the house of Nathaniel and the identical water pots which contained the water of the miracle! These latter are to be seen

in the Greek church, and are a source of superstitious reverence.

Leaving Cana, our way descended into a broad and fertile plain. Passing out of the territory of Zebulon, and entering that which belonged to Naphtali, we arrived at the famous hill called the *Horns of Hattin*, which has been identified as the

MOUNT OF BEATITUDES,

or the hill on which our Lord delivered His sermon on the Mount. Probably this particular elevation has been chosen as the likely site, because of its peculiar adaptability to the circumstances. It has two plateaux—the higher one would serve as a platform, or pulpit, while the broader and lower one could have accommodated the seated listeners. But there is no positive proof that this was the scene of those immortal utterances of Matt. v. and vi. The place, however, has authentic historic associations. At its base was fought one of the most sanguinary battles of the Crusaders, and yet within sight and almost in touch of the Mount that tradition has settled as the spot whence the blessedness of Peacemakers was pronounced by the Prince of Peace! This paradox reminds one of the Hague Conferences. Whenever that body has assembled to discuss Peace, war and the massacre of the Jews have broken out! Even in the Conference of the present year (1907) its sittings were not concluded before the Angel of Slaughter had descended on Morocco! This strange contradiction of human projects results from one single error on the part of the Peace Conferences. The delegates and promoters have forgotten to chain up the prime mover of wars—when they can chain the devil they will stop war, but never before! The next age of the Millennium will be inaugurated by the binding and imprisonment of Satan—that great deceiver of the nations—and then will begin the reign of universal peace for 1,000 years—but not one hour sooner. And that chaining up of the world's Troubler will not be the work of the Hague Conferences (though their endeavours to promote peace may be a preparation for it), but of: "an angel



GIRLS FETCHING WATER FROM THE WELL IN CANA.

(From a Snapshot).

from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years" (Rev. xx. 1, 2).

Shortly before leaving the famous Mount with its stretch of fertile green—and which tradition has sanctified as the Hill of Blessedness and history has reddened with the gore of battle—we came upon a vision of surpassing beauty in one of those glorious panoramic scenes which so often entranced me, and seem imprinted on my memory like indelible pictures. It was a glorious day about noon-tide and the sun shone brilliantly upon the scene that gradually unfolded itself to our eyes. For beneath us lay the blue, still waters of the Lake of Galilee, its green hills rising around and beyond, while on the near shore nestled Tiberias, and far away rose the majestic grandeur of snow-clothed Hermon. Gradually we descended to this scene of



NATIVE BOAT ON LAKE OF GALILEE.

(From a snapshot.)

loveliness and solemnity, for the lake lies about 682 feet *below* the Mediterranean.

The weather was hot, and when after lunch we entered rowing boats, only a soft, slight breeze was stirring, and hardly a ripple awakened the crystal beauty of this queen of all lakes. It is not always so. There are times when it is lashed into fury; but that day it was in its most smiling mood.

Our picturesque boats, manned by strong, dark Arabs who powerfully plied their oars in spite of the heat, and even indulged in an occasional race with another boat, bore us round to the chief spots of Biblical interest. Leaving Tiberias they rowed us to the north end of the lake near to where the Jordan flows into it; and then turning towards the West, we visited several places associated with sacred Writ, such as the supposed sites of the cities which our Lord condemned for their pride, and whose downfall He predicted. His prophecy has come absolutely true. Nothing but a few ruins remain of *Chorazin*, *Bethsaida*, and *Capernaum*, and even their site is disputed by some authorities. This is all the more remarkable because

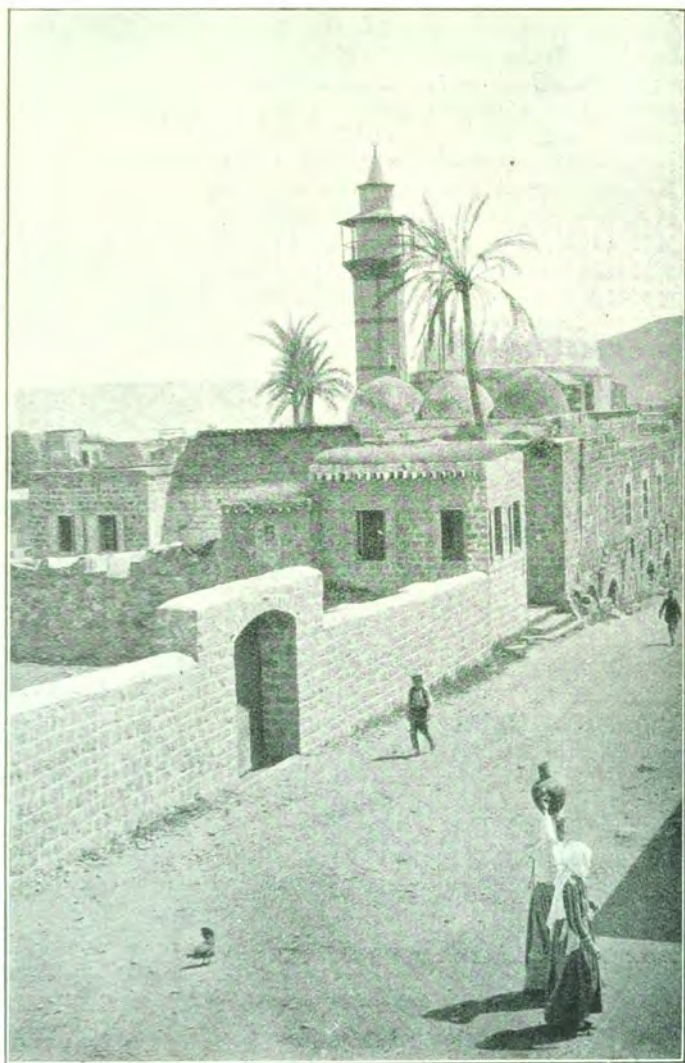
TIBERIAS,

against which our Lord never uttered a word of censure, is still standing, fairly large and prosperous, beautifully situated on the shores of the lake; and proving by its very existence, just as surely as the other "cities" show by their desolations, the truth of Scripture and the unchangeable decree of inspired prophecy. Dirty as Tiberias is, it is well for tourists of to-day that it escaped the retributive utterances of Christ; because there is no other town or village possessing a suitable hotel at which they could stay on the lake.

Our boat glided gently into the creek at

CAPERNAUM,

and, if this is the genuine site of that old proud "city," how admirably suited was its natural creek for our Lord's teachings out of the boat! How easy



TIBERIAS, ON THE LAKE OF GALILEE.
(From a snapshot.)

to have taught the people from a fishing craft moored near the shore, just there where the voice of the Speaker could be well heard by people on either side !

The modern name of Capernaum is *Tel-Hum* or *Tel-Nahum*, which signifies much the same as the old name, for while Capernaum means Village of Nahum, *Tel-Hum* is Mound of Nahum. Some notable Rabbi, it appears, of the name of Nahum (not the Old Testament prophet), was buried there.

Having landed, we at once proceeded to view the recent excavations which have brought to light the ruins of a handsome synagogue. If this is the site of Capernaum (and there does not seem sufficient reason to doubt it), these remains most probably belong to the synagogue built by the centurion who besought our Lord to heal his servant, while the Jews corroborated the Roman's just claim to His pity because, said they, "He loveth our nation and he hath built us a synagogue" (Luke vii.).

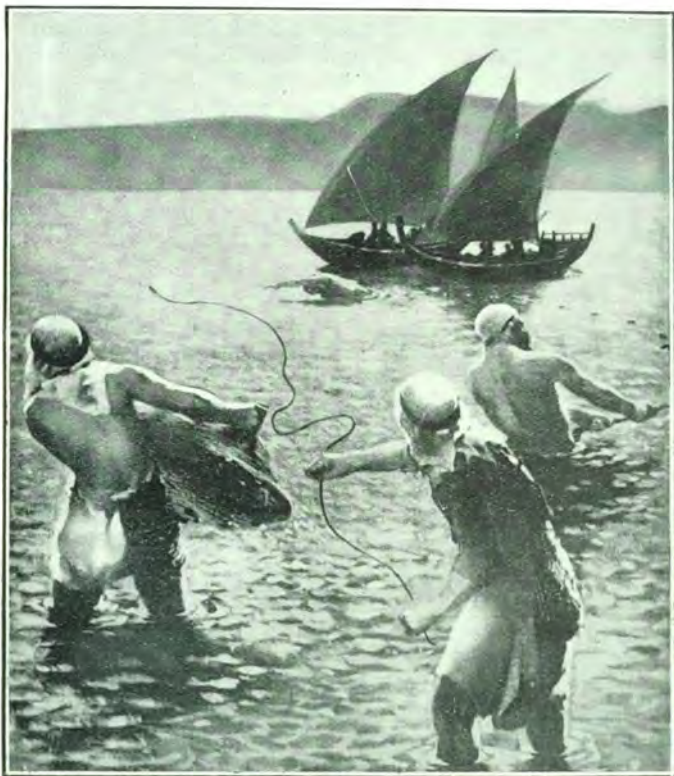
Evidently it was a synagogue such as a Roman centurion would have built, and according to the most approved architecture of the day, viz., in the style of Greek erections with handsome frieze ornamentations, colonnades and cornices. Fragments of such lay on the open ground before our eyes. How wonderful that the 20th century should thus bring to light these long-buried "sermons in stones" of the centurion's love for the Jewish nation ! The synagogue is of a white stone, and if, as believed, Capernaum was composed mostly of the black rock gathered from the adjacent quarries, this beautiful testimony of the centurion's piety must have looked conspicuously lovely, and like a pearl in a setting of jet. Capernaum was called Christ's "own city." It was evidently His headquarters in Galilee during His three and a-half years' public ministry, and is associated with His work as much as Jerusalem is with His death. Galilee was pre-eminently His place of preparation ; it was the field where He ploughed and sowed His seed—the anvil where He fitted His chosen instruments for their work.

As we sail away in our Galilæan craft, let me try and point out to you the sacred ground in our vicinity—those “holy fields” which Jesus’ earthly footsteps have immortalised. Just behind Capernaum stretch the corn-fields through which our Lord and His disciples walked. About a couple of miles further on is a level plateau, and on it stands an old khan, or inn. On that site has stood an inn for hundreds of years; it was there in our Lord’s time, and it was there long before His earthly day. Its position is an important one, for it stands near a junction of roads and by it runs the old caravan route which extends from Jerusalem, through Samaria, and on to Damascus. In Christ’s time it must have been a very busy thoroughfare. Behind it rises a mountain, probably the one where He spent all night in prayer before He chose His apostles and preached His immortal sermon of Matthew v., vi. and vii. Some have thought that here, rather than on the hill called the “Horns of Hattin” He uttered that famous discourse. Matthew tells us He was on the “Mountain” and Luke that He delivered it on the “Plain”—both are right! The “Plain” is on an elevation and from it can be distinctly seen Safed, “the city set on a hill,” and which “cannot be hid;” while above the “Plain” rises a natural plateau—there He could have sat to preach, with many of His disciples beside Him. The vast multitude, some 20 feet below in the Plain, could have distinctly heard His voice in that clear atmosphere. Behind the Divine Teacher, rose up the higher solitudes of the Mount that had been the silent witness of His all night in prayer.

From Capernaum to

BETHSAIDA

was a row of only a couple of miles. Doomed by our Lord to desolation, nothing remains of it but the fragment of a sea wall. Bethsaida means “Home of Fish,” and the name is appropriate; now, as long ago, fish abound near its shores. This was then probably the home of Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip. Here close by, it may be, Christ pronounced



FISHING IN THE SEA OF GALILEE.

