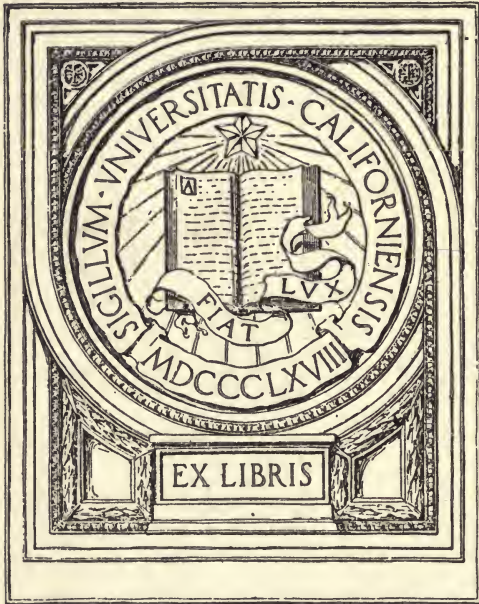


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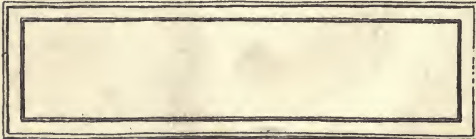
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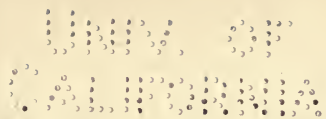


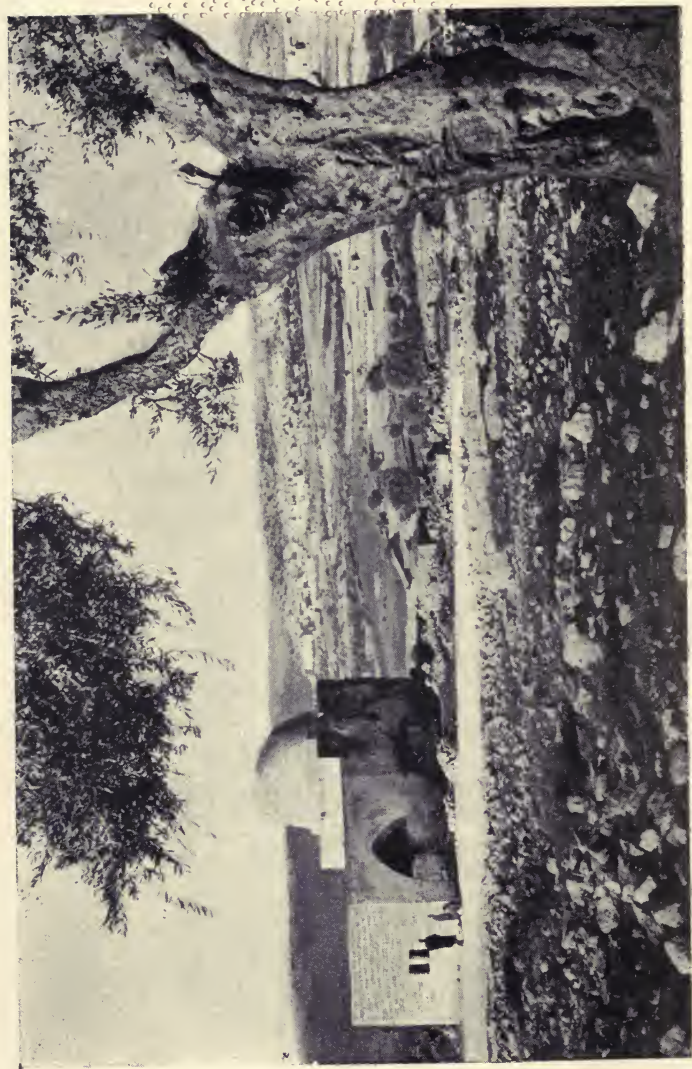
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ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM



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PALESTINE—REBECCA'S TOMB.

ROUND ABOUT
JERUSALEM

LETTERS FROM THE HOLY LAND



BY

J. E. WRIGHT, B.A.

ILLUSTRATED

JARROLD'S
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TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND R. MACINNES, D.D.,
LORD BISHOP IN JERUSALEM
AND THE EAST

Carpenter

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FOREWORD

Everything about Jerusalem is read with the greatest interest, especially now, and therefore, as Chairman of Jerusalem and the East Mission, it gives me great pleasure to write a Foreword to these letters brightly written by a young clergyman now acting as Bishop MacInnes' chaplain. I saw him as a young layman in Jerusalem when I was there myself and afterwards ordained him in London. The letters speak for themselves and give a clear and vivid account of what may be seen

“ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM.”

A. F. LONDON.

ST. BARNABAS' DAY, 1918.

PREFATORY NOTE

THE following are extracts from letters written home from Jerusalem. The writer is again in the East and has had no opportunity for revising them.

OFF FOR PALESTINE

ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM

OFF FOR PALESTINE

LEAVING Port Saïd we found the sea was absolutely calm, the sky one blaze of stars, and the air rather chilly. I made up my mind to spend the night in a deck chair in order to see the sun rise over the Judæan hills. The colours of the sunrise were simply grand, though unfortunately there was not a cloud to be seen.

We reached Jaffa about 7 a.m., and as soon as the doctor had been rowed from the shore, a distance of about half a mile, we were at once surrounded by a crowd of big rowing boats full of sailors, porters, etc., all very anxious to take us to land.

Old Jaffa is built on a hill overhanging the sea, and is simply one mass of buildings honey-combed with passages, making a perfect maze of tunnels and narrow alleys.

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Scarcely anywhere is there a space of more than 10 feet, and in general the streets seem to be from three to six feet wide—a kind of human ant-heap. I will not attempt to describe the smells except by saying that only here and there can you see the cobblestones for the refuse thrown out from the buildings. We climbed upon the roof of the house said to stand on the site of Simon the Tanner's home, and in the heat of the morning we could easily understand how St. Peter might have dozed off whilst meditating upon the roof. As I stood there looking over the sea I thought how wonderfully like a great sheet it seemed, stretching away to the horizon; also the reef of rocks just appearing above the surface, about 200 yards out, looked quite like animals crawling on the sheet. I can't help thinking that this sight might have caused the imagery of St. Peter's day-dream. He may also have heard the classical legend which connects these rocks with the sea monster petrified by Perseus who saved Andromeda. The passage through them is so narrow that our boatmen had to draw in their oars on one

side in order to pass through. No wonder it is so frequent that landings cannot be effected. They say that it often happens that the mail is delayed either way a fortnight or more, and all agree that we were very lucky to get ashore so easily.

We went over the C.M.S. hospital, which seems to be doing a good work, and is crowded with both in- and out-patients. Of course these buildings, like many others, are outside the real town of Jaffa, where there is more room. We lunched at the Jerusalem Hotel, where the bedrooms are named after the twelve Apostles and other saints.

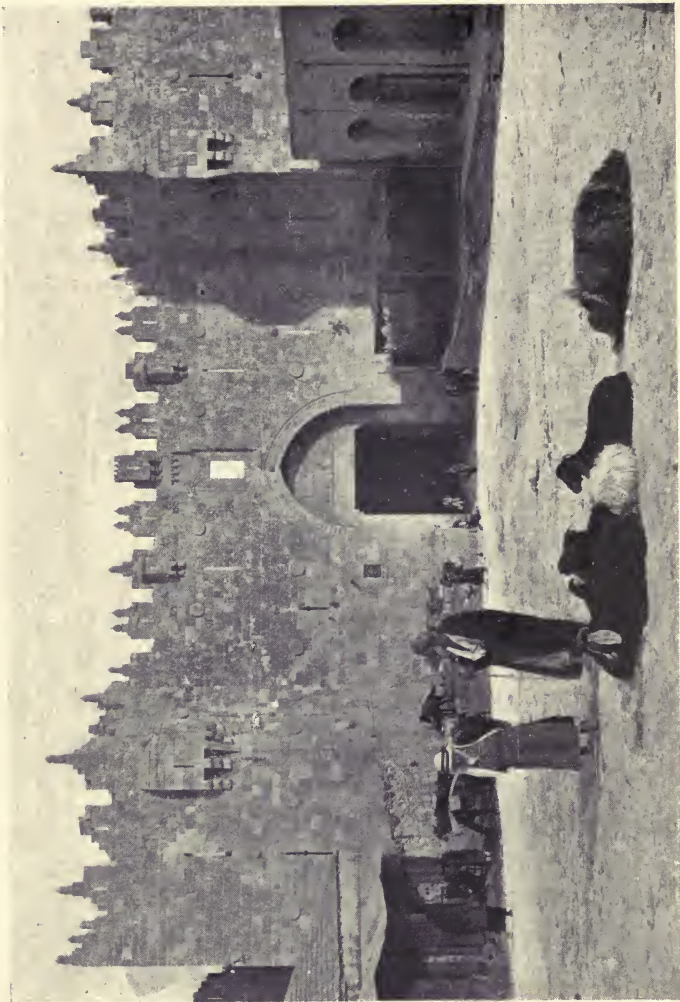
THE PLAIN OF SHARON AND VALLEY OF AIJALON.

At 1.30 we boarded the train for Jerusalem, but from the pace it went and from the look of the carriages it was more like four trams linked together and pulled by an asthmatical steam-roller. For some way we went through the middle of a large orange-grove, where the oranges were hanging in clusters, which made one wonder how the

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small trees could possibly stand the weight. We then passed out on to the absolutely level Plain of Sharon, all under cultivation and very fertile. But for the range of Judæan hills in the distance one might have been between Peterborough and King's Lynn. Here the Philistines used to live as they did also on the rolling hills which we had to ascend before reaching the foot of the precipitous Judæan mountains.

One gets a very fine view here of the Valley of Aijalon, and one hardly requires any imagination to picture the Canaanites rushing away down the valley before the pursuing Israelites. Barren and rugged as it is (it reminds one of Kirkstone Pass, Cumberland), it can in no way be compared to the awful grandeur and indescribable solitude of the rock chasm into which we next entered. The whole of the rest of the way (some 20 miles) to Jerusalem is up this barren valley. The higher we go the less precipitous are the sides. From time to time we cross "wadies," or dried-up torrent-beds, as they run into each other on their way down to the plain. I rode all the way



JERUSALEM--SHEPHERD AND SHEEP AT THE DAMASCUS GATE.

sitting on the step of the car, and seriously thought once or twice of getting off to take a photo, and then get on again further down the train.

JERUSALEM.

The Jerusalem station is at the top of this long winding valley, on a plateau, but a good way from the city, which stands on a hill between two "wadies," which go down the other side of the ridge towards the Dead Sea.

After a few weeks one begins to sort out the various impressions, which at first are most overwhelming. This country seems to be chiefly characterized by its inextricable confusion. The language, time, money, stamps, posts, religions, calendars, seem all in a perfect state of chaos. The time, for instance. There is Arabic time, which has to vary from day to day, as it must begin from sunset. There are several of these clocks. Then there is European time, but as this is not official it is not standardized. Each vessel which arrives at Jaffa coming from different ports brings its own particular

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version. This finds its way up to Jerusalem, and affects some though not all of the clocks here. Mine plods on and manages to keep in with the chimes of a big "Latin" clock close by, but the little watch has entirely lost its head, and by varying its pace strikes out quite a new line of its own. The Moslem time seems something similar to ours under the Daylight Saving Bill.

To-day is Sunday, the Jews keep Saturday, and the Moslems Friday; but this is not all. The Hotel Calendar tells me that to-day is the 18th of the month (English), the 5th (Greek), 11th (Coptic), 1st (Moslem), and 30th (Jewish). Of course, Easter is on different dates. Not only are English and French coins in circulation, but the Turkish coins vary in value in different towns. It is a profitable trade to change "metaliks" into "bishliks" here, and change them back again at Jaffa. Money changing must be very profitable judging from the number of "tables of the money changers" I pass every day. These are little tables with glass or wire-netting tops and a drawer full of coins.

The Germans, the Austrians, the French, the Italians and the Russians, etc., have each established their own postal system in spite of the official Turkish post, but they are not allowed by the Government to use the train for Jaffa. Europeans do not use the Turkish post, as it is so uncertain, the result being that the Turks sometimes waylay the other postal vans, lest their own should be entirely neglected. An extremely complicated list is put up in the hotel each week, saying when the various mails may come or go if a landing is possible at Jaffa or not. To crown all, the whole military and civil system is an absurd tangle of intrigue, suspicion, and bribery. It took several months to get the Christ Church tubular bells out of the Custom house, as the officials, seeking a bribe, made out that we wanted to use them as guns. Whilst I am writing, a recruiting sergeant is extorting money out of a waiter who does not want to be a conscript, by a system of blackmail. One can easily see how the old "Publicans" must have been hated.

After three days' wind, hail, and wet, the

10 ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM

weather is again beautiful. The rain comes at intervals of two or three weeks during the winter, but it is perfectly dry from May to October, when a storm would destroy the harvests (cf. 1 Sam. xii. 16-19, and Prov. xxvi. 1); hence these rains are extremely valuable, and every square yard of roof space is used for collecting the water which goes down into large underground cisterns, where it is kept cool and fresh, though it has to be filtered before using. When it does rain, it comes down with tremendous force. You can imagine the state of these dirty roads. I am reading through Ezra and Nehemiah, and after wallowing along in the mud appreciate the difficulty in Ezra x. 9. The cistern just in front of my window as I write is as big as two or three rooms put together; just now it is quite full, and yet they tell me that they often have to send miles away to springs before the winter rains begin again.

It seems curious that this little spot (for the whole city is very small, and I could easily walk round it in an hour) should be such a centre for religions, and exercise such





JERUSALEM — FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT THE JEWS' WAILING PLACE,

an attraction to pilgrims of all nationalities and creeds. It is the centre and only consolation of the Jews, who have always had an almost fanatical love for the place which they claim "God chose to set His Name there." Their great hope is the ultimate possession of the place, when they will be able to continue the sacrifices which they may only offer here, and which therefore they have been unable to offer for all these centuries. It is quite an inspiration to go down to their wailing-place where remain the huge blocks of stone supporting the area on which their Temple once stood (where the mosque now stands). The wailing is not in the least a ceremonious kind of service of any particular form, though they do have such services there, but you see them quietly and alone with the tears streaming down their faces, stroking the stones in a loving way with their hands, kissing them, burying their heads in their hands and sobbing, leaning up against the wall and imploring God to take pity upon them and restore again to them their city. The scene is most impressive and pathetic. It is similar, though

not nearly so impressive, at Rachel's tomb on the way to Bethlehem (cf. Gen. xxxv. 19, 20). The Jews here are very much on the increase and a large part of Jerusalem is known as the Jewish quarter. They are still very exact in keeping the Law. They mostly close their shops some hours before sunset on Friday to make quite sure of being on the safe side; the result is that Saturday is a much quieter day in the city than Sunday.

A large party of us have been to King Solomon's quarries. We entered through the only known opening (a hole in the rock under the wall by the Damascus Gate); for an hour and a half we walked about through the most wonderful passages cut in the rock under Jerusalem, almost all broad enough, if level, to drive three carriages abreast, the sides and roof being of pure white stone. We had candles, lamps, torches, and bits of magnesium wire. Here and there were vast halls large enough to take literally thousands of people. Everywhere were huge blocks of stone partly quarried out in varying stages, so that you could see exactly how it was

done, and everywhere mountains of chips showing that they had been dressed before removing (cf. 1 Kings vi. 7). Everywhere were swarms of bats. In two places they were clustered on the ceiling like a swarm of bees.

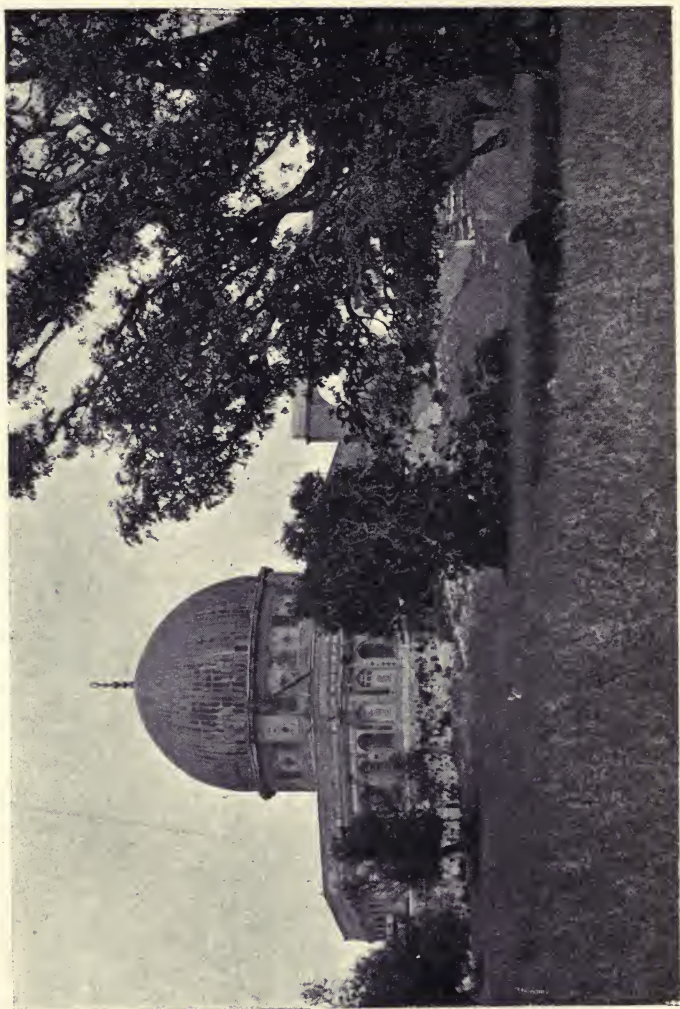
We also went to the leper hospital, a beautiful house and grounds belonging to the German Moravians, but the patients were too awful to describe. What a sacrifice to give up one's life to nursing such repulsive objects! It always attacks the hands, feet, face, and throat first, but not the body, so that many of them can neither walk, work, nor speak; they are fearful to look at, blind, and have a peculiarly horrible smell of decay. The disease is not catching, but hereditary, hence those in the house are not allowed to marry or beg, and for this reason they cannot persuade some to come into the house. It is thought that the lepers mentioned in the New Testament had a different form of the disease or else were not in a bad stage, as they were able to cry "Unclean!" These lepers are not allowed inside the city. (For the various kinds cf. Lev. xiii. and xiv.)

14 ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM

Life is very full. The other afternoon I went alone and sat for an hour on the Mount of Olives facing the Temple area, the other side of a deep valley, and could see all Jerusalem, the hills round and behind the Mountains of Moab, the Dead Sea, Plain of Jericho, and mouth of the Jordan.

Sunday, 4th. Walked along the hill track towards Neby Samwil (House of Samuel), a wild desolate-looking country, with outcrops of rock everywhere, in which are countless sepulchral caves. Here was a fellah (peasant) scratching the little soil between the rocks with his native plough drawn by his ox and his ass yoked together—there on the higher hills was a native shepherd wandering about in the midst of a flock of sheep and goats, which fed on what little scrub and weeds grow between the rocks. The other day I walked over from the Mount of Olives to Bethany, watched the women and girls coming out to the old well, chattering and drawing out water; when I reached them they let down again and drew for me to drink. Everybody here is most kind, and all seem to have





JERUSALEM--THE MOSQUE OF OMAR, THE SITE OF KING SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

combined the English openness and lack of ceremony with the Eastern boundless hospitality. I am very fortunate in having expert guides to all the different places, as of course some of the missionaries here are quite the best authorities.

Jerusalem has a great fascination not only for the Jews and the Christians, but also for the Moslems. To a Mohammedan this place is only exceeded in sanctity by Mecca itself, since from the rock in their mosque on the Temple area Mohammed is said to have ascended to heaven, and it will be here in the Valley of Jehoshaphat that the last judgment (so they say) will take place, when all will have to cross the valley on one of Mohammed's hairs stretched from Mount Moriah to the Mount of Olives. The wicked will fall into the valley and be dashed to pieces, but the righteous will be borne along safely to the other side. They very jealously guard the Temple area where now their mosque stands, and if any Christian attempts to go near it without a soldier, they wave their hands menacingly in front of him, and if he pushes on will draw out

daggers and guns. If a Jew goes near they will set on him and stone him at once. On the other hand, it is said that no Jew would think of going there, for since he does not know the exact spot on the area where the Temple stood, he might by mistake tread on the "Holy of Holies." We are accustomed to look upon Palestine as the home of the Jews, but that is not at all the idea out here. The natives or fellaheen are descendants of the inhabitants of the land before the Israelitish invasion, and are apparently entirely distinct from Jews, Turks, and Christians or Arabs. The Turks are the governing race (like the Romans of old) and the Jews and Europeans are only here on sufferance; their quarters are called Jewish colony, German colony, etc., and yet there are more Jews here than any other single nationality (*i.e.* in Jerusalem only). It seems to us a freak of Mohammedanism that they allow no one to go to Mecca or to their mosque here without a Government permit and guards, but the Greek Christians are as bad, for they would stone any Jew who dared to cross even the courtyard in front of the

Church of the Sepulchre. It was only last week that, when out for a walk with one of the boys, I had to abandon a short cut home as I found the boy dare not cross the courtyard, yet the Turkish soldiers stand inside the church itself with bayonets or rifles to prevent disturbances, just as of old Roman soldiers kept watch over the Temple courts to prevent such a disturbance as took place in the time of St. Paul. The cases are parallel. In each the necessity for such a guard seems a scandal, yet there is none the less a necessity. In each case the guard is hated, yet they act with apparent justice and though not with reverence, at least respect.

Where once the story was Roman, Jew, and Gentile, now the only difference is Moslem, Gentile, and Jew. In spite of the divergence in beliefs it is curious that all hold that the last judgment will take place in the Valley of Jehoshaphat between the Mount of Olives and the Temple area, the result being that one slope is now almost covered with Jewish graves, the other with Moslem ones. The Jews have a curious

superstition that all, when the last day comes, will have to worm their way along through the earth from their various graves to this place. They call it "The Gilgalim" or "rolling"; this is the reason why they all wish to be buried here, so that they will not have so far to come. It is a wonder they don't practise burrowing like rabbits, and the Moslems tight-rope walking.

We have been for a walk on the Mount of Olives and to see the Chapel of the Lord's Prayer, where this prayer is written on the walls in thirty-seven different languages, so that all pilgrims may find their own. If any one does not find it in his tongue he gives money towards having it put up. This costs £40.

One gets a glorious view from the Mount of Olives of the Jordan and Dead Sea. It is perfectly marvellous what you can see from the spot where the Ascension took place. Right down to the Mount of Hebron in the south, the Dead Sea, the Mountains of Moab and the Jordan Valley seem directly in front of you—they are really over 20 miles away. You can see over the Judæan



JERUSALEM—MOUNT OF OLIVES AND GETHESEMANE.

hills to the Mediterranean, and up north to the hills which divide Judæa from Samaria ; in fact, the whole of Judæa and a good deal of Moab. Jerusalem itself is so surrounded by hills that this view makes a wonderful contrast.

THE FEAST OF PURIM



THE FEAST OF PURIM

THE 4th of March is the Jewish Feast of Purim, when they commemorate the salvation of the Jews by Esther and Mordecai; as a rule they are extremely temperate, but on this day it is their duty to drink and make merry, and this they do till they cannot distinguish between Haman and Mordecai. In the evening their Rabbi reads in the synagogue the book of Esther, and all attend to jeer every time the name of Haman is mentioned.

I went down with Mr. H—— and others into one of these synagogues. The scene was truly remarkable. The synagogue is a big room newly decorated and painted up, almost square. In the centre of the east side is a kind of gorgeous bookcase with curtains in which is kept the particular copy of the Law belonging to that congregation. In the centre is a raised platform in size and

shape just like a band-stand. On this platform at a table sat the Rabbi with his praying shawl over his head, reading from a huge roll the book of Esther, and pausing each time for the jeers at the name of Haman. Crowding round him looking over his shoulders, and all round the room at little desks were Jews following in their own rolls and in a few cases books, almost all in a very merry state, anxiously waiting to make the most fearful din and uproar every time the name was mentioned. You can imagine the scene. I got one fellow to find the place in my Hebrew text for me ; it was the sixth and seventh chapters they were reading, where the name comes every two or three verses. Children were playing hide and seek and "last touch" in amongst the desks, which were just scattered about in any order and direction. Everybody was violently swaying his body back and forward, keeping more or less in time with the Rabbi, as he sang out the words. The noise and confusion was considerable all the time, but at the name of Haman all stamped, thumped, beat the desks with sticks, and even fired off

toy pistols and crackers. It reminded one of an exciting auction or the senseless speeches and applause at the close of a Cambridge "bump supper." All seemed in the best of spirits. Of course it seems very terrible, but then the synagogue is only a room in which they meet. I do not think the Jews attach any idea of sacredness to it, and I suppose they cannot really worship according to the Law, till they have a Temple here again ; then also the synagogue may be to them only a means to keep alive the old traditions and customs, to teach the children and kindle a kind of patriotism which will preserve the race till their golden age returns. If that is so, such scenes and festivals would be very natural. A synagogue is not a temple or a church. But then the idea of behaviour in churches here is very different from our own. The churches are open all day long, there are no seats, but people are all strolling about talking to each other and standing about in groups. They will chatter for some time, and then without any ostentation will kneel down or even lie down, and pray, and then wander off and

join in with a service being sung by some priest at some altar, or perhaps some procession wandering round the church. The whole idea seems extremely curious to us, but then it only depends upon what one's idea of a church is. I suppose their idea of a church is God's House, not that He dwells in temples built with hands, but the house where His children may meet, not so much with Him, for they can do that anywhere, but with each other.

