MR. ARCHIBALD FORDER IN EUROPEAN AND ARAB COSTUME

'VENTURES
AMONG THE ARABS

IN DESERT, TENT, AND TOWN

THIRTEEN YEARS OF PIONEER MISSIONARY LIFE
WITH THE ISHMAELITES OF MOAB, EDOM
AND ARABIA

BY

ARCHIBALD FORDER
LATE OF KERAK, MOAB

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TO A MUCH LOVED AND HONORED

Father and Mother

WHO WILLINGLY CONSENTED TO THEIR SON
GIVING HIS LIFE TO THE ARABS, AND FOR MANY
YEARS PRAYED DAILY FOR THE SUCCESS
OF HIS WORK, THIS BOOK IS

Dedicated

Of the world's pages, one is yet unread;
One land still waits the pioneer's tread;
'Tis Arabia, home of steed and palm,
With millions needing yet the Gospel's healing
balm,
So
Dim longings draw me on, and point my path,
To Eastern sands, to Kedar's mystic land,
The cradle of Islam.

PREFACE

The object of this book is not to gratify a love for sensational adventure, but to show how a life wholly given up to God's service can be used and spared under circumstances varied and often seemingly hopeless, and in the hope that many may be led to venture something on behalf of that great peninsula of Arabia of which it tells. It shows that the ventures of the pioneer missionary are full of adventures, trying, exciting, and interesting, and should dispel the illusion that his life is all honey and that in far-away lands he generally has a good time.

No attempt is made at literary perfection, or at a detailed geographical, historical, or other description of Arabia. My story is a simple record of ventures just as they occurred, a transcript of personal experiences and beliefs. It is sent forth to what I believe is a sympathetic

public, and if through the perusal of its pages any one is led to a fuller and deeper consecration in the work of evangelizing the nations of the world, my time, labor, and thought will have been well expended.

A. FORDER.

BOSTON, MASS.,
May, 1905.

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INTRODUCTION

[By Special Permission from "With the Arabs in Tent and Town."]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To whom it may concern:

Dear Sir or Madame,—

This letter introduces Mr. Archibald Forder, who is well known to me. He is a tireless, faithful, devoted Christian worker. He is fearless, and has labored with indefatigable zeal. He enjoys pioneer and missionary work better than any other man I have ever seen. Only last year (1900) he went alone into the heart of Arabia, and nearly perished because the hardships were so great. He is a regular Livingstone, and if there were still any "unknown continent," Mr. Forder would be the man to open it up to Christianity. In connection with some established Society, or under

the direction of some judicious Board of Trustees, I am sure that Mr. Forder would do most excellent work. His character is above reproach, and in this country he is respected by all who know him.

I remain, yours respectfully,

(Hon.) Selah Merrill, LL.D.
U. S. Consul, Jerusalem.

September 23, 1901.

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For the twin photographs reproduced as frontispiece, we are indebted to J. C. Varney, Haverhill, Mass., and for the photograph facing page 85, thanks are due to Van B. Wheaton, Amsterdam, N.Y.

'VENTURES AMONG THE ARABS

CHAPTER I

A ROUGH RECEPTION

IT was fast growing dark, and we were eagerly anticipating the end of our long and fatiguing journey. Four days we had been on the way from Jerusalem, and one more night should bring us to our new home among the thousands of Ishmaelites, in Kerak, the old Moabitish capital, on the highlands and in the mountains of that little-known region.

The leader of our little caravan ordered the loads to be put on the camels and mules for this final stage of the journey. With fear and trembling our faithful men adjusted them, then grasping their heavy sticks and slinging their flintlock guns over their backs, with a "Bismallah"—"In the name of God"—led off, hoping that before daybreak we would be housed in the old city, only twenty-five or thirty miles ahead.

We mounted our animals and brought up the rear. In the twilight we could see the caravan ahead of us urged on by our men, but

no sound was uttered. For we were now in the land of Moab, among a people noted for their lawlessness, dwellers in houses of hair, keepers of flocks and herds, whose hand was against every man, and every man's hand against them — a people who looked with suspicion upon any one who dared to enter their country uninvited, and who were ready at a moment's notice to attack, rob, and even kill, so that the purses and purposes of the chiefs and their many attendants might be filled and upheld; and after plunder and even murder return to their camps, pull down and fold up their tents, and migrate to some region inaccessible to any who might purpose revenge for any such treatment as just described.

Was it any wonder that our good Arab attendants kept quiet lest they should bring down on us some of the bloodthirsty, greedy children of Ishmael? But in spite of quiet and care we were not to be allowed to pass unmolested or to reach our mountain home without interruption.

It was about seven in the evening, and quite dark, when suddenly, without any warning, we were surrounded by a large number of fierce fellows armed with rifles, spears, daggers, and revolvers. They appeared to come from be-

neath, so quickly were they upon us. Their mode of operation was well planned and carried out. First they separated us, then some drove off the loaded animals that in the stampede and surprise had been deserted by their drivers. Others of these unexpected arrivals took as a prisoner one of our little company, and in a few minutes after the attack no one knew where the other was.

Who were the newcomers? some will be asking. They were a company of Arabs belonging to the ruling family of Moab, and known as the Mujellies. They were famous and feared, because of their ferocity and daring. Somehow they had learned of our coming and had been lying in wait for us, prepared to give us not only a surprise, but a rough and discouraging reception to their country. It was neither the place or time for talking, so each one, still riding, was led off in charge of three or four of these unwelcome fellows.

I heard my wife calling for me, her voice came from somewhere on my right, so without any notice to my captors I slipped off my horse, and before they realized what had occurred I was running in the direction from whence the sound of my wife's voice had come. Stumbling over stones and bushes in the darkness, I at

last came upon a little group. In the midst was my wife, still seated upon her mule. Around her were some six or eight men, some on horses, others on foot. They were trying to make her understand that they wanted any valuables that she might have.

Fierce and lawless as they were, their social custom kept them from laying hands on a woman, much as they might covet and wish to have any valuables that she might possess. I had already been overhauled, with a very poor result, however, for I had nothing worth taking, having anticipated some such experience as this. I had stoutly resisted the first man who started to make the acquaintance of my pockets and saddle-bags. Thinking to frighten me into submission, he drew out a long curved dagger and held it in a threatening way over me, but I put up my arm and knocked it out of his hands, and he thought it wise to desist from interfering with me.

Pushing between the horses and men that surrounded my wife, I, by signs and shouting, protested against their actions. At that time I only knew a few words of Arabic. They were joined, a few minutes later, by my captors, who had followed me after I had given them the slip. Together we all moved off, I walking

by the side of my wife's mule and doing my best to encourage and cheer her. Many times our captors urged me to ride, but to no purpose.

All this time we knew nothing about our companions who were able to speak the language, or anything about the loads or our faithful attendants. For about an hour we went on in the dark. Often I stumbled over stones, or put my foot into some hole in the dry, parched ground, but I held on to the bridle of the mule, and in spite of sore feet and bleeding legs, pricked by stout thorns or nettles, at last saw in the distance the lights of camp-fires, and knew that the homes of our captors were near, and for a time, at least, this part of our journey was about at an end. Furious dogs rushed hither and thither, announcing our coming with their shrill, harsh barking.

A few minutes later we halted before one of the tents in a large encampment and were invited to enter, which we did, conscious of the fact that we were the prisoners of the Bedouin, and our temporary prison a house of hair.

CHAPTER II

GETTING INTO MOAB

THE previous chapter left my companions and myself captives in a house of hair on the wide plains of Moab. Let me now relate how I reached the place and circumstances already told.

My wife and self left England on Thursday, September 3, 1891. We were sent off with many good wishes and the blessings and earnest prayers of our parents and friends. In due time we reached Jaffa, the port of Southern Palestine, and were welcomed there by Mr. and Mrs. Lethaby, whose place we had come to take for a time. Here I had my first Arabic lesson —one that was short, comparatively easy, but very helpful. The agent who undertook for us in the landing and customs taught me the equivalent in Arabic for "What is that?" Armed with my first two words of that difficult language, I went ahead and soon learned the names of many things, until able to converse with the people.

As the way to Moab was through Jerusalem, we hired carriages to drive to the Holy City. The railroad was not open in those days. After a weary ride we reached Jerusalem and were lodged in a comfortable home. On Wednesday morning, September 30, we started for Moab. The old capital, Kerak, — Kir of the Old Testament, — was our destination, and had we then known all that was to befall us, we would not have set out so light-heartedly. Our companions, Mr. and Mrs. Lethaby, rode in rude crates slung across a camel's back. Mrs. Forder and myself were accommodated in a similar fashion. We moved along like snails, and after having ridden until we were all stiff and tired, our camel man at last yielded to our pleadings and persuasions, and consented to stop and rest awhile. In ten minutes we started again. O dear! that day's journey to Jericho is still in my mind; the jolting and rocking on that camel's back, under the scorching sun, was almost unbearable. To add to our miseries, that stubborn camel would insist on walking along the very edges of the steep precipices so common on the Jericho road. If we touched it on the neck to guide it to the middle of the road, the beast would stop and commence to kneel. The calmness of that

beast greatly added to our discomforts that first day out. If it turned back its long neck to knock a troublesome fly off its hindquarters, we thought it was after a bite at our legs, that dangled over the sides of the crates in which we were seated.

At last we sighted Jericho in the plains below, and at length reached the village. We were tired and exhausted, and were grateful for the shelter and warm water supplied by the woman in charge of the Russian hospice there. We tried to sleep, but the heat and innumerable occupants of our beds made it impossible.

About two next morning we were up and again on the move. In the dark our camels followed their master across the level plain of Jericho. At daybreak we reached the banks of the historic river, and our man, throwing aside his garments, proceeded to ford the Jordan. In turn both camels were led through the river; two donkeys swam across, closely following the camels. Our man carried our packages across on his head, and after many fordings at length got everything over. It was an interesting sight in the cool and light of the early morning. We rested about half an hour, and had our breakfast off dry bread and Jordan water, which, if not luxurious, was satisfying.

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

VIEW ON THE RIVER JORDAN

This view on the river is near the fords over which the Israelites crossed. It is about five miles from Jericho. The picture was taken from the wooden bridge that spans the river at that point. Mr. Forder crossed here on his first journey into Moab.

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

INTERIOR OF AN ARAB HOUSE

This shows the fireplace in the middle of the floor and the mud bins in which grain, salt, or flour is stored. In the recesses on the left side the family sleep, the floor generally being occupied by guests. These houses have neither windows nor chimneys.

The ride across the plains of the Jordan was long and tiresome. The heat was terrific, and the Moab mountains seemed never to come nearer. But they at last were reached, and the ascent commenced. Slowly and calmly those camels went about their difficult task — up and down places that seemed impossible for any animal to venture, along the edges of deep ravines, over rocks with surfaces worn smooth and slippery by much traffic and exposure to storms and winds, and at last out on to the extensive and fertile plains of Moab, at that season of the year dry and cracked after the heat of the long summer. We passed close under the shadow of Mount Nebo, but were too weary to realize it or give much thought to the first leader of Israel who died there on that lonely spur in the mountain range.

Fifteen hours after leaving Jericho we reached Medeba, a large village on the plain. How thankful we were for the warm welcome given us by the chief of the place! He spread rugs and comforts on the floor for us, on which we lay, glad to stretch and rest our weary limbs. The house was just one large room; on each side were raised recesses, in which the family slept or stored their goods. Wide arches supported the roof, which was made

of a thick layer of mud and earth held up by beams of wood.