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that irresistible call to the Galilæan fishermen :
"Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men."
All these many sacred associations crowded to the
mind as we wandered on the shore, and collected
numerous pretty little shells that lie thickly on the
strand.

CHORAZIN

is more inland and at the back of Capernaum. Nothing but ruins now mark the past glory of this self-exalted "city"—even its site is uncertain. How these desolations proclaim the fact: "Thy Word is truth"!

The country along the shore from Capernaum to Magdala is the

PLAIN OF GENNESARET,

a tract of land that stretched before us, carpeted with myriad wild flowers of every hue and shape. Here "the lilies toil not nor spin," and yet in beauty of colouring, and in variety of texture and form, and in glory of adorning, rival the splendour of Solomon. How often our Lord must have trodden among them!

At the southern end of the Plain is

MAGDALA,

the home of Mary Magdalene. Nearly opposite to it, but on the other, or Eastern, side of the lake, was the

COUNTRY OF THE GADARENES.

Here the hills are steep and rugged and seem to frown upon the observer, in striking contrast to the soft, smiling beauty of the Western landscape. The country of the Gadarenes was, in our Lord's time, a part of Perea and not included in the Palestine of those days. At one spot, the point just opposite Magdala and now called Gergesa, the steep, rocky cliffs run sheer down into the water; and it was there that the demon-possessed swine rushed headlong into the water beneath. Scripture is very accurate in its descriptive language, even to details.

Another four or five miles rowing brought us back to Tiberias. We had spent over five hours on the lake. I could not help feeling that the scenes we had visited, and the famous spots we had been permitted to view, had added a considerable amount to the stock of Scripture light and knowledge with which our journey, amid

the very scenes of Biblical narrative, was every day providing us.

Among the many experiences of our Lord in Northern Palestine one of the most wonderful and beautiful was His transfiguration. Where did that event happen? Some have fixed Mount Tabor as the probable site; but that does not seem tenable in view of the fact that when it occurred He was in the region of Cæsarea Philippi, which is far away from Mount Tabor. No! it is more likely that it took place on the slopes of

MOUNT HERMON,

which is accepted by many as the more probable spot. It stands forth majestically beyond the North of the lake, its white robes of snow looking resplendent in that clear atmosphere. If that glorious event occurred there, we can understand that the apostles were impressed with the fact that His raiment was white as snow. To Luke it seemed: "White and glistening" (ix. 24). To Matthew: "White as the light" (xvii. 2). But to Mark: "Shining exceeding white as snow" (ix. 3). All these similes apply to a mountain covered with snow. Those who have stood, for example, on the Alps have realised how "glistening" is the light reflected on its snows, and how dazzling white is the snow itself, so as no fuller on earth can whiten it. But when Jesus was transfigured, these peculiarities of the snow region faded into the background to the apostles' wondering gaze. It was not the splendour of Hermon that enthralled them now; but the far greater refulgence of the Creator of Hermon, when somewhat of His Divinity was manifested, when His human face, marred by sorrow, took something of the glorious appearance which He had before the world was, and His rugged, home-spun garment became beautiful and like the light with which God covers Himself (Psa. civ. 2). Mighty Hermon with its unmelting snows, what was it beside the King and Creator of the mountains when but a little of His eternity shone forth! And what better spot than "that goodly mountain"—Palestine's greatest monarch

of the hills—could have been selected for so marvellous a revelation? “That goodly mountain!” It was evidently Mount Hermon to which Moses referred when he used that expression, and which he longed in vain to see (Deut. iii. 25). Yet not in vain, for was he not there with Elias talking to Christ on the mysterious and awful subject of His Atonement, that sacrifice on Calvary which the Levitical ritual had so forcibly foreshadowed in the Tabernacle ordinances with which Moses had been so familiar? On the other side Jordan he had prayed to see that goodly mountain; but his prayer was not answered then; but now, centuries later, he stands there, his prayer answered beyond all his dreams! If God refuses us somewhat to-day, He may give it to-morrow a hundred-fold better.

The probability of Mount Hermon having been the Mount of Transfiguration seems confirmed by the significance of its name: Hermon means *unapproachable* or *Holy*. Peter said they were with Him on the *Holy Mount* (2 Peter i. 18), in other words, on Mount Hermon.



CHAPTER XVII.

OVER THE LEBANON TO DAMASCUS.



ON Monday, April 15th, we entered the steam launch to cross to the south end of the lake *en route* for Damascus. A steam launch on the Galilæan Lake—how strange it sounds! Here again we were face to face with that curious blending of the East and West; of that wonderful intermingling of the present with the past, which makes one realise that 1,000 years are but a watch in the night, and that the interval between to-day and the times of Jesus' earthly life is but as a tick of the clock in the annals of the ages. But if we were surprised to see a modern steamer on the ancient Lake of Galilee, the astonishment of the natives of Tiberias was far greater. To them this novelty—for it was still a novelty though it had been launched a couple of months—was an unending source of wonder. They crowded the little landing place on the shore, talking and gesticulating wildly.

The weather was not so bright as it had been, the lake was rather rough, and the beautiful hills were partially hidden by morning clouds. But as the day advanced the mists lifted and the sun shone hotly. At the end of the lake, and not far from where the Jordan empties itself (having entered the lake at the northern extremity), there is a small fishing village called

SAMAKH.

Here we landed and proceeded to a modern railway-station—a queer little box-shaped building. But there they take things without hurry, so we had a long wait before our 20th century means of conveyance steamed up lazily.

I wish I could adequately describe the beauty of that journey, which reminded me a good deal of the railway through the Swiss St. Gothard. Passing the

BROOK YARMUK,

which looked more like a river than our conception of a brook, our train wound upwards until we reached the flat, extensive uplands of



NATIVES OF BASHAN.

(From a snapshot.)

BASHAN.

One of the first sights that greeted us there were black cattle feeding on the far-reaching plain, reminding us of the "fat bulls of Bashan," as the Psalmist said. The air seemed very invigorating, but the general outlook of the country flat and somewhat monotonous. The soil is very rich, and no doubt when it was under full cultivation in the time that Manasseh possessed it—

for this is a part of that tribe's division of the land—it must have been famous as an agricultural district. At present, Circassian settlements occupy some of the uplands of Bashan, and have done much to encourage the natural fertility of the country there. These Circassians are Moslem refugees, who fled from Circassia when Russia obtained possession of it.

We stopped at the capital of Bashan called

KUNEITERAH,

where we alighted for lunch, and then, continuing our journey, passing beyond the borders of Palestine, and entering Syria, we arrived at

DAMASCUS

at 8 o'clock in the evening. Half-an-hour later our shaky Victorias had rattled us noisily over uneven streets and through a long and lofty covered-over "Bazaar," to the *Damascus Palace Hotel*, where we put up for two nights.

Next day we started early for sight-seeing. Of all the cities we had visited in that Eastern tour, there was none older than Damascus—perhaps none quite so ancient—and none in which the echoes of by-gone ages can be more distinctly heard than in its busy streets, and amid its never-changing scenes of Oriental life. We first hear of it in Abraham's time (1800 B.C.). There is a tradition that our great Hebrew ancestor visited Damascus on his way to Canaan from Ur of the Chaldees. Whether he did so or not we cannot tell; but we know that his trusted servant Eliezer came from this city (Gen. xv. 2). And as we drove through its crowded thoroughfares, it was deeply interesting to think that what we saw around us was much the same as it was thousands of years ago, much the same as Eliezer himself beheld—for the East changes very little and very slowly, if it changes at all. The same open shops, the same bazaars with their centuries-old methods of bargaining and selling, the same bright costumes, the same dark-tinted faces of the passers-by, the same brilliant Eastern sunshine;

and in and around the city the refreshing cool of the ever-flowing Abana, and the fresh green beauty of apparently endless shady avenues and richly foliaged gardens. Other cities, ancient and historic, have passed through thrilling times—they have been laid low to the dust, and then raised again to greatness and prosperity. It is not so with Damascus; ancient though it be, it has experienced comparatively little of the viscissitudes of history. Wars have waged around but have seldom come near enough to despoil it. There were conflicts between Israel and Syria, but Damascus, calm amidst its orchards and its groves, suffered not. Many times it has found new masters—Assyria, Greece, Rome, Arabia, and now Turkey, have possessed it. But each conqueror kept alive the old-time prosperity of the city; so that to-day it is nearly, perhaps quite, as flourishing and beautiful as it was in the life of Abraham, or of Naaman the Syrian. It was in the days of Saladin that Damascus reached the zenith of its glory. But two centuries later Tamerlane seized the city amid much pillage and bloodshed. Its many beautiful buildings were destroyed, and its Christian population massacred. The Faith of Jesus, which Paul intended to lay low in Damascus, but, instead, was the means of uplifting, was early planted in the world-famed city, spread rapidly, and was represented by its Bishop at the Council of Nice in 325 A.D. For centuries the Moslem conquerors jealously kept the city from all outside intruders. But when in 1832 Damascus was taken by the Egyptians, then the exclusive city—hidden in its bowers of green foliage, and still more secreted by the political and religious ramparts that Islamism had reared around it—for the first time opened its gates to the representatives of other Powers; and the British Consul entered it mounted, and in full costume. This event gave the first check to the fanaticism of the Mohammedans. In 1841 the Egyptians were driven out by British arms, and Damascus with the rest of Syria reverted to the complete control of the Sultan of Turkey.

Evidently the overthrow of Turkey had not then, nor

has it yet, arrived; for Scripture shows clearly that when "the sick man of Europe" dies, it will be by the hand of British-Israel. Turkey is Edom.

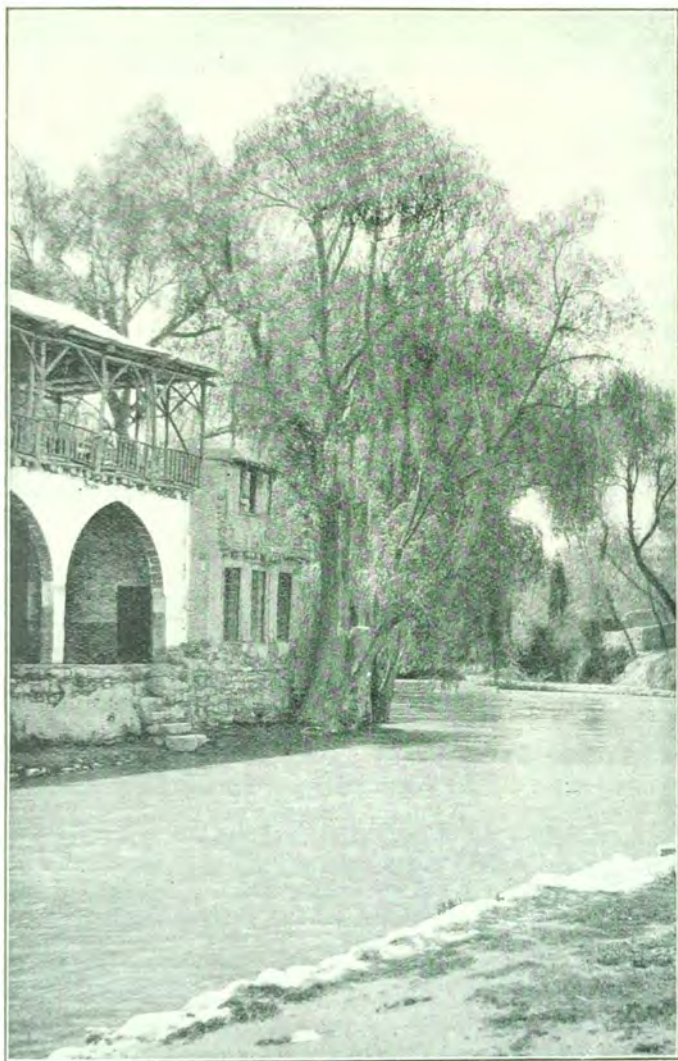
JEBEL-KASIUM,

the hill that towers above the city to the North-West, is the spot where the best and most impressive view of "the Pearl set in Emeralds" can be obtained. We went up there and stood, so we were told, where Mahomet is said to have trod when he gazed spellbound by the beauty of the scene beneath. And no wonder! The colourings of landscape, and the whole sweep of the beautiful picture, well deserve the above appellation: "the pearl set in emeralds." The buildings, crowded together, are of a pearly grey colour, while all around the city is a rich, dense mass of emerald-green trees and foliage. Beyond stretches the desert, making one realise that Damascus is an oasis, and that the secret of its undying fertility is the ceaseless flow of its two beautiful rivers,

THE ABANA AND APARPHAR.