There is now in Jerusalem an enormous party of Americans (600 in all) and every hotel is packed. Americans are funny creatures; some of them seem about as ignorant of what they have come to see as if they were discovering a strange land. One of them told me the other day that the Mosque of Omar was the same as the Church of the Sepulchre. Another when he came back from spending a morning in the Church of the Sepulchre wanted to know if it was known what had become of the Body of Christ, as he found the tomb was open and empty! I asked another what he thought of the place, and he said it was

all right, but he did not believe it was as many feet long as the guide books said, and he was determined not to be taken in at Samaria, so had procured a piece of string with a weight at the end to test the depth of Jacob's well.

Of the private travellers many seem to have their peculiar interests. One is deeply anxious to convince me that the Russians and Germans are mentioned in Ezekiel, and started off on the subject when I first met him on the doorstep.

One American confessed to being so mixed that he was not sure whether it was Christ or Mohammed who was crucified on Calvary. Another asked me whether the Lake of Galilee was inside or outside the walls. Asked if they had seen Bethesda they say, "Wull, I doan't rightly know, but I guess we've done pretty nigh everything ; anyhow we've got it down on a caard."

Another lady has been studying hieroglyphics, and one only has to set her going by asking if Rameses II. belonged to the 18th or 19th dynasty, and she will babble on till you leave the room.

The other day I rode on a donkey through wild and rocky country to Ain Kharim. You can have no idea of the wildness of these hills. The donkeys are big and extremely sure-footed and they climb over the rocks like cats; the jagged rocks stick up on the path so that several times I caught my foot on them, even when riding, and had to take care not to get it crushed like Balaam of old. These donkeys are wonderful creatures, and are known as Jerusalem ponies; they are much bigger than ours. They are sturdy and can gallop for miles at a time on the better roads. They are very cheap to hire. You can easily do 15 miles in an afternoon, and it will only cost 1 to 1½ francs, even if you take some one to assist your steed. Horses are from 1½ to 2 francs, but tourists pay much more. Ain Kharim is a beautiful almost Swiss-looking village situated in a deep ravine running west from here. It is said to have been the home of Elizabeth and the birthplace of John the Baptist. Mr. Schor's party of English has just arrived; they have been doing the north, and are now finishing

up here. Yesterday as they came from Nablous they saw the result of the terrible village blood feuds, which are handed down for generations. They found two poor men murdered by the roadside, one dead and the other dying, and the inhabitants of the neighbouring village setting out to avenge the murder. The Turks have a very clever way of catching the culprits in all cases of theft and crime. In each village or district the sheik or head man is given certain privileges in return for which he is responsible for the good conduct of all his people. If there is any disturbance he is at once taken prisoner and kept until the right men are secured for punishment. I believe this custom prevails over the East.

Talking of outrages, the mail should have arrived to-day, but it has not. The reason is that some postmen who drive the mail cart up from Jaffa were shot at by some Indian Moslem fanatics, who killed three of them and the four horses, ransacking the mail with the hope of getting money. A woman has just been to the door weeping because her niece's husband was one of the men killed.

We have just heard that the Italians have bombarded Smyrna, but know no particulars ; however, the head waiter here is a typical English one over for the season. He is really most amusing ; several times while I have been writing this he has come into the smoking-room to make a pretence of polishing up spotless glasses, but really to give me his views of the situation. He is very nervous, and I think if he heard a gun go off 90 miles away he would go and hide under a bed. He has just told me he has a first-class revolver and only wishes he had some practice with it. He gets hold of scraps of information and works himself up into an awful state. When he heard about Smyrna and the three postmen being killed on the way here, he mixed it all up and came to tell me an awful story, starting by saying, "They have done it now, they have bombarded Samaria." When he was told that Samaria was well inland, he said, "Well, it's nearer than Beyrout, I think it's somewhere in the Dardanelles ;" and then went on to say the natives had begun to retaliate by murdering all the postmen.

One wonders what a man like this would do if there really was any danger.

Nearing Easter.—There are now probably 10,000 Russian pilgrims here for Easter. An army of 1000 has just walked from Galilee.

On Friday I went to see the first of the sights connected with Easter-time. The Moslems claim that by a vision the tomb of Moses (Neby Mussa) was discovered, and that he was buried on a hill on this side of the Dead Sea. Every year, just before the Greek Easter, they assemble in Jerusalem from all over the country, and after a service in the mosque (Temple area) they proceed in a religious procession all the way to Neby Mussa, where they encamp and hold their feast and fair for a whole week, after which they return in a similar procession to Jerusalem, always arriving on the Thursday before the Greek Good Friday. Ostensibly it is entirely a religious affair, but in reality it is a political idea to ensure there being crowds of Moslems in Jerusalem at the time when all the pilgrims are most numerous, lest

they should suddenly take possession of the city. Of course it is impossible for any Christian to go on the Temple area during the service—in fact, during the whole ten days—but enormous crowds gather along the road outside the city to see the procession. They come out of St. Stephen's Gate and down into the Kedron Valley, and then by the Garden of Gethsemane, and on along the Jericho road past Bethany. I took three boys with me and "Ali"; we climbed on to a narrow ledge of a wall just outside the gate, where we had a fine view through the gate and up and down the road. As the time went on the whole neighbourhood became packed with natives, and scattered about were foreigners from all over the world. It is impossible to describe the crowds of sightseers dressed in all the most gorgeous variety of colours imaginable. Every possible place of vantage (the city wall, the gate, the hills, and almost every stone) was occupied by a surging mass of highly excited but very good-humoured men, women, and children. Everywhere the orange and lemonade men seemed to be doing a

roaring trade. Everybody was eating, drinking, and making merry. Sweets, nuts, buns, cakes, beans, etc., were so plentiful that they were not only eaten but also used for friendly missiles. One was particularly struck with the good humour of the crowd. Everything was shared, every one was treated to drinks, all teetotal. The idea seemed to be not to try and keep your own position to yourself but to see how many others you could get on to your own stone. They had uproarious fun pulling up all their friends to our wall, and then holding each other on till some would laugh so much that they would roll down on the heads of the people below, only to be helped up again. I never saw the slightest sign of ill temper. They are all extremely polite, almost servile to Europeans, and I was never touched. The procession when it did come was extremely weird. Every few minutes a crowd of men from some particular locality would come singing out of the gate with huge flags, the poles of which were surmounted by brass devices, usually including the crescent and the star.

The crowds were in no regular order, but

all were in a perfect frenzy of excitement, leaping up in the air and shouting all the time. They only advanced very slowly (two or three yards a minute). Each crowd had, beside its flags, its band consisting of tom-toms and cymbals. Of course there was no tune but a weird sort of rhythm.

One very old man was being led along by several others; he seemed in an absolutely mad frenzy trying to dash off everywhere, but was firmly held by his friends; then there was a dervish almost naked with a wild-looking head and glaring eyes. Some were twisting round and round as they went along the road; others had swords and spears and knives of all descriptions, with which they cut themselves about till they streamed with blood; others stuck arrows right through their faces between their jaws, reminding one of the story of Elijah and the Prophets of Baal.

Suddenly the crowds would form in a ring and all clap their hands in time with the tom-toms, while two dervishes would dash at each other with swords and shields, and you would just be thinking that one of them

must be killed, when they would separate and stalk each other round the ring as if they had lost each other, striking out all the while at the air. Next came crowds of ordinary Moslems with their Turkish fezes, shouting continuously one meaningless refrain, "Yahamalali-yahmali"; now and then, it seemed as if they were playing "oranges and lemons," for they would form into two long lines and commence clapping, all in slow perfect rhythm chop-chop-chop-chop. One or two would mount on the shoulders of others and be carried at a furious pace up and down the lines, shouting a kind of patriotic litany at the end of each clause, the rest calling out as before "Yahamalali-yahmali." There were a large number of Turkish soldiers to keep order. They used to fire guns in the air, but this has been stopped as it was very dangerous.

THE JEWISH PASSOVER

THE JEWISH PASSOVER

THE Monday before our Good Friday was the full moon and the Jewish Passover. The moonlight here is indescribable. The previous evening I walked in its light to the top of the Mount of Olives, where we had a glorious view of the Mountains of Moab from 40 to 50 miles away, and the moon shining on the Dead Sea, some 30 miles off. The next day, having luckily an invitation, I went with friends to the house of Rabbi B—— to be present at the family Passover, and to a certain extent share the meal. The Rabbi was a fairly rich Jew with a large family of nine children, living out in one of the Jewish colonies. He could only speak a very few words of English, but one of his daughters had been educated in an English school here, and so could talk quite well.

They were extremely kind and hospitable,

and not only gave us all food, but also every few minutes they stopped while the father in broken English, and the daughter fluently, entered into long explanations of each part and action with their significance. The Rabbi was delighted to know I had learnt Hebrew, and made a tremendous fuss, actually making me sit down during parts of the ceremony on his left hand at the table, whilst the rest sat on chairs at the end of the room watching. He kept his Hebrew copy of the Pentateuch for me to follow, and continually had the ceremony stopped to explain this or that. I found my idea of the ceremony was absolutely wrong. I had a sort of idea that they had a lamb roasted which they eat in great haste to typify the flight from Egypt—this is, I believe, how the Samaritans keep the Passover, but with the Jews it is entirely different. To start with, there is no lamb, and never has been since the destruction of the Temple, as it can only be killed in the Temple. Again, instead of their being in haste, it is exactly the reverse, they protract the meal as long as possible (till well on into the next morning),

and they are to lean back in their chairs while they eat, to signify first, that they are now in bondage to no man, but are free to enjoy their time, and secondly, that they do not rely on their own strength, but lean on the power of God. I stayed from 6.30 to 11.20 p.m., and though the ceremony was then over, they had still to sing the whole of the Song of Songs. They all sat round the table with the father at one end and an empty chair at the other. This chair is for Elias, if he should return; the door is kept open for the same reason. Every member of the family is to have four cups of wine which are filled at stated times to signify the four promises in Exod. vi. 6, and first ten words of ver. 7. The four mentions of the word "cup" in Gen. xl. 11-14, according to the Rabbi, obviously refer to this service. It is really the first day of unleavened bread, thus throughout the meal we were continuously eating the unleavened cakes which look like shrivelled pancakes and taste like water lunch biscuits. The Rabbi commenced after the first cup of wine to explain the meaning of the assembly, and to give a short sermon

which was prompted by the youngest boy who could talk, asking the formal question, "What mean these things?" The eldest daughter explained in English what her father was saying. It was something like this. It is our duty at such a time to show kindness to strangers and not to copy the Egyptians, who first showed kindness to Joseph, and afterwards oppressed his descendants; also we must not, like Pharaoh, be good to the women and harm the men, but show kindness to all strangers, remembering that we were once strangers in a foreign land. At the meal amongst other things we had cucumbers, the small local kind; lettuces with some bitter mixture made of all sorts of vegetables, to typify the bricks and mortar which they had to make without stubble; some weird kind of fishy dumplings, Turkish coffee, cake, tea in glasses, and with everything unleavened bread. The Rabbi showed me how in the Hebrew (Gen. i. 5) the first part of the verse shows (to him) that originally all considered, as we do, that a day is a day and a night, but that for the Jews it was altered to a night and a day at the institution

of the Passover (Exod. xii. 18 ; Lev. xxiii. 5 and 32), also he pointed out how the first month of the year was then changed to Nisan, the Passover month.

The next morning a party of seven of us started at 7 a.m. for a donkey picnic to Ain Fara, probably the Euphrates mentioned in Jer. xiii. 4-7, passing Anathoth on the way. We commenced the descent from Mount Scopus (the northern end of the Mount of Olives); this goes gradually down for 20 miles, and finally reaches the Jordan Valley 4000 feet below, the roadway only a mountain track over the wild hillsides. We crossed several "wadies"—dry torrent beds, which grow deeper as they go down until they join together and become huge chasms. In one of them Ain Fara is situated; "Ain" means a spring. There is a fine spring there which never runs dry, even at the end of the long summer. The approach to it is very sudden; after picking your way down stony hill slopes for two hours you come to a place where you can ride no more, and get off to clamber down the face of the rock several hundred feet to the little oasis at the bottom.

I have never seen anything like the awfulness of the chasm; the cliffs must be about 1000 feet on each side, just simply bare rugged rocks with great caves here and there, where hermits used to live, and some of them are still used for shrines for the pilgrims to visit and to worship in. We climbed up to one of them, high up on the face of the precipitous cliff, and one had to clamber up through a tunnel in the rock to approach it. When we got there we found the old monk at home, and he showed us his den. It was a square room with pictures, candlesticks, etc., where the pilgrims worshipped, cut out of the solid rock, and next to it a little compartment about six feet by nine, where he lived himself, containing a mattress for a bed, a table and chair, a candlestick and clock, the ticking of which seemed very loud inside the rock room, saying in the words of the poet, "never—for ever—never—for ever," etc. Beneath was a sheer drop of two or three hundred feet to the spring which we could hear babbling below. Up and down the valley one could see nothing but great rugged rocks. After lunch, a

bathe and tea, we started for home, which we reached about 7.30.

On Maundy Thursday I got up soon after six and started off to watch the Greek ceremony of the washing of the feet.

In front of the entrance to the Church of the Sepulchre is a square courtyard surrounded on all four sides by high buildings. It is in the middle of this court that the service takes place. On the walls, windows, roofs, ledges, and down in the courtyard below, there was a dense mass of people. Suspended in mid air were several photographers with their big cameras on hanging trays, also a cinematograph operator facing myself, with my back against a wall. I have never seen such a crowd in so small an area. Round the space in the centre were three rows of Turkish soldiers to keep the people back, and in the middle a raised platform of wood on which the scene took place. For a little "backsheesh" a soldier pushed his way through the crowd and brought us to a plank on some tubs, where we could see over all the crowd. We had a good while to

wait ; some waited three and a half hours, but it was very interesting. At one time I saw a professional European pick-pocket being hauled off by the soldiers to the Serai. Then there was a Jew who had ventured into the courtyard, hoping to escape attention, but having been recognized, he had to be surrounded by Moslem soldiers or he would probably have been murdered by the Christians (Greeks).

The service began soon after 8 a.m. A grand procession with candles, crosses, and fans issued from the church and filled the raised platform. The Patriarch was gorgeously dressed, with a magnificently jewelled crown on his head. Latin prelates are dressed as priests ; Greek as kings (Rev. i. 6 ; v. 10).

The ceremony is very fine and like an old Passion play, as in fact are all these ceremonies. Twelve archdeacons of the Greek Church represent the twelve Apostles, and while the Gospel is being read in the courtyard the Patriarch lays aside all his gorgeous robes and kingly crown, and girding himself with a towel, proceeds to wash each of their



GARDEN OF GETHESEMANE. -- THE OLIVE TREE STUMPS ARE SAID TO DATE FROM TIME OF CHRIST.

feet in turn. All the detail of the story is carried out, Peter refusing to have his feet washed, etc. Many of the tourists here look upon it as an awful example of mock humility, but it does not strike me in that way at all. It teaches the story in such a way as one can never forget, and has the same meaning as our Lord's action had to the Apostles.

On Thursday night we had a celebration of the Holy Communion, and when it was ended we went out across the brook Kedron to the Garden of Gethsemane, and had a quiet service amongst the old olive trees. Never have I been at any service so impressive. Such an inspiration should last one's life. We got there early, and as I stood under the stars, surrounded by the old old olive trees, looking up to the shadow of the wall of Jerusalem, standing as it always has, the whole picture seemed so perfect that one might have imagined one had really gone back to the old time. After a few moments I saw a crowd of men coming along with lanterns and staves, and the parallel seemed most real. Some of these were old bearded

Franciscans, who had come for the same purpose as we had. Others were from the American colony, and had come to sing one or two old hymns and pray. All seemed to feel the solemnity of the occasion, and there was a perfect silence over the whole scene. No one spoke above the slightest whisper.

I have no doubt that many branches of Christian thought were represented there, and yet there was one perfect spirit of harmony. First some one held up a lantern (just like the one in the picture of Christ knocking on the door), and started quietly to sing a hymn in English; all who could joined in. Then the Franciscans chanted low what was apparently a short liturgy; next there was a pause and some one knelt down; in a moment all were on their knees and there was dead silence. All reserve left me, and I forgot all differences. Never shall I forget kneeling in silence by the side of an old grey-bearded monk. Soon after this our own people arrived. Canon B—— read the Gospel story, and we had one or two hymns and extemporary prayers.

Good Friday was a quiet day. In the

afternoon I went into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to find that it was already crammed with pilgrims who were sleeping in heaps everywhere, to keep their places for the services of the next two days and three nights. The atmosphere would have been unbearable if it had not been for the priests, who continuously sprinkled every one with rose water and swung their censers. In the Eastern ceremonies one learns to appreciate incense.

THE HOLY FIRE

Saturday morning I went up to the consulate to join the consular party who had a special gallery in the church, to see the ceremony of the Holy Fire. We were eleven men and four ladies. The latter had to sit in a separate gallery as we were in a Franciscan part of the church. We started down in a procession with the two consular "kawasses" marching in front, beating on the ground with their staffs, which is a sign that all must make way. We pushed through the enormous crowd in the church courtyard, and went up through a monastery,

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and finally found ourselves in a gallery of the church high up above the masses below. Every part of the church was crammed to suffocation, and down below round the Sepulchre the pilgrims were so thick that I frequently saw people moving about on the heads of others. They sometimes stand three deep, one over the other against a wall. A narrow path was kept round the actual Sepulchre by rows of Turkish soldiers. The noise at times was tremendous, the priests shouting at each other and the pilgrims continually singing, "We are glad we are Christians ; may the Jews go to hell." I saw two Jews from the House of Industry unrecognized in the crowd. The soldiers treated the people just like sacks, and threw them about wherever they wanted them, but I never saw one lose his temper. Every one had in his hand bundles of candles waiting to light them at the holy fire. After a long while the procession came through the Greek Catholicon, and wound its way three times round the Sepulchre by the path made by the soldiers. The Patriarch as usual was dressed in gorgeous robes and

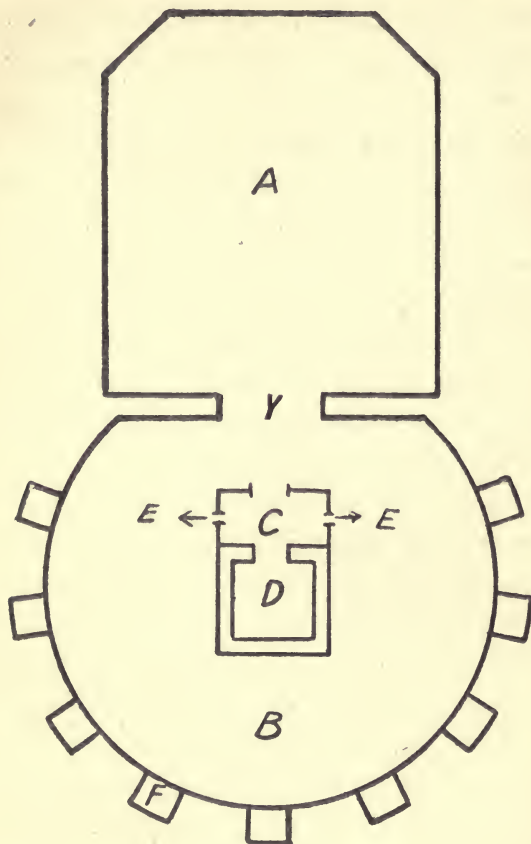


FIG. I.

PART OF THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

- A. The Greek Catholicon or Cathedral.
- B. Rotunda in which the Sepulchre is situated.
- C. Angel Chapel at entrance.
- D. Actual Sepulchre, a room built in the centre of the Church.
- EE. Holes for the fire.
- F. English Consular gallery.

wore a crown. Then he went alone into the Sepulchre, and a stillness of expectation ensued.

I should say that all this time there is no light in any of the Greek churches, but all are waiting for the light to come from the Sepulchre to light them for another year.

Suddenly the Patriarch pushes a light out of each of the holes and a fearful state of confusion ensues; every one is fighting for the light, way is made for the special runners to dash off at full speed to the men on horseback outside, who ride furiously to Bethlehem, Nazareth, etc., and even to Jaffa, where there are special steamers to carry it on to Constantinople, Egypt, etc. In less than one minute the whole church is one blaze of light, every one has a bunch of from twenty to thirty candles blazing away, and bundles are being handed up by strings into all the galleries, the place is filled with smoke, and you can well imagine you are in a burning church. It is a stupendous scene. The pilgrims believe that this fire will not hurt them, and it seems as if it is so, for you see them passing the flames of their candles

all over their faces and washing their hands in it. It is said that they believe it is miraculously sent down from Heaven, but apart from this deception I think the idea is very fine—the Light of Life coming from the tomb and spreading from church to church throughout the world. When once you get accustomed to the confusion which always attends these services, you see that the underlying idea is usually very fine.

We came out at 2 p.m. after having been in four hours. In the evening (Saturday) I went down with several others from the hotel to see the Abyssinian service. This is a very primitive and small church dating direct from Apostolic times; they have lived alone in the mountains of Abyssinia and not been affected by all the influences at work in the other Churches. (Every sect and Church seems to have its representatives here.) Their service was held on the roof of the chapel of St. Helena, which is part of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. They had erected a small tent, and when we arrived the service was in full swing. Outside were two men with gorgeous umbrellas, and men

beating tom-toms just at the entrance to the tent. Inside we could just see the Bishop and priests—all black men—dressed in the most varied and bright colours, chanting and swaying their bodies to and fro. All round was a crowd of amused sightseers waiting for the procession to come out. The whole scene reminded me exactly of a country fair. After some time the procession was formed, and umbrellas, tom-toms, Bishop and priests lurched round the roof, leaning first on one side and then on the other, all the time chanting a weird dirge to the time of the tom-toms; thus they went three times round, the idea being that they had found out the Body of Christ was not in the Sepulchre, and were searching everywhere to find out where it was laid. When they went back into the tent I came away, and went with the Rev. H—— to call on a man named Themelis, a diaconus. He is a fairly young man but of great importance, as he had been sent over to England by the Patriarch that he might learn English and attend an English clergy training college, in order to assist the Patriarch in his dealings with the

English Church. Mr. H—— had been his tutor. This diaconus Themelis took us into the Patriarch's apartments, and we, with the Russian Consul and his wife, proceeded behind the Patriarch back into the Church of the Sepulchre for the grand Easter Mass, which takes place at midnight at the entrance into the Sepulchre. The church was still crowded as it had been since Thursday midday, or for sixty hours, but we being in the procession had way made for us, and we were placed by the side of the Patriarch's chair facing straight into the Sepulchre (see *Y* in diagram). I stood on the right hand and Mr. H—— on the left, each holding enormous candles which Themelis had given us. We looked straight down the avenue. In every direction we could see throngs of people right up to the roof all holding candles. My overcoat seemed out of place in such a gorgeous assembly, especially after I had found that the candle-grease had run down the front. Perhaps I ought to have turned it inside out. I wished that I had my B.A. hood with me.

At midnight the climax of the service was reached. The Patriarch walked slowly into the Sepulchre. There was a hush all over the crowd. A moment later he re-appeared, and, turning to the people, shouted, *Χρίστος ἀνέστη*, "Christ is risen." At once every one took up the cry, "He is risen indeed." There was a sudden wave of enthusiasm over the whole church, the candles were waved in the air, the banners were twisted round and round, and the bells in the belfry were set clashing. Some time after this I got Themelis to get me out, as I was dead tired, having been there eight hours, four in the morning and four in the evening. He gave me my candle to keep as a memento, but though I burnt a good lot of it, it is still too big to get into my trunk.

On Easter afternoon I went down to what is called the Garden Tomb (the rock tomb out in the country supposed by Europeans to be the real tomb of Christ). Here there were only two or three Europeans, such a contrast to the scene the night before.