In usual Arab style supper was prepared and served. Two baked fowls, boiled rice, and warm bread made a very decent meal. We ate our fill; what remained was given to those who flocked in to gaze at us. Coffee followed, served in small cups; a tablespoonful was all we got, and for us it sufficed, for it was thick and strong, and minus milk or sugar. By that time a lot of men had crowded the house and had seated themselves around the fire, which was in a hollow in the middle of the floor. Midst their noisy jabber and the smoke of the fire and numerous pipes we fell asleep, and for a short time were oblivious to our new and strange surroundings. Awaking soon after, we were not long in discovering that myriads of minute bloodsuckers had attacked us, evidently with the intention of drawing all they could from the newcomers. We learned to our dismay that Medeba was the residence of the king and queen of the flea community, and that they never delayed investigating any one who tarried for a time in their domains. A few snatches of sleep refreshed us and helped to pass away that lively night.

I ought to have said that our heavy baggage

left Jerusalem on five mules about two hours before us the day we started; these we over-took at Medeba. We did not expect to set out again for a day or two, but about ten o'clock Friday morning they said they were going on. Our camels had gone back to Jerusalem, so we commenced the second stage of our journey on horses and mules. The next two days' ride meant danger and delay unless we were fortunate enough to get along unseen.

Late in the afternoon we entered the enemy's territory and kept moving on until quite dark. About forty men and animals now formed our caravan, many having decided to travel with us, because in numbers there was safety. Without a sound from each other we traversed those plains in the dark. Suddenly we were surrounded by ten or twelve men of the Hameideh tribe, through whose country we were travelling without consent. In the starlight they looked awful fellows, armed with rifles, revolvers, and swords, and spears about twelve feet long. After much shouting and talk, which to us was unintelligible, they separated us, and drove off all the loaded animals, after which they left us to come together again and proceed on our way, not knowing what had gone with our baggage.

After about two hours we reached an encampment of houses of hair, where we passed the remainder of the night. Before morning all the loaded animals were driven in, having been regained by our faithful muleteers. By daybreak we were again on the move, hoping that before night we should be safely housed in Kerak. Soon we descended into the grand but deep gorge of Mojeb. We crossed the river Arnon, which flows through the bed of the valley, and were delighted with the abundance of white and pink oleanders that grew on its banks. We reached the Kerak side of that magnificent gorge about ten in the morning; here we decided to stay till sunset, for we had now reached the territory of the robber chiefs of Moab, known as the Mujellies.

Our men knew that if we fell into the hands of these dreaded chiefs, they would show us no mercy. We found shade and shelter under a large rock, so placed that even passers-by could not see us unless we wilfully exposed ourselves. We had not been in hiding long when we heard a noisy wrangle going on among our men. Mrs. Lethaby crept out and caught sight of the long spear of a sheikh, or chief. He had come upon our men and said that some of them had robbed one of his

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

AN ARAB ENCAMPMENT IN THE DESERT

These primitive shelters are the " tents of Kedar," the Arab's dwelling which is called a " house of hair," because they are made of goats' hair. They are spun and woven by the women, and are so closely " pulled " that they will shed water and keep out the fine sand during a storm. The tent is divided into two parts, one for the women and the other for the reception and entertainment of guests.

tribe of a gun, and he must have something in return for it. After a stormy quarrel he drove away a mule on which he had loaded our beds, a box of our clothing, and my baby organ. We gave up all hope of ever seeing them again, but counted ourselves fortunate in getting them returned to us several weeks later.

The remainder of the day passed quietly, and the rest prepared us for the events recorded in the first chapter. There we were in a Bedouin tent, and from that point I take up the story.

My wife and self were taken into one of those goat's-hair homes. Carpets were spread for us to sit on. Men, women, and children crowded in to stare at us, and we concluded that they were all gratified at the capture that had been made. Soon it occurred to one of them that we might be hungry, so they asked us by means of signs if we would eat. We nodded our assent, and soon they baked us some large, thin cakes of bread, which were very good. They also made us coffee and brought us a large bowl of milk. It was perhaps well for us that we could not talk to them; we wished we could have done so, then we might have got tidings of our companions and our belongings.

In about an hour's time one of our men came

to us and made us understand that we were wanted elsewhere. We got up and followed him. He led us to a tent on the far side of the encampment, and there we found our companions. They were in the tent of the chief, surrounded by his wild sons and rapacious retinue. The chief demanded money for our passage through his country. Fifty dollars must be his before we were released, or else he would keep us and all our goods. To many the sum demanded would have been small, but to us and to them it was much, so we refused to gratify the crafty Arab's demands.

We prayed to God for wisdom and deliverance, then laid down on the bare earth and fell asleep. On awaking next morning, we saw some of our boxes lying about the camp at any one's mercy. Soon the women began to pull down the tents and move the camp, and we plainly saw that we must settle something or else lose all we possessed.

We promised to pay the amount demanded on the condition that we were escorted to Kerak in safety, and all our baggage restored to us. Three of the chief's sons were appointed to go with us and take us to our mountain home. Another start was made, but after an hour or so we were accosted by more Arab horsemen, all

excited and furious. Every one was allowed to pass but my wife and myself. These new claimants to us were from another family connected with the ruling sheikh, and they demanded their share of the plunder before we could pass. After much wrangling our protectors got us away and we overtook the others.

At three in the afternoon we reached Kerak, all weary, tired, and faint, for we had had neither food nor drink for fifteen hours. In this manner I was introduced to the Arabs. Ofttimes afterward I talked with those wild fellows about that night, only to have them reply — "What's past is past, and what's dead is dead."

Through all those first experiences, new and hard on fresh comers, we showed no outward signs of fear or terror. We realized then, as we have many times since, that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." It was only the commencement of much, and even worse, that was to follow before the love, respect, confidence, and admiration of those semi-civilized children of Ishmael were gained, never to be lost.

CHAPTER III

WHO WAS CAPTURED

SOME knowledge about the author of this book and his early life will enable the reader better to follow and understand all that these pages may contain.

Silver spoons were not floating around in the home where I first saw the light. I was one of seven children, who were fortunate in having godly parents in the fullest sense of the word. Worldly prosperity was not ours, neither were we poor, and the future promised no more for me than the humdrum plod, plod, of every-day life. It was when I was a lad of eight years that an announcement, made throughout my native city, created a desire in my young mind to hear a public speaker. Robert Moffat, the pioneer of missions in Africa, was coming to speak, and I gained permission from rather unwilling parents to go and hear him. The unwillingness came not from any wish or thought that it was no place for one so young in years, but rather because they thought that

bed was a more suitable place than a crowded hall for one of so short an existence.

When the night came, I had a front seat in that hall. The lights, crowds, close attention paid to the speaker, and other things still linger in my memory, but the veteran pioneer, with his bald head and long, gray beard, held me as no other ever did. The plea for the Hottentots and for volunteers appealed to some, but perhaps the thing that pleased me as a boy was the story of the lion jumping out of the jungle and gripping Mr. Moffat by the shoulder, and his faithful servant killing the wild beast, thus saving his master's life. Before that meeting was over I had made up my mind that I would be a missionary when I grew up. I made known my boyish resolve to my mother on my return home that evening, and for a time no more was heard of it. Later on my interest in foreign missions was renewed by hearing one who had spent many years in China, and I again determined to spend my life among the heathen.

For a few years I was quite an enthusiastic and successful collector for foreign missions. Most of my half-holidays, which came on Wednesdays and Saturdays, were given up to going from door to door asking for contribu-

tions in the box that I had gotten from a missionary society. Discouragements and rebuffs did not deter me from going ahead, and I was soon noted for being a successful collector. This work was often made pleasant by some incident like the following.

One hot afternoon I was out collecting. A knock at a door brought a kind-hearted domestic to inquire who was there. "Will you please put something in my missionary box?" was the request. The response was not money, but, "Come in, little boy, and I will ask my mistress." I entered and was shown into a nicely furnished room to await developments. The servant told her mistress about me, and in a short time the lady of the house appeared. She asked a few questions, which I answered, evidently to her satisfaction, for she rang the bell, and in came the servant again. "Bring in some refreshments for this boy," said the lady, and soon the domestic came back with a small tray, on which were some fancy crackers, cake, and a bottle of wine.

A glass of the latter was poured out and offered to me, but being a Band of Hope boy, I refused to accept it. My refusal resulted in lemonade being substituted for the wine, to which, along with the cake and crackers, I did

boyish justice. After refreshments I returned to business, and had the joy of seeing a coin, worth about sixty cents, added to the collection in my box.

When only thirteen years of age, I left home and was apprenticed to the baking and grocery business, in which I served for three years. At the end of that time, and during a brief stay at home, I was led to give my heart to Christ, through the patience and persuasion of my old Sunday-school teacher. No better preparation than this could possibly have preceded my going to live in the great city of London, a place full of dangers and temptations to young fellows from country towns. Arrived in the great metropolis, I soon got a good position in a wholesale and retail grocery store, in which, after a remarkably short time for one so young in years, I soon became manager.

I owe my success in those days to two things: my not being ashamed of my religious convictions and my strict adherence to my temperance pledge. After business hours my evenings, as well as my Sundays, were given up to work in slum missions, Sunday-schools, or young people's temperance societies. I was made missionary secretary to a large Sunday-school in London and raised the mis-

sionary collections in that school from about eighty dollars a year to more than three hundred. I came into contact with missionary pioneers and veterans from all parts of the earth, and all the while was getting more and more saturated with missionary zeal and information.

About this time I applied to the pastor of my church, who was in close touch with the missionary society of the denomination to which I belonged, and asked him if he could assist me to get into the foreign-mission field. He heard me patiently, and then with grave face and solemn tones addressed me thus: "Young man, I fear you are one of the most unlikely to get into the mission field. Many things are against you: you have no college training, you do not come of a ministerial stock," and other things, all true, but not necessary to the preaching of the simple gospel in any land. I left that study thinking that there was no possibility of my ever leaving my own land to preach the gospel in any other, so settled down to do my best in the home land.

In 1888 I married, went into business on my own account, but in my spare time kept busy with Christian work of one kind and another. I had yet to learn the truth of the

words spoken by the ancient seer, "My ways are not your ways;" also that —

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.

God looketh at the heart of man, and knows his desires, whilst man looks at the outward appearance and possibilities, so let none despair.

I was quite settled in my home and prospering in my business when unexpectedly my opportunity came and my long desire was realized. It was nearly three years after my interview with the ministerial sage that the whole course of my life was changed. I had returned from my Sunday-school duties, and was reading a missionary magazine. It contained an article on mission work among the Arabs in the old land of Moab on the east side of the river Jordan. The work was one of great danger, hardship, and difficulty, and was being carried on by a married couple and one young woman. As I read I was interested, and especially with the last words, in which an appeal was made for a young married man, practical, healthy, and ready to rough it, to go and help in this work, so that the tired-out workers might have a much-needed rest. I closed the paper, and as I laid it aside a voice seemed to say to me, "That is for you."

I could not get away from the impression made on me, and in a few days wrote to the secretary of that little mission, which was supported by a few of God's own whole-hearted people, most of them by this time in the glory land.

The secretary was the Rev. George Piercy, one of the pioneers of missions in China. The answer to my letter was a visit from the head of that work and a promise of favorable consideration. But there were difficulties in the way of my acceptance, — a paying business, a comfortable home, — and it meant sacrifice to give up these and go and start life among the Arabs in the isolated and dangerous land of Moab.

For four months the matter dropped. Then came a letter saying — if I was still in the same mind, the committee would consider sending us out. We were accepted; in a short time my business and home were disposed of satisfactorily, and we were free to go. A few months of practical training in hospitals was given each of us, which over and over again has proved invaluable during the past fourteen years. My leaving England for that far-away, little-known land was a severe trial to my parents; quite recently they had buried two of my brothers, and

my going away was like a third break in the family circle. They, however, committed me to God, and have never regretted the sacrifice it meant to them to see me leave my own land, possibly never to return.