The latter does not flow through Damascus itself, but the *Abana* is the life of the city. Its streams branch off in all directions and visit almost every house and street, so that even the poorest quarters never lack water in abundance. It is called *Barada*, which means *cold*, because even in the great heat of summer its refreshing rivulets benefit and bless every inhabitant of that crowded city. There is hardly a dwelling-house that has not its marble fountain, or its stone water-way for the flowing off-shoots of the cool, life-giving Abana river. No wonder that Naaman the Syrian despised the Jordan, when he remembered the glorious rush of his native rivers, without which there could be no Damascus at all. And yet it was the insignificant Jordan that God chose for a manifestation of His power, and not the mighty Abana and Aparphar. God often works thus.

Standing where we did, upon that hill above the city, we could see the direction of the road whence Paul



THE RIVER ABANA RUNNING THROUGH DAMASCUS.

came, blind and led by the hand, in his frustrated mission against the Christians; it was along the old caravan route leading to the city. Conspicuous and running through almost the entire length of Damascus is the

STREET CALLED STRAIGHT,

where he lodged. It is quite straight, and is now in the exact position that it was in his day, but considerably narrower.

Relics of the old gate remain. These consist of three handsome arches; the middle one being the entrance into the carriage road, the other two leading into the ways for pedestrians. On either side of the thoroughfare was a splendid colonnade; fragments of the columns are still to be seen. In Paul's day it must have been a magnificent highway. It is to-day, as it was then, the principal street, but though broad enough to serve for carriages and pedestrians, the present street is only one of the footpaths belonging to the ancient "Street called Straight." Overhead it is covered by a lofty arched roof, and on either side of the road are "bazaars" full of Oriental curiosities. Near the gateway is the reputed

HOUSE OF ANANIAS.

The building, which is very old, is now a Latin chapel; but there is nothing to prove it was the identical home of that disciple who was sent to recover Paul of his blindness.

In the same locality we were shown the projecting angle, old and rugged, of the old city's walls. A house is on the wall and its

WINDOW

was pointed out to us as the one down which Paul was let in a basket. It is not possible to know if it really is the identical spot of his escape, but there can be no doubt that it was over some very similar projecting buttress that he made his way.

In the same vicinity we saw, in the Christian cemetery, the

TOMB OF ST. GEORGE ;

not England's patron saint, but the man whom tradition says helped the apostle to escape. "He was a gentleman," explained our dragoman in all seriousness, "but now he is a saint !"

We also saw some ruins supposed to be those of the

HOUSE OF NAAMAN THE SYRIAN.

Close by is a mud-built leper hospital. "Many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha," said Christ, and there they are still to-day, whether in Syria or in Palestine. We saw many of them outside the Gates of Jerusalem.

These lamentable objects of human misery are an indescribably sad phase of Oriental life. An intolerable burden to themselves, outcast and avoided by their fellow-creatures, whose lot can be more wretched? And yet how few, comparatively, of the hurrying western travellers stop to pity, or to show practical sympathy. They hasten by, immersed in the charms of novelties on every hand, and without a thought, may be, to alleviate the untold sorrows of this living death! What a wonder Naaman the Syrian must have been when he returned to Damascus healed and well!

The site of the

HOUSE OF RIMMON

is identified beyond doubt, though nothing of its past magnificence now remains. We can realise how seductive were its influences—this Temple of the Syrian god Rimmon—when we remember that its altar was so unique that the idolatrous king Ahaz caused a *facsimile* to be made of it and set up in Jerusalem (2 Kings xvi.). But the house of Rimmon has passed away, and on its site was reared a Roman temple to Jupiter. This too was destroyed—though fragments of it remain—and on the same site was built a Christian cathedral in the 5th century. Two hundred years later it was seized by the Mohammedans, enlarged and reconstructed, and is

now a Moslem mosque, enriched with tiles and mosaics, with marble and mother of pearl, and costly decorations and splendid columns. I wonder what will be the next chapter in the varied history of this famous spot of worship!

This great

MOSQUE OF THE OMEYYADES,

as it is called, is a very splendid building, standing in its court 1,000 feet long, and with its porticos and its colonnades, its gates and its marble fountains of ab-lution, its decorations of priceless value, its rich carpets and its lofty minarets, and its utter absence of all symbols of idolatry. Evidently the Moslem has the secret, which the Christian can so seldom learn, how to beautify a sacred edifice without introducing into it images, idols, or pictures, or other infringements of the second Commandment. Mahomet was a false prophet, nevertheless he was permitted by God for the destruction of idols and the punishment of idolatrous Christendom.

Off the mosque is a small side chapel, the remains of the Christian cathedral, as is testified by a Greek inscription. Along the floor of this chapel is seen flowing a streamlet of the ever-cool Abana.

Another Greek inscription is to be seen by ascending the roof of the bazaar near the mosque. It is on one of the gates of the temple to Jupiter, and was evidently inscribed when the Christians took possession of it: "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." Truly a sermon in stones! How eloquently all these echoes of the past speak to us of the instability of all that is not of God, and the certainty of nothing except it be of Christ.

Outside the mosque we were shown the

TOMB OF SALADIN,

who was famous in the history of the wars against the Crusaders. Unmistakable evidences of the German Kaiser's visit to this tomb were there! Not only the golden wreath which he had presented, but also the

fact—so we are told—that he had taken away, as a curiosity, the cedar of Lebanon covering to one of the tombs, sending a marble one in its place !

One of the most interesting phases of Damascene life is that of the

BAZAARS.

If it were not that they are malodorous—as are most entirely Eastern quarters—one could spend hours amid the artistic displays on either side. Its rich silks, its antique gold and silver ornaments, the Oriental slippers in another booth, or, further on, gorgeous saddles and camel trappings ; or, elsewhere, richly worked curtains and beautifully inlaid tables and chairs, and a host of other fascinating articles. Add to this the ceaseless activity of its crowded marts, the bright costumes of the passers-by, the shrill voices of the street vendors, the graceful, lazy strides of the Oriental, and the general sense of careless, simple happiness that seems to be all around, and we have stepped into a scene that might be a fairy one—if it were cleaner !

Damascus has always been noted for its

INDUSTRIES

and its commercial prosperity. Situated on the highway between Asia and the Great Sea, it naturally became the emporium of surrounding nations. When we stood on that hill above the city we could see in the distance the great desert route, which was the highway of commerce. In ages gone by, when Chaldæa was in its glory, would have been seen approaching caravans loaded with the treasures of Babylon, which would find a ready market in old Damascus. Egypt, too, and Greece and the Phœnician cities on the Mediterranean coast—Tyre and Sidon—sent their camels laden with the produce of art and industry. From far-away India and Persia came their silks and spices. In the days of the Roman Empire the might and wealth of the Cæsars contributed not a little to extend the commercial activity of this favoured Syrian city ; and so from time immemorial Damascus has been noted for its trade, its markets, and its bazaars.

It is famous even to-day. We saw something of its manufactures. From jottings in my note-book I find that among those we inspected was that of rugs and small carpets. Quite little girls were working artistic designs in these with marvellous dexterity. Two of them told me, in French, they were Jewesses and only 10 and 12 years old respectively, while the small mite of eight years was threading the needles for them. In another quarter we saw a kind of copper-work, and among the busy workers were some very little ones—a scrap of humanity plying his tools with wonderful quickness for such baby hands; he was only four years old. Such tiny wage-earners gain only 1d. a day, while adults make from fr. 1 to fr. 1½ per diem. The work in mother of pearl was very lovely. Two small Mohammedans employed in this were only four and seven years of age. There were many children about this age engaged in these various industries. The working rooms were well ventilated, and even the youngest looked well, clean and contented. Sad as it may seem to see such babies at work, yet so long as our slums present the miserable condition they do, and where equally young children, half-starved and ragged, are made to labour in surroundings of dirt and degradation, we cannot point the finger of reproach at the employment of tiny children in the midst of healthy conditions in Damascus.

Many of the manufactures—chairs, tables inlaid with mother of pearl, rich silks, Damascene swords, etc.—were on view and on sale in a

RICH MAN'S HOUSE,

which is generally visited by tourists. A private house of the kind has a large court, into which open all the rooms of the house, the windows of which have no other outlook. Those who would look on the world outside must climb to the roof. The reception room of the house we visited stood at one side of the Court, and was composed of two divisions. The lower part was paved with marble and was enriched by a costly fountain standing in its centre. The upper part was raised about

18 inches above the other. In this upper part guests are received, while carpets and cushions are provided for their comfort. The extravagance which had been lavished on this reception room alone can be judged by the fact that £10,000 were spent on its erection and decorations.

Damascus is famous also for its works in gold and silver, its jewellery inset with pearls of great price, its turquoise and signet rings, and its massive silver ornaments worn by the peasantry. But beautiful Damascus, with its many fascinating scenes, has a great blot on its fair name. That

CEMETERY OF MARTYRS

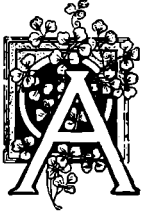
tells the inhuman tale. Can I call it a "cemetery"? A charnel place, rather—not even a wall surrounds it. The graves are few, because the martyred Christians were thrown anyhow into the holes and caves of the earth. One of our drivers—a Mohammedan—who seemed to see nothing but a grim joke in the ghastly sight, descended into one of the caves and brought us up a skull and bones, holding them up for our view with a laugh and a jeer. The massacre occurred in 1860, when 6,000 Christians were slain in cold blood, for no other cause than that they professed a creed which the Moslems hate. Of the 180,000 inhabitants in Damascus to-day, 120,000 are Moslems and only about 7,000 are Jews, the remainder being Christians of various communities. It will be thus seen that the Mohammedans are in a large majority, and one may well hope that the spirit of religious hatred may never again stain the beauty of "the pearl set in emeralds."

An excellent antidote to all such possible re-occurrences, is found in the steady labours of

BRITISH MISSIONARIES.

We visited the mission schools for boys and girls, and heard them sing Christian, familiar hymns in English and in Arabic. Many of the fresh young voices belonged to Jews and Mohammedans.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OVER THE ANTI-LEBANON
TO BAALBEC.