About Good Friday and Easter Day services I ought to explain that somehow, I

don't understand how, the offices for the various days have got pushed back in time until now, in the majority of churches, they are some twelve hours early, and in some cases much more, leading to the ridiculous result that Matins is always said at night, and Evensong, or what they call it, is said in the morning. In some churches they seem to get the time of day correct by fixing the offices still earlier, and being a whole day too soon. Of course, at the Church of the Sepulchre the services, especially in Passion Week, follow on one after the other, and have to be fitted in as best they can. The result is that the Thursday and the Saturday evenings have the real Friday and Sunday services. As far as the Latins are concerned they have no very striking ceremonies. They are Western, and though they have a great deal of ritual it all appears to go in the form of adoration, whereas the Easterns seem to think more of picturesque and parabolic actions. Their festivals take the form of enacting the stories which they wish to commemorate. The Latins, as also the other sects, have

their own ceremony of the "washing of the feet," but it is in a much more quiet and insignificant way. The Greek Church is the home Church of this country, and the Latins are looked upon as intruders, as in our own country. As far as the "Holy Fire" is concerned, they shared this with the Greeks at one time, but they now denounce the miracle as a fraud. It seems that the Russian pilgrims are the only ones who consider it miraculous, and by no means all of them do. When the Easterns have any cause for jollification, they certainly know how to enter into the spirit of it. They don't spend a fortnight and a mint of money putting up miles of bunting, and then go and stand solemnly for hours to see a staid procession drag past. With them there would be a natural and emotional difference between a coronation and a funeral, whilst with us the chief difference seems the colour of the bunting. It is most amusing to see the Europeans looking on at all these scenes and pitying the maniacs who take part in them, when, as a matter of fact, it is we, I suppose, who are to be pitied, being

so civilized that we cannot appreciate the real art of nature when we see it.

After all the ceremonies are over—I was eight hours at the church—I feel quite worn out, but am very glad not to have missed anything I saw. One feels immensely impressed by these Eastern services, and the impossibility of giving any idea of their beauty on the one hand, and of their absolute difference from our own ideas on the other. I must say that as far as I am concerned, I was there long enough to feel in sympathy with these Eastern people. I didn't mind the enormous crowd. It was inspiring; so far from feeling any objection to the masses of peasants living, eating, and sleeping in the church from Thursday mid-day to Sunday, I felt it quite a privilege to be in such a throng of simple, childlike people, who, if they are misguided, show such earnestness and zeal as I have never seen anywhere else. I learnt to appreciate the Greek services; their ceremonial, naturally Eastern and gorgeous, is simple and primitive, so that I, who could not understand the words, could thoroughly enter into

the spirit of the services. They have an inspiring wealth of meaning not to be imagined without seeing it.

On Easter Monday the first of a series of football matches was played between a team sent over from the Beyrout Syrian Protestant College and four teams : Monday, C.M.S. and L.J.S. combined; Tuesday, Y.M.C.A.; Wednesday, St. George's (Bishop's School); Thursday, all Jerusalem. The whole visit was very well conducted, and they have never had anything like it before. A large marquee was put up, and each day all societies met on the field—the mayor, consuls, etc.; the crowd numbered about 5000.

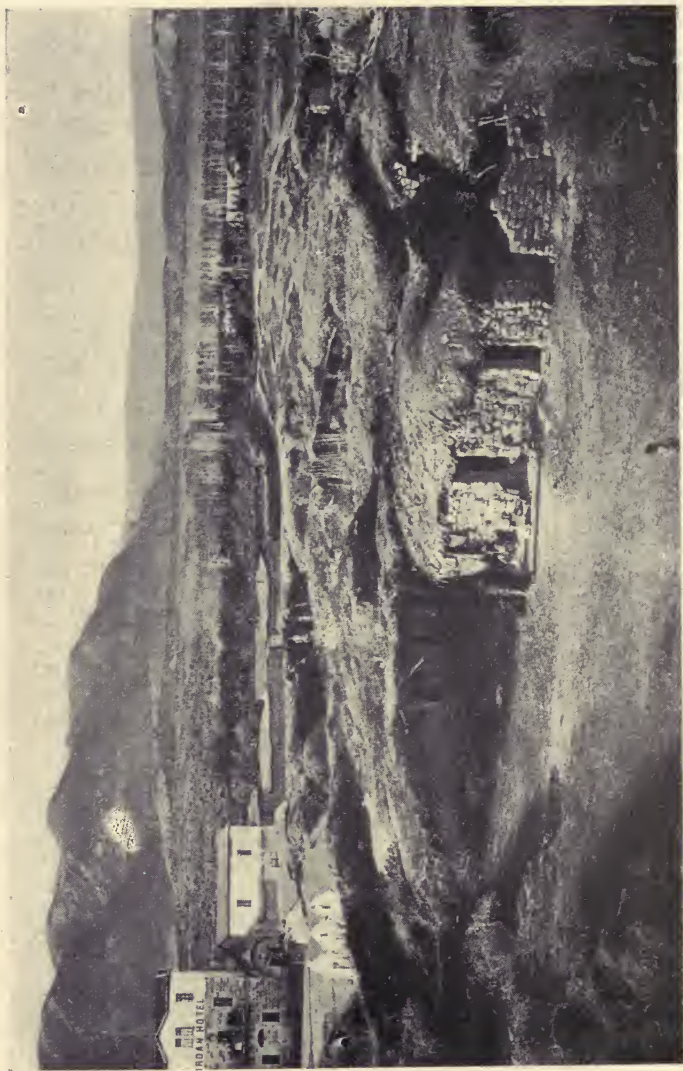
On Tuesday at 8 a.m. our party assembled to start on the Jericho tour. Mr. H——, who is an expert at this sort of thing, had made all the arrangements; we could not possibly have had a better guide; he knew not only all the country well, but also most of the Bedouin, so that we did not require an escort. There were four ladies, all full of fun and extremely energetic; R—— of the C.M.S. and myself, nine boys and a

pupil teacher and five Arabs—twenty-two in all. We had twenty-one donkeys and a mule, but two of them were used exclusively as pack animals, so the boys took it in turns to walk. You can imagine what fun we had making the donkeys go. Jericho is five hours distant from here, and over 3500 feet below (about the height of Snowdon). We crossed the Kedron Valley and over the slope of the Mount of Olives to Bethany, and then began to descend. The road here is very steep and simply winds backwards and forwards down the hillside to the Apostles' Fountain, which is traditionally the resting-place of the Apostles, and then slowly descends for several miles along barren, dry valleys, till after a short rise you reach the inn of the Good Samaritan. I cannot remember seeing a tree between Bethany and the plain of Jericho; nothing but stones, rock, and burnt-up grass.

We did not stop at this inn, but just looked inside, and went on down, down, down for two or three more miles to the next khan (inn); here we had our first meal. These "khans" are simply native

houses with enclosures where you can get rest and shade for yourselves and animals and water, or, if you prefer it, Turkish coffee. After about two hours' rest we continued down the valleys, which became more barren and rocky as we descended. This one is called the Valley of Blood. It always has been the haunt of robbers, and is traditionally connected with the story of the Good Samaritan. It has been the scene of several murders quite recently. A few years ago a lady and a doctor, living here now, were robbed, and the doctor only just escaped with his life. Curiously enough, though they will rob any one, yet a woman is much safer than a man. They will never touch a woman, but will shoot or strike a man without the least hesitation. The doctor had his collar-bone broken, and only recovered consciousness to find himself being dragged from the road to a precipice. They left him when he fired a revolver which he had concealed in his pocket. A little further on we rounded a hill, and Jericho appeared directly below us. We descended the last few hundred feet extremely abruptly down a



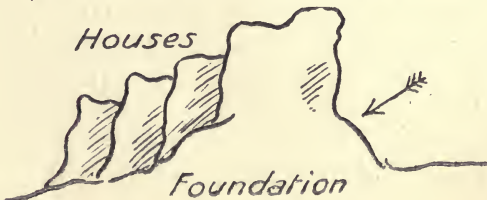


JERICHO.

zigzag road, and at the foot of the cliffs found ourselves within a mile of New Jericho. Looking back, the glaring white stony cliffs look insurmountable. The plain itself appears absolutely level, and is here twelve miles broad, and stretches north as far as the eye can see; on the west the cliffs of Judæa; on the east the equally abrupt mountains of Moab, Nebo, Pisgah, etc. It is absolutely barren except for desert scrub, but is capable of luxuriant vegetation when properly irrigated, as is shown by the large tract round Jericho, where they only seem to have to scratch the land to produce prolific crops. The fearful heat enables them to grow all the most tropical plants with ease, bananas, etc. Everything there is greatly in advance of the crops by Jerusalem, and they can easily get more than one harvest a year. We turned first to the left, and, as the afternoon wore on, rode up in a cavalcade to the ruins of Old Jericho, without any possible doubt the site of the city taken by Joshua. It looks as you approach like one huge mole-hill of brown dust without one blade of grass upon

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it, surrounded by luxuriant fields of corn, palms, etc. The solitude and desolation of the ruins, surrounded by such vegetation, is very striking; it seems to be absolutely uninhabited by man, bird, or beast. The size of the city is very noticeable. It seems not much larger than Trafalgar Square. Like all the old towns, it was evidently one honeycomb of rooms all thrown together, with no attempt at order, and communicating with each other by a perfect maze of narrow paths. The houses were built of bricks made of mud and straw, and baked in the sun, such as the houses of New Jericho are built of. I stood for a time and watched some of them being made. The explorers have been at work here and have laid bare the foundation of the wall which was overthrown in the time of Joshua. This extends all round the city, which is shaped like an egg. The wall in section was like this :



the foundation bulging out for better support. All is of stone, some stones being six feet long but very loosely put together, and packed in with smaller ones. The wall proper (upper part) is now simply a confused mass filling up the outer trench, and from all sides you can, as we did, "go up into the city every man straight before him" (Josh. vi. 20). As for the number of people being in what seems so small a place, there are several things to be remembered. It is as large as all the old cities of its time here; people in the East can and do now live huddled together like a swarm of bees. The perfectness of the climate down there would make it entirely unnecessary for them to live in houses, but they would need a citadel in case of attack. On the other hand, it is quite easy to understand how the Israelites could easily walk seven times round and yet have plenty of energy left. It must have been very terrifying to the defenders to see the tribe from the desert parading round and round the city in absolute silence. Also the Israelites must have known well where Rahab lived, as they would have passed by

thirteen times. As one stands on the ruined city and looks back across the mile of level plain to the great rock cliff of the Judæan hills, broken here and there by huge clefts, chasms, and caves, you can almost see those two spies slinking off from the wall in the exactly opposite direction from their camp to hide for three days till the plain on the other side was clear for them to return. Josh. ii. 16 says "the mountain." Just opposite Old Jericho the cliff towers up to one great peak called Quarantania, traditionally the desert and mountain of the Temptation of Christ. It is honey-combed with hermits' caves, and surmounted by a monastery. The reason why Jericho was built in the plain is perfectly clear; inside the outer wall of the city bubbles up a never-failing and plentiful supply of fresh and sweet water, so plentiful is it that only a part of the stream has to be diverted to turn a water mill. It fills two large tanks so deep that I did not touch the bottom, though I dived from a height of 15 feet; you can imagine how refreshing a good swim in this was after a hot and dusty ride. The spring

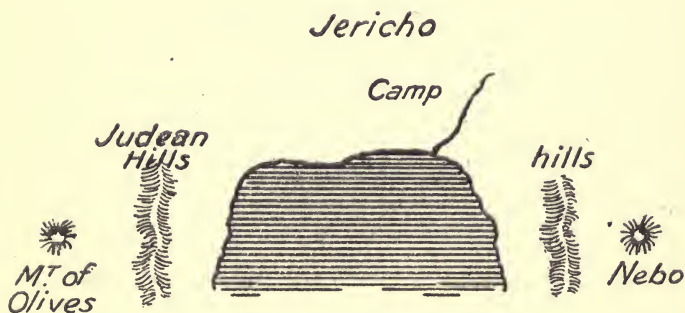
itself supplies New Jericho with its water, some two miles away. It is also of Biblical interest. The incident recorded in 2 Kings ii. 19-22 took place here.

After a good swim we all rode off to New Jericho, which is simply a collection of sundried, mud-brick houses, and two or three hotels. We had obtained permission to use the hall of the house of a fairly rich native, who was away for the time being; here we fed and slept in rows on the stone floor. The next day we got up early and started off in a cavalcade across the plain of the Jordan. For an hour and a half we rode over the dry sand with nothing on either side but scrub. All this land would be as fertile as the part round Jericho if it were properly irrigated, but it belongs to the Sultan, who does not let any one do it. The Jordan has evidently sunk, as there are slight descents before one gets to it; when you do, you find it lined on both sides with very dense jungle, too thick to penetrate except in the part cleared for the pilgrims. The heat each day was tremendous, and we were delighted to reach the shady and

cool-looking river. Two things strike one—its size, it being only about 20 to 25 yards across, though running very swiftly, and its mud banks, and bottom like Breydon Water, all soft mud. This with sand floats down and makes the water look like pea-soup. It is good to drink, but you must let all the grit sink, or you would be nearly choked. We much enjoyed a row on the river and a jolly good swim in it. Even while we were there a good number of Russian pilgrims came to baptize themselves in the water. They buy sheets of the size of the stone of anointing in the Church of the Sepulchre, and having stripped, men and women all together, they cover themselves with these sheets and jump into the river. These they take home to Russia to be buried in. On a certain day before Easter they go down literally by thousands, and all jump in together as a priest dips a cross into the water.

After a lovely lunch in the jungle by the riverside, where are all sorts of wild animals, wolves, bears, boars, etc., we remounted and went for another hour and a half across the

plain down to the north end of the Dead Sea. We did not actually pass any of the slime pits mentioned in Genesis, though of course they are still there, but we did have to ford two kinds of marshes where carriages often sink right in and sometimes horses are lost. The shore of the Dead Sea is a fine pebbly beach, and when we reached it there was a



beautiful calm, the waves scarcely turning over on the shore. The big bay at the north end, in the centre of which we were, is about 12 miles across. To the east above the Moab cliffs we could see Nebo, where Moses saw the completion of his work, and to the west the Mount of Olives, where Christ Himself saw the completion of His.

As you gaze south you cannot see the other end, so it looks like a great gulf. As soon as we were cool enough we went for a bathe. Can you imagine it? Beautifully warm, almost dead calm, absolutely pure from anything growing on the bottom, floating in it or swimming, no current, and simply to sit in it, your head out, your hands out, and your feet out. You can stay in for hours without a chance of feeling cold, you can paddle out to sea for any distance and simply rest when you feel tired; you have only just to come out on the warm beach for the sun to dry you, and then go in again—in fact, you feel just like a human swan. But woe betide any one who gets a drop in his eye or in his mouth, or in a cut; it is five times as salt as the sea, and is as bitter as copper soaked in vinegar.

When at last we did come finally out of the water we found there is one drawback; you can't get the salt off your skin, or out of your hair. You feel somewhat like what a fly must after it has come out of the treacle; all your clothes stick, and your hair is in twirly cakes.

After this Mr. H—— took R—— and me over to call on some natives whom he knew. They were sitting round their fire when we arrived, but at once set to work to make a beautiful kind of bread-cake—they pushed it into the ashes under the fire—and also made some Turkish coffee. In a few moments our meal was ready, the ashes were raked off, the cake was beaten to get off the dust, and then we all sat round and enjoyed it. Whilst Mr. H—— did all the chatting I passed round some cigarettes, which were much appreciated. We then went on to see the place where in the storms the sea washes over into a kind of natural trough ; here men dive for salt, which settles in large quantities at the bottom. By this time it was quite dark, and we walked back to our camp along the beach. We gathered a lot of dry sticks, and after a good meal set light to our bonfire, wrapped ourselves up in rugs, and lay in a circle round the fire. I shall never forget that night on the shore of the Dead Sea. It almost seemed like wasted time to go to sleep. However, the lapping of the water, the warmth and the

rhythmic chorus of snores was too much for me, and I did not wake up till the sun was just tinging the Mountains of Moab with pink.

I piled some more fuel on the bonfire, which was still smouldering, and a short time afterwards we went for another bathe. The morning air was cold, but the water had not lost its heat, and felt like a warm bath. We all just lay in the sea and paddled about. The sensation was unique lying still right out at sea, without a breath of air or a ripple, with the great mountains on each side, and their reflections in the water.

We rode back to Jericho over the scorching plain, about two and a half hours, and had another swim in Elisha's Fountain, and got rid of the coating of salt from the Dead Sea. We slept that night again in the native house in rows on the floor. Of course the evenings closed in with the usual camp sing-songs, which took the form of songs, hymns, and choruses.

On Friday we set off early for a stream called the Aujeh, which flows out of the Judæan hills to the Jordan, about four hours

north ; we passed through Old Jericho again, and on through the most desolate desert under the Cliff of Temptation, past several Bedouin encampments. These Bedouin of the valley are quite black from the sun, and one can easily understand their chief being called "The Raven" and themselves "The Ravens" (Judg. vii. 25 ; 1 Kings xvii. 6).

We also passed a desert graveyard. This is a very sacred place for the Bedouin, so sacred that they store their grain and property in pits dug amongst the graves, and leave it, no one daring to steal that which is guarded by the dead. Mr. H—— said I could have left my hat on one of these graves, and if it had not blown away, I should have found it there any time I came back to look for it. The stream was simply a mountain torrent, but full of fish, of which we caught a very large number.

We rode back in the evening and saw some fine bubbling springs in the mountain-side, and a very fine Roman aqueduct at Ain Duk.

The next morning on our journey home we crossed to the foot of the Judæan hills,

and then abruptly commenced the ascent. After mounting some way we again descended down the face of a precipice along a narrow track into a glorious chasm through which rushes a mountain stream down to the Jordan—Wady Kelt, the brook Cherith (1 Kings xvii.), where Elijah was fed by ravens. Halfway down a monastery stands out from the face of the precipice. The scene was simply grand. The huge rock cliffs, towering up on both sides, full of caves and hermits' dens, in one of which no doubt Elisha lived, and down in the gorge beneath the rushing water, almost hidden by the luxuriant tangle of jungle. We went into the monastery, had two bathes in the waterfalls, a good picnic lunch and tea, and started on our way again about 4 p.m. We returned along the road we had come by, up the "Pass of Blood," the scene of several recent attacks and the traditional scene of the Good Samaritan incident, and reached home in the dark about 9.30 p.m., having had a wonderful experience down in the Jericho Valley.

On Monday, April 23rd, Messrs. W. R.— and I rode over on horses to Ramulla, a

Christian village like Bethlehem, some ten miles north on the road to Bethel, Samaria, and Galilee. We took our lunch with us, and put up at the house of some honorary C.M.S. missionaries, a mother and daughter. We afterwards called on a young Syrian who is studying here, and were taken into the guest-room of the family of Hadad. Hadad lived some hundreds of years ago and his family is fairly numerous by now—in fact, the town is shared between four families.

There was a wedding on in the place and this was the second day; all the men of the family were assembled in the guest-room for the feed, and were squatting all round the room. Strangers, and especially foreigners, are very cordially welcomed at these gatherings, and we were put in the place of honour at the side of the sheik (head of the family). Water was brought for us, and, like the rest, we commenced to wait. They had apparently been there some time when we arrived, but as, after an hour, there was still no sign of the meal, we humbly apologized through our friend, and left them still

waiting quite contentedly for their feast. We hurried down through the village to the house of the bride, where the cooking operations were still in progress, paid a rapid call on some American Quaker missionaries, returned for tea to the C.M.S. house, and rode home. The wedding ceremony reminded me of Samson (Judg. xiv. 10). From the gossip that went on the bridegroom might have been propounding riddles all the time.

On Friday I was called at 6 a.m. and went down to join a party Mr. H—— was taking over to the Cave of Adullam; we were one lady, four gentlemen, two Arabs, and seven donkeys. We passed through Bethlehem, about six miles, to the Frank Mountain, about five miles further. This is the highest hill in the neighbourhood, and has a rampart of some 150 feet erected on the top of it. It looks like a volcano cone. Below are the ruins of a tower and dungeons in the citadel, all built by Herod. It was the last standing-place of the Crusaders in Southern Palestine. From here we went on, mostly leading our donkeys over the rough and, in

places, slippery rocks, across a deep wady to the cliff face in which is situated the entrance to the Cave of Adullam. We had lunch and a half-hour's rest in the shade of the rock, and then began to pack up food, candles, etc., fill water-bottles, take off coats and collars in preparation for our journey into the mountain. We also procured some camel-hair tent ropes. From the preparations made we might have been going on a journey of exploration; however, everything was needed. We then scrambled up the cliff to a narrow ledge, along which we had to proceed with great caution, at times on hands and knees, then, from the end of one buttress, we had to step across a yard of space into a small smooth hole in the cliff. One person standing at the entrance entirely blocked up the whole cave. Some Bedouin followed us thus far, but they dare not go farther owing to the dark. One cannot well imagine a more inaccessible place for an enemy. Being near Bethlehem, David would have known it. After going down a narrow passage for some way we came into a magnificent cathedral-like cave,

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which we lit up by magnesium wire. From here we went round a buttress into a similar narrow passage. We left coats, collars, and all extra clothing. Soon this passage became low, and we had to crawl on hands and knees. This went on for some way, and we were glad when it became large enough to rest and have some refreshment. From here a great many passages led off in all directions. We started down one and soon found it too low for hands and knees, we had simply to crawl; from time to time we would drop down several feet into large caverns. We laughed a good deal about the difficulties, but were informed it was nothing to what was to come, which was true. At the next halt we were told to put out all candles but one. Each blew at his light, but luckily one did not go out, for the next moment we found that *all* matches had been left in our coats near the entrance. We relit, and Mr. H—— went back, but it was a very near escape. When he returned we started on again. My word! rabbit holes are not in it with that cave. For some way you would have to get your feet

in different cracks, then lie on your left shoulder and squirm, then come to a drop which you would have to take head first; then there was a clean drop of 25 feet, which you had to do on the rope; finally, we came out at the same hole we had gone in by nearly three hours before. We had some tea and rode home, arriving at 9 p.m. Though we had been exploring all this time we had only done one of the nine passages in the cave that Mr. H—— knows. When you see the size of these places you have no difficulty in understanding how Saul and David could have been in the same cave together, or how David could have lodged his 400 men, or how Obadiah hid men “by fifty in a cave.” You could have put 1000 men into that one, and have lost them all. We got back to find that two English clergymen had got out of the train at “Bittir” to walk the last 10 miles into the Holy City, and had not turned up. A small search party had gone out to find them. However, in the morning, as they were still lost, I went to the English Consulate. The consul sent to the Serai (Turkish Magistrate’s

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Office) and a mounted police force was sent, then I started in a carriage with R—— towards Ain Kharim. We had got a good way along the road when we were stopped by a breathless horseman who told us that they had calmly walked in, quite unconscious of the trouble they had caused; they had lost themselves and been put up at a convent.

SAMARIA AND THE
SAMARITAN PASSOVER

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HAVING been told that I was certainly not to miss the Samaritan Passover, especially as only very few have seen it, I joined a party of seven who were to drive half-way (40 miles in all) and then ride the other half. We drove through the land of Benjamin, which is all rocky and mostly treeless, into the beautiful valleys of Ephraim, where the road winds along between the mountains which are covered with beautiful olive groves and vineyards. The wild flowers were simply wonderful. The walls were covered with honeysuckle and maidenhair. In one place we saw a perfect field of irises growing thick like corn. When we reached Singyl (a corruption of Saint Giles, a Crusading knight) we were met by the horses for the party which had been sent out to meet us from Nablus. We walked

over the hills to the east towards Shiloh, which is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the road, so that few travellers except camping parties see it.

It is simply like all these old cities, a small rounded knoll, steep on all sides. It is entirely a ruin, no one lives there, but it is covered with the foundations of buildings; here we looked up all the references to Shiloh we could find. Eli lived here; and here Samuel heard the call. The Benjamites stole their wives from here (Judg. xxi. 21-23). After seeing and climbing over the heap of ruins one can understand the force of the words of Jer. vii. 12-14 and xxvi. 6.

I then rode one of the horses back to the road and drove on to Nablus. This is a very fanatical Moslem town and quite a large place, about 12,000. No European can walk about alone, and even as I drove in, many boys picked up stones to throw at the carriage. I stayed with Dr. and Mrs. W——, who really were most kind, and gave me a very jolly time, though they themselves were extremely busy. Nablus is the old city of Shechem, and is situated

in a deep valley between the great mountains of Ebal and Gerizim. As you turn westward you pass between two great shoulders of the mountains, where no doubt took place the cursing and the blessing (Deut. xxvii. 1-end and Josh. viii. 35). Then, as you go on into the town, you can see standing out from Gerizim and entirely overlooking the city, a great pulpit-like rock, on which Jotham could stand with perfect safety and shout his insulting parable at the men of Shechem. Looking up at the mountains above, one could easily picture Judg. ix. 35 (Gaal and Zebul). On Sunday I attended the Arabic church, and the next day joined a party in a drive to Sebaste, the old Samaria. We drove a distance of about two hours (everything is reckoned in hours here). The valley down which we went is well watered, very beautiful, fertile, broad and green. Samaria stood on a very lofty circular hill, which stands quite alone, having a broad deep valley all round. The view from the top is grand, but is not so extensive as that from Ebal. During the last three years the excavators

have been at work here, and have brought to light some wonderful ruins, some of which could only be indistinctly traced before.