The reader will now understand better the conditions and reasons that led to my entering the mission field. It was "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord," and now that many years have passed since I started that new life, and circumstances many and various have been crowded into my life, I can truly say, I am sure it was God's call to me, and I have never regretted the step I took, or the sacrifice I made, to enable less fortunate ones to come to a knowledge of him who "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

CHAPTER IV

"WHO ARE THE BEDOUIN"

THE preceding chapter has told briefly what circumstances led the writer to a people most of whom live "'neath houses of hair." It will here be suitable to introduce the reader to the nation among whom the experiences told in these pages occurred.

The modern Arab is a perpetuated reality of the ancient Ishmaelite. Next to the Jews, no nation has had such an unbroken or interesting history. It would be out of place in this volume to attempt any detailed secular account of the history of the Arab; let the Biblical account suffice.

There can be no doubt that Ishmael was the founder of the great Arab race. Four promises made concerning the seed of Abraham and Hagar are fulfilled before us in these days. They were as follows:—

To Hagar (Gen. xvi. 10).

"I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude."

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

ARABS OF MOAB, DWELLERS IN TENTS

These are the three men who were with Mr. Forder when the horses so intelligently gave the alarm on the approach of robbers. The man on the left-hand side is "Old Faithful," who has accompanied the author on so many of his journeys among the Arabs. These men belong to the same tribe, and generally camp east of Kerak in Moab.

To Abraham (Gen. xvii. 20).

"As for Ishmael, Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly, . . . and I will make him a great nation."

To Abraham (Gen. xxi. 13).

"Of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed."

To Hagar (Gen. xxi. 18).

"Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thy hand; for I will make him a great nation."

Thirteen millions of people, proud of their descent from Abraham and Ishmael, represent the fulfilment of these four promises.

"He shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren" (Gen. xvi. 12) has its fulfilment in an unbroken occupation of their land by the Ishmaelites as a nation. Invaders, one after another, have tried in vain to get the Arab's country, but have failed. Ishmael, represented by the Arab, dwells before all the nations of the earth to-day, and no section of his country has been taken by any of the Christian powers of the earth, although at a few points on the coast protection is guaranteed to some of the chiefs by Great Britain or France.

The names of the twelve sons of Ishmael, recorded in Genesis xxv. 13, 14, 15, have not

altogether been superseded by more modern designations. Many of the names with only some slight variation in pronunciation or transposing are still found in Arabia. Towns, localities, and even families bear some of the names exactly as they are given in the above reference.

That Arabia has always been the home and land of the Arab proper there is no doubt. Long before the children of Israel possessed the promised land, the descendants of Abraham through Ishmael possessed their land. "And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt" (Gen. xxv. 18) is sufficient proof that they occupied the peninsula of Arabia. A thousand years later their land was spoken of by Isaiah as "the desert of the sea" (xxi. 1).

Division of the Nation. — The Arabs soon became divided into two communities, — the settled and the nomadic. The Revised Version of Genesis (xxv. 16) speaks of the villages and encampments of Ishmael. Hundreds of years after, in Isaiah xlii. 11, we read of the encampments that Kedar doth inhabit, "lit." Later again Jeremiah speaks about the tents, curtains, flocks, vessels, and camels of Kedar, and also refers to this people as a nation, "wealthy,

dwelling without care, having neither gates nor bars, dwelling alone" (Jer. xlix. 28–31). The Bedouin are that section of the great Arab nation that are referred to above.

Every Bedouin is an Arab, but all Arabs are not Bedouin. A Bedouin is one who neither ploughs nor sows; he breeds flocks of goats and sheep and herds of camels. His home is in the wilderness or desert. His food he gets from the towns and villages of Arabia, giving stock in exchange for dates, grain, and the few other necessities of life. The dwelling of the nomad or Bedouin is a black tent, literally "a house of hair," so called from its being made entirely of goat's hair, which is collected, spun, and woven by the women in those lands. "Black as the tents of Kedar" (S. Sol. i. 5) is not an imaginary expression, but a literal one, the hair of the Arabian goat from which these tents are made being black. Kedar, the second son of Ishmael (Gen. xxv. 13), was probably the founder of the nomadic section of the Arab race now called Bedouin.

Nebaioth, the first-born of Ishmael (Gen. xxv. 13), settled in the caves and dens of the mountains of Arabia, and later in their history built houses which eventually became settlements. The settled Arab looks despisingly at the

Bedouin and considers him much below him in every way. Call a town or village dweller a Bedouy and you insult him. On the other hand, the desert dweller pities the settled people, because they are debarred from enjoying the liberty and healthy life of the desert.

Both sections, however, have many things in common: their hospitality is proverbial and wonderful; in religion they hang together, although the city people are more strict in their religious observances than the unfettered nomads. The style of dress varies little. The women in the towns and villages are generally secluded, whilst the women of the "houses of hair" go unveiled and have their liberty.

The Arabs as a nation have not always been prominent in either Biblical or secular history, but certain allusions to them, from time to time, strikingly remind us of their continuous existence. It was to a company of Ishmaelites that Joseph was sold and taken into Egypt. Picture the swooping down upon the servants of Job, their being slain, and the oxen and asses being driven off. Who were the marauders? The section of Ishmaelites known as the Sabeans. From whence did the Queen of Sheba come to visit Solomon? From the land of the Arab. And probably the men who came from the East,

seeking the infant Saviour, belonged to the Bedouin of Arabia. The New Testament gives evidence to the existence of the Arabians, for they were present in Jerusalem at the day of Pentecost (Acts, ii. 11).

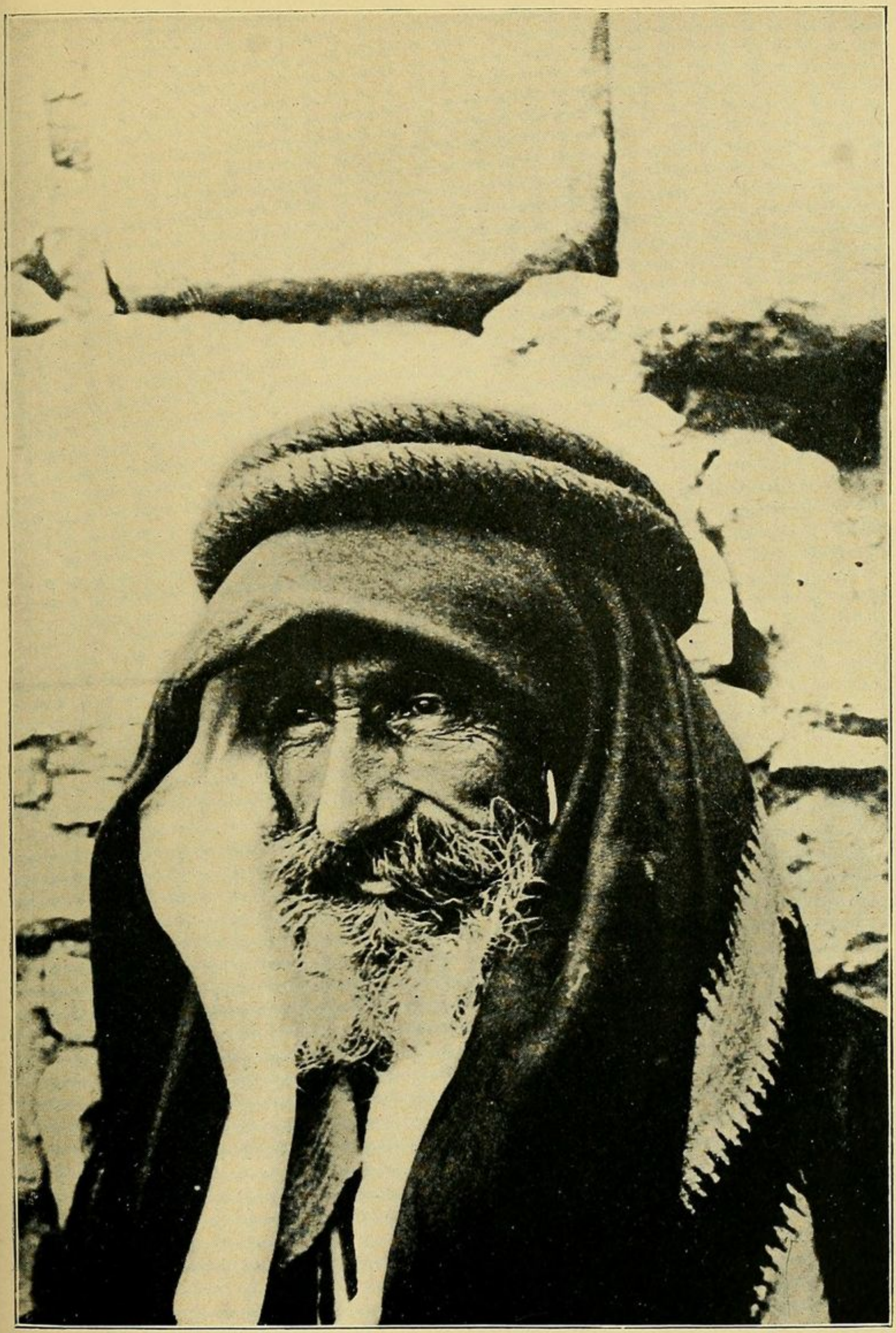
Later secular history occasionally pushes the Arab to the front to be heard of for a short time, and then to retire into seclusion again. The experiences of the Arabs have not always been of such a nature as to help them to a better state either socially, religiously, or commercially. From the time Ishmael with his mother was driven away from the tent of Abraham, their "hands have been against every man, and every man's hand against them." Physically, they are a fine race, slim and wiry, able to stand fatigue and privation. To an enemy they are treacherous and cruel, but to their friends, faithful and kind. Once gain the confidence of the Arab and you have made a lifelong friend.

As a nation they have no contact with intoxicating drinks; immorality is promptly and severely dealt with by the killing of the guilty parties. They are fond of their children, especially their boys, the advent of a son into the family causing a change in the name of the father; henceforth he will be known as the

"father of ——," whatever the name of his first son may be.

The greater part of the Bedouin are free from any form of government. Every tribe and family has its sheikh, or chief, to whom they refer in times of doubt, difficulty, and danger. His decision often settles matters. The position is not hereditary, but is often kept in the same family, the only reason for choosing one from another family being the inability of the son of the late chief to conduct affairs or rule his people.

The events and experiences related in this book may lead some of the readers to conclude that the Arabs are a very unsociable and dangerous lot to live among. After many years among them, I firmly believe that ignorant fanaticism, coupled with deeply embedded superstition, has been the cause of much that I have passed through. Give the Bedouin a chance, gain his respect and confidence, and you have made a faithful and lifelong friend. Since the day that Ishmael was cast out into the desert, it seems that every man's hand has been against him, but a brighter day is dawning for him.



PHOTOGRAPH BY C. A. HORNSTIEN

AN ARAB SHEIK

The sheik, or chief, is one who controls a tribe, town, village or encampment. Tribal disputes are referred to him for settlement. Among the nomads, he orders the camp to be moved and selects the new " pitch." This sheik, who is a Christian, is the chief of Medaba, and a good friend to the author of this book.

CHAPTER V

NEW EXPERIENCES UNDER DIFFICULTIES

OUR arrival in Kerak was the cause of much excitement for many days. The enormous demands of the avaricious chiefs caused us much annoyance. The Turkish government had no authority in the region, and we had no one to appeal to for help. The ruling sheikh was unable to control either his many sons or others who considered themselves of importance.