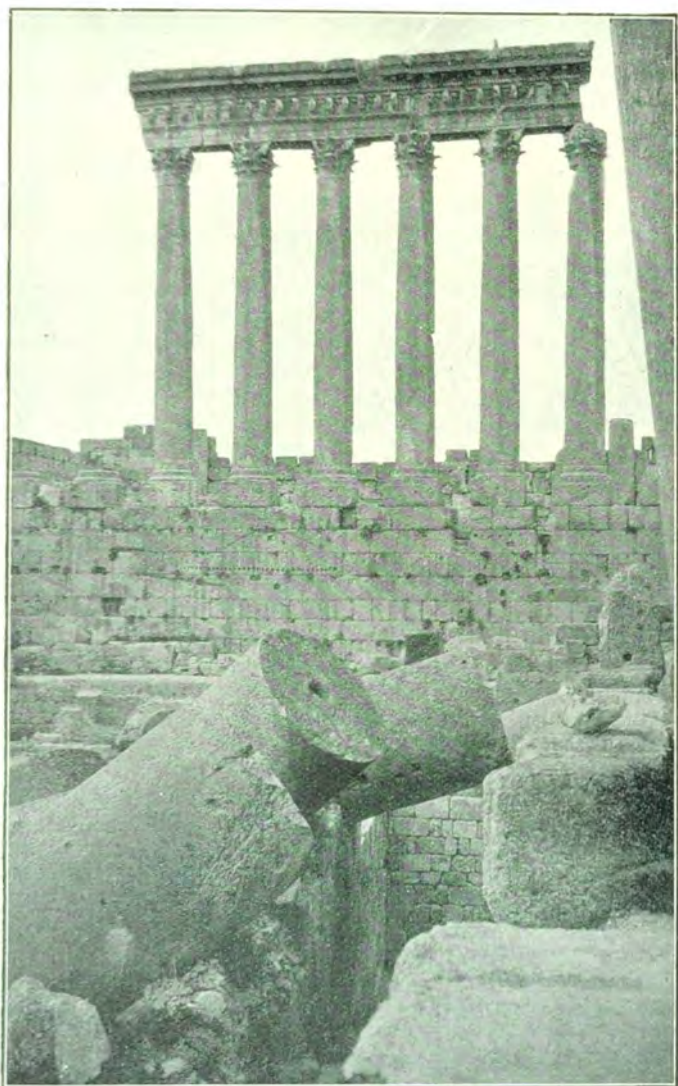
AMID the familiar sound of "All aboard! All aboard!"—which is the accustomed phrase of the dragomen when the moment of departure comes—and soon after 7 o'clock on the morning of April 17th, we left Damascus *en route* for Baalbec. It was a very hot day, and the brilliant sunshine gave the finishing touch of perfection to scenes of great natural loveliness. Our train—for travellers can go by railway now—bore us past steep, rugged rocks—across fertile plains—by picturesque villages—affording us occasional glimpses of the *Abana* river rushing over rocky beds, or flowing gently through meadow lands. Passing water-falls and through oftentimes wild and impressive scenery, our train bore us up and up, giving us a glorious sight of Mount Hermon on our way, until we were 4,498 ft. high, and in the very heart of the

ANTI-LEBANON.

The scenery grew grander as we advanced, with the Lebanon range snow-capped at one side, the Anti-Lebanon range, also sugared with snow, on the other. When our train stopped on the table-land of *Beka'a* we alighted for lunch at the Station Hotel at *Rayak*. *Beka'a* lies in a broad valley between the mountains, and yet 3,840 feet above the level of the sea, for it is in the very heart of the Lebanon. The Greeks called it *The Hollow of Syria*. In the Old Testament it is known as the

ENTERING IN OF HAMATH

(Judges iii. 3; 1 Kings viii. 65; Numb. xxxiv. 8). It



RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN, BAALBEC
(From a snapshot.)

was so-named because it was the main approach to the town of *Hamath*, which is situated at the extreme end of the valley, or "hollow"; and which marked the most Northern limit of the Holy Land.

After lunch we proceeded on our way, arriving early in the afternoon at

BAALBEC,

the ancient City of the Sun. It was at one time an important centre of Baal-worship. Magnificent ruins of its heathen temples remain; and when one has viewed these and gained some idea of the outward and visible splendour of the cults of Jupiter and Venus, one can perhaps understand the seductive influences of such ornate worship on the human mind. In all ages, and in all climes, that which can be seen has appealed to the unregenerate; the grossest errors have been enshrined in the most gorgeous temples. But the more spiritual the worship, the more simple will be its outward accompaniments. The heart that is really in touch and in unison with the Unseen will not want—nay, will avoid—all that is carnal and earthly; that there may be nothing—not even the highest achievements of human genius—between it and God.

There were three heathen temples in Baalbec, the ruins of which we visited. The

TEMPLE OF THE SUN

is believed to have been one of the largest and most magnificent erections ever built. The massive stones are enormous, and yet one joins the other without cement, and so precisely united that it is sometimes difficult to know where one begins and the other ends. While these colossal blocks inspire wonder, the beauty of the architecture raises admiration. Its flights of broad steps, its porticos, its splendid columns, its spacious courts, and marvellous terraces, and exquisite carvings—all point to the fact that this Temple to Baal must have been one of the wonders of its time. What multitudes of workmen—slaves—must have been employed in its erection! Generation after generation saw it, helped its growth, and passed away. The labour of

building and beautifying in those days, though wonderful, was slow : none of those who laid the foundation of the famous edifice ever lived to see it completed. The view from the terraces was impressively beautiful. On the one hand is the Lebanon, and on the other the Anti-Lebanon. Add to these the brilliant, hot sunshine, pouring down on these snow-topped ranges of mountains, and we can form some idea how the sun, with all its powers of life and effulgence, should have captured the imagination of the dark, heathen mind, and inspired it with sentiments of admiration and gratitude, until reverence gave place to worship ; and the devotee thought that no human skill could do enough to honour the great burning orb, whose benign influences he could feel but could not understand. And so he built that great Temple to the Sun-god, and adorned it with all the wealth and labour at his command.

Near to it is the

TEMPLE OF BACCHUS,

which is even in a better state of preservation than the Temple of the Sun ; while in artistic carvings and decorations it almost surpasses it. Especially fine were its doorways with their exquisite ornamentations of wheat, poppies, vines and ivy—the symbols of Bacchus. Some of the decorations were never completed ; because Constantine the Great, on his conversion to Christianity, stopped all further work on the heathen temples. The roof of the Temple of Bacchus has disappeared, but its main walls are standing, and are provided with niches in which evidently once stood the images of the gods. None of these idols remain ; but one of the vacant places where they once stood has now—if not a god—at least a tablet with an inscription which looks as curious as it is out of taste. It was put there by the German Kaiser, and expresses “friendship” between himself and the Sultan ! “Is there any real friendship ?” I asked our native guide, whose descriptive explanations, by the way, of the temples had been most lucid and thorough. “It is self-interest rather !” he replied with a smile.

Leaving the Temple of Bacchus we were conducted to the Temple or

SHRINE OF VENUS,

a much smaller building than the other two, circular in shape, and of a very picturesque style of architecture.

When one has realised that all these trophies of human genius were reared in a setting of the perfect beauty of the snow-covered Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, and that this centre of Baal worship had an imposing ritual, one can hardly wonder that Israel—ever prone to idolatry—should have fallen beneath the witchery of so potent a charm! There can be no doubt that, in the days of Israel's occupation of Palestine, Baalbec was an important focus of heathen influences.

The quarries, from which the massive stones were taken to build the temple of the sun, are well worth visiting. No tourist to Baalbec should think of missing the sight of that

COLOSSAL STONE

which reclines in the quarry, having been evidently hewn from the rock and left where it is—how many centuries ago, I wonder! Its enormous proportions can be guessed from the fact that it is 70 feet in length, and weighs 1,500 tons. What innumerable slaves must have been required to move such giant blocks, what sufferings must have been entailed in their herculean task! What has fallen man not done in his search for immortality! And yet these temples—built though they were with massive masonry—are now but magnificent ruins, and of value only because they speak to us of the ancient world and tell us something of a primeval age.

On April 18th we left Baalbec by train, returned to Rayak, when we again alighted for lunch, and then proceeded towards *Beyrout*.

Our journey was as beautiful as the one of the day before, and if possible surpassing it in panoramic splendour. Our train—cog-wheeled and running on three rails *à la Suisse*—ascended from the table-land of *Beka'a* until we were 4,878 feet high on the Lebanon. Glorious views opened out as we passed on—Mount Hermon, sublime and majestic in dazzling white,

luxuriant plains and picturesque villages. As we drew nearer to

BEYROUT

we began to descend fairly rapidly, until the town, embowered in its groves of pine trees, gradually appeared beneath us with its beautiful *Bay of St. George* stretching beyond; while the snow-capped mountain ridges perfected a scene of great natural loveliness.

Beyrout itself is said to be more European than any other town in Syria or Palestine; and English is probably the foreign language best known and most spoken there. *The British Syrian Schools* and the *American College*, etc., are a considerable influence for good among the 130,000 inhabitants of this sea-port of Damascus, with its busy export and import trade.



CHAPTER XIX.

SMYRNA AND EPHEBUS.

A CONTRAST.



THE Mediterranean breezes seemed very cool and refreshing after the heat in Beyrout, as we steamed out of the beautiful Bay of St. George. Charming as the tour had been, there was a delightful sense in the thought that we were "homeward bound!" But we had yet several places of interest to visit before we reached our dear native land; for our vessel, the *Saghalien*, was to touch at Asia Minor, Turkey, Greece and Italy, for the purpose of discharging, or taking in, cargo, before she landed us at Marseilles. We were twelve days coasting the Mediterranean, our first stoppage being at the

ISLAND OF SAMOS,

once visited by the Apostle Paul (Acts xx. 19). The modern capital, named *Vathy*, has a splendid harbour, where we anchored. The town had a much cleaner appearance than the ones we had recently left, probably owing to the fact that the island, though paying a tribute to Turkey, is under a Greek governor.

After leaving Samos we went to *Smyrna*, which we twice touched at. On our first visit there, time permitted us to charter a train and go to

EPHEBUS.

In all Asia Minor it would be impossible to find a more interesting sight to the Bible student than that ancient place, once a mighty centre of idolatry, and a stronghold of every form of Oriental vice; and yet where Paul preached Christ crucified, where Timothy

was bishop, and which was numbered among the specially mentioned Seven Churches in the Revelation. The height of spiritual illumination, and the depth of sacred knowledge which the Christian assembly there attained, may be gathered from the marvellous language of the Epistle to the Ephesians—the deepest of all the epistles. To those who believe in British-Israel Truth—and they are a very large section of the community—the Epistle and Ephesus have a peculiar interest; because the letter contains internal testimony that the people to whom Paul addressed it were a part of the lost House of Israel. For example, the words: “Ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise” (Eph. ii. 11—13). They could not have become “alienated” (see R.V.) unless they had first belonged to the “commonwealth of Israel,” and they could not have belonged to it unless they had been Israelites. The House of Israel had never returned from the captivity—it had become Gentilised and divorced from the law and the covenants of promise. “But now in Christ Jesus ye, who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” The Atonement of Christ is essential to the re-instatement of Israel nationally into favour with God, quite as much as it is necessary for the salvation of the individual soul. There can be nothing good without the Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In spite of the rain which was falling heavily, quite a large party volunteered for the excursion to Ephesus. We started at 8 a.m., and after an hour and a-half's run through gardens and groves, and a beautiful valley with picturesque old aqueducts, we arrived at

AY-ASOLUK.

Here we alighted and waited for the donkeys, which had travelled in the luggage van and were now hauled out like so much baggage. It was then discovered that there were no side-saddles! However, at last we were all ready, the majority mounted on the donkeys and a few walking. I was among the latter, and though the roads were

muddy and the rain pitiless, I enjoyed the tramp. Passing the high pillars of the Byzantine Aqueduct, the tops of which afford nesting homes for a number of storks, we proceeded along a winding road until we reached the ruins of the

TEMPLE OF DIANA.