As we climbed up the steep side of the hill we reached what is called "The Leper's Gate." Till three years ago the spot was only called this in local tradition, being, as with the rest of the ruins it was, under a ploughed field; now it has been dug out and stands there almost complete, but looks as if it were not quite finished building. There are huge massive bastions of the old city wall and the gate between. The door itself is of course gone, but you can distinctly see the sockets in which it stood. From this place one gets a fine view straight down into the broad valley below where the Syrians encamped. Here, where those hungry lepers sat and made up their minds to go down into the enemies' camp below and risk their lives for food, we sat and ate lunch. It is wonderful how much more real these stories become when you see the places where they were enacted. From here we climbed up through the city—that is, we walked through the ploughed fields which

cover it. A wonderful fulfilment of Micah's prophecy (i. 6). It seems as if the excavators are fulfilling the end of the verse.

We passed through the colonnade which surrounds the citadel, a grand circular avenue of pillars two miles long, each pillar being about 20 feet high, though many are now broken. This was built by Herod, who beautified and rebuilt Samaria. At the top they have laid bare a magnificent flight of steps, which led up to Herod's Palace, and the temple he built for the worship of Cæsar Augustus. There is a headless statue of Cæsar and the foundation ruins of the Palace of Ahab, and also that of Omri. They have found here pieces of pottery used as slates, on which were written corn bills, etc., mentioning the name of King Ahab.

There is still a village here called Sebastiyeh, where we were entertained royally in the guest-room with coffee, tea, etc. They would have been insulted if we had suggested paying.

On the Tuesday morning I got a native boy to go with me over to Jacob's Well, but

as he could speak no English, and I could only say a string of words and phrases in Arabic, we could not talk much, but had to do everything by signs. The well is situated just where the Nablus valley runs into another, and is now unfortunately surrounded by the foundations of a new Greek Church, which is being built over it as a sacred spot. There had been an old Crusader church here.

It is directly at the foot of Mount Gerizim. One can easily imagine the woman pointing up, and saying, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain." From it there extends a fine plain, which is simply one sheet of corn unbroken by road, rock, or fence. No doubt the words of John iv. 31-38 were suggested to the mind of our Lord as He sat here and looked over this wide field. There is a narrow path winding across the valley, and I could see a little company of villagers in the distance coming along in single file through the corn. The man in charge was a Greek monk; he seemed very nice, and drew me up some water in a can (the water now is 32 metres below the top of the well), and let down a can of burning candles

for me to see the interior. The water was beautiful and cool. I thought I would try some Greek on him, and so asked for a *βίβλος*, and he gave me one; I then to his surprise turned to John iv. and read with him in the Greek the story. When we got to verse 13 I drank from the water, and said, *διψήσω πάλιν* ("I shall thirst again"); he smiled, and turned back to the book, and pointing with his finger to verse 14, read it over. It was fearfully hot walking back, and I had to stop several times under the shade of the olive trees.

The chief reason for my visit was to be present at the Samaritans' celebration of the Passover (see 2 Kings xvii. 24-end; Ezra iv. 1-2; and Nehemiah).

We started up Mount Gerizim about 4 p.m. and found it a fairly steep climb to the top; however, we reached the summit before sunset with the hope of obtaining a good view, but unfortunately the sun was obscured by drifting clouds and it was too dark for a photo. The Samaritans, a small and rapidly dying-out community, who usually

live in a quarter of Nablus, were encamped in tents for their Passover week on the top of the mountain. When we arrived they were just about to commence the ceremony, which they begin at sunset except when the next day happens to be a Sabbath. The women and children were in the tents. They do not share in the ceremony till the men have finished, then portions are brought to them.

On the top of the mountain there is a pit about 10 feet deep and 4 feet wide lined with stone like a well. At the bottom of this was a roaring fire, into which they kept dropping branches of trees till the flames (no smoke) poured out into the air above. At the side was a trench also full of fire heating two large cauldrons. It was round these fires that the men were standing when we arrived. All were dressed in long, flowing white garments. Inside the circle were six lambs, one for each family—over these the high priest stood with hands outstretched to heaven, calling for God's blessing on their sacrifice and reminding the men of their deliverance from bondage. After a

short, wild kind of litany, the men drew out their knives and with a great flourish and shout cut the throats of the lambs. They were dead in an instant. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter." One could not help thinking of this when one saw the lambs waiting, without a sound, for death. Boiling water was poured over them and all the wool plucked off. The entrails were cut out, and the right shoulders cut off as a wave offering to God, and to be a portion for the high priest and his family. Not a bone must be broken, but the flesh is slit at the sides with a knife. No stranger must touch. The lambs are then crucified on rough wooden crosses, head downwards, with the hind legs on the arms of the crosses. Salt is rubbed in. When all was ready the men stood in a circle round the pit holding the six crosses to conclude the sacrifice. The scene was such as I never can possibly forget. The white-robed figures silhouetted against the sky, some with their hands smeared with blood lifted up to heaven, others holding up the sacrifices, round the pit of fire on that barren rocky mountain-top

—the clouds drifting past, giving an occasional glimpse of the moon; the figures and the rocks lit up by the flames which licked up from the furnace below—and all the while the weird chant rising and falling in the still night air.

Suddenly there was a hush, and then a great shout—all the crosses were pushed down into the pit below; a hurdle was put on the top covered with grass and then with mud. The sacrifices are entombed under the earth for three hours. Of course, the fire is extinguished for want of air, but the heat of the pit is sufficient to cook the lambs whole. Unleavened bread and bitter herbs are passed round to all, including visitors. At midnight, according to the law, they eat the Passover with great haste, standing, their shoes on their feet, their staffs in their hands. They tear the lambs to pieces with their fingers, and eat as fast and as much as they can, burning up all that remains. You can see what a wonderful sight it is. I was sorry that I could not stay right to the end.

On the next day I wanted to return to Jerusalem, but was unable to get a carriage,

and so waited to travel with Mrs. S——, who was also a guest at Dr. W——'s. In the morning, the dispenser, a native Christian, took me up Mount Ebal. Though he had lived under its shadow all his life, he had never before been up to its summit, and he could not quite understand my wanting to go on such a hot morning; however, I had read George Adam Smith, Chap. VI., and was determined not to miss the view from the top of the mountain. Ebal is slightly higher than Gerizim, but has no historical connection, except that it is the Mount of Cursing. It is in the very centre of Palestine, and you can see almost the whole of the country south to Mizpeh, within five miles of Jerusalem; practically the whole coast to far up beyond Carmel, all the hills round Galilee, and even beyond, up to Hermon with its everlasting snow; and on the east, as from every high point in Palestine, the unbroken wall of the Mounts of Moab and Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh. It certainly is a wonderful view.

DAILY SIGHTS AND TALES

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JERUSALEM is the place for cranks. I pass one every day as I go into the city gate, who is dressed in long white robes and wears long hair. He stands there barefoot holding a bright lamp filled with olive oil and well trimmed. He thinks he is one of the ten Virgins, and is standing there month after month with his lamp ready and waiting. Talking of going barefoot, you know the feet of the natives who wear no shoes become as hard as leather. One came into school the other day, and having obtained a needle and cotton he sewed two parts of his foot together where his sole had split.

One man here used to stagger through the streets under a heavy cross, being determined to "take up his cross and follow." Are not these sort of things very Eastern, and really just like the symbolical actions of the old prophets?

The Turkish Government has just passed a law that all men of a certain age, whether Christian or not, must serve as conscripts unless they are married to a girl that is an orphan. An orphan girls' mission school here is being besieged by young men who are all very anxious to be shown over it. Orphans are at a high premium.

One of the teachers at the C.M.S. College here has just been taken off to prison because when he was out for a donkey ride with R—— his animal stumbled, and in falling he knocked down a little boy. They think nothing of prison here apparently. Amongst the natives, if you want to find a friend, you go first and see if he is in gaol. The cells are open to the public, and prisoners are supplied with food by their friends. One popular prisoner is thus sometimes able to stand the whole gang a sumptuous dinner.

A lady from Cairo society sitting next me at dinner told me that it used to be the regular thing for people who had servants they particularly valued to have them put in prison while they went away on their holiday, lest they should drift into other situations ;

but such things are not done there now. At one prison the prisoners are kept in a confused mass in a sort of bear pit, and the tourists go and throw them coins to see them fight. As you can imagine, these are awful places for breeding disease. Dr. C—— (a Syrian) has given us a lecture on "Charms" and amulets; he has a collection of 700, which he has obtained from his patients and others. Charms he found most common amongst the native Christians, although the Moslems say that "spirits" are so numerous that one could not drop a pin from the sky without hitting at least one. The most to be feared is the power of the "evil eye," which they avoid by wearing a blue bead marked like an eye. Next there is the "hand of evil," which they avoid in the same way by wearing an imitation hand. Passages of the Koran written in a cup make water from it the best possible medicine.

It is wonderful to see the porters here (who are a particular class of men) carrying things about the town on their backs. Yesterday I saw a man carrying sixteen boxes,

each about the size of a small cube sugar-box. No Englishman would look at the things they carry. One man has been known to take a ton for a wager. You often see two men going along together, one carrying nothing, the other toiling under enough for three. It makes one think of the aptness of the illustrations used, Luke xi. 46 ; Gal. vi. 2 and 5. The other day I saw an interesting sight at the station. A Syrian, evidently returning from America, was met by friends, probably his father and brothers. There was quite a Jacob and Esau scene, during which I was trying to get past the ticket collector's gate. The traveller simply threw himself on the neck of each one in turn and wept and howled with emotion. One is naturally reminded of the Prodigal's return. These Easterns are very emotional.

The poverty of some of the Jews here is something too awful to contemplate. I believe a great lot of money is spent by charitable Jewish organizations in other lands, but it seldom seems to get to the most needy. We are disgusted at the custom of throwing all refuse and foul

matter into the streets, and bless the dogs for doing their best in the scavenging line; but with the poorest Jews it is the reverse. The filth of the street is their only means of staving off starvation, and the dogs are thus their rivals. They beg at the shops, and often have to try two or three places to get a para, 15 of which make a metalik, which is worth $\frac{1}{2}d$. Those who work among them tell me that it may easily take a whole morning's tramping to obtain this metalik.

The other day I heard of some amusing incidents connected with the German Emperor's visit here about twelve years ago. He went to see all the German institutions. The head mistress of the Talitha Cumi School on showing him over said very boldly, "We want a dining-hall; will you give us one?" That evening an architect was sent up, an estimate made, and the whole thing put down to the Emperor's account. A few days later the Emperor visited Schnell's boys' school, a very large institution. The head master received him with great ceremony, and began complaining

of the bad water supply. He enlarged on the benefit it would be if they had a good swimming-bath ; they had to send down into Jerusalem even for drinking water, and they would be most grateful if he could do anything towards their getting water, to at least give the boys a good drink. That evening the Emperor sent up six donkeys with water-skins and a note saying he would like a receipt, and hoped it was sufficient for the boys to have a good drink. Later, when at Damascus he was entertained in a lordly manner by a native prince, in a room where the furniture was magnificent even for the East. The prince, seeing him admire the carpet, said with Eastern politeness, "All is yours." "Thank you," said the Emperor; and next morning he sent up his men with a van and had the furniture packed up. He said he would teach people to say what they meant.

The war (Turkish-Italian). The other day the Turkish authorities at Jaffa received a telegram which had been stopped at the post office, and handed over to them ; it said, "Italian Prince arrives to-morrow."

The authorities, in a great state of excitement, cabled to Constantinople the news, and asked what they were to do. They were told to treat him with all respect, and give him what he wanted. In the meantime the steamer, for it was the name of a vessel, was impatiently waiting out at sea signalling for boats to come to take her passengers off.

July 5th.—Last night we heard an awful yelling mob rush past the hotel during dinner; it was a crowd who had been attempting to lynch a Mugrabe Jew (North African). The man was surrounded by soldiers, and being taken to the Serai, he was stripped and bleeding from head to foot. Lately there have been several cases of kidnapping children by these Jews, like this case, where the mob attacked the man finding him carrying off children in a sack. The same cry is beginning again which has so often been heard in Europe, that the Jews eat Christian children. We hope the kidnapping will soon be stopped or there may be a Jewish persecution. Recently a Greek

priest, who wears his hair long like a woman, saw a child fall down in the street; he picked it up. The crowd thought he was a Jew dressed up, and set on him, and pulled his hair out.

ASCENSION DAY, 1912

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THURSDAY last, being Ascension Day, six of us here arranged to go up to the Mount of Olives before dawn, and see the sun rise over the Mountains of Moab, and to be present at the ceremonies connected with the day. We asked the waiter to call us, but somehow his alarum did not go off; and if it had not been for a friendly mosquito, the whole expedition would have been wrecked. We were told the sun would rise at 5.15, so it was extremely fortunate that a mosquito found its way into my net, and settled on my nose exactly at 4.30. I tumbled into my clothes, and banged at the only door whose number I knew.

Whilst waiting, I found two of the party disconsolately returning to their rooms, as they did not know the way, nor my room, being new arrivals. At last we got started, and hurried past the Green Hill, down into

the Kedron Valley, and up the steep mountain path to the village on the top of the Mount of Olives.

The sun rose as we went up, and as we turned to look back we could see the soft light of dawn upon Jerusalem. The view from this point is superb, the whole city being spread out like a map below. That morning the sight was beyond description. The dull, grey city of old Jerusalem was suddenly bathed in a flood of golden light from the *Ascended Sun*, and it became the Holy City of Gold—a new Jerusalem. To me it seems a beautiful custom to have these Ascension services at this time in the morning. As the sun ascends into the heavens, the grey Jerusalem is changed into the Jerusalem of gold: so Christ ascended leaving the same grey Jerusalem of earth for the Holy City which He is preparing above. The traditional spot of the Ascension is guarded by the Moslems, who, of course, consider Christ a prophet, and the stone, with the traditional footmark, is under the dome of the mosque, which is surrounded by a courtyard. The various Churches

somehow obtain permission to hold their services in the courtyard, and even in the mosque itself.

It was into this courtyard that we first pushed our way, crushed in a crowd of pilgrims of every nationality, surging to and fro. On the eastern side of the mosque were awnings suspended, forming very dirty and tattered tents. At the back of each was an altar covered with ornaments and candles. Each Church had its own tent, the Latins, Greeks, Armenians, Abyssinians, Copts, and Syrians; but the crowd surged backwards and forwards, peering into each tent in turn. Each Church seemed to have its own time to go into the mosque, which is just a dome about as big as a fair-sized dining-room.

We went in with the Greeks, who, as soon as the Latins had cleared off, took the place by a great rush. The pilgrims were all falling over each other in their effort to reach the rock in the floor, which has a foot-mark impressed in it. All the while the priests sat calmly behind it, selling, at a great pace, pieces of paper cut the shape of the sole of a foot, which they touched on

the stone, and then passed over the crowd to the highest bidder.

We walked back to Jerusalem somewhat sickened by the sight ; such scenes are not likely to give "great joy" (Luke xxiv. 52).

THE CONVENT OF THE
CROSS

THE CONVENT OF THE CROSS

ON Whit Monday I walked over to see the Convent of the Cross. It is about two miles due west, over a very rough uncivilized road. All these roads, except the four or five which have been recently made by Europeans, are just simply tracks worn into the rocky hillside by the use of centuries, like the paths of the Lake District.

The convent is situated in a little valley by itself, and is surrounded by its own lands. All these country convents, like the monasteries of the Middle Ages, are houses of industry, hospitality, and piety. They reap a good income from their olives, and always have their cellars full of the best home-made wine. There are a great many about, and the monks are most hospitable, being always pleased to take in any travellers, ladies or gentlemen, especially if they have a letter from an episcopal dignitary. Tourists

are expected to give something to their common fund ; pilgrims are entertained quite free.

This particular convent has of late obtained a reputation for learning, and is now a college where there are a good number of students, who are clothed, boarded, and given a theological training. They have a good library, including many English books (Sir Walter Scott's, etc.). They also dole out bread to the poor, and wine on fast days. In fact, they seem to correspond to one's idea of old English monasteries. This particular one is extremely ancient, dating from long before the Crusades, and it has twice been taken by an enemy, and all within it killed.

They show you the blood marks (?) on the chapel floor. It is called the Convent of the Cross because it is said to stand on the spot where the tree grew which was afterwards used for the cross. The exact spot—three inches in diameter—was reverently pointed out by the monk, who could only speak Greek and Arabic.

The story, which is abundantly illustrated

by pictures on the chapel walls, is as follows :—

Lot when he fled from Sodom, took with him a stick or root, and planted it here. Abraham, knowing that it should be connected with the Redemption, carefully watered it. The devil, wishing to frustrate God's purpose, endeavoured, when Abraham was not looking, to hew it down, but he turned just in time, and drove the devil away. It was in a monastery dedicated to such nonsense that the Patriarch and all the highest officials here were educated !

However, the building is very interesting, being a perfect fort, with its external wall very massive and high, with windows only at the top, and a little heavy iron door about four feet high and three feet wide.

The Bishops are usually chosen from monks who are not ordained or married. Those who are ordained are married. The orders of Priests and Deacons are separate (like our army and navy) and often a man does not pass from one to the other.

THE SILOAM TUNNEL

THE SILOAM TUNNEL

THE other night after dinner some of us went to explore the famous Siloam tunnel. On the side of the hill outside the present south wall of Jerusalem, known as Ophel, the hill on which stood the city of David,



and before it the fortress of Jebus, there is the only real exhaustless spring of fresh water near Jerusalem. This spring was no doubt the reason why Jebus was built on the hill. Solomon filled up the valley by an artificial causeway to the neighbouring height of the old temple site, and extended the city of David over the neighbouring hills (1 Kings xi. 27; Millo = filling up).

The spring is now called the Virgin's Fount, and originally burst out at the foot of the hill, and ran down the valley. The Jebusites cut a horizontal tunnel into the hill and then a perpendicular shaft down to it from the centre of their rock fortress, so that they could draw up water without going outside the city wall (see Fig.), simply by descending some steps in the middle of their town to the head of the shaft. The taking of Jebus described in 2 Sam. v. 6-8, seems to have been achieved (2 Sam. v. 8) by Joab getting into this tunnel with some of his men, climbing the shaft, and bursting out into the city from within while the men of the place were standing on the walls, laughing at David at the foot of the hill. Later King Hezekiah (2 Kings xx. 20), hearing that Sennacherib was coming, in order that he might have plenty of water for himself and also to leave none for the invaders outside the city, stopped up the fountain and continued the tunnel some 600 yards through the solid rock into the next valley which Solomon had included into his city, making a large pool by damming up the

valley so as to hold all the water. This pool is the Pool of Siloam. There are several basin-like cuttings in the rock which are supposed to have been used by the fullers, being near the spring (cf. 2 Kings xviii. 17). I believe also the great prophecy, Isa. vii. 14, took place here (cf. Isa. vii. 3). I wanted to see the place where used to be the famous inscription found in the wall of the tunnel by an old boy of the L.J. Society School (possibly the oldest Hebrew writing extant), which describes how the workmen beginning at each end had some difficulty in meeting in the middle, but finally "pick answered pick" and they rejoiced to see the water flow through, which it has done ever since.

There was a gentleman staying here who wished to come. I made inquiries from two experts as to whether it was possible. They had both been in at each end, but I do not think either had been right through. They said that there was an iron grating fixed in the middle by the explorers Parker, etc., and that the spring being intermittent the water would suddenly rise to within a few inches

of the roof in places, and that we must inquire of the natives of Siloam, and that they would probably be able to tell us at what time it would rise next. So I got two boys from the school to talk to the natives in Arabic, and at 8.30 in the evening Messrs. B—— and R——, with two ladies from the hotel who wished to see the fun, and the two boys, started off down to the Pool of Siloam, it being almost full moon. After a parley with some of the men we found out they did not know when the water would flow next, and they were sure there was a fence so that we could not get right through. However, we left one boy outside with the two ladies, jumped into the water at the entrance where it flows out into the pool, and started off into the darkness. The tunnel is very neatly cut some 2 feet wide and 600 yards long. For some way we were only in water up to our knees, but the roof which had started at about 7 feet was now some 18 feet up. We passed the hole in the rock where the inscription had been cut out, and after this the roof got lower and lower, until we had to stoop to walk along; here the water was not

much above our boots. We soon came to a shaft cut roughly up into the hill above; this I climbed, to find it blocked at the top by huge stones which looked like the ruins of some building that had stood above. We went on some distance further, and came across the place where the workmen from each end must have met; there were two or three blind alleys and turns as if they could hear each other but could not meet. Some way on the water became deeper and reached to the top of my walking-stick. Here we came to the old Jebusite tunnel up which Joab had crept, and which ends in the shaft which goes perpendicularly up to the top of the hill. Down this there was a strong wind blowing, which blew out some of our candles. A few yards further we reached the cavern of the spring, and came out up the steps on to the hillside. We had gone right through having seen no barrier. We walked back in our wet things to the lower pool, where the ladies were waiting and expecting us to emerge. Then all walked back by the Kedron Valley, having gone right round the city. The curious bend is supposed to have

been made to avoid the sacrilege of passing under the tombs of the Kings, David, etc. If this is so, then, perhaps, some day the priceless treasures which are known to have been hidden there will be unearthed. The hill itself is now ploughed in terraces according to the prophecy, "Jerusalem shall be ploughed as a field."

“NEBY SAMWIL” .

“ NEBY SAMWIL ”

ON Thursday afternoon I arranged to take Miss —— over to Neby Samwil, as neither of us had been there. It is of interest for several reasons. The highest hill-top of the range in this part, it is only six miles from here, and from it you can see the Plain of Sharon, the land of the Philistines unto “the Great Sea, and the going down of the Sun.” You can also see up to Ebal and Gerizim (30 miles away). The barren hills of Hebron to the south, where Abraham lived when Lot chose Sodom, and on the east, the inevitable Mountains of Moab. Such a conspicuous hill, so central and with such an extensive view, is very naturally named in the Old Testament Mizpah (a watch-tower). From its position, it has of necessity occupied an important place in history. The Crusaders called it Mons Gaudii. It was their first camp in sight of the sacred city which they had come to recapture. Its chief interest, however, is in its connection with Samuel, from which it gets its modern name. Samuel

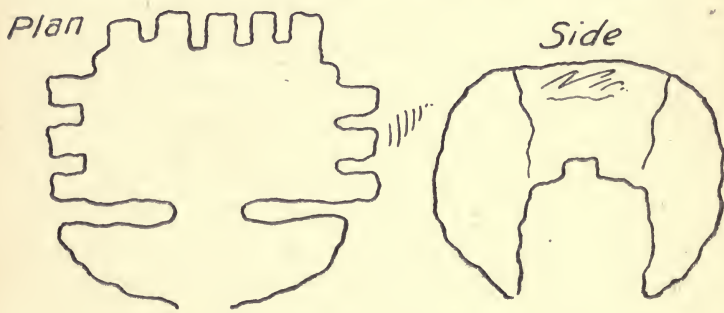
128 ROUND ABOUT JERSALEM

lived at Ramah, but went on circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh (1 Sam. vii. 16). As you stand in the village, on the roof of one of the houses which cluster round the summit, and look over the rolling hills to the south-west, stretching below you to the Philistine country, and the sea, you fancy you can see the whole scene of 1 Sam. vii. 6-12. As we climbed uphill to the village above—I was toiling behind, driving the donkeys up the steep and rocky mountain-path—we passed women coming down, and were greeted by the peasants, who, with sickle in hand, were reaping the corn. We could appreciate almost every detail of the story of those two who had climbed that same hill before (1 Sam. ix.). “Up” is very noticeable in verses 11-14; certainly I realized its force clambering after those donkeys. We had a lot of difficulty in getting started as the lady’s donkey was rather thin, the result being that, in order to balance, she held on by the reins, which so annoyed the animal that it would only go round in circles. We had given up the attempt once and were returning home when she decided she would try my suggestion of

riding my donkey straddle-legged. I had hardly liked to suggest it, as I had a native saddle which is very wide, and the lady is by no means a chicken. However, after one or two efforts, in which the donkey just moved off when I had got her well up into the air, we finally succeeded by my leaning up against the donkey and Miss —— climbing up. When once she was planted on and properly set, we both thought it best not to unload till we arrived. All this made us late, so that when we reached Neby Samwil the sun was shining down over the Mediterranean. Here we changed saddles and found it more comfortable, only I had the thin donkey with the big saddle. We were just going down to the end of the city (1 Sam. ix. 27), and had arrived near the place where I supposed Israel's first king was anointed; Miss —— had passed on in front, and I stayed behind to think, when suddenly my saddle slipped under the donkey, and I found myself lying on my back on the ground with the ass looking down at me, with a pained sort of surprised expression. I have found out since that those donkeys have a trick of puffing themselves out when the girths are

being done up so that it may be nice and loose.