In time our baggage was brought in, but we discovered that some of it had been opened, and many things were missing. We made our home in a room about twenty feet square, half underground; there was neither window nor chimney, and the only opening into it was the door. The fireplace was in the middle of the mud floor, and the smoke had to escape as well as it could. If an adverse wind kept it from going out at the door, we went out instead, — driven by smarting eyes and choking lungs. We had no means of keeping out

the many curious ones that came to investigate the new arrivals, and the only way to get privacy was to close and lock the door and consign ourselves to semi-darkness.

We found a small boy's school which had been carried on by our predecessors. Many of the lads spoke good English and had become quite civilized and well behaved. One of these lads was put at my disposal as interpreter; by his aid and my own persistence I soon gained a practical knowledge of the Arabic language. My time for the first few weeks was divided between attending the sick who gathered about my door and fixing up our primitive home. Tables, stools, and cupboards had to be made from packing-cases, and thankful I was that I had learned to use a few tools. The Arabs were all interested in my doings, and would sit for hours and watch me. Gradually I became an M.A. to them, so clever did they esteem me.

One of my earliest experiences gave me a good record among the men who were inclined to shun me as one to be feared. I was passing up through the narrow streets of that Moab city, and hearing some yelling turned aside to find out what it meant. I entered a house, dimly lighted, and saw a man being held down

by four or five others. One was leaning over him and doing something to the fellow's mouth. My appearance caused a pause in the operations, and on inquiring I was told the man stretched on the floor had the toothache and had come to the blacksmith to have it taken out. I asked him why he yelled so. He told me "because the man with the pinchers got hold of several teeth and part of his tongue and pulled." I suggested that I could make a better job of it than the blacksmith, at which he got mad, because that meant a loss of some wheat which was to be his payment.

My suggestion prevailed, and the sufferer made his way to my house to await my return. When I arrived, I found a good crowd waiting to see what would be done for the man with the toothache. I got my forceps, which were thoroughly examined by all present. The sufferer was fearful lest I should fail to accomplish what the blacksmith had attempted. He asked for proof that I could remove his tooth. I showed him a bottle with a few teeth in, and assured him that what I had done for others I could do for him. He yielded, and in a few moments was relieved. Taking his tooth he went out into the sunlight, threw it toward the sun, exclaiming "O sun, take the tooth of a

donkey and give me the tooth of a gazelle." He then turned to me and asked me to put in a tooth in place of the one I had extracted. I told him it was impossible to do so, and he went off disappointed but grateful. My fame began to spread, and soon I had as much surgical and medical work as I could do. This gave the natives confidence in me, and some that had treated me badly began to become friendly. They brought me all sorts of things to mend, — boots, wooden bowls, saddles, boxes, — and to the best of my ability I fixed them.

In the noon I had a class of boys that came for one hour to learn English. I think I learned more Arabic from them than they did English from me, but the hour spent together was a mutual benefit.

Often I would go to some encampment of Bedouin to attend some who were sick or had been wounded in a fight. One of my first experiences in an Arab camp will be of interest to the reader. We heard that a fierce fight had taken place between some of the Keraki Arabs and those of a neighboring tribe, the latter being famed for their ferocity and daring. In the fight eight were killed, and the next day brought into the city to be buried. We heard that many were wounded and three likely to die.

Next day two men came to our house and asked if I would give them medicine to take to the wounded lying in a camp away on the plains. At the same time a man came with a message that the sheikh who was in the city wanted to see me at once. With my lad as interpreter, I went to him, and found him with several of his sons and minor chiefs sitting on a housetop holding a council. I shook hands with them all round, and then took a seat by the side of our chief. The last time I was in their company was under very different circumstances. Then I was their prisoner in a house of hair; now I was their guest, by invitation. The old chief said to me, "It is my wish that you go and doctor the wounded out in the camp." It was about five hours' ride away from the city, but they told me it was quite near. The chief said I should have an escort to keep me from interference, and that he would provide a horse for me to ride. I told him I would go, and would be ready in half an hour. My boy, Mohammed, was to accompany me, to act as interpreter.

After eating some food, for Mrs. Forder got me a hasty meal whilst I packed my knapsack with medicines and instruments which I thought I should most likely require, I made my way

up into the city. In a few minutes a horse was brought for me and a mule for my boy, and away we went with two wild-looking men, quite intending to return on the morrow. It was a very long ride, and tiring as well, up the hills and over mountains, down into deep valleys and across never ending plains, until just before sunset we came upon the camp of about ninety tents pitched in a valley. I was very glad to get off my horse and stretch my legs, but I was anxious to do what I could for the sufferers before dark, so asked where they were, and also for the man that was wounded the most.

I was taken to a large tent, in which lay a man who had nine wounds from guns, spears, swords, and daggers, and it was evident to me that I needed the knowledge of a fully qualified surgeon for the task that was before me. As I stood over the man and saw the cuts from the sword, some six inches long, and the gunshot wounds, I shook and trembled like a leaf, but offering up a short and silent prayer to my Master in Heaven for courage and wisdom for the task, I set to work to sew up and bandage one place after another, until the poor man was a little more comfortable than before. All the time I was doing this I was surrounded by some seventy or eighty men and women, who

were surprised to see me sew up the open cuts.

I then asked for the next man. Although it was now dark, I said I would do the three men that were so badly hurt, but they quickly told me there were twenty-two like the one I had just seen. Of course I could not attend to all of them that evening; so, doing my utmost for three, I went back to my first patient, and asked for something to eat. They said I was to sleep in this tent, and then they set about making bread for me and the lad; this was made in large, thin cakes, and was very good. They gave us three eggs to eat with the bread. I asked for water so that I could make some tea, but what they brought was like mud, and I could not use it. In a short time a man came in with some sheep's milk, and we gladly drank it; this was our evening meal.

Whilst we were sitting round the fire I told my boy to ask if we should read to them from God's Book. Some said yes; so, having an Arabic copy of Deuteronomy and of Matthew with me, I told Mohammed to read the Commandments, and I said a few words to accompany them. Some of the men were attentive; others only mocked and laughed at us.

In this tent there was the usual Arab

mixture, and visitors are supposed to make themselves quite at home amongst it all. The varied inmates of our tent were: men, women, and children, goats, kids, sheep, lambs, dogs, and puppies, two donkeys, three cows and one calf, two horses and one mule, and fowls without number.

Now you will guess that, with the noises from all these, I did not care much about the situation, and outside the tent were hundreds of goats and sheep contributing to the noise. About eight o'clock the owner of the tent asked if I wanted to sleep, and as I was very tired, I said yes; so he laid a thin rug over some dry heather and grass, and motioned me to lie down. After having silently prayed to God for protection, Mohammed and I lay down without a covering and tried to sleep; but the groans and cough of the sick man, the coarse laughing and shouting of the men and women, and the different animals inside and out made sleep almost impossible. At last I did fall into a good sleep, and had forgotten all my surroundings, when I felt some one shaking me.

Opening my eyes, I saw the man who was ill being held up on his legs by several men, and, on awaking my lad, found out that they said "he had a pain and wanted medicine";

they thought it would do him good to walk him about. I quickly made them lay him on his rude bed, and told them that was the way to kill him. Giving him a sleeping draught, I again lay down and tried to sleep, but the wind had risen in great force and was blowing through the tent, and it was very cold. At last I again fell asleep, when another good shaking aroused me, to find that the rain was coming down in torrents and dripping through on me; there was quite a pool in the place where I was lying. For the rest of the night I sat over the fire listening to the wind and rain, and again and again wished that I was safe in our humble abode at Kerak.

At last the morning dawned, but with it no improvement in the elements. Having eaten some bread and drunk some milk, I told them I would see the other wounded. I dare not attempt to describe the awful state of the poor men; every one of them needed the care and attention of the best hospital in the world. However, God made me useful to them, and I carefully washed, sewed up, and bandaged all their wounds. Some of them were very thankful and kissed me over and over again; some of their mothers and wives gave me raisins and prunes and other things to eat. By the time I

had finished, the rain was over, and I asked to be taken back to the city as arranged, but not one man would move to go with us, so I said I would walk. They all said I was to stay until the wounded men were well, and they should not let me go away from the tents. They also said that our sheikh told them I was to stay ten days; this was a lie, and I told them so. Then the rain began to pour down again, and I and my lad started to walk to Kerak, and set off up the hill. When we reached the top, some twenty of the men came running after us and took away my boy from me, and one man, who afterward proved a true friend, took off his large "abba," or cloak, and put it over me to keep me dry. Then three or four of them pushed and carried me back to the camp, and put me in the tent where I had slept the night before.

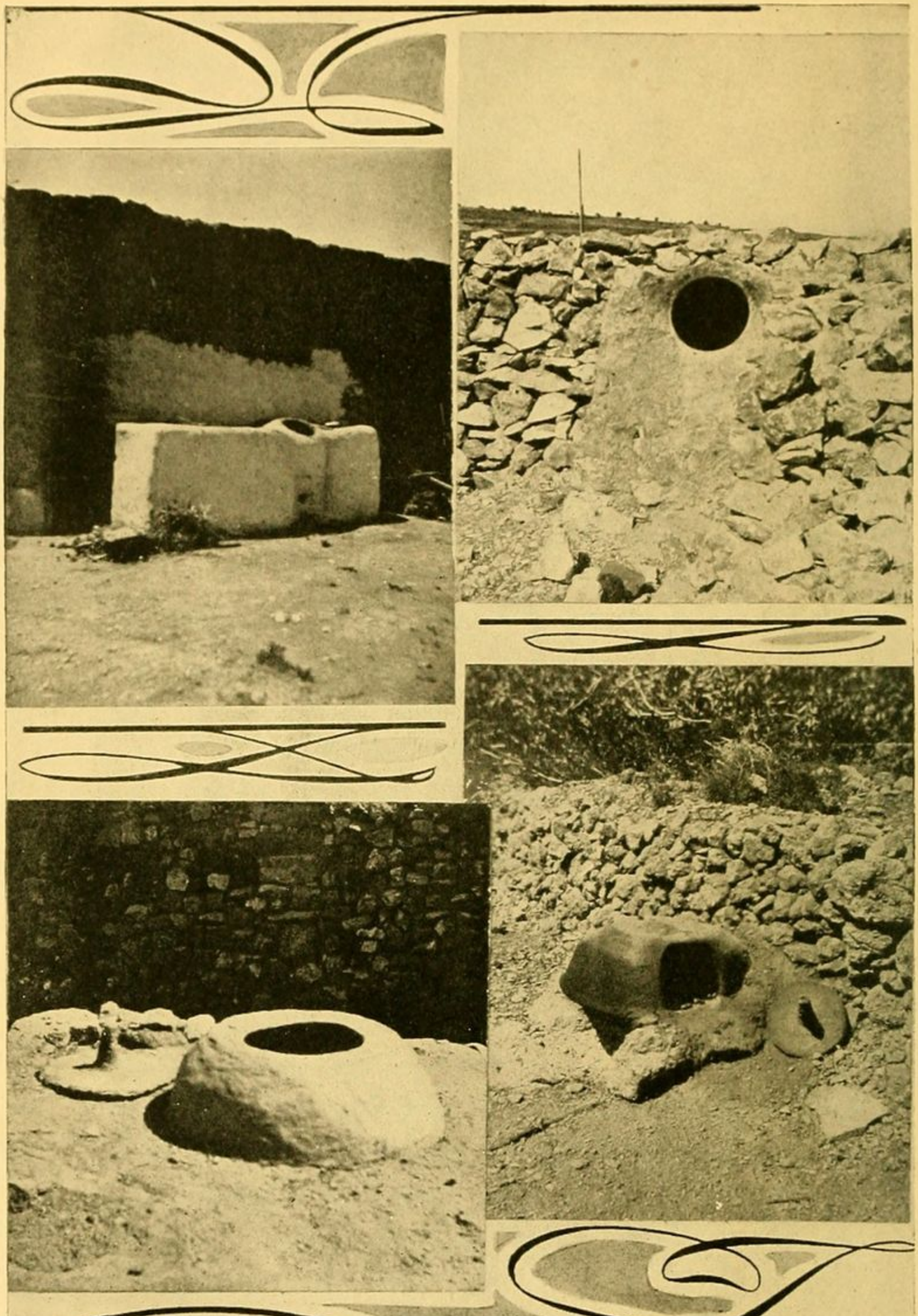
This tent was a miserable shelter, and the man who covered me with his coat seemed to understand that I was not as comfortable as possible, so he took me away over another hill, and we came on about twelve more tents, in one of which he lived. Here he put plenty of rugs for me to lie on, and then told the woman to make a big fire, to warm and dry me. Next he asked what I would eat — should they kill a

sheep, goat, lamb, or kid? Anything that "was in my heart" he would do for me. I asked for a fowl, and some salt and onions; these were quickly brought in, and I cleaned and cooked this fowl in my own way, without any native messes. They baked me bread, and Mohammed and I made a decent meal, after which my Arab friend made me coffee with sugar and milk in it. We found out afterward that this man had lived in Damascus and Beyrout, and had seen a little of European ways and manners.