Not that we could see the ruins. They were there, our guide assured us, underneath that pool of water! The excavations which have been carried out measured about 500 feet in length, but rain and flood had covered the marble pavements and beautiful columns and steps, and all that now attracted our notice was a noisy colony of frogs that kept up a ceaseless, unmusical concert of loud croakings. And this was the great temple of the goddess Diana which all Asia worshipped! What an eloquent testimony to the littleness and mortality of earthly greatness! What would the town clerk of Ephesus say now, or the rabble that shouted "Great is Diana of the Ephesians"? Ruins buried beneath the flood, and become the home of frogs—that is all!

We continued our way through the rain, our military bodyguard escorting us mounted on a beautiful and spirited Arab horse; and eventually we arrived at the ruins of the City of Ephesus. There was no flood here, and we were able to examine the splendid fragments of the once famous Metropolis of Asia Minor. The most impressive of them seemed to be

THE THEATRE,

especially as it is the one mentioned in Acts xix. 29, into which the excited crowd "rushed with one accord," and shouted: "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" It was one of the largest theatres in Asia, and capable of seating twenty to thirty thousand people. What an uproar it must have been which the town clerk's tact and wisdom were able to silence! No wonder that Paul's friends "sent unto him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre." That the worshippers of Diana should have rushed with one accord to the theatre is easy to understand when we know, as Mr. Wood (one

of the chief excavators of the ruins of Ephesus), says in his book that: "On the wall of the entrance lobby, to the right, was found a long Greek inscription which described a number of gold and silver images weighing from three to seven pounds each. These were kept in the temple of Diana, and on the anniversary of the birthday of the goddess they were carried in procession to the theatre, where they were set up near the seats of the council, and after the assembly they were carried back to the temple, where they were deposited."* Naturally, therefore, the worshippers of the goddess rushed to the place where she was annually honoured, when they thought she was in danger.

The theatre itself must have been a magnificent building, not only on account of its size, but also because of its splendid architecture, which, in a measure, can be realised from the remains of its marble steps, its columns and orchestra, its stairs and storeys, its fountains, avenues, and streets paved with marble slabs. Beyond, towards the west, are the ruins of the

GREAT GYMNASIUM,

a Roman building of the first century A.D. Above it, on the hill called Mount Prion, stands a Greek tower, which tradition has identified as the prison where Paul was confined.

There are other ruins which show the importance of ancient Ephesus—for example, the *Marble Market Hall* or *Exchange*; the *Roman Agora*, an open market square beautifully paved with mosaic marbles; the *Odeum* or *Opera House*; the *Library*, with marble steps leading up to it; *Monuments* and *Gates*, etc., all of which speak of the past greatness of the once famous city. Relics, too, of its Christian history are to be seen. The site of the

CHURCH OF ST. JOHN

has been identified. A fine ruin, called the *Gate of Persecution*, leads to it. Near to it was the Temple of

* *Guide to Ephesus.* By J. T. Wood.

Diana, and in the same vicinity stands the *Great Mosque*, an imposing building which cannot fail to attract the attention. These three ruins, so near to each other—Temple of Diana, Church of St. John, and the Great Mosque—signify the three great periods of history which have swept over Ephesus. First the heathen, which assumed powerful proportions, and in its era Ephesus became great, especially through the exertions of Alexander the Great, and, later, under its Roman masters. But the glitter of heathenism died before the Divine glory of the gospel which Paul laboured for three years to establish, with the result that Ephesus became the leading Church in Asia, and an important centre of Christianity. But with the advent of the fourth century A.D., the corruptions which prevailed nearly all over Christendom found their way to Ephesus. “Thou hast left thy first love” (Rev. ii. 4), said Christ to the Church in Ephesus, and the prophetic warning had come true. The depth of blasphemy to which it sank can be realised when we know that the Third Œcumenical Council, held there in the fifth century, declared that the Virgin Mary was “Mother of God,” a title and a doctrine repugnant to Scripture, and which, on the one hand, unduly exalts a human creature, and on the other lowers the Divinity of the Son of God. In process of time the Church of St. John grew more and more like its heathen predecessor. Images, idolatrous feasts, worldly fairs, etc., could have shown the thoughtful and enlightened observer that, much of “Diana of the Ephesians” had reinstated itself. Naturally, the third era, signified by that Great Mosque, followed in just retribution, and Christ’s prophetic utterance was fulfilled: “I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place except thou repent” (Rev. ii. 5). The Turks took possession, and Ephesus suffered from their attacks for three centuries, until, in the beginning of the fifteenth century, its final doom arrived. The Church of St. John was destroyed, the Christians fled the city, and Ephesus lost its place as the capital of Asia. Now there remain only ruins—the “candlestick” is gone.

On the occasion of our second visit to Smyrna (we had seen Constantinople in the meanwhile, which I will describe later), the weather had cleared, the sun shone brilliantly, and

SMYRNA

looked beautiful when we viewed it on that April day from the hill above the city. Beneath us stretched the lovely Bay, ships passing and re-passing on its blue waters. On its shore lies the city around which the histories of ages have clustered. It looks much more modern than it really is with its graceful minarets and domes, its tiled roofs, and groves of cypress trees. I have noted above that Ephesus against which Christ uttered condemnation, has ceased to exist as a city. Now, it is—we will not say remarkable, for there is nothing extraordinary in the fact that Divine prophecy is fulfilled, because it always is—but *noteworthy* that Smyrna, which is the only one of the seven Churches of Asia against which *no reproach* was uttered, is to-day flourishing and important, and numbers 230,000 inhabitants. Indeed, Smyrna is the only one of the seven Churches which retains any portion of its ancient prosperity—the others have practically ceased to be. Here is a potent lesson which should not be passed lightly by.

As we drove through Smyrna we were struck with its clean and well made streets, its fine houses and generally pleasing appearance, which was altogether different from the essentially Turkish towns. Half the large population of Smyrna are Greeks; though colonies of various nationalities reside there, while the modern tramway line makes it difficult to realise how very ancient Smyrna is. It is as old as Ephesus—nay, possibly older—and has passed through the vicissitudes of war, and the eras of peace and progress. Christ's message to the Christians there, shows us how terrifically the storms of persecution swept at one time over it. The name of

POLYCARP THE MARTYR,

a disciple and contemporary of the Apostle John, is

indissolubly linked with Smyrna the Fair. I was very anxious to visit the spot of his martyrdom. The remainder of the party wishing to see the Bazaars, I took a guide and proceeded to the historic site, which is situated on Mount Pagus. My guide—an old Greek—could speak English tolerably well and entertained me with accounts of the celebrities he had guided to the same place, among whom, he said, was Lord Kitchener. He seemed greatly astonished that I should wish to *walk* to the place on the Mount. I was the very first woman, he declared, with many expressions of surprise, to make the journey on foot. That I should prefer walking to driving seemed to astound him, but I told him how ladies in England lived a very different life from those in the East, and that we in the West would not tolerate anything but the freest liberty. Then our talk turned to other matters, and he told me he belonged to the Greek Church. "It is all so dark," he said, wearily; "no one comes back from the other world to tell us what to believe. We can be sure of nothing."

"We have the Bible," I replied; "it is our Guide. It shows us the way to Heaven. We have no other. And just as you are my guide to Mount Pagus, so is the Bible our Guide to Heaven. I trust you to lead me rightly. I do not know the way, but you do, and that is enough for me. In like manner the Bible, which cannot err because it is the Word of God, tells us that Salvation is through Christ only. There is no other way to Heaven but through Him."

This seemed to set the old Greek thinking, and he told me he had a Bible and would read it. And so whiling the pleasant climb, we neared our destination, passing on our way the site of Smyrna's old theatre, which, though not so splendid as the one at Ephesus, must have been great and handsome, but very little of it is now left. Nearly at the summit of the Mount is the famous *Stadium*, which centuries ago was supplied with its marble seats, and decorated with artistic designs. None of these now remain, but the general outline of the play-house, answering to our modern music-halls, and inferior to the theatre, is plainly dis-

cernible. There Polycarp was martyred before the sneering, jeering, blaspheming crowd that filled the amphitheatre of seats around. If Christ came to modern music halls to-day, whether in the East, or in the West, would they treat Him better? I doubt it. Sin is the same in all ages, and the hatred of the unregenerate heart to a Crucified Saviour, unchanging.

I thought of Polycarp as I stood looking at the site of Smyrna's old music hall, his venerable form and hoary head the butt for the mob's ridicule. They offered him pardon if he would deny Christ. "For eighty-and-six years," replied the aged disciple, "Christ has been my Friend; why should I deny Him in my grey hairs Who has never done me anything but good?" And then they burnt the old saint, on the very spot at which I was gazing eighteen centuries later. Near to the site of his martyrdom is the so-called *Tomb of Polycarp*. That the ashes of the martyr are really there is not likely; it appears rather that they were taken and deposited in a tomb outside the city, and on the road to Ephesus. But it is very probable that this tomb is a memorial one, erected to his honour by faithful disciples, and ever remaining where they built it—a monument, simple and unadorned, but eloquent of the steadfastness of him who was indeed "faithful unto death," and who now has "the crown of life."

The view from the summit of Mount Pagus, 600 feet above the sea, is one never to be forgotten—with the city lying beneath and the blue waters of the Mediterranean stretching beyond. I wonder was it the same calm, sun-lit day that last time that Polycarp saw it.

If Polycarp has gone, his work has not. Smyrna's candlestick is still alight, which is evinced by the existence of British and American Protestant Missions in the town. What a contrast to desolate and forsaken Ephesus!

On our walk back my guide led me by the Turkish and Jewish quarters. The streets were narrow and Oriental in appearance, and our speed was considerably hampered by a string of camels which were going in the same direction. Being well laden they took up a large

part of the narrow thoroughfare, and we had to stand aside until they had passed. In the Jewish quarter I noted that the Jews looked much more prosperous and happy than they do in Jerusalem ; and the black velvet, turban-shaped hats of the women were very quaint and picturesque. The kind old Greek, not wishing that I should lose a sight of the

BAZAARS

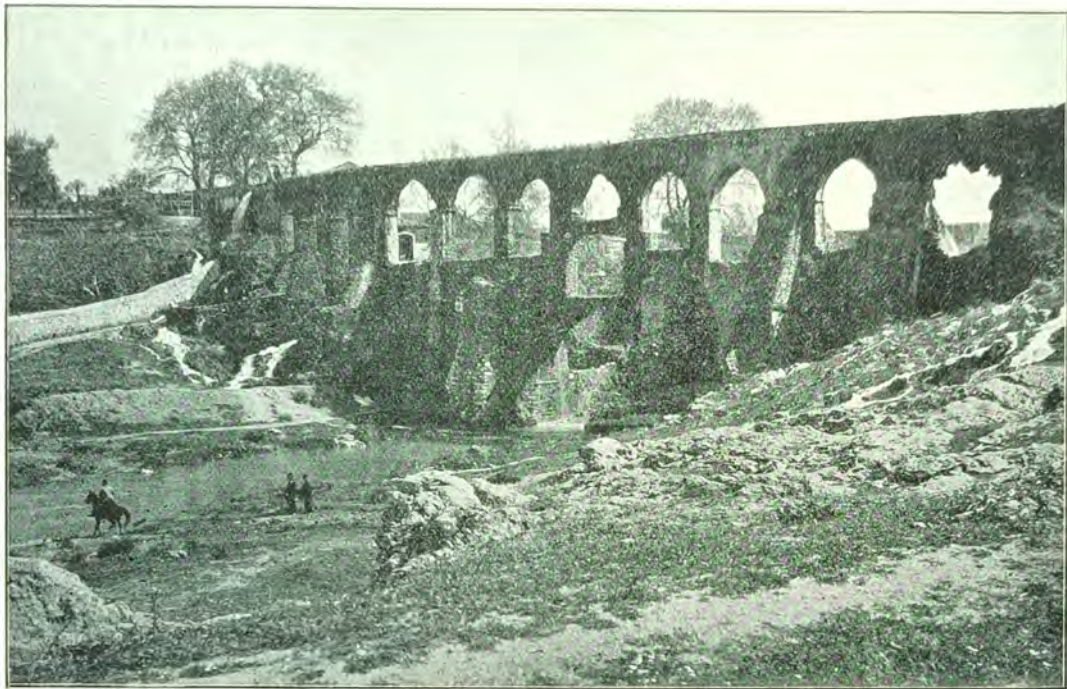
of Smyrna, led me through them—tortuous little streets, covered overhead, and having open shops, or booths, on either side, and crowded with a motley throng of various nationalities in a variety of bright attire. Merging out upon the quay I found the rest of our party, just in time to return with them to the *Saghaliën*.