On our return through the valley which leads to Neby Samwil I noticed several fine tombs cut out of the solid rock. They are known as the Tombs of the Judges. The hillside is cut away to leave a face of rock, and this is carved in bas-relief,



making very imposing entrances, in the centre of which a low square door is cut which leads to a fairly spacious room out of which the tombs or places for the bodies open directly. I believe they are said to be Roman.

As M. W—— had not seen the finest one, we returned another day. Some of these tombs—in fact, most of them—are used as sheep-folds, and being out on the hillside, serve that

purpose very well, but this does not improve them for the sightseer, as these black sheep and mountain goats are by no means clean animals. We had walked a long way, and it was getting late, and though I had not noticed it before, I now found I was aching in every limb. M. W——, too, was evidently anxious to get home, and we went faster and faster till we reached the hotel door. Mrs. —— was there to meet us, but M. W—— pushed by and disappeared into her own room, while I was left a moment to say what we had seen. I noticed that Mrs. —— looked hard at me and was just wondering whether my tie was not straight or what, when she leant forward, saying, “Excuse me, but you have a little fly on your coat—no, it isn’t, though—Oh! there’s another! Where have you been?” I was just turning round to explain, when she exclaimed, “Fly, they have swarmed on you.” In spite of my aching limbs, I did fly to my room, and in two minutes had flung every stitch of clothing out of the window, in my excitement quite forgetting my watch and purse, and was leaping up and down my room like the Priests of Baal on Carmel, or a caged

lion at feeding time, only instead of cutting myself with knives, I was throwing jugfuls of water over myself—I looked like a gory chunk of meat. My word! it was awful. Looking back on the scene of that battle-field with the corpses strewn around and the smell of Keating's powder in the air, I am appalled to think of the amount of blood that was shed, but, after all, I suppose it was mostly my own. The porter secured the purse and watch. M. W—— turned up late for dinner, and when she did there was a twinkle in her eye and an uneasiness of manner which only Mrs. H—— and I could interpret.

June 17th.—For some time past I have had my eye on a high hill to the south-west of Jerusalem, and last Thursday settled to see the view from there. M. W—— said she would come, so at about 3 p.m. we set off on two sturdy donkeys across the Valley of Hinnom and on to the Plain of Rephaim, where now stands the station, and where David fought his most famous battles with the Philistines.

This time we took the precaution to have a donkey boy; unfortunately, our "boy"

was an old man too old to run, and so our progress was slow. The first six miles is along the Bethlehem road. When within half a mile, and just past Rachel's Tomb (traditional), which we were lucky enough to find open, and crowded with Jews wailing, we turned off along the Hebron road, and then to the right, into a most glorious grove of olive trees. It is said to be one of the finest groves in Palestine, and certainly justifies "Bethlehem" being called "House of Food" (Ps. cxxxii. 6). The path, which was a very good one, wound along under the shadow of olive trees, over the soft, rich, brown soil, to the foot of the hill we had set out to climb. We passed up through a town called Beit Jala, the Giloh of the Old Testament, the home of Ahithophel, a shepherd companion of David in his youthful days at Bethlehem, who afterwards joined Absalom in his revolt, and seems to be mentioned bitterly in Pss. xli. 9 and lv. 12-14.

The hill became more and more steep, and soon after passing Beit Jala, we had to leave the donkeys with the old "boy," and climb from terrace to terrace, pulling ourselves and each other up by means of the

vines, which were down in great profusion over the rocky walls which hold up the soil on the hillside. It was good fun, though very hot, and we were very pleased to reach the top, from which we could see the Mediterranean on one side and the Dead Sea on the other, the former about 40, and the latter 20 miles away. The whole country was like a map, Jerusalem below us to the north-east and Bethlehem to the east.

The following Saturday, I determined to go down into Samson's country by train, returning in the evening. I persuaded R—— to come too. There is no difficulty about time table, as there is only one line to Jaffa, and only two trains each way daily. We left by the 7.40 a.m., having bought tickets for Dier Aban, the second station down, and just where the narrow gorge—through which the line runs—suddenly opens out as if by a door, upon the wide rolling hills which border on the Jaffa plain. However, we did not intend going quite so far as this, and before the train started, I had a little talk with the engine-driver. He was a Frenchman, and in their usual polite manner, promised to stop 30 kilometres

down for us to get off. This, I had calculated by a map, would be about five miles, as the valley winds above Dier Aban in the gorge, and somewhere near the great cave which Samson seems to have made his stronghold, in the incident mentioned in Judg. xv. 8-13. The calculation was correct, but unfortunately the driver did not stop, and we were rushed right past the cave, which we could see above us on the other side of the chasm, and were only able to jump off as the train slowed down for Dier Aban.

We started off up the broad valley till we reached a colony of some seventy or eighty Rumanian Jews, who could talk French, and were very kind in giving us water, etc. From here we struck up to the left through the cornfields, to the top of the hill where stands Zorah (Judg. xiii. 2). It was without doubt in these fields that the incident recorded in Judges xiii. happened, and to add greater interest, we passed, as we went up, an old rock altar in a field of corn with steps up to it belonging to that date (cf. verse 19). When we reached the village, we were welcomed by some men of the

place, though we could only return the salutes, and were at once ushered into the village guest-room (just three sides of a square with a dome over the top, all of stone). Here the old men were all sitting round with the sheik in the centre. Having taken off our boots, we squatted down with our hosts, glad of the shade. For more than an hour we kept up a kind of deaf-and-dumb conversation. They showed us their things, and we ours. One of them had quite a nice watch. In the meantime, coffee was being made over a fire at the entrance. We each had two cups, and then they were passed round to the others. After repeated bows on our part, and motions of a "don't you go yet" style on theirs, we went back down the hill, to the Jewish colony, where we ate our lunch, and slept for an hour, the heat down in the plains there being very great.

We then walked over the hills to the south, to Bethshemesh, where the Palestine Exploration Fund is excavating, but not having much time, and the excavators being asleep, we did not have them wakened. We returned by the afternoon train for Jerusalem.

THE WHIRLWIND

THE WHIRLWIND

July.—To-day I was sitting under the shade of a wall, waiting for some cricket. It was perfectly still and very hot—not a breath of wind—when suddenly I heard a rushing noise on the other side of the wall, and the next moment a crowd of old tin cans came hustling over about ten yards away. Immediately they all jumped into the air again, and a lot more lying on a scrap heap close by. Then I realized what was happening. It was a whirlwind, confined to a few square feet. It rushed along about as fast as a horse could gallop, and everything it touched jumped high into the air. It passed by a big olive tree, which was almost uprooted, and a Bedouin tent, pitched under its shade and well pegged down, was lifted some 30 feet into the air. If it were not for the high column of sand

and dust passing over the Mount of Olives, I could almost think I had dreamed it.

Mr. H—— says that I was fortunate to see it so well, as they are very rare here, and are very seldom as strong as this. I wish I could have got a photo of all the tins leaping up off the scrap-heap, as if the laws of gravity had been suddenly reversed.

It is no wonder that primitive people saw deities in nature. I suppose they were partly right, though "Jehovah is not in the Whirlwind."

THE "DIDACHEE"

I have made two attempts to see the library of the Greek Patriarch, as I particularly wanted to see a manuscript I had read a lot about in Cambridge, called the *Διδάχη*, or "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." The first time we went, a priest who, like myself, could only speak broken French, told me I must come at 2.30 in the afternoon. The next time another told me I must come in the morning, but now we have managed to do it by means of a deacon whom I have got

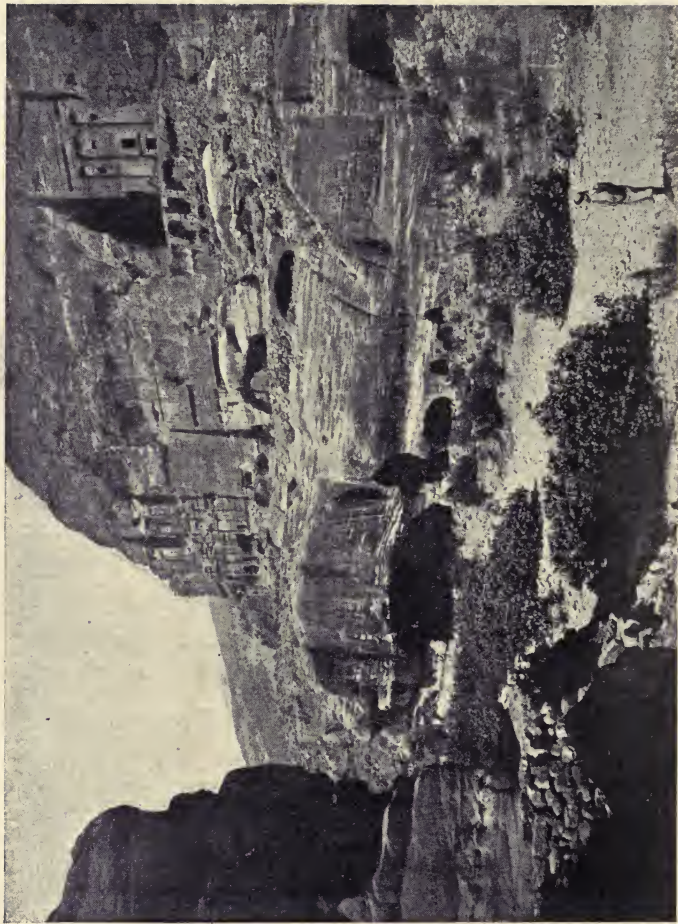
to know. We went at 8 a.m., and he was very kind, and showed us many interesting MSS., including the one I wanted to see. It is a ninth-century copy of a second-century MS., and is unique in being the only copy in existence, the work being only found elsewhere in early Christian quotations. It is a second-century or possibly first-century account of what the Apostles taught concerning the customs and ceremonies of the Christian services.

“PETRA”

“ PETRA ”

July 9th.—My word! I am in luck's way. I have just had an invitation to go with a Dr. B—— to “Petra.” “Petra!” Any one who has seen it is considered quite an explorer. As the crow flies it is 110 miles into the Great Arabian desert, but as we shall have to go, it will be much more than this each way. “Petra,” the old rock city of centuries ago, all the houses, churches, temples, theatres, tombs, etc., are cut out of the solid rock at the foot of Mount Hor, where Aaron was buried. Dr. B——, a C.M.S. missionary amongst the Bedouin and Arabs at Es Salt on the mountains of Moab, wrote that he was getting a small party to go there, would R—— and I join? We should be camping with the Bedouin, and get a lot of hard riding over mountain and desert. We shall probably be away a fortnight, and if we ride hard, we may get four days there.

Es Salt, July 21st.—So here I am, having passed the first stage of my journey. We—*i.e.* R—— and I——had heard that people sometimes ride here from Jerusalem in one day, and being extremely busy, we determined to attempt this; however, nearly everybody said we were foolish, and that we ought to stay one night at Jericho. We got three horses and a little Arab boy to take them back, and started just after midnight on Friday. From that time we were in the saddle almost continually until we reached this door at 3.15 on Saturday afternoon. It certainly was an experience which we shall never forget. The night was a very dark one, there being no moon, though the stars were brilliant and we were a frisky company as we left the hotel. The horses were real Arab steeds with no end of vigour, and went splendidly for the first ten hours, though they had to be urged on towards the end. The Jericho road has a bad name from of old, and of late there have been several robberies, so R—— borrowed a revolver, which he kept in his belt. It was weird in the extreme, riding down the winding wadies



GENERAL VIEW OF THE NORTHERN TEMPLES AND TOMBS OF THE ROCK CITY OF PETRA
DISCOVERED IN 1812, AFTER HAVING BEEN LOST TO THE WORLD FOR 1,500 YEARS.

which lead to the Jordan plain, and continually meeting bands of Bedouin prowling about in the night with camels and donkeys. Whenever we heard any men in front, the boy always rode on and exchanged greetings. We asked if he was armed. "No," he said, "God is my defence," of course in Arabic. We passed by the inn of "The Good Samaritan," just getting off to look in at the sleepers, lying huddled up all round, and then as the sky showed slight signs of the approach of dawn we rode into the valley popularly known as the "Valley of Blood." However, we found that there was a human defence also, in the shape of a picket of Turkish soldiers, who were posted here because of recent disturbances. We heard that they had just beheaded three men for highway robbery. As we rode on and down the cliffs which descend to the Jericho plains, the sky became brilliant in the extreme, and the view became—well, indescribable.

Passing through Jericho the sun rose, and here R—— wanted to wait for breakfast, but I knew that at all costs we must push

across the plain before it got hot. For an hour and a half we were riding across the wonderful flat country (as flat as Peterborough), passing companies of Bedouin, sheep, horses, donkeys, camels, all as so often pictured in Genesis. Several times our horses broke out into furious gallops, feeling the freedom of the desert, so we scampered on into the weird hillocks of sand, which the Jordan, in prehistoric ages, has worn into the plain, and after another half-hour we reached the Jordan itself with its tropical jungle banks. We paid the toll and rode across the curious wooden tubular bridge, and then sat down in the shade of the jungle by the riverside for our breakfast of sardines, eggs, and bread; we drank what water we had with us, and filled the bottle with the muddy Jordan water. R—— was then for a slack, but I knew we had two and a half hours' more riding on the plain, and was firm for going on at once. The boy said we must go back to Jericho, and go on to Salt the next day, but this we refused to do.

When we got out of the jungle and on to

our horses again, we found that the heat was already intense, although it was still only about 8 a.m. The plain, which had been covered with dew, was steaming, and we felt just as if we were being steamed over a kettle. We put handkerchiefs to hang down from our hats, and silently rode for the hills, which were some two hours distant. We were told when too late, the night before, that though Mr. H—— had been across many times, he would never dream of crossing the plain after breakfast in the summer, and that he did not think the Arab would allow his horses to go. However, after about one hour we were very much relieved to find a steady, if slight, cool breeze blowing, and the last part in comparison was really not so bad.

As we drew near the foot of the hills we met more Arabs, who were on their way down. They asked our boy if he had any water. He answered that they could get some at the Jordan, knowing we should want all of ours. One hardly understands the force of all the metaphors about "water" in the Bible until one has been out here.

Where there is a spring there is a town and history; roads must go where water can be found, and journeys arranged accordingly. Our boy was right, we did need every drop of that muddy Jordan water. For three hours we climbed up the dried-up water-course, the sun still scorching down, and now the wind was cut off by the hills, when suddenly we came upon a fig-tree clinging to the rocks. This tree is a famous landmark on the route, and we had been told of it before starting from Jerusalem. After leaving the Jordan, it is the only tree one sees all the way up the mountains. We hastened into its little shade to find that the figs were not ripe. Under this tree was the only water between Jordan and Es Salt (seven hours); it was just a puddle in a hole about as big as a footbath, to which you descend by steps, and yet this was sufficient to make the place a camping-ground. The puddle was full of swarming creatures, so we decided to drink our bottle of Jordan water and fill it again, though we hoped that the liquid would not be needed. From here we pushed on for another hour and a half,

and on reaching the top of the wady, we had a grand view of the Jordan Valley and mountains of Judæa and Samaria. On the top we also came across a large Bedouin encampment, and being very thirsty, and also wishing to humour them, we rode straight into the middle of their camp, and waving our hats in the air with a flourish, we jumped to the ground, and saluting asked for "moysh" (water). They seemed very pleased to see us, and at once spread cushions under one of the long black goats'-hair tents, where we reclined while they fetched a bowl full of filthy-looking water, out of which everybody drank in turn, and which tasted very much of skins. They at once lit a fire just in front of us, and proceeded to make coffee. We each had to drink twice from a tiny little cup, which was then handed all round. The young women and children all hung about in crowds, staring, but the old women sat with us and the men, smoking long black wooden pipes. The men smoked our cigarettes.

From here we pushed on again. After another hour's climb we reached our first

view of cultivation—terraces of vines. For three metaliks (*i.e.* for $1\frac{1}{2}d.$) we had not only more than we could eat, but also far more than we could carry with comfort, four large bunches of grapes each.

The hills of Gilead are extremely fertile, giving one some idea of what Palestine was like when it was described as flowing with milk and honey. Some of the bunches were more than a foot long. We rode on munching handfuls for another hour and a half up hill, and then saw Es Salt in a valley just below us. By this time both our horses and ourselves were somewhat tired, and we slowly wended our way down, and were very glad to tumble off at the doctor's door, where we had a very hearty welcome, and were soon made to feel quite at home. This is a town of 17,000 inhabitants, and is the only medical mission station on this side Jordan. When the C.M.S. came here some twenty years ago, the people were a very ignorant lot, who had no mosque, and only through custom observed the Mohammedan habits and superstitions. They say that one who was a Greek somehow got hold of a Bible,

and becoming interested, read it to his friends. They soon became dissatisfied with their former ideas and asked at Nablus for a teacher; then a native pastor was sent, who built up the nucleus for the present congregation, which is 400 strong, and is the largest native congregation in the whole country. Yesterday morning (Sunday) it was quite inspiring to sit in the crowded congregation of the little stone church, and join in the hearty services conducted by the old native pastor, assisted by the retired pastor, who is older still. The service was perfectly easy to follow as it was simply ours in Arabic. The hymns were to the best known English tunes, and they sang so heartily that I was able to sing what I could remember of our version without any fear of putting any one out. They have no particular idea of time, but sing all the tunes in a rhythmic kind of chant, swaying on quite regardless of the harmonium. The last hymn went to the tune of "God save the King," and it sounded very quaint being shouted by Arab voices. The Christian women do not drop the custom of the veil,

and all sit in a group at the back of the church. The Moslems have just lately built a mosque here. The Arabs, who are dark, like fair hair, and in spite of our boy's denials, the rumour has got through the town that R—— and I are really husband and wife. Salt is famous for grapes, and is the origin of the word "sultana."

On Tuesday afternoon (July 23rd) we went up to the top of what is probably Mount Pisgah; it is only about one and a half hours above Es Salt. We found it a pleasant walk up the vine-covered slopes to the top. My word! what a view we did get! You see nothing until you reach the top, and then you come to what is practically a precipice, with the whole of Palestine below and around. To get some idea of the extent of our view, read the description in Deut. xxxiv. 1-3. Gilead, of course, was the east of the Jordan up to Dan—that is, to Mount Hermon with its snow-capped top 100 miles away; Napthali and the hills round Galilee 50 miles away; Ephraim and Manasseh with the Nablus, Ebal, and Gerizim, etc.; Judah, with the Mount of

Olives, and, most remarkable of all (verse 3), the wonderful Jordan Valley and Dead Sea, spread out just like a map 5000 feet below. It almost took my breath away because of the abruptness of the view. It will remain in my mind as one of the most dramatic scenes of the Old Testament; Old Moses having given his life up to the one object, and then as he toils up the last few yards, suddenly this wonderful view of the promised land bursts on his eyes. He gazes round bewildered, and then overcome with emotion, falls back and dies. The hill is called now Jebel Osea, and the Moslems show, as one of their shrines, the tomb of Hosea. They claim that the body of Moses was carried by angels to the west of Jordan.

The next day, after a picnic lunch on the floor, the second part of our journey began. We had seven horses and mules, all loaded up so that you could hardly see which way round they were. We each mounted one and started off on the road to Ammon, five of us and the muleteers. It is wonderful what these animals can carry, and the distances they can go. My mule had only

come from Nablus that morning (twelve hours), and it was now going on to Ammon (four hours), to return to Es Salt that evening. We did not pass much of interest, except that we saw Jerash in the dim distance, until about halfway we came to two new colonies, one of Turcomans and the other of Circassians. At Ammon itself is another big Circassian colony; here were wild-looking semi-European, but bigoted Moslem people from the Caucasus, who have been induced by the Turks to settle on the edge of the desert as a protection against the sudden visits of the desert Arabs. They had belonged to Russia, but, being Moslems, preferred to live in Turkey. Though I believe none of the colonies are much more than thirty years old, yet they are grand places just like garden cities. Every one has his own little white bungalow with beautifully cultivated garden. This is all done in what would otherwise be a dry valley by means of a system of aqueducts. It just shows what the country must have been like when all the aqueducts were in use. These Circassians have very much the same problems to face

that the Israelites had when they settled here. Here the doctor, R——, and I rode to the C.M.S. dispensary to get two more beds, and when we got to the station it was dark, and we found the ladies sitting on the baggage. The Hadj railway (*i.e.* pilgrims' railway) runs from Damascus to Medina, and would be continued to Mecca if it were not for the fanatical Moslems. At Ammon station we were very kindly treated by a Turkish officer, who gave us a large van to camp in for the night. Next morning we were having breakfast when the train steamed in. We finished our meal, packed up, put away the ladies' tent, had a last look round, and when we were ready, the train proceeded. We were in a second - class (cheapest) corridor, similar to a London suburban train, and had to request some official to sweep out the compartment of the remains of nuts, figs, etc. All the rest of the compartments were full of pilgrims on their way to Mecca. They were really very interesting, but unfortunately these were not the only occupants of the carriage. Whilst they called forth our sympathy, their companions

made our blood boil. The pilgrims spent all their time eating, washing their feet out of the window, and saying their prayers. In order to do the latter they placed boards across the seats, and, in endeavouring to face Mecca, were much put out by the continual twisting of the line. One man slept with his head on the seat and his feet up on the hat rack.

They were mostly Egyptians, Indians, and Africans; everywhere the line was guarded by soldiers.

By this time the sun was overhead and simply blazing down; the scene was perfectly dazzling. The sand stretched out all round as far as the horizon, sometimes in stretches of plains, sometimes in low dunes, sometimes in great cliffs, but always sand. The heat seemed to come up from the ground as down from above, and standing out on the foot-board you could feel it on your face as if it had been a fire. I do not wonder that the Israelites, when they got through into this land of Moab and Gilead, did not feel inclined to push on across the Jordan.

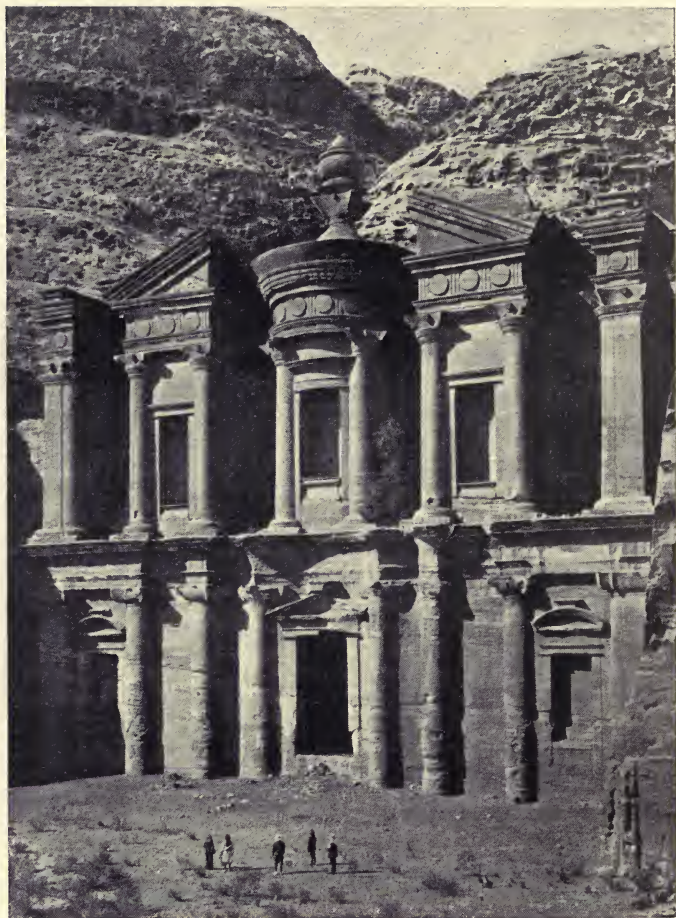
We were near the place where the Serpent was put up in the wilderness. The stations were still being built all down the line, which seemed very curious, as there was never the least sign of vegetation or habitation. I think they are partly to guard it from Bedouin, and partly to serve villages miles away by some oasis (like Maan). At one station we had a long halt, during which we had to get everything out of our train into another, as the engine of the northward one had jumped the points and got right across the line. I tried to get a photo of the great scramble which took place, but was stopped by a Turkish officer, who said he was anxious lest the accident should be heard of at headquarters. However, when all the fun was over he relented.

After two hours' wait we proceeded to Maan station, which is an important one with a lot of European type of buildings, including barracks, officers' house, and two or three shops; also two American windmills for drawing up water from deep wells. Another Turkish officer who was in command here (Maan), seeing us looking for

a camping-ground, at once sent soldiers to take our baggage, tents, etc., and invited us into his garden. Here (as everywhere) he gave us coffee, and then said he was having all our things taken into his house. He said he would leave a soldier to do for us, and was going to sleep out in a tent himself. So he left us in comfortable possession of his house for the night.

It is most remarkable how extremely polite and thoughtfully kind these Turkish officers are. They speak French, and are apparently delighted to find people to talk to. They cannot speak Arabic, and their soldiers only know the words of command in Turkish. Next morning we spent a long time arguing with local muleteers, and then went three-quarters of an hour through the desert by a well-made road to Maan, which is really two cities built by a fine spring, the water of which soon dries up in the desert. Both are entirely built of bricks of sun-dried mud.