After we had eaten, we went round to the worst of the patients and made them easy. One man had his nose cut clean off, and his mother produced this severed member for me to sew on again, but I could not comply with her request, although she entreated me to do so. Night came on, and I was made very comfortable by the fire. I asked if we should read to them from God's Book; they assented, and my lad read, and I explained the Commandments and a few verses from St. Matthew; they were very attentive. Afterward they began to question me on many subjects: How much money did I have to pay for my wife? Where was my sword, dagger, gun, and spear? To the first I replied, "English people do not buy their wives." To the other question I said that,

God was stronger than man, and He took care of me. They could not realize this, and one man offered to give me his pistol. Questions followed about the Queen; then they asked "whether the people in my country had such nice tents to live in as they had." I told them of the large and beautiful houses we had in my land, in which they were interested.

At a late hour I fell asleep, and slept till daybreak, when I arose; having eaten some bread and drunk some milk, I prepared to walk to Kerak. I looked round for my Arab friend, but he had gone away with some flocks. Then one well-dressed man came up and said if I would go and see his brother and dress his wounds, he would take us both to Kerak. I did so, and then looked for my man, but he was missing; three times I had been treated like this, so I determined to set out, as there was every prospect of a fine day. Again we climbed to the top of the hill, some thirty or forty men shouting after us to come back; then they tried again to force us back. In the middle of the struggle my Arab friend suddenly appeared. I believe God sent him just then. He quickly scattered the ravening wolves, and said he would take us to the city. As he had only just recovered from an attack of fever, he said



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

OVENS USED BY THE ARABS

These ovens, made by the women and hardened in the sun, answer their purpose well. Dried grass, chaff, manure and brushwood are used to heat these mud ovens, and once heated, they remain hot for a long time. They take many days to construct and are easily broken.

he must go back to the camp and get a horse. Leaving his "abba," pipe, big boots, and head-dress, as a pledge of his return, away he went, and in a quarter of an hour returned, and we started for Kerak. After about three hours, walking over ploughed ground and soft turf, we came in sight of the old castle at Kerak, but still two hours' ride from us. My lad said, "See, Mr. Forder, the castle; I am very joyful!" So was I, and sang in real earnest the beautiful hymn, commencing:—

As when the weary traveller gains
The height of some o'erlooking hill,
His heart revives if 'cross the plains
He sees his home, though distant still.

We plodded on, passing two hyenas and some foxes, and about three in the afternoon reached Kerak. Our return caused quite a commotion, but all seemed glad to see me again. Thus ended my visit by invitation to an Arab encampment. Though rather rough and unpleasant, yet it was an experience that I can now look back upon with pleasure. To be used by God to help those poor ignorant people was an honor!

CHAPTER VI

THROUGH TRIALS ENEMIES BECOME FRIENDS

THE first six months of my life among the Arabs had passed quickly, and I trust profitably, to those to whom I had gladly ministered. A kinder feeling toward the mission was manifest, especially from those who had been its opponents since it was commenced.

Mr. and Mrs. Lethaby left Kerak two weeks after our arrival and went to England for a well-earned rest. Mr. Lethaby never returned, and his wife only came back, with much sorrow of heart, to take away their few things. Events sad and mysterious prevented the founders of that mission from returning to it, and I was left to carry it on. Assisted by my wife, whom the Arabs had learned to love and serve, I worked from sunrise until evening, helping the people and teaching the boys.

On Saturday morning, May 7, 1892, just eight months after we entered Moab, my wife fell

dead in our house. Without any sign of failing health, or time for a parting word, she was called from earth to heaven. The Arabs were broken-hearted about it and showed me great kindness in those days of darkness and sorrow. The sad news spread rapidly, and before nightfall many of our chiefs had come into the city. We settled to bury my wife on Sunday morning; so early on the Lord's day the chiefs of Moab carried to her grave the body of the first one who had given her life for the salvation of the Bedouin of Moab. Those same men a few months before had captured us as we entered their land, now they shed tears as they committed that body to the grave. After the burial those same men came to me, saying, "You must not think of leaving our country now. Having buried your dead in our midst, you have become a son of the land; we are now brothers, so do not go away." Enemies had become friends through a variety of events permitted by an All-wise God but hard to understand.

Our nearest post-office was a hundred miles away, and it was necessary for me to go and send home the sad news. I started the same day and was escorted by two of our chief's sons to the limit of their territory. I returned after about eight days and was again met by some of

our chiefs. They insisted on my going to their tents with them, which I did. They killed a sheep, made coffee for me, gave me presents of milk, eggs, bread, and sundry other things, and treated me in the kindest possible way. I slept in the tent of the head man, and early next morning set out for the city, accompanied by two of the younger chiefs, who brought me to my house safely.

The news had reached the city that I was returning, and every one turned out to welcome me. Our schoolboys and my English class came running down the mountain side to meet me. Meals were prepared in many homes for me, and numerous presents of food, fruit, and more things were forced upon me. What a different reception to the one I received less than a year before, and since then matters have improved and such experiences belong to the past. My only companion and fellow-worker in those days was an English woman who had gone to Kerak two years before me. She, like myself, made many friends among the Arabs, until circumstances compelled her to retire, never to return to the mission field again.

My first letter home after my return gives some account of how my time was spent and how I made more friends; a part of it reads thus: —

"Now I must tell you how busy I have been since I returned, and what dreadful doings have taken place. Last Wednesday, the 25th, a fight took place between Mujellies and the next tribe, the Skour; two brothers, sons of Sheikh Khalil, were cruelly murdered, not killed in fair fighting, but captured and killed in a barbarous manner. These two were our best friends among the Mujellies, so that it is to us a really serious loss; they were fine young men, and much respected by the Keraki. Besides these, two more, sons of sheikhs, and two Keraki as well, were killed.

On Thursday morning the sad news was brought to the city, and at once men, women, and children joined in the wailing, strong men crying like children from real grief. Two hours later the bodies arrived loaded on three camels; the sight was one I shall never forget, and the wailing of the women cannot be described. When the bodies were washed, I stood by and saw all the wounds; it was a dreadful sight; such butchery I never want to see again.

During these proceedings and the funeral following, a request came that I should at once go out to the tents to see a wounded man, son of one of the sheikhs, a cruel man. At first I refused, as a boy only was to go with me,

and the country was in such a disturbed state, the Skour being bold enough to come into Kerak territory; the sheikh then said, 'Wait until the morning and I will go with you myself.'

Next morning we started at six o'clock, taking plenty of medicines, etc., with us. After four hours' ride we reached the tents, and I found the poor fellow dreadfully wounded; I sewed up spear and sword wounds, and made him comfortable. In the afternoon the head sheikh, who had lost his two sons, came from the city, accompanied by all the other sheikhs; they did all they possibly could to make me comfortable, killed a sheep for me, and kept me well supplied with coffee and milk. I slept with them that night, and the following day returned to the city to get more suitable medicines. This family of Mujellies, who have been so cruel to Mr. and Mrs. Lethaby, now swear eternal friendship, and I really think they would not hurt a hair of our heads. I am glad that I have been used of God for their good; continue to pray for them especially, that they may accept the Saviour. They sorrowed with us, and we are permitted to be with them in their time of trouble. It is to these I am going in an hour or two.

We had made up our minds to have a quiet Sunday. The boys had come and gone, and I was having a tune on the baby organ, previous to a short service, when two heads appeared over the gate. On inquiry, a request was made for me to go out and see a man badly wounded, lying in some tents about one and a half hours' ride away; he had been wounded in a recent fight, and had been brought on a camel as far as he could come.

Feeling it to be a call of duty, I had to put desires aside, and although very tired from the two previous days' work, I soon packed my saddle-bags and set off. I found the man in a dreadful state, the worst case I have had as yet. His arm was deeply cut above the elbow; I had to put five stitches in it, in his chin two, chest one, back two. With lint and plaster and bandages, after two hours' work, I got him in a comfortable state. After eating some eggs and bread, I started back again, reaching our house just after 3 P.M., quite tired out. I shall have to go out several times to this man before I can leave him to the care of his own people. If I could read and explain the Bible to the people, I have plenty of opportunities to do so, but I am at present only the advertising agent of the Kerak mission. In my spare time I read a

little Arabic, and when possible read with the boys in the school; I get on very well with the talking, but don't seem to make much progress with the written language."

Hardly a week passed but I was called to go to some village or encampment to attend some sick or wounded man. Thanks to the simple and open-air lives the people live, my patients generally recovered, and the Arabs were sharp enough to recognize that my presence among them was a benefit rather than a misfortune.

These frequent visits to and sojourns in the tents of the Arabs gave me splendid opportunities to observe and study the everyday life and customs of the people. Gradually I got accustomed to the rough-and-ready life, and could eat almost anything they set before me provided I did not see it prepared.

I passed many sleepless nights in these houses of hair, kept awake often by the furious barking of the dogs, who were keeping off some wild beast intent on attacking the flocks. The wailing of the women over one of their men lately killed deprived me of many a night's rest, as did also the drawn-out groans of a one-stringed fiddle played by the man whose duty it was to watch and await any alarm of attack on the camp or flocks.