One of the most curious and weird sights which we witnessed in Smyrna was that of the

HOWLING DERVISHES.

These are to be seen in all Mohammedan centres, but Smyrna afforded us the first opportunity of observing this strange, religious, fanatic display. We all drove there, passing on our way the very beautiful ruins of the old *Aqueduct*, which witnesses to the marvellous engineering skill of the Greeks centuries before Christ, and now affords the traveller a lovely picture of massive masonry, fine pillars and graceful arches, with the water of the River Meles rushing beneath. Nearly opposite the Aqueduct was a wonderful bridge—wonderful, that is to say, for its dilapidated condition ! So broken and unsafe was it, that we were all obliged to alight and walk over it, while the horses were taken out of the shafts and led across, and the carriages were dragged over by the drivers one by one, the bridge being unable to bear any great weight. It was full of holes, which were covered over with loose fragments of tin, a typical, Turkish piece of neglect !

The Howling Dervishes performed their devotions—if such they can be called—in a large, bare room, while we were gathered in a balcony to watch their antics. The following jotting from my note-book will give some



AN OLD ROMAN BRIDGE OVER THE RIVER MELES, NEAR SMYRNA.

(From a Snapshot).

idea of the scene we witnessed:—"There were three chief Dervishes squatted on mats of sheep's skin. The one in the middle was on a red mat, while at either side of him were the other chief Dervishes—old men with sad, pale faces and white beards and green turbans. The others were seated before these three in a semi-circle. They began slowly to repeat parts of the Koran, mostly calling upon God, and gradually working themselves up into a vigorous nodding of heads from one side to the other. As they continued, their excitement increased; their heads nodding more and more quickly, and their bodies bending and swaying with an intensity that was astonishing. After a while they got up and, joining hands, danced round with a certain grace of movement. One Dervish in the middle was going round and round by himself like a spinning top. They seemed to be under hypnotic power, and some looked very exhausted when the performance, which had lasted for over an hour, was over."

This is the Mohammedan idea of prayer! The peculiar grunt which they unceasingly ejected was the one word, *Hu*, which means *He* (God). And every action, by which they were working themselves into an ecstasy, had some significance to the initiated. The Dervish, for example, who was whirling round like a spinning top, turned round in the belief that God was everywhere and all around, while one hand, the palm opened, was stretched upwards to receive God's blessings, and the other was bent downwards to confer blessing on those on earth. Only a man who has been to Mecca can be a Dervish. But the whole spectacle was saddening.



CHAPTER XX.

THROUGH THE DARDANELLES TO
CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE journey by steamer, from Smyrna to Constantinople, was very beautiful—through the Gulf of Smyrna and into the Ægean Sea, passing Mitylene and other islands, and through the far-famed

DARDANELLES.

This narrow stretch of water, extending between 40 and 50 miles, is one of the most remarkable natural defences in the world; while the inventions of military science have done much to render the water-way almost impregnable. As we steamed out of the Ægean Sea and advanced up the beautiful Straits, landscapes steeped in the records of past history opened at either side. Asia stretched to our right, Europe to our left.

The Plain of Troy, famed by the conquering forces of Alexander the Great, and in later centuries by the vigorous onrush of the Mohammedan power, was spread before us on the Asiatic side. Now, its forts of *Kum-Kaleh*—facing those of *Sedd-al-Bahr* on the opposite coast—remind us of the present well-nigh invincible character of the Dardanelles. As we steam up farther, we are aware that fortifications, manned by guns old and new, guard the way from all possibility of invasion. The chief works of defence are at a very narrow point called *Chanak Kalessi*. This is looked upon by military experts as the key to the whole position. Here our vessel stopped to gain permission to proceed. This is obligatory on all ships, and if the order were disobeyed the Krupp guns on either side would soon inquire the reason why. Evidently the *Saghalien* was able to give

a good account of herself, as after a few minutes' delay we continued our journey. For the rest of the way, formidable defences were observable on either side, which are connected with each other by roads on their shores and telegraph lines.

As we advanced further, *Gallipoli* came into view, where the allied armies of England and France met at the time of the Crimean war. It is said that the Dardanelles have only one weak point, and that is on the European side. If an army, protected by a powerful fleet, were landed on the *Island of Imbros*, or on the coasts of the *Gulf of Saros* (which would be possible), the forts of the Dardanelles could be seized from their rear. Whether this, or some other way, will be the means employed to capture the gate to Turkey, it is impossible to say at present. But that the Mohamedan power must continue to decline, and the British-Israel empire go on to increase, is quite evident to those to whom the Book of Prophecies in the Word of God has been unsealed.

Leaving the Dardanelles we steamed into the expansive waters of the

SEA OF MARMORA,

and when, later on, the capital of Turkey loomed in the distance, everyone crowded on deck; for the approach to *Constantinople* is considered one of the grandest sights in the world. Certainly it was a magnificent scene as we steamed towards the city; with *Stamboul* on one side and *Scutari* on the other, while the graceful, tapering minarets and domes of *St. Sophia*, and other mosques, the fine buildings and elevations, and the waters of the *Golden Horn* that were shining in the afternoon sunlight—all combined to make up a picture of great and impressive beauty. There is an old saying that: "distance lends enchantment to the view," and this is emphatically true of

CONSTANTINOPLE.

Only when one has landed does one realise that, it is the metropolis of "the sick man of Europe!" We

seemed to arrive at once right into the midst of the city, the *Saghaliën* anchoring, one might say, at the very side of one of its busy streets. We landed almost at once, and, proceeding to the Custom House, had our passports duly examined after an almost interminable time of waiting, for the Turkish official does not hurry. Our guide then took us for a walk round the city, but all that I seem to remember of that particular excursion are muddy roads, ill-paved streets, dirty houses, and wild dogs! That night, however, Constantinople was festive, every minaret and public building being illuminated, for it was the Sultan's birthday, and his Majesty was getting his annual birthday present—a new wife! I inquired what became of the Sultan's wives when they got old, or when he grew tired of them. I was answered by the information that on the shores of the Bosphorus there is a grey, grim, old castle . . . I needed to ask no more, alas!

On the morrow we drove to see the famous *Mosque of St. Sophia*, passing on our way the

SUBLIME PORTE,

which is the "Downing Street" of Turkey. "The Sublime Porte," said our guide, waving his hand towards a dirty-looking gateway. "Is it?" I said. "It looks more slimy than sublime!" Altogether, it seemed to me that Constantinople wanted painting up. Even the

MOSQUE OF ST. SOPHIA

did not compare favourably in its general appearance with the freshness of the mosques we had seen elsewhere, such as that of Mohammed Ali in Cairo. But the architecture is undoubtedly very fine. The Mosque of St. Sophia, as all know, was once a place for Christian worship. There are many mosques in Constantinople which once were Christian churches, and these can be always identified by the fact that externally they are painted yellow, while the others are white. In all, there are about one hundred mosques in Constantinople. The head of the Mohammedan religion is the Sultan, and

next to him ranks the *Sheikh-ul-Islam*. A winding passage led us to the galleries which nearly surround the interior of the building, and whence we had a good view. Just facing us were two large discs, one bearing the name of *Allah* (God) and the other of *Mahomet*. An inscription on the principal door, with the symbolic device of a dove and a throne supporting a Book, is evidently a relic of the times when Christ was worshipped there. It runs in Greek: "The Lord said, I am the Door of the sheep, if any man enter in he shall go in and go out and shall find pasture." Descending to the floor of the mosque we were able to see and admire the splendid aisle, whose roof is supported by columns of green marble, and the lofty dome, which has the appearance, due to its sunk panels and windows, of being suspended from above. The place which the imperial throne occupied when Constantinople was the capital of Eastern Rome was near the centre of the church, while the seat of the patriarch was opposite to it. Facing them was the Holy Table, which the corruptions of an apostate faith had styled an "altar." Our guide, who was a Romanist, drew our attention to a white patch in the roof above the place where this "altar" had stood four and a-half centuries ago. It was nothing more than the effacement of some of the gilt or paint, and yet in all seriousness he declared that: "it was through there that the Holy Ghost came down when the priest said Mass." The ignorance of the man may be some excuse for such a blasphemy; but it provided an eloquent reason why the Church of St. Sophia was given over by an overruling Providence into the hands of idol-hating Moslems. Idolatry can never go unrequited: in the sins of faithless Christendom we see the why and wherefore of the devastating triumphs of a creed hardly darker than the corrupted one it overthrew. Now the follower of Islam recites his devotions on the carpeted marble floor, acknowledging no God but One, and with a strict adherence to the second commandment. That Islamism is an offspring of hell there can be no doubt, for it denies Christ as the Saviour and the Son of God from first to last; yet it is equally clear that it was permitted by God to wage cruel war against

apostate Christendom, and was His scourge against iniquities not less black than its own.

Among other sites visited by us in our drive round Constantinople was the large, open space which once covered the Hippodrome, which lies buried beneath, and which in ancient times was a famous public building. In this place now stands the

OBELISK

brought from *Heliopolis*, having been erected there sixteen centuries before Christ by one of the mighty Pharaohs. It was brought to Constantinople by Theodosius the Great, towards the close of the fourth century. Near to it is the

BURNT COLUMN,

said to have been erected by Constantine. A legend ran that any invading army would be powerless to proceed beyond the site where stood this curious pillar. But the theory proved a vain one, and the relics of images and popery buried beneath it had no power to check the onset of the Ottoman invaders, much to the surprised grief of the Greek "Christians."

A very handsome monument which we passed was that of a

MARBLE FOUNTAIN,

presented to the Sultan by the Kaiser of Germany. The reader will remember how in Damascus and in Baalbec "Willie" liked to leave a similar impression!

Perhaps the most lovely sight we had the opportunity of looking at that day was the

BOSPHORUS.

We viewed it from the ridge of the hill in that part of Constantinople called Pera, which is the European quarter of the city, and consequently characterised by finer buildings than one is accustomed to see in other parts. Here are situated the embassies, the principal hotels, clubs, schools, and private residences, etc. Beneath lies the Bosphorus, a beautiful stretch of

water flowing between the Sea of Marmora and the Black Sea. Numerous houses studded the shores on either side, richly enlivened by luxuriant foliage and trees, while the narrow water-way itself seemed full of animation with boats and steamers constantly moving up and down. Another picturesque stretch of water is that of the

GOLDEN HORN,

so-called from its shape, and also because, in the heyday of the Greek and Roman empires, the treasures of gold were conveyed up its water-way. A bridge called the *Galata Bridge* crosses the Golden Horn and unites Stamboul with Galata. This bridge, which we drove over, is nearly as interesting as the Kasr-en-Nil bridge in Cairo on account of the variety of nationalities who are always crossing it—the Turk, the Greek, the Armenian, the Bulgarian, the Jew, the Asiatic, and the European all combine to render the famous thoroughfare a scene of interest and life.