At Maan we had another halt to call on the Turkish Governor, and here we were joined by the two soldiers whom the Governor compelled us to take.



PETRA—THE WONDERFUL TEMPLE OF ED-DIER, CARVED ENTIRELY OUT OF THE LIVING ROCK. THIS WONDERFUL DESERTED ROCK CITY IS 70 MILES N.E. OF THE GULF OF AHALA.

After a long wait, during which we had to sit in the centre of one of the towns surrounded by the inquisitive people, we at last got under way for Petra. By the most direct route we should have passed no water, so we determined to go rather further round and have a picnic by an oasis. This we did, and much enjoyed a seven hours' ride across the desert, which towards the end became very hilly and even mountainous.

Castle of Pharaoh's daughter, Petra by moonlight—I sit down perfectly stupefied when I think of describing this place. To say that it is wonderful, awe-inspiring, beautiful, is no true description; many places are, I suppose, this, but Petra is unique.

As we rode, or rather led, the horses on Friday afternoon down through a rugged, wild ravine, similar to those of the wildest parts of the Lake district, the sun began to dip between the hills, and, in spite of the grandeur of the rock scenery, we looked forward to camp. The ravine opened out as we clambered down, and suddenly, as we wound round the shoulder of the hill, the mountains

of Edom burst upon our eyes. Never shall I forget it. The hills we were crossing were of a grey, ordinary colour ; but the pile of rock, which was thus framed in grey, was composed of all the colours of the rainbow, at this distance blended as on an artist's palette into the most perfect hues of a sunrise in the Alps. As the sun set behind this mass, it looked like a huge cinder still glowing ; the rugged points just caught by the last rays of the sun faded from one soft colour to another like a dying flame, until as the daylight faded and the moon came out, the whole mass grew cold in its silver and black.

Though we had fully intended to reach Petra that day, we came to the conclusion that it would be more beautiful and also more safe to go down into the mass of rock by daylight, so we pitched our camp in Wady Musa, close to the village of Elji, and just below it.

Next morning we got up early, loaded the donkeys, and were quickly on the march down the valley. We soon reached a fine tomb with a huge decorated front and a

double colonnade before it, all carved out of the solid rock. After this the valley became more and more precipitous and the rocks full of tombs, until at last the torrent-bed turned sharp to the right and straight into the mountain, and we were in a narrow crack artificially widened at the bottom to about 10 feet, and with the cliffs on each side towering to some 300 feet, sometimes seeming to almost meet at the top. We had entered the mountains of Petra, which I ought first to describe in general.

Surrounded by grassy hills which separate them from the great Arabian desert on the east, and by the sandhills which descend to the desert of Arabah, or great valley between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Akabah on the west, they are of entirely different geological nature from the rest. They are one mighty heap of soft sandstone peaks, the highest of which is Mount Hor; but the most remarkable thing about this craggy mass is, that the rock of which it is composed has in it a grain exactly like wood, sometimes in curving lines, sometimes twisted into knots just like mahogany, sometimes again in scales like

a mackerel skin, and every grain has its own particular colour ranging from polished jet black to the whiteness of snow, and including not only all the most brilliant colours of a paint-box, except green, but also all their soft silky tints as well. They are described as being mostly of a watered-silk appearance, but to me some seemed more like satin.

After about three-quarters of a mile in this cleft in the rock we entered another and broader chasm at right angles. Here we suddenly came to the most beautiful and most perfectly preserved of all the remains of Petra. It is a temple of Isis, cut out of the rock in the time of the Roman occupation. I feel how hopeless it is to give you any idea of its grandeur and beauty. They selected a piece of the rock-face which was all of one hue, the lovely strawberry cream colour of a sunrise on the snow-clad Alps, and out of this face they cut the porch about 120 feet high, consisting of two storeys, the first 60 feet long, supported by grand columns and the top part beautifully ornamented, culminating in an urn which the Arabs believe

contains the treasures of the Pharaohs, hence they call it "The Treasury of Pharaoh," all cut out of the solid rock.

As we passed, we found several of them, as is their custom, shooting at the urn, hoping to chip some pieces off, with the idea that some day it will be broken, and all the contents fall to the ground. The interior of the temple, which, of course, is inside the mountain itself, consists of six rooms, three very large and three smaller, and is absolutely without decoration, but the stone is of the most exquisite colours imaginable. The sik down which we were going was the old entrance to Petra, and though it was really water-worn, yet it had been paved, and the water had been confined to one side by means of an old aqueduct; some of this work still remains, as also the remains of a triumphal archway, which had spanned the sik at its entrance. We then emerged suddenly on to a low undulating plain about half a mile across, shut in by huge vertical cliffs. This is Petra.

The wady continued across the plain and out by another sik of possibly greater

magnificence on the other side. As to the place itself, Petra was the capital and centre of Edom, which nation lived in these mountains south of Moab and no doubt extended out to the outlying oases in the Desert of Arabia in the east and of Arabah or Desert of Zin on the west. The Edomites were naturally proud of their apparently impassable frontier. No wonder the Israelites, who pushed their way through the other tribes, here asked for permission, and, when refused, went all round (Num. xx. 19). The sik down which we went is the only possible passage through this barrier of rock; it is obviously "the highway" of ver. 19. As this is only 10 feet wide in parts, it certainly was a question of permission or else going round (ver. 19). They would pay for the water! Why? Water in Petra is precious. In the ruins there is a most wonderful system for conveying and preserving water by aqueducts, reservoirs, etc. Now that they are not in working order, it is very scarce. The first thing I did after pitching our camp was to dig with my hands in the sand a little hole large enough to collect the little trickle,

that we might have sufficient for a wash. The Edomites refused, and the poor Israelites went away disappointed. While we were staying there, we did all we could to persuade the Governor of the district to allow us to go up Mount Hor, which is the highest of the mountains of Petra and on the border (Num. xx. 22).

We wanted to go up and see the Tomb of Aaron, which is a Moslem sacred place. We asked that we might be allowed to go straight up and down "without doing anything else to go on our feet," but he said, "Thou shalt not go" (vers. 19, 20), and we had to turn away disappointed. As they climbed Mount Hor and looked down so we climbed the Mounts of Petra and looked across at Aaron's tomb, which is built exactly on the top of Mount Hor (Num. xx. 28). The Israelites could do nothing against those that dwelt in the "clefts of the rock." Petra—rock (Jer. xlix. 16) is a most perfect description. You cannot imagine what force such a verse as Jer. xlix. 10 has, when you stand on the top of one rock-altar after another built on the high places; yes, stand on the

actual altars themselves and climb up the sacred pillars (secret places) and see around you not a person, not a tree, or shrub, except the oleander bush down in the dry bed of the stream, everywhere nothing but rock.

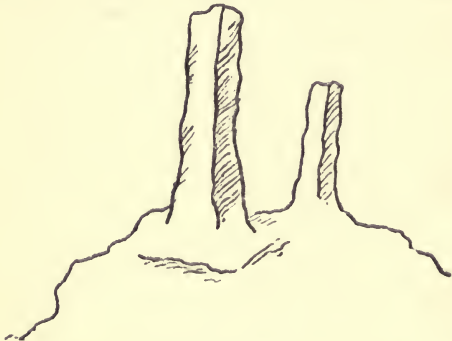
The principal tombs and temples of Petra must be described in several books, so I need not attempt to describe them here. There are more than 750 of them, many being enormous, some plain, others beautifully decorated with columns, pilasters, urns, and decorative moulding. Just a very few have had statuary; but in all cases, as is the Moslem custom, the heads have been knocked off.

One of the finest temples had at one time been used as a church, and a small Greek inscription had been painted on the back wall. One tomb of the Governor had a Latin inscription. Another one much older had a perfect inscription in Nabateen writing. These are all the inscriptions mentioned in guide-books, but in the west sik or entrance, where it had been made artificially wider, Mr. H—— had found a few words also of Nabateen roughly chipped by the hewers.

We found some more, which I believe had not been read before, and we brought back a copy ; it was under a huge boulder.

פנלחחנסת הוהת ענה שנינס סנתת

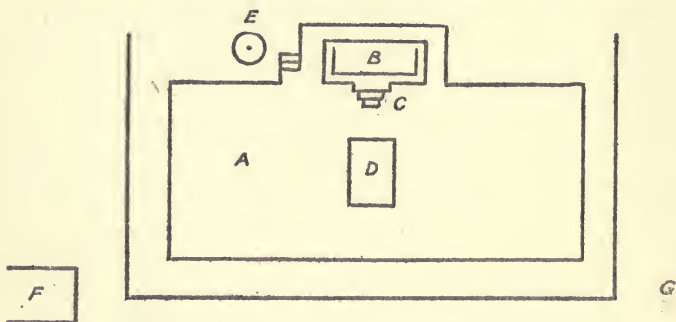
There is a very striking similarity to Hebrew, many of the letters being decidedly the same. To me the most interesting thing



was a Semitic “high place” quite complete and perfect. It did not strike one as being a thing of the past, it was so perfect. We had a stiff real rock climb up the face of one of the crags, occasionally being assisted by the remains of flights of steps up which the worshippers no doubt used to ascend. After climbing from one beautiful grotto or terrace to another, we suddenly found ourselves face

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to face near the top with two huge pillars, which were really a part of the mountain which had been left standing when the surrounding rock had been cut away. They were each about 25 feet high. I had read of the pillars connected with Semitic worship, and am glad to say managed to get a good



- A. Courtyard cut down into rock about 2 feet deep.
- B. Grand altar about 6 feet by 4.
- C. Steps up to altar.
- D. Low platform.
- E. Circular basin with tubular drain leading off from the centre.
- F. Cistern.
- G. Spot from which the photo was taken.

photo of one. They are mentioned in Deut. xii. 3.

Close to these was the ruin of a Crusader's castle which seemed centuries away from

everything else at Petra, and then just on the actual top was the real high place.

On the Tuesday we went for an excursion up to El Deir ("The Convent"), an exceedingly grand temple, cut near the top of one of the mountains on the west sik. The climb was very considerable, especially in the heat, but we were very well repaid. The temple front was enormous, the door-step being up to my chin, but in this case it was not so much the temple that took our fancy as the view to the west. We could see down over the mountain sides for many miles, right to the great Desert of Arabah, with the Gulf of Akaba on the south and the Dead Sea on the north. For a desert view it was superb, but it had not the interest of the one from Pisgah. In the afternoon we went down the west "sik" or entrance to Petra. Here as everywhere the scenery was grand. There was mostly more room than in the east sik; here was a spring of water and a waterfall and pool deep enough to bathe in. We were not long getting in, and quite astounded the Arab with us by our being able to float. He was afterwards

overheard telling the soldiers. He was a native of the nearest village named Mossa or Moses, and the Arabic name for Petra is Wady Moosa or Valley of Moses. This spring, which is really only the re-appearance of the one we had passed on our way into Petra, is supposed by the Arabs to be one obtained by Moses from the rock. One never knows what truth there may be at the back of such traditions, but the circumstances are interesting. It certainly does flow out from a big rock in the hillside. This district is the district of rock in a special sense, hence it is called Petra.

Since returning I have spoken of this to a Rabbi I know here. He said, "It is a foolish tradition. That rock we are told in the Talmud followed the Israelites into the promised land, and it is now settled down near Acre." I told him of the quotation in the New Testament, "The rock which followed them was Christ."

As there were a large number of partridges about, we went out in the early morning to shoot some, but with very indifferent success.

RAMULLA

RAMULLA

It certainly can be hot here. The last three days have been testers. I have been in a bath of perspiration all day long, and after lunch every one goes straight to lie down. One sleeps heavily till 3 p.m., waking up with a heavy sort of feeling which two cups of tea are hardly sufficient to remove.

I got back this morning from a very pleasant week end spent at Ramulla, 10 miles from here (the supposed place from which Joseph and Mary turned back), where I had gone on Saturday afternoon to take the Sunday services.

The L.J.S. girls' boarding school were staying there for their fortnight's holiday. They gave me a very good time, though I was much in the minority, as there were forty-five girls, two mistresses, and two other English ladies. The inn was crowded

and I had to sleep out in a tent, which was very pleasant. Miss B—— was going over to the wedding of the cousin of their servant, which was also taking place yesterday, so we and the servant secured the inside of a public carriage. It was rather amusing as we travelled decorating the servant up in all the wedding finery. The women turn all their money into head-dresses of coins and bangles, etc.; so much so that nearly every local coin is pierced with a hole. The head-dress in question had about £5 worth of coins on, fastened by a silver chain. She had six massive and solid silver bracelets on each arm, six rings, beside pendants, earrings, etc. The servant's husband, like many here, has gone off to America fortune-hunting, and never writes, so that she does not know anything of him. I was glad to accept an invitation to the wedding ceremony, as I had not been to a Greek marriage. They had been having feasting for a week, and we went down in the evening to see the dancing. We entered the house of the bridegroom's people, where we first watched the women

dance in one of the rooms, while they continually sang songs of welcome to the guests, and fed us with melon seeds soaked in salt and dried. The dance was of the Highland type, but much slower and very graceful, the time being supplied by clapping the hands. Afterwards we were provided with chairs in the courtyard. Here was a still more weird sight, there were more cries of welcome, screamingly funny, and then we were provided with chairs at the head of the courtyard. The flat roof was crowded all round with women all squatting, as also the stairs leading up to it. The men were in a jolly crowd down below. Nothing could have looked more Eastern but for the "Lux" lamp, a brilliant petroleum arc lamp on the "Primus" principle, which had been temporarily suspended in the court. The dance of the men was more curious than I could have imagined. It was more of the "Sir Roger" type, either side singing in antiphon and clapping alternately. It was awfully fine.

The next afternoon three or four of us went down to the Greek church to see the

actual wedding service. The bridegroom was enthroned outside the church door, and the court was crowded with people, the women doing "a ring a ring of roses" type of dance. Suddenly there was a stir in the crowd and three boys pushed their way through, carrying floral branches, followed by four Greek priests, and then the bride, led by her father and uncle, who were in rags, to signify mourning at their loss; her veils were so thick that you could not see either face, head, or shoulders. Amidst tremendous enthusiasm the two were led into the church by the priest. The man is not supposed to take any interest in the affair, but to always turn away from his bride and look as morbidly dejected as possible, and if he has elder brothers unmarried, even to weep. Our bridegroom was beyond everything successful; he hung his head down and looked as if he would be sick (which the bride was, all down the inside of her veil), whilst the best man mopped his perspiring face with a rag, which looked as if it had been used for cleaning engines.

Small white crowns, very much awry, were put on each head, and then interchanged, from which the service gets the name of "the crowning." A woman stood behind continually sewing their clothes together with needle and thread, but as there was no knot the thread always pulled through. Each was given a ring. The Gospel was read in Arabic and Greek, the book resting partly on one head and partly on the other. There was an administration of reserved Sacrament administered entirely with a teaspoon. They were dragged three times sideways round the Table, which stood in the centre of the church, surrounded by the crowd. The bridegroom was lifted three times by the best man and let fall again, and then the babble of the crowd turned into a mighty roar, pistols and crackers were fired. The bride fainted, and the priests fought their way out with a free use of their fists. The bridegroom also cleared off apparently in disgust, leaving ourselves, a few women, and a Syrian doctor to attend to the bride. The doctor lifted her veil and threw cold water in her face. She looked

absolutely deadly. However, a few moments later she had joined the bridegroom outside, and went off surrounded by dancing and joyful women.

This was a Greek Christian wedding, but I think in many respects it is much like a Moslem one. A Russian one I saw later was somewhat similar but more decorous. I rode back early on Monday on a donkey with a lady's saddle, and kept as much as possible with a carriage, as several times lately people have been held up on this road. Only last week a carriage horse was shot and all the people robbed. Sometimes men turn up at home with nothing but trousers left. I have never heard of an Englishman being shot.

WADY KELT

WADY KELT

THE BROOK CHERITH

Aug. 20th.—To-day we start for camp at the brook Cherith. We go down the Jericho road past the Good Samaritan inn to about three and a half hours' distance, and then over a hill to the left and down into the chasm where Elijah was fed by the ravens. We shall not rely on ravens, but hope to get plenty of fish and partridges. We expect to be away ten days.

Aug. 21st.—This is a jolly place, and we are now well settled in. We came down about 2200 feet, or nearly to the sea-level, only on the Jordan side of the hills, and are camped in an orange and lemon garden on the bank of the stream, where the wady, which is mostly narrow and precipitous, widens out for a short space. The vegetation wherever there is water is luxuriant

in the extreme, part of the stream being hidden in an absolutely unpenetrable jungle of 15-foot reeds; here and there there is a banana palm or pomegranate tree, above my head a fig tree, and across the stream a shady bower covered with a fruitful vine.

Above all this are the absolutely dry, brown hills of the Judæan desert. These hills need not be so barren. Where one aqueduct runs along them from higher up the stream, there is as here abundant vegetation. There are also everywhere remains of old Roman aqueducts, which make it look as if once this must have been a prosperous valley. It's just the water which makes this such an ideal camping-ground, and one can easily understand Elisha hiding here. Just above us, about 30 feet up the face of the rock, are four large caves, once used by the hermits, now lived in by the family who look after this place. Perhaps the prophet lived in a cave like these?

But something has happened since I began this letter which still more reminds me of him. On Thursday morning when

Mr. H—— returned from shooting with his faithful friend, a dear old Arab who is living here with us, we were down at the pool bathing when the effendi, or man to whom all this belongs, came down to say that during the night there had been a quarrel down by the Dead Sea, and that the old man's cousin who had been in prison before for murder, had killed a man of another family. Blood demands blood, and since it is known that the old man is here, he has had to go away and hide further down, just like the prophet hiding from Ahab. If possible he hopes to escape across the Jordan Valley, as David did from Absalom.* Above here, in the time of the Romans, a wall was built across where the sheer rock in the narrow ravine descends straight into the stream, which still holds the water back, making a fine long winding pool. In this spot we all spend most of our mornings. It is about 60 yards long, and in

* The old man who had to flee for the blood feud has come back. He met his would-be murderer with a rifle close to the camp waiting for him ; however, he luckily saw the enemy first and escaped. He crossed the Jordan and went over the mountains to his clan near Ammon. Here he found it was all a mistake, and his tribe was not implicated. A message was sent, and he took fifteen hours walking back.

parts well out of our depth. Camp life is the same here as everywhere, bathing, feeding, reading, sleeping, etc., sing-song and games in the evening.

It is very wonderful how careful the Moslems are now that it is their fast of Ramadan. They may neither eat nor drink while the sun is in the sky, they work all day long in this heat, and will not even dip their faces in the stream lest they should get a drop in the mouth. The soldiers will put them in prison if they catch them eating or smoking. Most keep the fast, but some eat and drink on the sly.

Tuesday, Sept. 17th.—Off for Galilee. We left Jerusalem yesterday for the north. As usual there was a tremendous rush at Jaffa down to the wharf; but we had Cook's tickets, and were soon in his boat dancing over the rippling waves, rowed along by ten strong natives to their own particular chant. We shot through the gap in the rocks and out to the steamer *Saidiah*, of the Khedival line. Most of the way the coast was much like Cromer-Sheringham, just sandy cliffs

with the level plain behind, and the Judæan hills in the distance. Gradually these seemed to approach the shore until soon after we passed Cæsarea (which looked like a large heap of ruins) there were but a few yards of plain left between the hills and the sea, and I knew we were under Carmel. We then made a wide sweep out to sea to avoid rocks, and turned in to this glorious bay. We were soon rowed ashore and put into a conveyance. Here we had to cling to each other and to the carriage while rattling along over the most awful cobble-stones, through the old streets and market of Haifa, and then through a German colony right up a precipitous and zigzag road to this fine hostel, kept by a German pastor right on the top of Carmel. It is difficult to compare one view with another, but of its kind I have never seen anything finer. Below my window is a very steep drop of 700 feet, covered with vines and finishing in a slope of 200 feet more, on which Haifa is built. The old town is composed of white, flat-roofed houses and minarets, the new one of of pretty red-tiled bungalows, with large

verandahs and creepers. Beyond this is the blue water of the Mediterranean, which as I look down is covered with little boats.

Across the bay is Acre, and behind that the mountain called the Ladder of Tyre. All the distance is filled in by the beginning of the great Lebanon range and beyond, dimly seen, the snow peak of Hermon. Pastor Schneider calls this place "a home for missionaries," of whom there are several staying now for a few days. We have prayers half in English and half in German. These missionaries are returning shortly to their various stations, but owing to the fear of quarantine on the railway, we are to share a carriage instead of going by train.

Our first day here we climbed down into Haifa, nine of us, and then separated up as we all had things to do. I went to the bathing-place of the German colony, and had a swim in the sea, and then made inquiries for a boy who left the L.J.S. school last term, and is seeking employment here. Fortunately I found him almost at once, and went to see his family. They seemed highly delighted. The whole family

is now Christian, the mother and sister having both been at the L.J.S. girls' school. After Turkish coffee I went for a short stroll.

Wednesday we took our lunch with us, and climbing down again into Haifa got a brake and drove all along the foot of Carmel, inland by the side of "that ancient river the river Kishon" which (when it flows at all) flows through the absolutely level plain stretching from the sea at the foot of the mountain to drop into the Jordan Valley. At first this plain is about 10 miles wide, but after 10 miles it narrows down to a few hundred yards, and then opens out again into the great Plain of Esdraelon. All along its south side run the cliffs of Carmel for 16 miles, occasionally broken by ravines and covered everywhere between the rocks with green trees (the guide-book says Carmel is often used in prophecy as a sign of fruitfulness), then the cliffs turn sharp to the right towards the sea, thus forming a huge triangle. To this corner we drove, as here is undoubtedly the spot where Elijah made his great stand for righteousness. At the foot

of the mountain the dry bed of the Kishon which winds about in the plain takes a turn quite close up, and here is a small hill where no doubt the prophets of Baal were slain. We climbed 1600 feet and got a splendid view over Esdraelon to Nazareth, Gilboa, Little Hermon, etc. About three-quarters of the way up is a kind of platform on the hillside, with a very old well to which all the shepherds bring their flocks. As this is the only spring in the neighbourhood, and as there had been no rain for so long, the people would have encamped here, and from it the water would be drawn for the sacrifice. The altar of Baal would probably be upon the top of the mountain.

Afterwards we climbed to the summit, and stood, as Gehazi had, and looked towards the sea, which was visible in the distance reaching right down to Jaffa. Here there is a monastery of Carmelites; they were very kind in showing us over and giving us tea. Across the plain we could see Jezreel, to which Elijah ran before the chariot of Ahab.

On Thursday evening we arrived at the hotel Germanis Nazareth. What I have

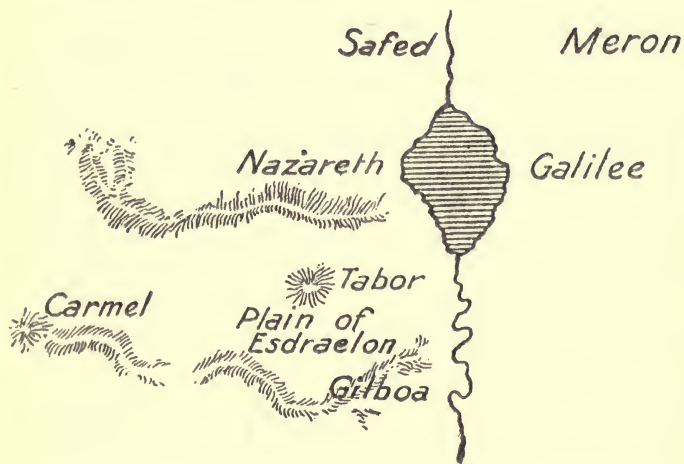
seen so far here is not very attractive; it is a large place covering several hills and consisting of large convents and monasteries, their grounds surrounded by high walls. There are also hotels, orphanages, a hospital, etc. On our way we passed through a large forest of oak trees, and descended into the plain. At this season it is extremely dry, and at many places where the ground is hard it is all cracked in the sun; in others, the dust is several inches thick. What it must be like after rain you can imagine from the fact that conveyances have to go slowly with men behind, scraping the clods of mud off the wheels. Sometimes people have to get out and wade through the mire. No wonder Elijah told Ahab to make haste across to Jezreel as there was the sound of rain, and no wonder that the nine hundred chariots of Sisera were no use against Deborah and Barak (Judg. iv. 3), especially as the river Kishon which in summer is dry was in flood (V. v. 21). No wonder Sisera got down from his chariot and went on his feet like many a tourist has since had to do.

The Turkish post is like everything Turkish, absolutely rotten. People say that nothing of value ever arrives by it, and in out-of-the-way places like Safed, they have to try all sorts of dodges, as there are only Turkish mails. When they order newspapers they have to get them wrapped up as parcels, or they do not arrive, and when they order boots they have them sent one at a time, so that they are no use to the postman.