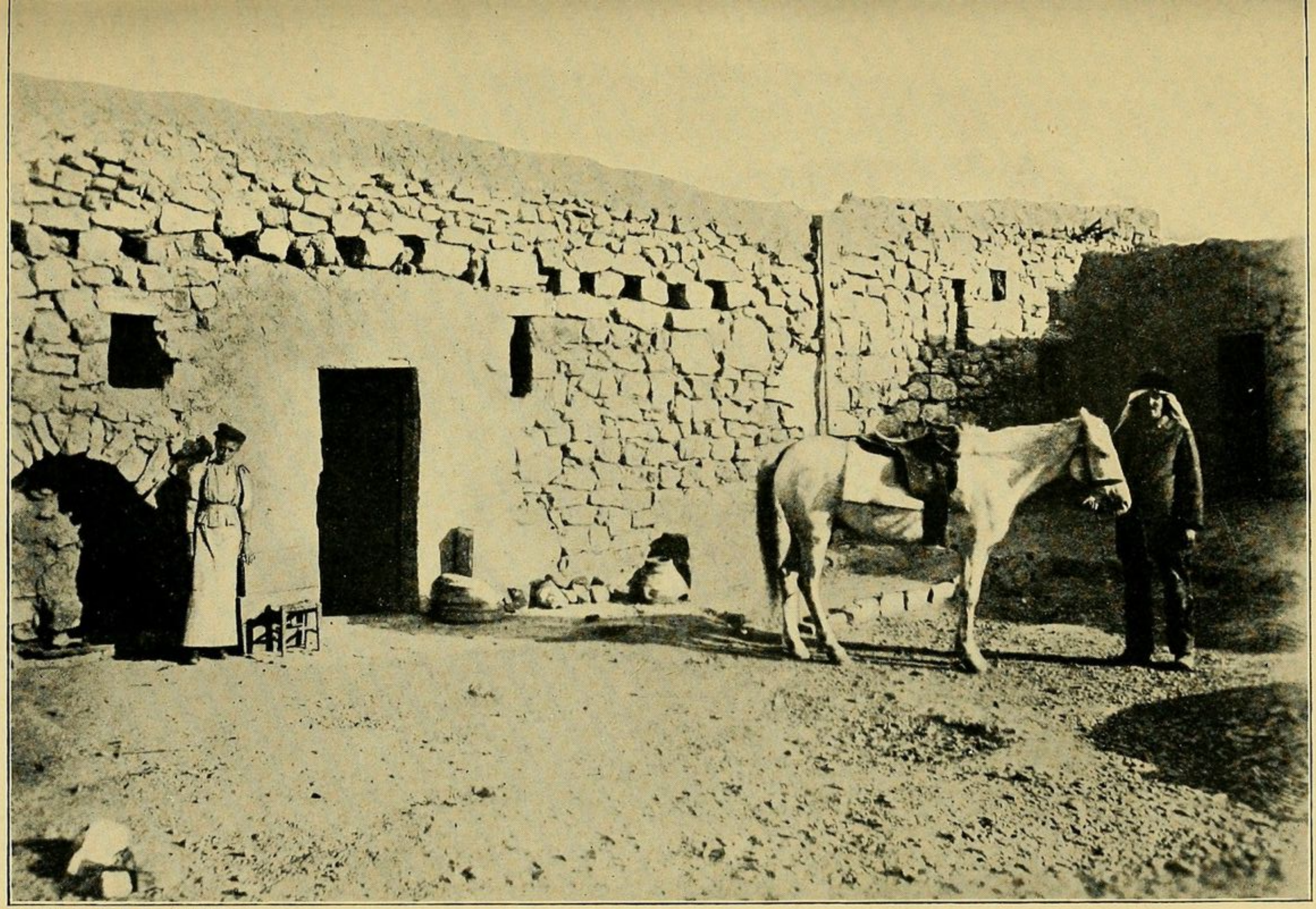
Under such circumstances as these I made friends, some of whom have faithfully served me during trying and dangerous journeys, even risking their lives so that mine might be preserved. But this for another chapter.

CHAPTER VII

TRYING TIMES IN TRYING PLACES

AFTER my arrival in Moab, and gradual acquaintance with the Arabs both in town as well as in camp, the mission had prospered sufficiently to encourage us to attempt new things in the way of buildings. Medical and school work could not be carried on satisfactorily in the porches of our houses, and if the work was to be efficiently carried on, something must be done to procure more suitable accommodation. A short visit to England for consultation with our committee resulted in sufficient funds being raised to lease land and erect houses, in a much better style than the ordinary "dugout" of the Arab.

Our new buildings were above ground. Windows, cupboards in the walls, good doors, and other conveniences savoring of civilization were innovations that interested the Arabs. The woodwork and much of the plastering had to be done by myself, and we were in-



PHOTOGRAPH BY C. A. HORNSTIEN

MR. FORDER'S HOME IN MOAB

This shows the first house built entirely above ground in Kerak. The Arab houses are dug out of the ground and have neither windows nor chimneys. The author of this book built this house and six others for mission purposes. He is seen in the picture, ready for a journey to some Arab camp. The young woman near the door was the teacher in the mission school for many years.

deed thankful when we moved into our new quarters.

On my return to Moab the journey from Jerusalem was again one of exciting interest. My sister returned with me and had her first and only taste of life in houses of hair. Her own words shall tell the story as written at the time.

"We left Jerusalem about 7 A.M. with three camels, three or four donkeys, and two men, and kept on until eleven, when we reached a khan and remained there for about half an hour. Then we went on through mountains until nearly 3 P.M., when we reached Jericho. The hotel was shut up, as the season was over, so we had to sit outside in a kind of farm-yard with men, women, and children all around, and animals as well. After a rest we made a start for the Jordan; this time we had a plain to cross. It was very hot, as we were on a level with the Dead Sea. At 6 P.M. we were on the banks of the river; it was so different to what I expected. Instead of green hills and fields it is all sand, quite like the seashore, and on both sides very many people and animals were waiting to cross. There is only one barge, and this has to be pulled to and fro by means of ropes. We managed to get over about seven

in the evening, our boxes, camels, and men in one load. I felt very tired after so much riding, and after making some tea we tried to sleep, but it was impossible, owing to the noise of the animals and men. Among the crowd were hundreds of goats, and from these one of our men obtained a supply of milk, which we thoroughly enjoyed.

It was full moon, so we could see quite well, and it looked so strange to see such a lot of men and animals lying in the open air, and the big blazing fires to keep off wild animals. About two o'clock in the morning the men told us they wanted to go on, and we were not sorry, because then we should finish the Jordan plain before the heat of the day. By six o'clock we were at the foot of the mountains beyond, and by the waters of Heshbon I got my sponge and soap and knelt on a stone and washed in the river, which was very refreshing. Here we had a meal, and by eight o'clock were on our journey again. We went on up, up, up, until I thought we should never have finished. Men at the Jordan told us not to go to Medeba as it was not safe, so we kept on till about eleven o'clock, when we came to some Bedouin tents and there put up, for we were tired of riding. We went into their tents and lay

down, but I could not bear it, the men and women made such a noise with their talk, and it was so fearfully hot; and worse than that, the women and children came crowding round us, and they were so fearfully dirty. You cannot imagine people living in such a state. After a while we found a little shed place at the end of the tents, which was much better than being in the midst of the people.

We stayed here all the next day. At sunset the women began to make bread and prepare supper; then the flocks and goats came wandering over the hills, and they all had to be milked; some did one thing and some another. They gave us plenty of milk, which was delicious. When the men came home, fires were made, and sitting around the same pot we ate our evening meal. Again the animals kept us from sleeping, and at two o'clock the men said they were ready to go, so up we had to get, and off once more, this time for Mien instead of Medeba, which we reached about eight in the morning.

We went to the native schoolmaster's house, such as it was, and as soon as we got inside, men, women, and children came flocking in to look at us; there they sat on the floor, which was of earth, and smoked. Then our

host brought us bread, and we had a tin of jam with us, so we had our breakfast, and by this time I had taken a survey of the house.

It was a fair-sized vault, underground, and frequently we had showers of dust from the roof. The room was very dark as the door was small and low down. The only furniture was two large heaps of stone covered with mud plaster, one on either side; these were their beds — of course no blankets, sheets, or pillows. The family — father, mother, and two boys, one about twelve years old and the other about two — slept on one, and my brother on the other. Arch made me a little room for myself in one corner by standing our boxes one on the other; some boxes made a bed, so I was better off than the others.

A coffee-pot was about the only civilized thing they possessed, besides two or three tin pans, which were used for everything — for us to wash in and to eat from. They simply poured a little water over their hands and let it go on the ground when *they* washed. They gave us plenty of their native bread and some honey; it all came in these tin pans, and we had to sit one on each side of our boxes, the pan in the middle on the box, and dip our bread in, and this had to continue for a week,

because we could get no men to take us on to Kerak.

You can imagine the days seemed very long, as we had nothing whatever to do. We could not go outside all day because of the heat. At last we got a man to promise to take us on, but my brother had to pay him good money before he would face the dangers of the road; then when we thought to start, and had all our things ready for loading, the man sat in his house doing nothing, and said it was not convenient then — he would go in the morning. Of course we could only wait, and finally got away about eight o'clock next day.

We started for the Hameideh tents to get a guide to take us on; these we reached about 5 P.M., very tired, but could not get free of the women and children for some time. Directly you are in the tents they swarm round you, and some would feel my dress and boots, and some my face, I suppose to see if I was flesh and blood like themselves. We had some milk when the goats came home, and one was killed in honor of our visit, but I could not touch it. I had tried it once before, and that was enough. Again the goats, horses, donkeys, camels, cows, sheep, dogs, etc., pre-

vented our getting much sleep, and just as we did get off, which was about three o'clock, the men wanted to go on, so we got up and once more made a start. The ravine of Mojib was before us, so we had to 'make our hearts strong' — a native expression.

It is impossible to describe what this place is like so that you could fully understand. It is like climbing enormous rocks; there is stone enough to build cities. I thought we had come to the top two hours before we did; we stopped about two hours by a little mountain stream, and sat under oleander trees, which were so lovely after the hot sun and glaring rocks. I walked down a good way; it was more than I could do to ride a horse down such a fearful place.

Going along one very narrow mountain path, one donkey slipped, or rather the earth gave way under it, and the poor animal, loaded with my tin box, another box, and my fiddle, went sliding down about twenty or thirty feet. I stood and trembled for my fiddle, but it was an earth hill, about the only one passed, and only a little damage was done. We reached the top about seven, where we came upon an encampment of tents made of goat's hair and had to be stared at again, and then, after a good

drink of milk and a rest for four hours, we made our last start for Kerak, and this time had level ground to go on.

It was just eleven when we set out. It was not nice riding in the dark, but we had rest and comfort in view, so did not mind; we came to the Mujelli tents about three in the morning and passed them safely, and had a first view of Kerak about six; it looked so nice from the hill, but we had to go down and up before reaching it. We went down very well and were about halfway up when we met a young fellow who took a fancy to my brother's *morea* — the rope round his head —. It was a new one he had bought in Jerusalem. The man wanted him to take his old one, and give him the new one; my brother remonstrated, but the man was determined and pulled out his dagger. I was terribly frightened, and to quiet me the robber was allowed to have his own way.

One of our men had gone on to tell that we were near, so before long the school children were scrambling over the rocks to meet us; Miss Arnold met us just outside her house. The people soon brought us presents; we had thirty-three eggs, two live fowls, a big bowl of butter, which is like lard, two bowls of honey

in the comb, fish from the river, and several other things, while the landlord killed a goat for us, as a thank offering for our safe arrival."

After a stay of a few months in Moab, I accompanied my sister back to Jerusalem. Inter-tribal fighting closed the way by Medeba and Jericho, so we had to take the route round the south end of the Dead Sea and through Hebron. The journey this latter way is to be dreaded for two reasons, the scarcity of water, and the liability to attack by robbers, the mountain region and the desolation being very well adapted for the haunts of highway robbers.

We travelled with a company of traders, mostly Hebron men, returning from the villages and plains of Moab, where they had been among the Arabs bartering the necessities of life for native produce, such as sheep, goats, tobacco, olive oil, butter, and other things that would find a ready sale at good prices in the markets of Hebron and Jerusalem.

This trip we rode on donkeys. All went well for the first three or four days, when more exciting experiences occurred, resulting in the loss of our goods and a narrow escape with our lives. One morning early, we left our camp near the western shores of the Dead Sea, and commenced the weary and steep climb

into the mountains. About eight o'clock we halted for breakfast, unloaded the animals, and prepared to rest under the rocks during the heat of the day.