Of the 900,000 inhabitants of Constantinople about half that number are Turkish Mohammedans. With so large an aggregate it is easy to understand that the Armenians suffered terribly at their hands during the massacre. A Greek to whom I mentioned the occasion of the last massacre of Armenians in Constantinople that took place about eleven years ago, told me that the horrors which he himself witnessed in that dire event were indescribably dreadful. "Don't ask me about it," he exclaimed with broken voice. "I saw them slaughtered before my eyes till the streets ran with blood—I cannot speak of it. O, it was awful!" God grant the atrocities may never be repeated!

Of the various dwellers in the historic city I must not omit the far-famed

DOGS OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

They are exactly of the same breed as those we saw in all the East—Jerusalem, Galilee, Damascus, Smyrna, etc.—but I thought looked even sadder and thinner than

those in Jerusalem. If the following note (which I take from Macmillan's *Eastern Mediterranean*, p. 207), be accurate, the canine inhabitants of Constantinople exhibit a noteworthy intelligence and sagacity:—"The many dogs which crowd the streets pass the whole of their existence there and are quite ownerless. They are very indolent and consequently are often maimed by passing vehicles. They pick up a living from what is thrown upon the streets, and have a special grudge towards the night ragpickers, regarding them as men who may rob them of their perquisites. The dogs get a certain amount of attention from sections of the community and are very responsive to kindness; but those in a district which is quite Oriental are sometimes troublesome to strangers. Among street dogs hydrophobia is practically unknown. By some method of their own the streets of the city are laid out by the dogs into districts: any dog which ventures to trespass out of its own district into another is attacked and driven back by the dogs of the district into which it has trespassed. Yet it happens that a dog wishes occasionally to pass through a district not its own, and there seems to be some way by which it makes known its desire; for in such cases it is met, at the dividing line, by dogs of the next district and escorted through their beat and then handed over to the charge of dogs of the third district."

More humorous, if not so intelligent, seemed the porpoises in the Sea of Marmora as we left the shores of the great city. A number of these "pigs of the sea," as they have been called, followed our vessel for some way, evidently enjoying a race with the steamer, and plunging in and out of the deep in a way that was quite comical. Some, evidently in a high state of porpoise hilarity, jumped high up into the air; one leaping quite six feet above the water! He must be quite a champion acrobat among his fellows. A cheer from the deck greeted his performance—"Well played!" shouted an Englishman.

It was towards eventide as we left Constantinople, after having had our passports duly examined by a

couple of Turkish officials who guarded the gangway. A crowd had gathered on the quay to watch our departure. Gradually, as we steamed away, the forest of red fez—for nearly every Turk wears that headgear—faded from view; and later, while the playful porpoises were exciting our mirth, the city itself grew less and less distinct as we moved forward, and soon its graceful, tapering minarets and domes, and numberless buildings were lost to view. And what has been the

HISTORY

of that great city—New Rome as it once was styled? It is impossible to see it without thinking of the mighty events that have taken place within it, and the deep upheavals that have shaken its old foundations and changed the trend of its career more than once. Centuries before Christ the *Byzantium* of the Greeks, it was conquered by Constantine the Great three centuries after Christ, and re-named by him after himself—Constantinople. The seat of imperial government was transferred thither, and this change, while it lifted the city of the Bosphorus to renown and importance, helped to deal another blow to the western half of the Roman empire, which for generations had been nearing its dissolution. And “New Rome” became the rival of her sister on the Tiber, and bade fair to outshine her in religion and in commerce.

The Greek Church has always been distinct from the Roman in not acknowledging the Pope as its head, but otherwise there is little difference between the two—the general “falling away” predicted by the Apostle Paul (2 Thess. ii.) infected the Greek as well as the Latin section of Christendom; and these were the two women who, in symbolic language, carried the “ephah of wickedness,” and established it in the “Shinar” of resuscitated Baalism (Zech. v. 6—11). In the seventh century arrived the scourge on apostate Christendom, when the Saracens invaded Constantinople. In the thirteenth century the Crusaders—servants of the Pope—attacked, plundered, and captured the city, and treated the Christian Greeks with as little respect as they did the Moslems

in Palestine. Then came the Turkish foe, and century after century saw their onslaughts and their triumphs over Constantinople, until, in 1453, the historic city fell completely into their hands. In vain were the images of saints paraded round the streets; the enemy advanced even to St. Sophia, and polluted that place of worship with acts of barbarism and cruelty. But the event is marked in the era of the Renaissance as a very important one. Until then the treasures of Greek learning were selfishly guarded within the walls of the city—now its scholars fled, bearing with them knowledge of MSS. unknown to the rest of the world. Thus an impetus was given to learning and to the revival of the study of Greek and Hebrew. It is needless to point out how great a part that scholastic awakening played in the translation of the Scriptures, in later years, into the tongues of the people; which unlocking of the sacred Word caused the glorious Protestant Reformation. How wondrously do the designs of overruling Providence fit one into the other! Such then is the history, in a nutshell, of the city that faded from our view beneath the mellowed light of the setting sun on that April evening of 1907. And what will be its future? When “the sick man” dies who will occupy Constantinople? What power will seize this famous gateway?

In a previous chapter I have referred to the identification of the Turks with the Edomites, the descendants of Esau. I have also pointed to Ezek. xxxv. (see Chap. XIV.), which foretells the downfall of Edom, and to the prophecy of Baalam, which foreshows that in the latter days Israel will be the agents of the Turks' overthrow. In Psa. lx. we have another remarkable statement concerning Edom, while linked with the mention of Edom in that passage is that of “the strong city.”

“Who will bring me into the strong city? Who will lead me into Edom?” If Edom be the Turks, what can “the city” be but Constantinople? Well may the inspired writer ask, Who will bring him there? Yea, who can take a city so impregnably situated? “Vain is the help of man,” he exclaims. Strategists have acknowledged that the task of con-

quering Constantinople is almost impossible. In human might alone it may be out of the question, but "Through God we shall do valiantly; for He it is who shall tread down our enemies."

The Israel of God—British-Israel—shall yet possess Constantinople.



CHAPTER XXI.

THROUGH THE GREEK ARCHIPELAGO
AND HOMEWARD BOUND!

AFTER leaving Constantinople we touched for the second time at Smyrna, which visit I have already described (see Chap. XIX.). Our journey from Smyrna to Piraeus took us through the far-famed

GREEK ARCHIPELAGO,

affording us a series of views, very much like the appearing and vanishing scenes shown on the screen by a dissolving lantern. Many of the islands were of great beauty in form and colouring, and no sooner had a group of the *Porades* or *Cyclades* faded from sight than another immediately appeared before us. They seemed to be springing up on every side as we steamed along; some losing themselves in the misty distance, while others merged out of the dimness towards the horizon.

We had left Smyrna at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of April 28th: on the following morning, at 6 o'clock, we were at

PIRAEUS,

a large harbour on the Greek coast, but of no particular picturesqueness. This was Sunday morning; our gallant ship being a day later than had been expected, owing to the delay caused by taking in cargo at Samos. We were to leave again that evening; but though there was but that one opportunity of seeing *Athens*, I could not bring myself to do in Greece what I would not do in England. The excursion to Athens would have entailed travelling by boat, railway, and carriage, and a general round of sight-

seeing, which I could not think was the right way for spending the Lord's Day; and so I preferred to remain with the very small minority on deck, who valued a clear conscience more than a visit to the Greek capital, beautiful though no doubt it is. Therefore, I did not see Athens with the majority of our party, which numbered several English, Welsh, and American clergy and ministers, who gave it as their excuse that they must see Athens in order to describe it to their respective congregations! I could not help thinking that their people would have been more edified and strengthened by the uncompromising steadfastness of their pastors to the sanctity of the Sabbath than by the description of the ruins of heathen temples or even of Mars Hill! But we are not in the days of the Puritans, whose adherence to holy principles was so powerful a means of the fruits of righteousness which we are enjoying in these days.

Leaving Piræus, we arrived the next morning at

NAPLES,

passing by *Capri*, a very lovely island. The sun was shining brightly on the waters of the bay, and picturesque though the whole scene was, I thought Torbay and Torquay were finer and more beautiful, and after the unrivalled approach to Constantinople, Naples looked tame; while the poetical charm of Italy is nothing to be compared to the fascinations of the East, which we had just left. We took a pleasant drive through the town, and visited the splendid and lofty Colonnade, which was well worth a visit. Our guide conducted us to the chief church of the town, in which is exhibited to visitors the finger of St. Januarius: the blood on it is supposed to liquefy once a year! Which is darker—the Howling Dervishes of Mohammedanism, or this “lying wonder” of the corrupt Roman Church? Which? The Howling Dervish is at least sincere in his fanaticism, but here is a fraud practised by an unscrupulous priesthood with the object of deceiving, in order to enhance its own power!

What pleased me most in Naples of all I saw there was the *Victoria and Albert*, the beautiful yacht of our king, lying in the harbour. Unfortunately for us His Majesty had left Naples, and the Queen was away; and so we had no opportunity of seeing them.

Time had not permitted us to visit Pompeii, much to our regret. But we had an excellent distant view of the marvellous ruins as we were steaming away, while Mount Vesuvius frowned above. The famous old crater did not show himself fully to us—heavy clouds were obscuring the summit. Our way, after leaving Naples, took us between the islands of

CORSICA AND ELBA.

I could imagine Napoleon gazing impatiently from his prison on the one, towards his home on the other.

Gradually we neared the coast of France, with “half a gale” making the proverbial “blue” of the Mediterranean look grey and angry. On May 1st we embarked at

MARSEILLES.

That same evening we took train for Paris; crossed to England via *Dieppe* and *Newhaven*, and found ourselves, safe and well, back in London on May 3rd. And as I drove through the World's Metropolis once again with my dear father, I felt that it was good indeed to be back in England—the best of all lands.

Some weeks later I was lecturing on the Holy Land at the Palestine Exhibition, in the Agricultural Hall; and since then have lectured, with lantern views brought from Jerusalem, in many parts of our “Isles of the West,” thus endeavouring to pass on to many the increased Biblical knowledge gained in our tour, “By Way of the East.”



A NEW CHAPTER.

EASTER, 1914.



HIS chapter is new—not merely because it is now published for the first time—but chiefly because it touches on so many *new* things that have come to pass since the first edition of “By Way of the East” appeared—things that have a direct bearing on the Land of Promise.

Just seven years have passed since I visited Palestine; and as one lets the mind recall the past, one thinks first of all of the mighty political upheavals—the Revolution in Turkey of 1908, followed by its *New Constitution*, which promised so much and achieved so little. The birth of a New Turkey did not result; but the unexpected shrinkage of its territorial possessions marked another stage in the decay of that power, that has held Jerusalem so long in bondage.

The Holy Land watched the effects of the new *régime* and benefitted from the change; the iron heel of Edom on Israel's land became less hard and stern when the Sultan's rule gave way to a more constitutional method, and the throb of expectant hope was felt throughout the land of our forefathers. Probably in Turkey itself the improvement was most marked. Readers of my description of Constantinople will find mention of the famous wild dogs of that city. These now no longer exist. Turkey, anxious to show how up-to-date the New Constitution had made it, caused its 42,000 canine inhabitants to be destroyed, so that the visitor of to-day will no longer see those old, living links with Oriental ways, nor be disturbed by the barking, and howling beneath his window through the night. They wandered even on to ships anchored at the city's street (for vessels approach right to the thoroughfare of Constantinople).