Later—Nazareth greatly improves on acquaintance, as it is surrounded by high hills which you can climb up, and these blocking out all the awful buildings, one can think of the country and its past. The Edinburgh medical mission have a hospital here with a staff of two doctors and two nurses; they are doing a splendid work. On Friday we arranged to spend the day on Mount Tabor. About 10 a.m. five of us left the hospital on horseback, and in two hours or less were ascending its very steep side. Tabor can easily be seen from Nazareth, being a peculiarly isolated mountain at the end of the Nazareth ridge, which

rises abruptly all along the north side of the plain of Esdraelon.

We only had three wadies to cross, and then went by the zigzag path of the pilgrims up to the top. Here there are as usual both a Greek (Russian) and a Latin place,



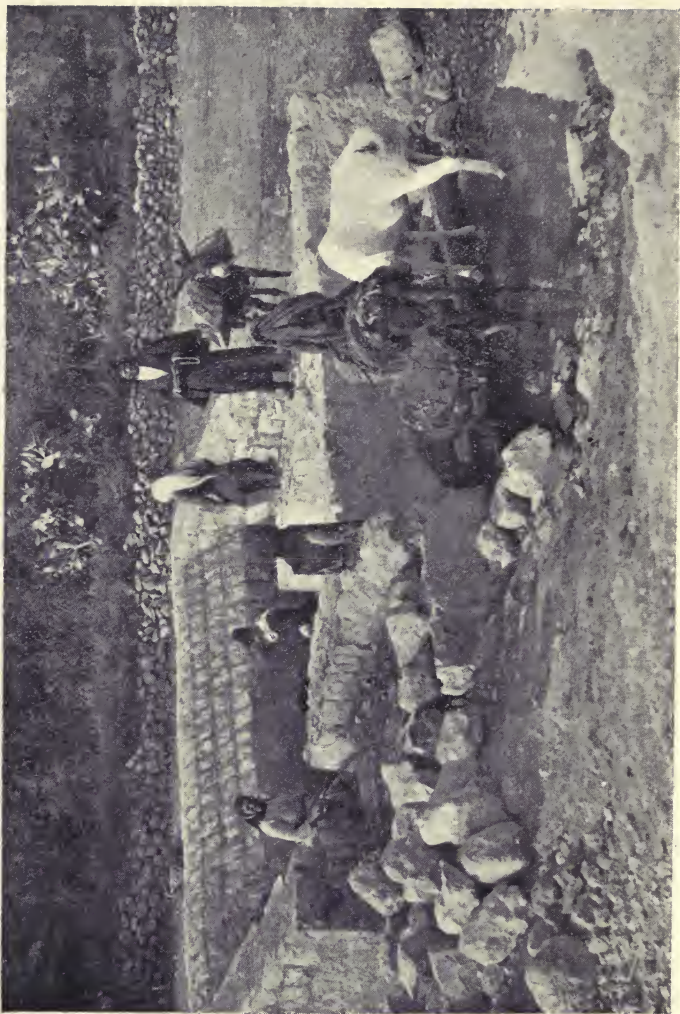
each owning half the almost flat summit of the mountain, in keen rivalry each claiming that they have the true site. The Russians put up and feed the pilgrims with no charge, while the Latins have more idea of business, and make a fixed charge of ten francs a night. It seems to be a paying concern

as they have done a lot of excavating in their grounds, and found the remains of an old crusading church, etc. (These Latins never seem to want money.) The view from the top, which is about 1800 feet, is very fine. On all sides the mountain descends steeply, and you can walk to the edge and look down over the country as over a map. On one side is the great plain (Esdraelon) with Carmel, the mountains of Samaria and Gilboa in the background; then where the plain slopes towards Jordan through the vale of Jezreel, there rises Little Hermon with Nain and Endor at its foot. On the north were the hills of Safed with the town itself perched on the top, some 20 miles away, and down on the right the Horns of Hattin, with, just beyond, a little blue patch of Galilee backed by the rough peaks of the Hauran, and, like a cloud on the dim distance, the stately "Hermon," or "Mount of the Chief," so called because of its predominance and its white head. It is in Syria, but, being 10,000 feet high, can be seen far down into Palestine, even to Jericho. Here we had lunch, and read the passage concerning

Barak, who rushed down upon the plain with 10,000 men (cf. Judges). This is supposed to be the mountain of the Transfiguration, and it does seem to suit the story. The argument against it is that there was a Roman fort on the top, but this seems to be of little force as the summit is so large.

We wandered about a bit, and then rode back in time to see the sun setting just as we reached Nazareth. On Sunday we saw something of the C.M.S. work, with which I was very much struck. In the morning we went to their church, which is a very nice building, and found it quite full of natives. They had a very hearty service in Arabic conducted by two native pastors; one of them preached what seemed to be a wonderful sermon, in which he appeared to refer to every part of the Bible. On coming out I met a fellow who had just left the C.M.S. College at Jerusalem, whom I know. He showed me the traditional synagogue where Jesus preached, which is now a Latin chapel. It did not look convincing, as, apparently, every part visible had been renewed. We then went into the Church of Annunciation

(Latin) and saw the spot where the angel stood, and also into a cave known as "Mary's kitchen." In the afternoon we went to the orphanage, where I had promised to take an English service. Here, for a great many years, the C.M.S. have taken in and trained as teachers orphan girls from all parts of the country, their average number being between seventy and ninety, and from here, as from their training institute at Bethlehem, they send out Christian teachers to hold little classes in the villages up and down Palestine. It seems to me that such an organization must be having a great effect. Like several other institutions here this one seems to have been founded by some one who later on handed it over to the C.M.S. The girls were all away for the holidays, but the service was attended by the doctor and nurse, the three ladies at the orphanage, and our party. Afterwards we enjoyed a fine view over Nazareth from the balcony, and descended the 150 steps to the town. Later we saw the Virgin's fount, or the spring (being the only one) from which Mary must have carried water. Here, in autumn, it is



AT THE WELL OF CANA OF GALILEE.

sometimes so difficult to get water that soldiers have to be on guard night and day to keep order.

The next day we started at 5.30 a.m. to drive to Safed. We went up the hill at Nazareth and down into the valley to the north, soon halting by a spring just outside Cana. It must have been over this hill that our Lord and His mother walked to the marriage, and probably the water of the miracle would have been drawn from the spring. Several women came with huge black earthenware jars, and filled them. We walked up to the village, going into the church to look at the exact spot where they say the six jars stood, and a model in wood of what they looked like. I believe somewhere they are supposed to have the real jars, but we felt quite glad that we were not dragged off by the priest to go and see them. One gets absolutely disgusted with these things and longs to be outside on the hills, where one really sees the country itself. Going through the village we were mobbed by girls and women wanting to sell lace, until the doctor had to swing his riding-

whip round in order to get to the carriage. They were much amused by my copying them, and waving my handkerchief in their faces offering it for two francs. From Cana we drove to another village called Lubia, and soon passed close to the top of a curious hill



called "The Horns of Hattin," just where the road drops suddenly down to the lake

of Galilee, which is 600 feet below the sea-level, hence on that side it is quite a high mountain. It is generally considered to be the site of the "Sermon on the Mount." As we came over its slope we suddenly saw below us the whole lake of Galilee, a beautiful calm sheet of blue water looking like a mirror set in a frame of mountains reflecting the clear sky above.

"A little ship was on the sea,
It was a pretty sight."

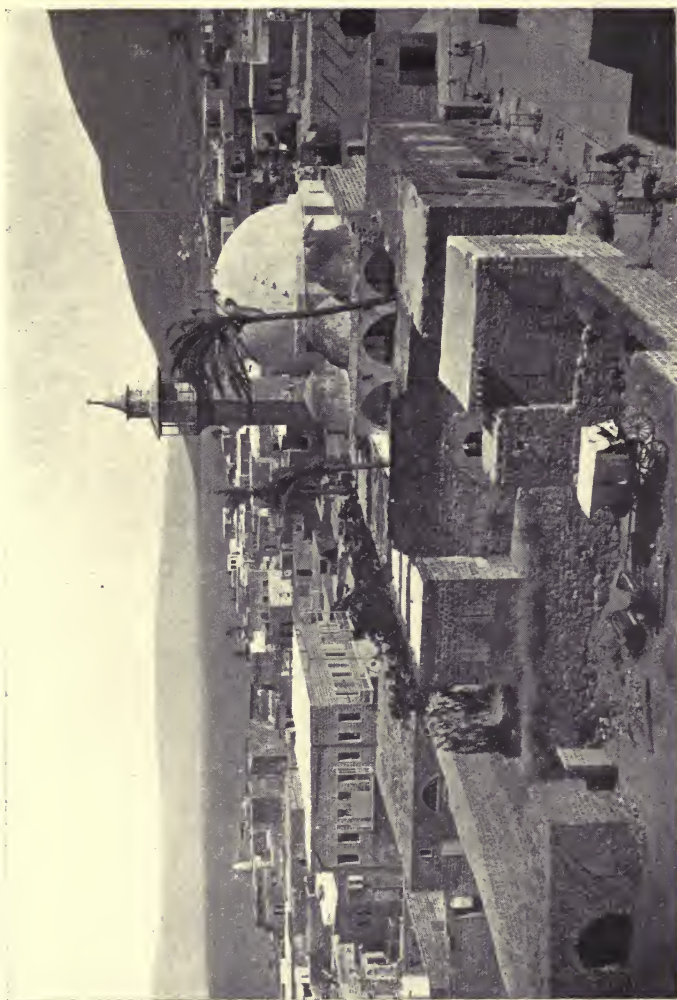
Unfortunately for the poetry of the scene it turned out to be a small steamer which goes the length of the lake each day.

It was on the mountain of the Beatitudes

that the Crusaders made their last great stand when they were defeated by Saladin. They had been forced to camp the night before in a valley close by, where there was no water ; no wonder they were defeated.

From here we descended by the steep road down to Tiberias on the shore of the lake ; we did not stop, but drove straight through, and all along the lakeside for an hour, at the foot of the mountains to Mejdal, *i.e.* Magdala. Once a big Jewish town, after centuries of ruin it is now being revived like almost every place in Galilee by a Jewish colony. These little settlements are a wonderful feature of this country, all over the hills where for centuries there has been nothing but the ruins of past civilization and the little mud villages of the Arabs. Now you see rows of bungalows with red-tiled roofs surrounded with neat gardens. They seem to be able to grow anything. One can easily see what a wonderfully fertile country this might, and no doubt will be. Thistles and thorns cover the land (there are flowers in the spring), but wherever men turn the soil over and plant things,

there it becomes like a garden of Eden. The Jews are extremely industrious, and at Magdala we found cement works where they make pipes for water supply and irrigation. It is situated at the beginning of the plain of Gennesaret, which is an exceptionally fertile plain on the north-west side of the lake, with copious springs of water all over it. Here we got out of the carriage and found horses sent down for us from Safed. We sat by the blue waters of the lake and had lunch, then filled our pockets with little shells, after which we began our great climb up to Safed, which we could see on the mountain above. Galilee is 600 feet below and Safed about 2700 feet above sea-level, so you can see it is a good climb. We left the lake at 2 p.m., and did not reach our destination till sunset. The town itself being situated right up on the top of the mountain overlooking the lake in such a conspicuous position, seems to have suggested the words, "A city set on a hill cannot be hid," but if that is so, we might add "cannot be hid by man," for as we left Galilee the clouds rolled over the mountain



TIBERIAS AND THE SEA OF GALILEE.

and entirely blotted it out. I stopped at Dr. M——'s house just outside the town on the slope of the hill looking south towards the lake; the view from his balcony is said to be the most extensive from any European house in Palestine. You can see the whole of the Sea of Galilee at the foot of the mountain, over 3000 feet below, just like a map, and beyond that the Jordan Valley, in clear weather down as far as the mountains overhanging the Dead Sea. To the west you look straight over the mountains of the lake to Nazareth and Tabor, and even over there and across Esdraelon to the hills of Samaria, Ebal, and Gerizim (three days' journey away) and again still more to the west you can see right over to Carmel with its 16 miles of mountain from the place of sacrifice to the sea. Seeing this view for a week at sunrise, sunset, and full moon, I feel that I got a grasp of the geography such as I can never forget.

After two days' rest we procured horses and rode over to Mount Jermak, which is 1000 feet higher—indeed, the highest point in Palestine proper. Here we had the same

view, only much more so, as it included also the sea, Haifa, Acre, Tyre, etc. ; northward Lebanon, the Anti-Lebanon Hermon, waters of Merom, and the desert towards Damascus. Safed is built on the top of a mountain ; the actual summit is occupied by the ruins of an old crusading castle, and the town clusters all round this. It is so steep that the roads or passages often pass along the roofs of the streets below. It is a very large place and populated mainly by Jews. It is nowhere mentioned in the Bible, and does not seem to have had much importance till the time of the great Jewish Rabbis, two or three of whom are buried close by. Since then it became a Jewish University, and is now one of the four sacred cities, the others being Jerusalem, Hebron (Judæa), and Tiberias. Years ago (1837?) there was a bad earthquake here, which destroyed nearly every house in the place, and small earthquakes are now very common. Dr. A——'s house, only finished last year, has unfortunately been so badly cracked that it is not considered safe to live in.

The Rev. F——, who lives near here, was

a Russian Jew from Odessa, and as a boy was sent to Safed partly to study and partly for health. Here he studied the Talmud, etc., but on a visit to Jerusalem came in touch with our Mission, and became a Christian. After some training he returned as a missionary to Safed, where the Jews were so fanatical that no previous one had been able to live amongst them. His sister afterwards became a convert. He married a missionary, and these three, with his sister-in-law, have worked here for years. He cannot go to the Jewish houses now, having injured his leg, but seems to receive a constant stream of callers into his house, and I am told that there are also those who like Nicodemus come under cover of darkness. He is universally respected, and both Jews and Moslems bring their disputes to him to settle. He says that the Jews are openly working against the mission to an extent which he has never known before. I hear the same everywhere. We have been seeing the curious booths which the Jews all over the world make during the Feast of Tabernacles. In many cases they

had real booths either on the roof or against the wall of the house. In some cases they had only put branches over the roof, removing the ceiling; in others, they did not even remove this.

After our visit to Jebel Jermak we descended to a place called Meirom, five miles from Safed, but divided from it by a deep ravine. It is of great interest, because here are the tombs of the great Rabbis Hillel and Simeon. In the spring the Jews come in great number on pilgrimage to the place, which, apart from this shrine, is only a tiny village. Last spring a number were killed, being crushed off the roof by the crowd and falling upon those in the court below. They were brought to Safed, and died after lying for days untended on a stone floor, as their friends would not allow them to enter our hospital. The tombs of the Rabbis are just whitewashed domes in a comparatively modern building, and like the Greek holy places are lit up by suspended brass candlesticks, burning wicks floating in olive oil.

There are also at Meirom the ruins of a

really old synagogue, probably B.C., but there is not much left except the doorway and floor.

The next day we rested. I determined not to go to Damascus as many travellers do, because I wanted to get to know one country well. Besides this, as it happened all Syria was in quarantine, and there would have been much difficulty in getting back. I just spent the day in wandering over the Galilean hills. The following morning three of us started off on horseback before sunrise to see the Lake of Merom. We descended by a very steep path into the valley of the Jordan and then galloped over the plain to the south end of the lake. Horses here do not trot or canter, they either walk fast over the rough tracks, picking their way between the rocks, or when they do reach an open and level stretch like their native desert, gallop madly for the sheer joy of the sensation. You should have seen us going over the plain that morning. I have learnt to ride like the natives, getting free of the stirrups, crouching down and gripping on to the horse's flanks with my heels. My!!! it was grand.

The lake itself is quite small compared with Galilee and is not unlike Wroxham Broad. It is quite shallow, the bottom being overgrown with vegetation. Towards the entrance of the Jordan it is covered with floating weeds and water-lilies, and all that side is simply one mass of papyrus reeds so



 *Section*

thick one cannot push through. These grow from 8 to 10 feet high; they are very easily cut through, but even a thin strip of the pith we were unable to break.

As we rode through the Jewish colony on the south-west side, which is just like a garden city, we could hear them chanting

their liturgy in the synagogue. It was their Sabbath. Many of them came out as we passed to look at us, still chanting away and swinging their bodies to and fro. Luckily it was their holy day or *the* one boat would otherwise have been engaged fishing, but the Jews won't buy fish on the Sabbath, and in this climate it can't be kept. Two Arabs were sitting by the shore, but the boat was on the other side. However, by the time that we had lit our fire and had breakfast it had been brought across, and we went for a row. The water was so shallow that we had to be carried out. We rowed up to the north end, and then quanted through the water-lilies into the narrow channel of the Jordan. By this time it had become very hot, and whilst rowing back we managed to get a good swim. It had been fairly clear all day, but as the sun declined the mountains became intensely distinct. Such a peaceful scene one could hardly imagine. In the foreground the absolutely still surface of the mere with a few cows standing knee-deep in the water, beyond was the great valley of the Jordan,

with the purple Lebanon on one side, and on the other the great mass of snow-capped Hermon. It was up this valley that our Lord retired for rest with His disciples, and here St. Peter made his great confession. It is to the Lebanon that the missionaries now go for a change in the middle of the summer. As we rode away southward over the plain we kept turning back to see the view, until we reached the mountain gorge up which we had to ascend. The sun had set and the light quickly faded out of the sky. This wady is very steep, and is notorious for robbers, there being a big hole halfway up called the witches' cave, where they often hide. At Meiom we had met a man who had been attacked the night before, who managed to escape with only a few bruises. However, with three of us together we did not fear much. We rode at short distances apart, so that in the twists of the wady it could not be seen how many we were, and I rode in front with a papyrus roughly cut to look like a gun in the dark, and G. N—— had a revolver at the back.

Just as we came to the witches' cave we passed two or three men. They watched us go by in silence without giving the ordinary salute, and soon after we emerged at the top of the wady, to find the moon had risen, and in the distance on a further hill were the lights of Safed. That evening on the balcony I caught a fine specimen of a scorpion. If annoyed these creatures can sting, and though it is seldom fatal, yet the person can be paralysed for twenty-four hours. We also saw several snakes; two big ones nearly two yards long were lying dead by the road, evidently having been killed by the natives. These snakes are mostly harmless, though not all of them.

On Sunday we rested. At present they have no Hebrew service, as any Jew showing signs of being an inquirer has to leave the neighbourhood; but in the schools they hold a little English service, at which I spoke. They are building a church. We needed our Sunday rest, as we had another hard day before us: Safed, mouth of Jordan, Tel Hum, Tabegah, Tiberias, Semach by steamboat, and Haifa by train. The ordinary

way to Tiberias is by horse direct to where you catch the little steamboat, but we got up very early, rode down to the Jordan and along the north side of the lake to catch the boat at Tabegah. On this shore in the time of our Lord there seems to have been a large Jewish population. Where it was thickest there the place had a name, such as Bethsaida, Capernaum, Magdala, etc. "A desert place" (Matt. xiv. 13), I suppose, simply means where no people lived (13 and 15 mention cities and villages). At that time the Jews would not enter Tiberias, as it was a newly built Roman town, which they said was put up over a graveyard. It has since, however, become one of their sacred places. Magdala (Mejdel) is a new Jewish colony, and I expect they will once more soon spread along this northern coast, where at present there are only about four houses. It was on this shore that our Lord spent so much time. At 5 a.m. we had a good start, and began riding by the moonlight through the drifting clouds down the gorge towards the mouth of the Jordan. For the first half

way it was very steep and rocky. The horses never seem to stumble, but often stop and have a good look round to see the best way. Several times my feet touched against the rocks as the horse climbed down. The sun began to rise as we got near Chorazin, and the rest of the way was not so steep, but just a matter of riding through fields partly rocky, partly wayside, partly thistles, and some pretty good ground down from hill to hill till we reached the mouth of the Jordan. Chorazin, now called Kerazeh, is just simply a heap of shapeless ruins. By some mistake we passed it unnoticed, the man who was with us knowing nothing and being unable to understand why we wanted to go so far round to get to the boat. The Jordan at its mouth runs swiftly out into the lake over a shallow sandbank. Here were four men with a funnel-shaped net weighted all round the bottom, which they swung round their heads and threw out over the water, and the fish which were inside the circle became entangled in the net as they drew it in. As I reached the mouth first I determined to

ford across the sandbank, which forms a regular bar. The water at its deepest did not quite reach the stirrups. I should think our Lord must often have crossed here. One tried to imagine the crowd fording as they hurried along the shore looking out over the water to see where the boat was going to land (Matt. xiv. 13). The mukareh (man with the horses) was yelling to me to come back, but I did not understand why, and pushed on to the other side; however, on returning I found out the reason, for starting to ride westward we were at once held up by a picket of soldiers, as the further side of the river was in quarantine because of the cholera at Damascus. After a good talk, in which our man explained that we were really coming from Safed, and that the doctor lived there, they reluctantly gave way and we rode past. We saw by the lakeside a fishing-boat pulled up on the beach with six men preparing a large net, and reined up a moment to watch them. They too stopped their work to watch us, but I don't suppose they guessed the thoughts passing through my

mind. This north shore consists of little bays so small that the people could have sat on the rocks all round and heard our Lord as He spoke from the boat. From the shore the rocky fields stretch away over the hills to the mountains, reminding one of the parable of the Sower. We soon reached⁴ Tel Hum, which is situated on a slight promontory in the middle of the north side. It is of all places in Galilee the one which I wanted to see most, and I was very glad to find it practically unspoilt. It now seems to be generally agreed that this is Capernaum. The word "Capher" means a village, and is still used in names such as Capher-Yussif, etc. The word "Tel" is extremely common, and represents a "heap" of ruins where there has been a village or town. It is the same in Hebrew, and is used several times (Josh. viii. 28, etc.). So when Capher-na-Hum became a Tel, or ruin, it was naturally called Tel Hum. This being so it makes this spot of exceptional interest as the centre of our Lord's mission work. The ruins of the same old town or colony, for it had no walls, still lie

around; behind are the same hills where the sower still goes forth to sow; in front, the same lake still rippling on the shore, and in the distance are the same old mountains. It is good to have seen this spot before it has been covered with modern buildings.

It is striking when you remember the denunciations against these places where Christ spent so much time preaching to find them just heaps of ruins all level with the ground—Capernaum, Bethsaida, Bethesda, Chorazin, Magdala. We had lunch by the side of the ruin of the old synagogue, which has been found in a wonderful state of preservation, the whole of the ground plan and steps, etc., remaining in position, and the sculptured capitals lying in heaps just where they fell. Its plan proves it to be of about the time of our Lord, yet experts say its architecture shows decided Roman influence, which seems strange for a synagogue, until one compares it with St. Luke vii. 4, 5. It appears certain that these are the ruins of that building, but it is of much greater interest still. In

St. John vi. 59 we read the sermon which Christ preached on the text concerning manna (ver. 31) was delivered here. On one of the large stones there is said to be an engraving which represents the pot of manna, and may have occasioned the discourse (cf. Palestine Exploration Fund Second Quarterly Statement).

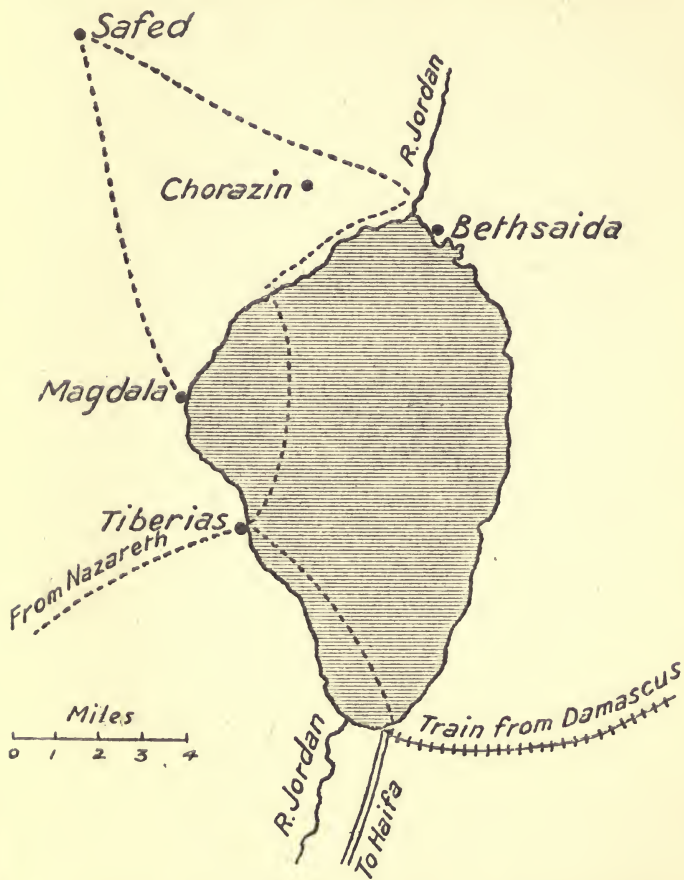
The entrances at the top of the stairs are very distinct, the stone is well footworn, and there is a socket at the side for the door hinge.