We were eating our simple meal when twelve men appeared on the brow of a hill near by. The word "robbers" was passed round, and fear seized every one in the company. They came down the hillside, guns in hand, and when they got within easy distance of us, they fired a volley at us, wounding two of our company. This was followed by a volley of stones, which scattered our men in all directions. Before we had time to realize what was happening, a man covered my sister with his large cloak, and lifting her up bodily made off with her. He carried her some distance, then put her in a cave in the rocks, where he knew she would be out of harm's way. I picked up my saddle-bags and followed, but was pursued by one of the robbers, who shouted as he ran — "Drop them, or I'll shoot you." I dropped the bags, which he secured, leaving me to follow my sister and find her hidden in the cave. She had not realized what had happened, but supposed that the men were hunting wild beasts.

After a time, wanting to know what was going on, I crept out, and saw our men and

the robbers quarrelling and fighting over the spoil and animals. One of the robbers caught sight of me, came over, and grabbed my cloak, head-gear, and shoes, leaving me in my cotton shirt, which, being native-made, reached to my heels. Our comforts and rugs were taken, and some of my sister's clothes; the latter were returned, because it would be a shame, even among robbers, to take away the things of a woman. Money was demanded from me, but having none, I was unable to meet the request. The man at whose mercy I was saw on my finger the wedding-ring of my late wife, so determined to have it. Finding he could not easily remove it, he applied his dagger, and was about to cut off my finger, when the chief of the robber band, seeing what he was about to do, stopped him, saying, "Don't spill the Christian's blood; let him alone," so I was spared the loss of a finger, besides much suffering.

The animals were loaded and driven away by the robbers, who made off over the hills, taking with them our meal bags, water-skins, animals, and coverings. I went after them and begged a donkey for my sister to ride on, also a covering for her use at night, both of which they gave me. I then appealed to them for my outer garment, which had been taken. It

is against custom to keep that over night (see Ex. xxii, xxvi, xxvii). All I got from the robbers was an old sack, into which I slipped during the three succeeding nights passed in the open air on the Judean hills, exposed to the dews and cold so frequent in those parts.

With my head-gear and shoes gone, and my outer garments taken from me, I was exposed to the burning sun by day and the cold winds of those moonlight nights, but under such adverse circumstances I experienced the fulfilment of the promise, "The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night" (Ps. cxxi. 6).

After three days of weary travel, we reached the vineyards and olive-groves of Hebron. At daybreak I presented myself at the door of a missionary's house, but my outward appearance kept the servant from allowing me to enter. She no doubt thought me a beggar. Perseverance conquered, and after continued knocking and calling, those inside realized that some one was in earnest. They recognized my voice and at last admitted me, and accorded me a hearty welcome. That same night I went on to Jerusalem in the borrowed clothes of my friend, my extremities conspicuous by reason of the shortness and tight-fitting garments of one so much shorter than myself.

The night after my arrival in the Holy City I was seized with violent pains and fever, caused by the long fatigue, exposure, and abstinence from food and drink. Good Dr. Merrill, the American Consul and friend of the needy, showed me great kindness at that time, and by God's goodness I was soon raised up and back again, ministering to those resident in stone dwellings and in houses of hair also.

Following chapters will record other trying experiences under trying circumstances; for the present these must suffice. We will now consider a brighter and more encouraging side of the life lived and spent in the interest of the dwellers in the land of Moab and regions beyond.

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

ARAB WOMAN WITH MONEY ON HEAD

This woman has one hundred and fifteen coins on her head. They are part of her wedding dowry, and are much prized. Only in a few villages are such headdresses seen, and it is considered a shame for a woman to expose herself sufficiently to be photographed. Mr. Forder has frequently visited the village where this woman resides.

CHAPTER VIII

ENCOURAGEMENT FROM UNEXPECTED QUARTERS

I HAVE already stated that the work to which I had devoted my life was sufficiently encouraging to compel us to consider better accommodation in which to carry it on. Many pleasing incidents had come to our notice that must be recorded, so that others may be induced to go on with similar undertakings, although beset by hindrances and unfavorable surroundings.

We were pleased by the action of two little boys, brothers, who were in our small school, and from whom we did not look for such things. I had been absent from home for some time attending some wounded men lying in an encampment some distance from our station. Nothing had been heard from me, until one morning a man leaned over the gate of our school yard and informed the boys that I had been murdered and that my body was lying out on the sand, no one caring to interfere with it. The report was a false one, for nothing had

occurred to suggest such a rumor. The lads were much concerned about my safety and troubled over the news they had heard. When they were dismissed, they were more disconcerted by hearing their relations and neighbors discussing the rumor which one and all hoped was untrue.

Two little fellows, on reaching their home, if such a word is permissible to describe the place where they lived, were met by their father, who was ignorant, fanatical, hard-hearted, and cruel. He detailed to the boys the news of the morning, finishing up by telling the lads to give no heed to the teaching of the missionaries about God caring for them, or to the belief in Jesus as the Son of God. The little fellows did not attempt to argue with their father, but disappeared into an underground vault. Their father wondered why they should go there, so followed them. He heard them talking something after this fashion:—

"We come in here to pray God for our missionary and to bring him safe home, and if we pray, we must say something. What shall we say?" They settled that the Lord's prayer would be the best they could repeat, and said the elder lad, only about eight years old, "If we do not say just the right thing, we shall have

said something, and God will know what we mean." Then a second difficulty came to their youthful minds, viz. did God understand their difficult language, or would the English language be easier understood? After a few moments' deliberation they decided to say their prayer in both languages. So, kneeling on the damp, dirty floor of that dimly lighted vault, together they repeated the prayer, "Our Father who art in heaven," first in English and then in Arabic.

This over, they left the vault and were again met by their father, who, with oaths and curses, reviled them for daring to approach Ullah, "God." Going up to the flat roof of the house, they looked out over the city. Down the steep mountain side away in the distance rode a horseman. The lads saw him, then commenced to run toward the mission house. On reaching the gate, they shouted between their gasps for breath, "He's coming, we saw him, God heard, so we came to tell you." It was all true. Whilst the little boys had been offering their petition in the vault, I had crossed the ridge of the mountains that encircled that Arab city. The horseman they saw was their missionary, and when I rode up to the gate of our house, I was not received in Oriental style and with

voluminous salutations, but with such words as these: "We knew you would soon come, because we asked God to bring you;" the joyous faces of the little fellows showing how happy they were.

Would the reader not be encouraged by some such experience as the following? After caring for scores of people stricken with that dread disease, smallpox, I at last was stricken with it. For a long time I lay helpless and unconscious, and to add to the fears of my native attendants, delirious. No comforts or suitable treatment were available, and I was at the mercy of such food and doctoring as the Arab mind conceived. Slowly I returned to consciousness and health, and was pleased and encouraged to be told that all through that long sickness four of those Arabs had undertaken to attend me, two during the day and two at night. Faithfully they did their self-imposed duty, refusing to accept anything by way of compensation. Every day numbers of men and women came to my humble abode and in subdued voices inquired how I was, and when for a time they feared I was dying, they begged to be allowed to enter. My attendants refused their request, only to be met with such words as these, "He was our friend when we were in trouble, he came to us

when others were afraid, let us come in and just look at him for a minute; we will not speak or make any noise, we only want to see our friend." As I recovered the natives came to congratulate me, some bringing with them as a thank offering a few cakes of bread, some eggs, milk, or fruit, others bringing a fowl or some firewood. All tried to show their gratitude for the help I had given them, and although much of what they brought was unsuited to one in my condition as a convalescent, still it encouraged me to do more for the almost helpless and neglected descendants of the bondwoman.

Soon after getting the good-will and confidence of the people, I thought it well to let them know the main reason for my being among them. Every morning a crowd of men, women, and children gathered about my door for medical and surgical help. I thought such an opportunity to preach the gospel ought not to be missed, especially as most of the people were unable to read for themselves, and all of them quite ignorant of the things contained in the Bible. Some came only once and would never return, and unless they heard the Good News when present, possibly no other chance would be theirs.

One morning I introduced the Bible, telling the people that it was God's word and I wanted them to hear it read. Reverently and attentively they listened as some portion of the Old or New Testament was read and explained to them. Some would ask questions, many of them intelligent and surprising. Several came time after time only to listen. Ofttimes they were not satisfied with the portion chosen, and because of its shortness and interest they would request more. One morning I purposely commenced giving the medicines without any reading or even explanation, when I heard remarks such as these: "No reading to-day! what does it mean?" Then one man said, "You have not read to us this morning." I replied, "Do you want the reading and teaching from God's Word?" The general answer was, "Of course we want to hear it; no one but you reads and tells us such good things, so you must not leave off, and if you have no time, we will forego the medicine and listen to you read and speak."

On Sundays I had morning gatherings for men, which were well attended. During the ploughing and harvesting seasons not so many attended, but no Sunday morning came round without some one coming to hear the Word spoken and read.

I was called to a sick man on one occasion, and after treating him asked him if I should read to him from God's Book. He assented, and I read and spoke to those assembled in that simple home. After I was through, a man in the company said, "Sir, I heard you read and tell us that we must not curse or take God's name in vain like we do, and I have not forgotten it; every day I try not to do so; your book tells good things; I want to obey it and do as you teach us."

Many were the opportunities for sending copies of the Bible or some tracts to some part of the country we could not reach. We always did so, believing that the "word would not return void, but accomplish the thing whereunto it was sent."

One day a man presented himself at my door who had come a journey of two days. He had been shot in the shoulder and wanted treatment. For want of a better place we allowed him to lodge in the porch of our room. We noticed how attentively he listened to the daily reading and exposition, and on leaving us he asked for a book so that he might read for himself. We gave him a John's gospel in Arabic, of which he was proud to be the possessor. Two months later he turned up again, not for

more treatment for a lacerated or shot limb, but with a request for a Bible. Said he: "I have read the little book you gave me to the people in my town; they like it very much; now I have come to ask for a big book, so that we might read and know more." Such incidents encourage me to believe that many readers of God's Word in different parts of the great Mohammedan world, also in the lands where I have travelled and preached, will come to a knowledge of Him who "willeth not that any should perish, but that ALL — even Arabs — should come to repentance."

Was it no encouragement to know that a party of Arab boys, taught in our school to pray, were daily remembering me when out among the Bedouin? If only those riper in years and experience were as faithful in backing up the worker in far-away lands by their prayers, how encouraged many a weary one would be, instead of feeling that he was alone in the work! Was there no encouragement in the fact that whereas an Arab would not trust his best friend or nearest relation with money or anything he valued, yet he would come voluntarily and desposit any quantity with me without even thinking of asking for a receipt or paper of any kind?