How well I remember that night we spent there, when, suddenly waking, I found a large wild dog sniffing round my berth! But it was harmless! It merely gazed astonished at my peremptory command of dismissal, blinked its tired eyes, and withdrew! The most regrettable part of this westernising of Turkey was the cruel way its famous dogs were destroyed. To the Mohammedan it is a crime to kill a dog; but no crime to let it die. The first would be man's work which he has no right to do; the second would be Allah's responsibility, which, of course, he cannot avert. So the dogs were removed to an adjacent island, and there left to starve to death. The stronger ones, if report be true, fed on the weaker, until even this means of subsistence was at an end, and in course of time only dead bodies, and bleached skeletons, were left.

Such a people, striving vainly to be less Eastern, are not likely to progress. Much as one deplores the atrocities in the Balkan War that followed in 1913, one cannot wonder that the Turkish soldier was proved unfit for aggression, or even for defence. The rout of Lule Burgas decided the war against Turkey; the drying-up of the Islam territories, just as a river recedes, changed a portion of the atlas, so that a *New Map* of the Near East is among the changes of recent times. But the atrocities meted out by Turks against Bulgarians and revenged by the Bulgarians in yet greater crimes of barbarity against the Turks, and more particularly in nameless horrors against innocent women and defenceless babes, are not new; they merely reiterate again the fact that unregenerate humanity cannot govern wisely, which is a rule too often proved to be in any way a new one. But Palestine has benefitted from the success of the Balkans; for every weakening of Turkey hastens the day of deliverance. But Constantinople is unconquered still, and will abide, to hinder the final extinction of Turkey-Edom until the period fixed in the prophecy of Daniel has run its course. Another forty to forty-five years remain (see my "Seven Vials," Part II., p. 158).

Turning to Egypt, the most potent sign of the times was when, a year or so ago, the modern æroplane

hovered over the ancient Pyramids of Gizeli. If the stones of the Great Pyramid could have spoken, how would they have expressed their wonder at the airy invasion? Would they have pointed to an age anterior to the day when the foundation was laid, the age before the fall of man, when earth had communion with heaven, and God talked with our first parents? Would they have found, perchance, in this modern conquest of the air, a *New Sign* that the end approaches?—the end of the age when earth will again have communion with heaven; fiery indignation on the unrepentant, and the rapture in the air of the blessed! As we look back on merely the last few years, how the signs thicken; how the horizon glows with the advent of the heralds of the glorious consummation! Not least among them is the awakening East. We are face to face with a *New East*, or rather the ancient East renovating. China, Japan, etc., have cast off the slumbers of centuries; Mesopotamia begins to throw off the desolations of many years; Shinar, once the centre of Babylon's ancient mysteries, the cradle of all idolatry, is, as the prophet foretold, arising on "its own base" (Zech. v. 11).

The noise of the modern train will soon disturb the silence of its ruined wastes. This is of interest to us because of the effect the *New Railway* will have on Syria, and therefore on the commerce and progress of Palestine. Damascus is preparing for a *New Motor-Omnibus*, as part of an important *New Scheme* for the running of a mail from Beyrout to Bagdad, 500 miles in length.

"Messrs. Alexander Behm and Company, a London firm, are sending out, at the end of the month, to Syria, a member of the firm with half-a-dozen specially constructed F. W. Berwick omnibuses to run between Bagdad and Beyrout, on the coast. At the present the Turkish mails from Bagdad and the Persian Gulf ports are sent by horse carriage along the ancient road across the Syrian Desert to the Mediterranean, at the mercy of bands of marauding Bedouins.

"The mails now take twenty days for the journey from

Bagdad to Beyrout; the British motor-omnibus, it is anticipated, will do it in six.

"The type of vehicle selected is a large char-a-banc with a wooden canopy and a special "boot" at the back for the mails. The motor-ornnibuses will have English drivers."—*The Daily Mirror*.

So the ancient East is linking up with the modern West, and Jerusalem cannot fail to participate in the change.

When I was there, the mingling of antiquity with the present, new customs jostling the old, the bygone of millenniums side by side the innovations of to-day, were among the most remarkable points of interest. This now is even more marked than it was seven years ago. Jerusalem grows year by year less Eastern, less ancient, and more Western and modern. It has even begun to cleanse some of its dirtiest thoroughfares!

Nor can I fail to mention among these many signs of the times, the direct request of the aged Rabbi who, from the seclusion of Jerusalem, has addressed to the British-Israelites of England a request—couched in fervent and eloquent language—that those who can prove we are the lost House of Israel, should hasten to lay their claims before the Jews in the Holy City (see Appendix). The Wailing Place for hundreds of years has witnessed the prayers of Judah for the recovery of the lost Ten Tribes. Now, for the first time, the glad tidings, which is *News* indeed, has reached some of Judah's sorrowing ones. As I write these words, the Missionary of the Protestant British-Israel League is on his way to Jerusalem to answer, so far as circumstances permit, the pathetic appeal of the aged Rabbi, and to distribute among the Jews who throng the Holy City during the Passover week, portions of the Old Testament Scriptures, and literature explaining our claim to be the lost House of Israel. That such an appeal should have been made, and steps taken, at least by one League, to meet it in a measure, is among the most emphatic signs that *New Life* is springing up in Judah, *New Light* in the long darkness of Jerusalem's bondage.

These last remarks lead me to mention yet another

New influence which has had its being since I returned from the Holy Land. Between three and four years ago the *New League*, called the Protestant British-Israel League, was formed. In its basis and three-fold object it is New; for now, for the first time, an organisation exists for declaring "the whole counsel of God," and not merely a phase or two of it: (1) Preaching the Gospel; (2) Spreading Protestantism; (3) Teaching the Israelitish origin of the English-speaking race. Thus are leagued together the main principles of the whole of the Divine plan of the ages, which, outside of the Bible, has never before, so far as I know, been united in one effort—thus providing a *New Sign* of no little significance of the coming of that better age when we shall no longer know in part, no longer learn but fragments of the Divine Scheme; but shall know as we are known, and comprehend, in all its fulness, the length, and breadth, and height, and depth and fulness of "the love of Christ that passeth knowledge."

What will the future be for Palestine, for the world, for Israel's Empire, for ourselves individually? New signs will gather, new heralds gild the sky as the day appeareth; and then, in its appointed time—how soon we know not—will be inaugurated a *New Age* of peace and Godliness, Christ's millennial reign, until all enemies are put under His feet; followed by the Eternal Day, when He Who sits upon the throne will say: "Behold, I make *all things new*." And then will come a *New Heaven* and a *New Earth*, and *New Jerusalem* in glorious array descending from heaven. So, while the New things of the present are full of potent meaning, the New ones of the future overflow with resplendent effulgence and eternal hope and joy. To that *Newness of Life* may He bring us!

"THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST BE WITH YOU ALL. AMEN."



APPENDIX I.

THE following is the letter, mentioned on p. 220, from a Jewish Rabbi, which appeared in *Haemeth*, a Hebrew paper, and reprinted in *The Truth*, both papers published in Jerusalem:—

To the Editor of *Haemeth*.

Peace be unto thee. I, in conjunction with several others, have read thy expositions upon lost Israel with intense pleasure and interest. We find, to our great amazement, that thou dost very often allude to the Anglo-Saxon race as the probable offspring of the Ten Tribes of Israel, without, however, substantiating thy assertions by any historical or tangible evidence.

In your articles we find only plausible conjectures, wild hypotheses, based upon mere deduction, inference, and hearsay.

Sir, we are in real earnest; we are longing to find our lost brethren, who for over two thousand years have baffled all our efforts to discover their whereabouts, and are, as it is this day, a riddle even to the greatest of our illustrious Rabbis.

Our hearts yearn for our brethren of the House of Israel; we long for the truth; give us, then, we pray thee, clear, living water, and not a tantalising draught of some coloured beverage which only augments instead of quenching our thirst.

Thou tellest us that among the British-Israelites there are responsible men of social position and learning; well then, we ask, should not these honourable gentlemen come out to the gates of Judah, and tell us openly and frankly what they know about our missing Ten Tribes?

Friend! nowadays, every ism proclaims its views from the house-tops, and asserts its claims with dash and energy.

Behold Zionism, spiritualism, socialism, yea, even atheism have their periodical congresses, conferences, or convocations, to argue, polemise and publicly discuss upon the intrinsic worth of their respective assertions.

Why, I ask again, should not the founders and propagators of this greatest of all isms—Anglo or British-Israelism—also convoke an assembly of representative members of the House of Judah, and lay before them all the facts in their possession respecting their identity with lost Israel?

I can assure thee there is no community in the ghettos of the world that would not send at least one worthy delegate to the congress to hear and report upon the evidence adduced in favour of British-Israelism.

Let a Judæo-Israel Congress be held in London, Jaffa, or Jerusalem, and I have not the slightest doubt that it would be well attended by luminaries of the House of Judah.

If the leaders of the Identity movement can produce solid, irrefutable facts to substantiate their claims, we poor, afflicted, despised, and persecuted sons of Jacob shall certainly rejoice, and feel greatly honoured to recognise, our lost brethren in the mightiest of all peoples—the British nation.

In thy last leader in *Haemeth* thou soughtest to make us believe that Queen Victoria and King Edward VII. were firm believers in their lineal descent from King David; also, that King George is no less convinced than his father that the House of Hanover is a scion of the Davidic dynasty, and that there are invulnerable proofs to that effect in the Royal Archives of Windsor Castle.

If it be so, why, we ask thee, should they hide their light under a bushel?

Is British-Israelism another Freemasonic order that they do not reveal all they know?

Why should not that noble King George V. imitate the example of the good King Josiah, who, upon the discovery of a precious document in the Temple Archives, “gathered unto him all the elders of Judah, the

priests and the prophets, and read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found."

Thou, Editor of *Haemeth*, knowest as well as I do that according to prophecy none of the mighty events predicted can receive their full accomplishment before the two great Houses of Judah and Israel are confederated into one nation.

It is for this that I, being of an advanced age (89), long to see some harbinger of that great event before I am gathered to my forefathers.

I beg thee, therefore, to transmit this, my humble proposition, to the apostles of the British-Israel theory; and if, perchance, any good comes out of it, I shall close my eyes with satisfaction in the knowledge that I have contributed somewhat towards the solution of a great historical and ethnological problem. If my words produce an effect and a congress be convoked, I shall endeavour, notwithstanding my advanced age, to attend it, and participate in what may prove epoch-making deliberations.

Apologising for my lengthy dilation on a subject that lies near my heart,

I remain, dear Editor,

Yours in Abrahamic bonds,

(Signed) GERSHON BEN-ZWI HACHOEN.



APPENDIX II.

THE following resolution was passed unanimously on February 6th, 1914, by the Central Committee of the Protestant British-Israel League :

“The Central Committee herewith express their deepest sympathy with the relatives and friends of the late Mrs. Phillips, of Bangor, North Wales, in their great bereavement. They record their appreciation of her faithful labours in the cause of truth, and her untiring energy in defence of Protestant and British-Israel principles, especially as a member of the Protestant British-Israel League, and President of the Bangor Branch, which branch was formed as a tribute to the keen interest she aroused among her numerous acquaintances in Bangor, to whom we send, together with this message of condolence, an expression of earnest desire that her work, so well begun, may be continued in Bangor with all zeal and loyalty to truth, which will be the best memorial they can raise to her memory.”

Signed on behalf of the Central Committee,

AUGUSTA COOK, *President.*

The Protestant British-Israel League

was founded in 1910 to: (1) Preach the Gospel of Salvation; (2) Uphold the principles of the Protestant Reformation; (3) Teach the Israelitish origin of the British and American peoples.

Further information will be sent on written application to MISS AUGUSTA COOK, 30, Imperial Buildings Ludgate Circus, London, E.C.

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