From Tel Hum it was three-quarters of an hour to Tabegah, where we were to catch the steamer. We had luckily timed it just right, and arrived at the little pier exactly as the boat reached it, having passed seven strongly flowing springs, which burst out of the hillside and rushed down into the lake. There are the remains of an old water-mill, and an old aqueduct which used to carry the water right round the hill to Khan Minyeh, which is just on the plain of Gennesaret, and is supposed by some to be Bethsaida.

At Tabegah there is nothing but a little convent and tiny wooden pier which stands

out into the lake. The boat was rather larger than a big motor launch, and went at quite a good pace. As we steamed across the perfectly smooth lake Mr. S—— told us how he has seen it get so rough that the waves have cleared the tower of the sea wall at Tiberias (about 18 feet), and the water has poured down into his garden on the other side. We reached Tiberias in forty-five minutes. Some naked little Arabs were having great fun with a canoe made of a sheet of corrugated iron bent double. From here we steamed in another fifty minutes to Semach at the extreme south end of the lake. This place has a curious look as you approach it, the water being prevented from bodily emptying itself down the valley by a sand cliff about 20 feet high and several miles long. At Semach we landed and hastened into the station which is by the lakeside. Before our train started, the one from Damascus came in on the loop line, but a cordon of soldiers was at once made between the trains as the one coming in had to wait twenty-four hours for quarantine and ours had done the same. Poor

things, I did pity them, and was much



amused to see their efforts to get across to our train without being seen. We could

shake hands with these passengers from our windows. One man pretended he was a doctor. I know I should have made an effort myself.

After travelling a good way down the level plain of the Jordan, we turned more westward, crossing the Garmuk (a tributary of Jordan), and then the river itself which was winding its way through the strange sand pinnacles so characteristic of the neighbourhood. As we crossed each river or rushing trout stream, close by the railway bridges were old Roman road-bridges which were and are still on the caravan route from Africa into Asia, the old track along which we could watch the camels trudging in the same old track along which the caravans of centuries have plodded. Time seems to have stood still. Surely those are the Midianite merchantmen now returning from Egypt and congratulating themselves on their good bargain made with Potiphar.

Surely the ages of science and civilization belong to some other world ; all here looks peaceful, contented, no one worries, no one hurries. "Hovoot" ("Tickets, please").

The dream is gone! In three minutes we reach Beisan. I looked out for fat bulls, but this is not the place, or the lean ones must have devoured the well favoured. From here we went up the broad and very fertile "vale of Jezreel," which gradually ascends from the Jordan Valley up to the plain of Esdraelon. We had turned north-west. On our left were the slopes of the Mountain of Gilboa, where Saul was encamped on the last night of his life, and over Little Hermon on our right is Endor. What a state of mind must he have been in that night that he should have crossed this wide valley where the Philistines were encamped! It was on the heights of Gilboa that Saul and Jonathan died with the flower of the Israelite army. It is noteworthy that though Carmel and Gilboa are really spurs of one range, Carmel is so very fertile and Gilboa so absolutely barren (2 Sam. i. 21).

The next station was Afuleh, in the middle of the plain. Here to the north we could see Nazareth on the hills, and to the south the branch line which has already been

begun and will be extended to Jerusalem. The last station before Haifa is about 15 miles inland, opposite the place of sacrifice on Carmel and near the Vale of Dothan where Joseph was cast into the pit. You see, we are still close to the old trade route into Egypt. As for the actual pit, I believe there is the traditional one, but these holes are extremely numerous everywhere, being cut out of the rock to hold water in places where the winter torrents will fill them. They are not covered, the opening being about a yard in diameter, but inside these



is plenty of room. There is no possibility of getting out unaided. The Arabs, according to their picturesque custom,

have improved upon the story. They say that when the brothers saw him coming they covered the hole over with a mat and all sat round to eat bread. When Joseph arrived they asked him to sit in the middle to tell them of their old father, and any more dreams he might have had. However,

before he finished his story, at a sign they all stood up and Joseph slipped through into the pit.

Just as we left the last station, the train stopped. An official came running up to the driver. We then backed to the platform, and everybody got out and began racing up and down in a great state of excitement. We were unable to make out what had happened till we found a Jew to whom M. W—— was able to speak in Yiddish. The station-master had just received a telegram that the Italians had landed at Haifa, and were advancing along the line. After a while this was modified, they had not yet landed, but it would not be safe to go on. There were no houses about, we had not had much to eat, and there was only a piece of melon left, and a bit of crust which I had pushed into my pocket. For two hours we walked up and down the line determined to stick to the train. The sun went down and it became quite dark. Suddenly there was a shout and every one got in again. The train must hurry on as it was wanted to remove valuables, etc.,

from Haifa. The Italians were not timed to land till 11 p.m. As trains on this line only run by day, men had to come out from the town with lanterns to signal it in. When we arrived we found about ten engines all with full steam up, and blowing off clouds of smoke, ready to leave at a moment's notice. An official told me that they had already sent away the money from the banks and also the documents. I suppose the engines were to take the soldiers out of harm's way. We went on to the hotel, where we heard more rumours of the attack. However, we slept well that night, and as far as I know no Italian ship ever came on the horizon.

I have reached Jerusalem again after a very jolly time. On arriving at the coast, I found the steamer was not to reach Haifa until the next day. However, we were awakened at sunrise by the boots, who said, "Steamer just in, may stay an hour," and so had to pack, breakfast, drive to quay, and row out to the boat. It was done.

I determined to try without Thos. Cook. The day before had been quite rough, and

they had doubted if we should be able to land at Jaffa, but during the night the sea went down, and we had a fairly calm passage. Doing without "Cook" means a most awful fight and bargaining. If you have his ticket you are at once surrounded by his men, like a body-guard, and the independent mob can't get near you. I had heard before of the awful fight that sometimes goes on if you try to do things for yourself, but did not expect all I got.

The boats catch on to the side of the steamer before she stops, and always seem to get half swamped. The men do not wait for ladders, but swarm up the sides like lizards. Ropes, portholes, exhaust pipes, anything seems sufficient for them to climb up by, and before the steamer has come to a standstill they are pouring over the hand-rail in a human flood, like the rats after the Pied Piper. There were very few passengers for Jaffa. I could see there would be a fight so stood over my bag ready, intending to do things very calmly, and try to teach these men a lesson, but before I was ashore, I had to shout once or twice and show my

teeth. I know I patted two of them. They make a rush for your luggage because they know if they can get that you are bound to follow. I was just enjoying myself warding off a few on one side and keeping them well at bay, when I turned and saw my bag, which had been behind me, just disappearing down a ladder in the hands of a man, who was shouting to me to follow, and saying it was "All right," "All right." I chased after him, and asked whose luggage he was stealing, and who the bag belonged to? He said he thought it was mine. I said, "What if it belongs to that lady over there, and she doesn't want to get off at Jaffa?" He hastily put it back and started to search for mine. Some said if I would come with them I should not have to wait, but I told them I was enjoying the view.

Some said the sea was getting rough, and I agreed with them that there was not much fun in going ashore just yet. They hardly seemed to understand, but all tried to get me into their boats by grabbing my bag and screaming like wild cats. I had to wrestle with several. Finally, I picked up the

luggage and thought to calmly climb down the swinging stairway, and get into a boat unaided, but the men were determined to have their own back, and that ladder was by no means easy with a bag and a parcel. Two men were trying to get up and two trying to get down, and I was between. Those below seemed to think their only way was to get up between my legs, and those above thought that they would surely get down if they rested their bundles on my head. I was soon hanging almost suspended over the sea, with one hand on a rope, and the other holding packages, then I left go and landed in a boatman's arms below. All this time I had been quite unable to render any assistance to the lady who was landing, or even see anything of her; she had apparently hidden, but now appeared at the head of the ladder. I shouted to a man to assist her, which he promptly did. Seizing her in his arms, he swayed her off her feet, and let her drop to a man below. The next moment they were rowing away over the waves singing their song and laughing at the others who had to go without passengers.

226 ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM

Here, at Jerusalem, everything is in a state of excitement and suspense.* The war scare is creating great interest as the men are being taken to fight. (They were unable to go to Tripoli as the Italians held the sea.) We hear rumours daily of wars and treaties, of massacres and conspiracies, and yet nobody seems as yet to know anything definite. For some days we have been entirely without news, and we all anxiously await the next telegrams. Yesterday the reservists (men between thirty and forty years) were called out, and a large number marched past the hotel on their way north. It is said they will go all the way to Constantinople. The barracks are a perfect prison for those who have been taken, who will be sent off during the night up north. As I went past they were stretching out their lean arms through the iron bars of the windows for the food which the women were bringing them, because the authorities are too busy to provide it. Cans of water were suspended outside, just as tins of water are fastened to the bars of a

* The war between Turkey and the Balkan States.

canary cage. They are raising enthusiasm by describing the cause as one of defence against the infidels, and are doing all they can to excite the mob. One man on a tub was leaping into the air and waving a sword, two others fired off pistols. Others again formed into lines and clapped and sang to their curious rhythm; and as the poor ignorant fellows in their excitement offered to fight, they were carried shoulder high into the barracks, from which some few hours later (under cover of darkness) they were marched off in gangs, surrounded by soldiers to start their weary tramp north. One scene just outside our school, which faces the barracks, was most impressive. A very old sheik, who looked as if he might have been the shade of some ancient prophet, had fetched from a mosque a large purple banner. He stood in the midst of the crowd, and there was a momentary silence as he lifted up his hands to heaven, and called down a blessing on those who should defend it. All the people cried "Amen," which is of course an Eastern word; then, after an impressive pause, he

turned round and round and shouted, "This banner goes to the war, who goes to defend it?" I was not there myself, but was told that something like 200 more men came forward and offered for the fight. The authorities are laying hands on all they can see. Drivers dare not bring their horses into the towns, as they will probably be commandeered.

Yesterday I heard of one man who lost three horses for less than the price of one. The camel ground outside the Jaffa gate is empty, and there is not a camel to be seen in the city. Orders have been given that on no account are the persons or goods of any foreigners to be touched.

The situation here is curious. The Arabs hate the Turks, who are very brutal to them, but being Moslems, they always want the Turks to win. In spite of the excitement the conscript reserve are doing all they can to get out of fighting; 24,000 pounds Turkish (1 pound = 23 francs) was paid in two days in Jerusalem by men who wished to buy themselves out.

Mr. H—— has just got back from Beyrout ;

he has been telling me about the Italians bombarding the place in the spring. There was great excitement when their men-of-war appeared and signalled for the surrender of the two Turkish gunboats in the bay. The people and soldiers rushed to the barracks, and grabbing all the rifles and revolvers they could find, began shouting and firing at random at the battleships which were far away on the sky-line. One man in his excitement jumped into a rowing boat, and was pushed off from the shore waving his native slippers and shouting in triumph, "With these shoes I will stop up the mouths of their guns." With a long-distance gun the Italians fired high into the air and right over the city. A few moments later there was not a native to be seen. As their ships entered the bay one of the Turkish gunboats fired twice, the shots landing in gardens on the other side. The Italians fired two torpedoes, and in twenty minutes there was only one funnel of the Turkish gunboats above water.

It may be interesting to note that the natives and Jews all think that England will

come and take this country. Two hundred Jews went down to the station the other day to welcome the English soldiers, whom they heard were coming up by train.

We have just been for a scientific expedition. For some years past careful measurements have been made of the height of the Dead Sea, which is only kept down by evaporation. We went to take further details, also a German professor is conducting an inquiry into the causes of malaria, which is so extremely common. He is examining the blood of every man, woman, child, he can get, and has a suspicion that the fever comes from the people of the Jordan Valley. We went down to bleed all we could persuade to submit, and to bring their blood up to be examined. It was great fun. The malaria germ can only pass one stage of development in the blood of a human, and the other only in the body of a mosquito, hence a man cannot get it except from a mosquito bite, and this insect cannot infect him unless it has already bitten a man, who has the germs in his body.

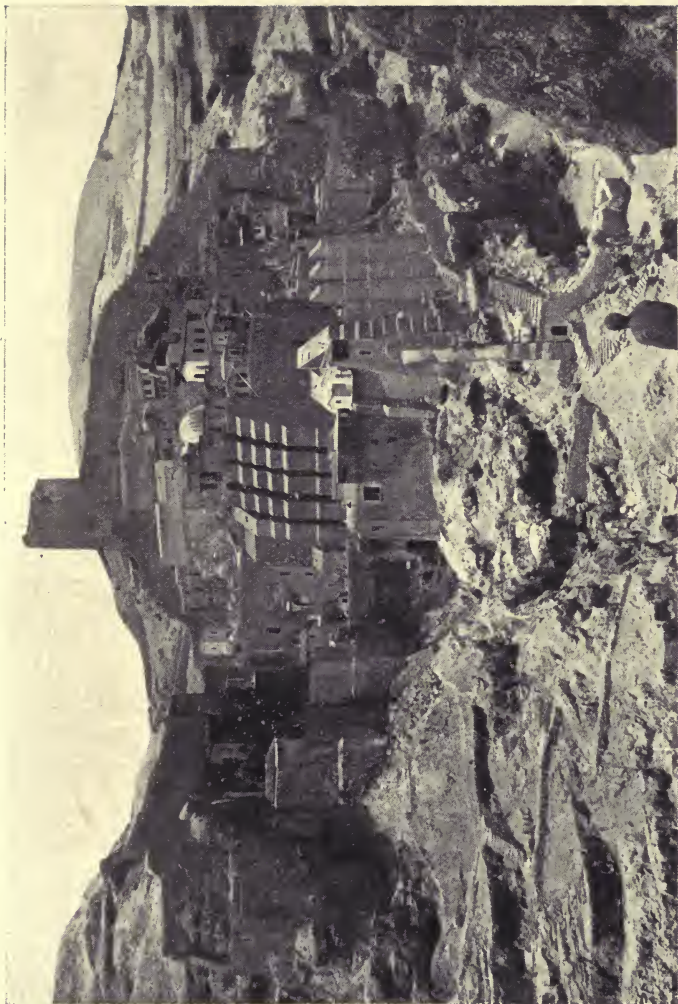
Well, we hired horses—the owner gave

me a "bishlek" (sixpence) as a "pledge" that he would bring one; he called it an arrabon, obviously the same word as the Greek ἀρράβων in Eph. i. 14. We set out at 10.30 a.m. and rode till about 1.45, when we reached the second inn on the Jericho road. Here we began our operations. One of the innkeeper's daughters was the first to offer. With a fine needle the doctor probed the lobe of her ear, and then smeared the blood on two microscopic slides. Some of the people were rather alarmed, but we laughed at them, chased them about, and amidst the merriment of the rest caught them one at a time, and held them down whilst the doctor did them. There was one negro whose skin was so tough that he did not seem to feel anything, and we had great difficulty in getting any blood. They all seemed to enjoy the joke when their turn was over, but evidently thought we were quite mad. We then rode on to Jericho, where there was a splendid catch; in fact, we were quite besieged by people who wanted to be bled. It was amusing to see the natives jumping about with glee and very

proud of the little bit of cotton-wool sticking to their ears, a kind of badge that their turn was over. (Subsequent examination of the slides showed that though most of the people examined had the fever germs in their system they had not that type of germ which could infect mosquitoes, and thus be a danger to others.)

Next morning we started by moonlight for the Dead Sea. We rode down the west side through jungles of reeds and bushes, the springs being here very abundant. At length we reached Ain Feshla, where the mountains descend straight into the water.

Here is the mark on the face of the rock where the Palestine Exploration Fund makes measurements. As the water was rather wavy we had some difficulty in determining the exact level of the sea, so we made independent observations, and on comparing notes found we agreed within half an inch. The sea during the dry summer had gone down one foot nine inches, which is rather less than usual, as the weather has not been quite so warm as usual. We met several Arabs about and flocks of goats and sheep,



THE WONDERFUL MONASTERY OF MAR SABA, NEAR THE DEAD SEA.

but our party was large enough for it to be quite safe. Once or twice Mr. H—— has had some excitement here, even being fired at, and Mr. E—— had his donkey shot under him. We turned towards Jerusalem up one of the gorges, the wildness of which is far beyond description. Sometimes we had to lead the horses, and could often have jumped off their backs several hundred feet down the cliffs.

On the top of one of these hills we came to the buildings of Neby Mousa, where at Easter the Moslems have their great week of feasting, their "Tomb of Moses." During this part of year it is absolutely deserted though as large as small barracks. It was very strange walking about into the various rooms and not seeing a person. Mr. H—— said that it is a famous haunt for robbers, and we were all to enter together.

On one occasion when he had some school-boys with him they were just entering when they discovered a lot of robbers fast asleep. He at once retired, and had the donkeys hidden in a valley some way off, and then they all sprang in together shouting, "Friends,

friends." The robbers woke up with a start, and when they saw their numbers welcomed them as friends. The Arabs had a lot of camels with them which had been stolen, and these were being taken off to Gaza to be sold.

When we entered, the place was quite deserted. After looking at the tomb, where our muleteer said his prayers, we rode on. A small Moslem shrine was the only other building we passed until we reached Bethany, getting home to Jebus in the dark.

MICHMASH

Yesterday, being free, I determined to do Michmash, Bethel, etc. We rode along the Nablus road over Mount Scopus, soon branching off on the old north road so graphically described in Isa. x. 28, etc. Passing near Anathoth we descended from the bleak heights of the watershed into the glorious sea of hills and wadies with their olive groves and vine terraces, their shepherds with sheep and goats, and clustered

villages. Soon we were leading our horses as we clambered up from the rocky bed, keeping as much as possible on the patches of rich red soil, which lie everywhere in the ledges of the grey rock. At the top of this hill we found a little bunch of grey stone houses (or rooms); fierce-looking wolf-like dogs heralded our approach, beasts which seemed ready to tear us to pieces; then a swarm of women and children came out and crowded round us, almost everybody having bad eyes and not above asking for "backshish." After looking a moment over the ocean of hilltops down to the Dead Sea, we again descended and rode to Hismath, where we were rapturously welcomed by the old sheik and all the village. I had learnt to know him well as he was accidentally shot in the summer and remained for some weeks in our hospital. He at once spread a fine carpet outside his house, began to make coffee, and was just sending to kill one of the flock when we said we could not stay long; so after a short rest we rode down into the valley, where there are some strange remains of massive masonry, called locally "Tombs

of the Children of Israel," evidently very old and, according to some modern authorities, on the site of Rachael's tomb. Here we found and ate some mushrooms.

We pass Geba or Gebeah, or a hilltop, and went down into the pass where Jonathan and his armour-bearer climbed up against the Philistines (1 Sam. xiv.). A little further the wady became absolutely precipitous, and here I could see easily the two rocks mentioned in ver. 4, two huge buttresses of rock which stand out from either side as if they would block up the wady altogether. The scene is wonderfully described in 1 Sam. xiv. There is an enormous cave on the south side with a small entrance now called "the cave of the Benjamites." Saul and Jonathan were Benjamites. "Hands and feet" (ver. 13), the only possible way of climbing this cliff; ver. 14 describes a common Eastern way of reckoning, and there, right on the top of the cliff, we saw a patch of soil between the rocks which had just been ploughed. A winding path led us up to Michmash, still like the other places called by its Biblical name; here old Achmed

the sheik left us, and so riding to Ai of Josh. viii., we passed close by the place where the prophet must have been killed by the lion (1 Kings xiii. 24).

Ai is on a steep hill where there are now no houses. It is known as the Tell, or "heap," as described in Joshua. Passing on to Bethel, we saw the ruin of an old Crusaders' church, and later a more perfect one at Beeroth. These churches must have been very numerous at that time. At Bethel we saw but little to remark, except an enormous reservoir, which shows how large this place must once have been. There is still a good-sized native village. Its desecration seems to have been so thoroughly carried out in Joshua's time that it does not appear to be again mentioned in Old or New Testaments, unless Bethany (Hosea x. 5) refers to it, where the prophet seems to change El (= God) into "aven" (= idol).

From here we rode on to Beeri, finally returning home by the modern road.

BACK TO PALESTINE

BACK TO PALESTINE

Feb., 1918.—Just left Cairo and swinging along for Kantara on the Canal, going up to dear old Jerusalem. It is just over five years since I left, and that was under very different circumstances. We are, I think, the first English civilians to go up, except four who went as agents of the Relief Fund. It will be a very interesting journey; the Israelites were forty years reaching the promised land, we should be one night. They tramped the burning desert, we glide along in a sleeper under the full moon. On either side the cold moonlight glistens on the sandy hills, or the deep shadows lie where, lightly covered with earth, rest the bodies of those by whose sacrifice a way was opened to the Holy City. The train is full from end to end with officers and men returning to the front. Such a fine, clean, healthy set of men. If the spirits of those

who rest in the eternal desert can see these men hastening forward over the ground they have won, to take their place in the roll of fame, they would rest assured that they had not died in vain. At Kantara I got my bags into a motor lorry, which was waiting to carry everything across the pontoon bridge. There was a crowd of officers and soldiers, but I was the only civilian. They all looked at me in the moonlight, and I heard some one say, "Look who comes 'ere, Bill." However, the military police had evidently been instructed. I soon got my pass examined.

Crossing the Canal, I found the Bishop surrounded by a number of officers, who had evidently come to see that all was correct. Really I feel quite ashamed to see the luxury with which I am about to travel. The main part of the train is rough suburban carriages for the men, with one or two sleeping berths for officers, but our carriage is used by generals, berths, a saloon with tables and chairs, and a fine kitchen.

Feb. 28th.—Dear old Jerusalem. I can

hardly take in the fact that I am here in my sitting-room looking on to the Mount of Olives, over the slopes of which, a few weeks ago, the Tommies fought their way. In the distance to the north I can see Neby Samwil, where so many lost their lives, and behind there fighting is still going on. We hear bursts of gunfire now and then. The distant hills dotted about with tents, and motor lorries can be seen dashing about on the mountain tracks. Well, I must try to tell my story.

I woke up yesterday at sunrise to find we were still in the desert, but just crossing the border into Palestine. We drew up at a large oasis, and pointed out where our first relief unit had been on the edge of the desert. An hour later we were passing through a grassy plain, which divides two hills, behind the more distant of which is Gaza. It was across this plain that the British had to advance to capture it. The hill on which the Turks were posted was thickly covered with cactus and shrubs, but the plain in front was absolutely without cover! Shortly after we were running right

through Gaza, a complete ruin now with the railway wandering right across it, though a year ago it was an important town. After breakfast we rolled on along the line northward, seeing Askalon in the distance. Some boys selling oranges said they came from Ashdod. We bought four for $1\frac{1}{4}d.$ At last we found ourselves in low rolling hills with olive trees.

After we had paid a visit to the G.H.Q. we changed into a Ford car and had a wonderful ride up the wild rocky passes to Jerusalem, 2500 feet up. It took us three and a quarter hours. There was a storm and the roads were deep in mud. There were streams and streams of huge motor lorries struggling along the slippery rocks, and tents scattered over the hills everywhere. Six times we stuck and once nearly turned over, several times we had to wait for cars to pass on some precipitous cliff or hairpin bend. At last we crossed the deep valley at Emmaus, and soon were among the red-tiled Jewish houses which reach over the hills on the north of the city. I was able to guide my driver by a short

cut, and so we got to our gateway about ten minutes before the others. Jumping out I shouted, "El Metran!" ("The Bishop!"), then ——, who has kept everything going through the war, came out, and the various servants; so we welcomed the Anglican Bishop to his new home. We went over the house and found everything well kept. All were full of stories of the past three years, as how the mayor sat at the writing-desk and signed the document handing over the city to the British. The gardener presented the Bishop with a Turkish rifle, dropped by a soldier when he fled through the garden. We then went into the cathedral, which we found in the same state in which it was when sealed by the American consul three and a half years ago. We knelt in prayer and thanksgiving, and were shown the hole made by the Turks searching for cannon (mistaking our canons for guns), and the one window which had been broken after a Russian victory in Asia Minor. Next we visited the clergy house, library, boys' school—now in full swing—and the girls' school, now

turned into a big industrial institution, where were 170 women making garments. How they blessed the Bishop and the Fund!

This morning we went (with the old Bishop's cawass, *i.e.* soldier servant carrying a sword in front) to visit some of the Relief Institutions. The orphanage is great. Miss W—— has got hold of a big Austrian hospice, and now already has 106 children. We saw there one little girl of eleven who had been married twice. Her first husband was divorced, and her second had gone off to the war, leaving her destitute. Yesterday we received official calls from the representatives of the Greek, Coptic, and Syrian Churches, and to-day we have been to return them at the monasteries clustering round the old Church of the Holy Sepulchre. We were received by abbots and archdeacons, as the Patriarchs and Bishops of the different Churches have been carried off. It gave me a bit of a thrill when, passing through the courtyard of the old church where the Crusaders worshipped, I saw "Tommy" standing sentry with fixed

bayonet. These are certainly wonderful days. On all sides are evidences of the exciting historical events which have so recently taken place.

THE END

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