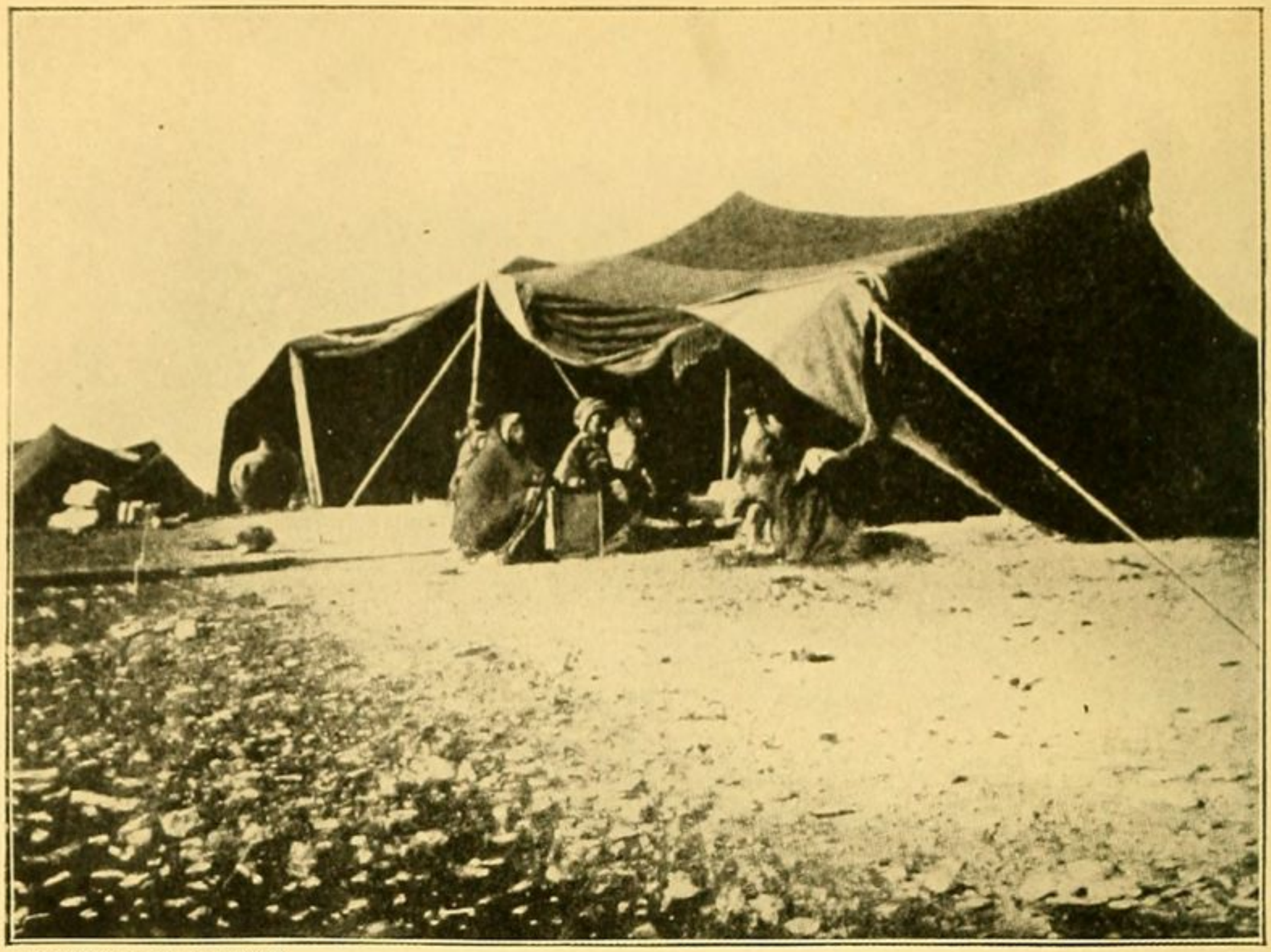
Surely it was matter for thankfulness, and one full of encouragement, that when fighting took place between the Keraky and Turkish troops, and men were shot down before my eyes that I had known for years, their wives and children came to us for shelter and deliverance, feeling perfectly secure and safe under our roof; and then, when they had to leave for their work in the open fields or gardens, to have them put with us for safe-keeping their few jewels and trinkets. And then at last when the news spread that I was leaving, they came and besought that we would not leave them for good, as they had no one but us to turn to for help in trouble, threatening that they would stop us setting out, which, to prevent, we did one morning at dawn.

Later years have not been without signs of encouragement. One day a young Arab presented himself at our door in Jerusalem, saying he had brought his father to us for treatment. He had come more than a hundred miles, proving that some amount of faith in our methods had resulted from our life and work at Moab. Was it no cause for joy to us when the old chief of Moab, who in one day was bereft of two of his sons, chose to turn aside to us for comfort and cheer rather than be among the

howling crowd of his own relations and people? That man had been one of those that had caused me to be taken prisoner and money paid for my release when first I entered Moab.

The account of my journey into Arabia, given in other chapters, cannot be read without seeing between the lines much that encourages us to press forward; the readiness of the people to buy the Scriptures, the kindness shown by those in high places, and last but not least the workings of a watchful, kind, and gracious Providence always bringing to mind the remembrance that "The Lord reigneth," and that His Word says, "I will be exalted among the nations." If any worker in either the home or foreign field that reads these pages is discouraged, let him take to himself the promises that cannot be broken and go forward, remembering that the "Well done" is not promised to the good and successful worker, but to the good and *faithful* servant, who is to enter into the joy of His Lord.

Walking down the street called Straight, in Damascus, a man accosted me that I had no memory of. He was surprised I did not recognize him. "You attended me in an encampment away in Moab when I had been shot in



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

A BEDOUIN TENT

This is the dwelling of the nomad, and named by him "the house of hair." These tents are very strong and heavy, and last for many years. The sides are fastened to the top by wooden pins about six inches long. So closely woven are they that water rarely penetrates through them.

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

THE FORDS OF ARNON, MOAB

This stream is in the bed of a very deep valley that terminates on the shores of the Dead Sea. It divides the territory of the Amorites and Moabites. In the Pentateuch this place is frequently mentioned. After heavy rain, this stream is impassable.

the neck, and when I left for my own place and people, you gave me one of your gospels. We have all read it and like it very much," was what he told me. Before leaving me he asked me to come among them and tell them of our religion.

CHAPTER IX

IN COMPETITION WITH NATIVE DOCTORS

MISSION work of every kind in all lands is always accompanied by times of discouragement. That the former are allowed by God it cannot be doubted, but all admit that these times do come, and are ofttimes blessings in disguise, although not always discerned at the moment. Without such times coming into our lives, there might be danger of pride or self-exaltation over any little success that was attending our work; and so these discouragements occur, maybe sometimes to remind us that it is "not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord," all success in our labors is brought about. Again, discouragement may teach us many lessons and enable us to gain valuable experience which otherwise we would not have gained, and thus temporary discouragement may result in lasting blessing, not only to individuals, but also to communities. New work in out-of-the-way places among a strange and ignorant people always finds much

to discourage. The idea in the mind of the Arab is that you are among them for personal benefit to yourself and not to them. The monarch of the nation you represent has sent you among them, and is paying you a heavy sum to stay among a hard and degraded people, or, as was often told me, I must have killed some one or committed a great crime to cause me to leave my own land and settle among the Arabs. Such opinions as these from those whom you are trying to benefit are neither helpful nor encouraging, rather the reverse, and ofttimes one is sorely tempted to leave the people to their foolish imaginations and go elsewhere.

Perhaps some of the greatest discouragements I had was in connection with the medical work at Kerak. Although the Arabs there were ready enough to apply to us in time of need, it was with difficulty that we could get them to exercise patience for any length of time. Medical or surgical aid from us was supposed to have an instantaneous effect on the patient, and if it did not, very little persuasion was needed to put away the unknown remedy or treatment, and apply one that was suggested by the women near by. The native doctor was our greatest hindrance, no doubt because he was jealous for his craft, and al-

though the natives acknowledged that our way was best and our medicines more effective, yet they preferred ofttimes to pay the native quack a heavy fee for some visible and painful application rather than have our untried, slow-restoring remedies free.

They could not understand why, for a bad headache, they should have medicine given them to drink. Why not do like the native doctor, apply a hot iron or a bleeding glass to the spot and so scare away the pain? What good liquids did for medicine when fever was in the system could not be understood. Fire, and blood taking, with a few dangerous drugs, are the remedies for everything among the Arabs. To wash a wound and allow it air or drainage was madness, even sin, on my part; they would plaster it with filth and exclude air, and thus, instead of improving matters, make them far worse. Rest and quiet are rarely permitted to a patient; on the contrary, the room, or tent, of the sick man will be crowded with men, women, and children making plenty of noise. I have known many a one to die that might have lived if only our advice had been carried out.

One case in particular comes to my mind even as I write. One noon I was having my

meal when a man ran into my room breathless, exclaiming, "Come — run — quick; a man murdered!" I jumped up, seized my emergency bag, and without coat or vest followed the messenger. Up in the city, lying in the road in the midst of a crowd was a man in a pool of blood. He had been attacked from behind by the avenger of blood, and his abdomen ripped across, causing his intestines to protrude. I set to work alone; no man cared to interfere, lest the poor fellow should die and they get the blame. Carefully I stitched up the gash, replacing the protruding mass as I proceeded; the fellow behaved well and kept up beautifully. Having finished, he was carried on a carpet into a house near by and was supposed to remain there. I persuaded the men to go away and leave him to get sleep and quiet, and having given him a sedative I promised to return in an hour. I did so, but found the house fastened up. Inquiring of some people near, I was told the owners of the house had gone out to their tents, and the wounded man had been helped to walk to another house. Thither I went, to find the place crowded and the poor fellow exhausted, yet being kept awake to talk to these so-called friends. I scolded them and sent them all out, and decided to stay myself.

Soon he was asleep and rested quietly for two hours. On waking I left him in charge of a woman to go to another case, promising to return and possibly have him taken to my room so that he might be well cared for. I returned about sunset, and to my astonishment found my man was not in the house I left him in. The woman very coolly told me, "We feared he would die, and did not want it to be under our roof. You will find him in ——'s house." Off I went and found him again, but he was too low to be moved; they told me he could not walk, so they had put him on a donkey. I saw the poor fellow was very exhausted, so stayed with him until he died, which happened about three hours later. Truly "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." I went home disheartened, but had learned a lesson never to be forgotten.

On another occasion I was called to a young man that had violent fever. The native doctor and the women had done all they knew, but to no effect. I went and listened to all they had to tell me; then I told them if they would leave off treating him, I would do what I could. They agreed, and for some days all went well, but the patient was not up and about as they expected he would be. One

morning I went as usual, but got a cold reception. I guessed something was up; I gave the medicine and left them. A little later on I returned and gave them a surprise visit. Before I reached the door I heard cries of pain, so waited a minute, then crept gently to the door and looked in. I saw my patient being held up by three or four men whilst others applied hot irons to his spine, causing him to yell from pain. So intent were the men and women on their cruel work that they had not noticed me, so when I spoke, they were surprised, though not ashamed of their doings. The excuse they made was "he had a pain in his back, so we were driving it away." After that I left them a few days, but returned again to treat both back and fever. The young man recovered and was always very grateful.

Another time a young baby was brought to us for treatment, "because it cried"; something was given it, more to please the mother than anything else — for babies will cry — and away they went, and we heard no more of them. Some days after I was in the encampment of our sheikh and was asked to look at a baby that was ill. It was brought to me; on uncovering the mite I found it was quite raw and of a dark color. I asked what they had been

doing to it to make it in such a condition. The answer was, " Because it cried we rubbed it with the medicine you gave the chief to paint his knee with, but it did not profit." Some time before I had given the old chief some liniment iodine for a swollen knee, and they thought what was good for that was good for a crying baby. Needless to say, a little grave was the result of such treatment. On me it had a good effect, that of discouraging the giving of medicine or drugs into the hands of those ignorant of their use.

Our patience was sorely tried by another family that we did our best to serve. A man was cleaning his loaded pistol with his little seven-year-old girl near to him; suddenly it went off, the charge entering the little maid's thigh. Our help was asked and willingly given, one of our lady helpers going twice a day to dress the wound and do what was necessary for the little sufferer. One morning she went as usual and applied clean dressings. The afternoon visit revealed a different state of affairs. The fresh dressings had all been removed, and in their place a plaster of various abominations had been put. An old woman, supposed to be very clever, had advised this, and so it had been done, and a fee given for the advice and plaster.

The parents were talked to about their foolish doings, but to little effect. Patiently the dirty plaster was removed, the wound cleansed and dressed once more. All went well for a few days, when again the good done was all upset. A knuckle bone — supposed to work wonderful cures — had been worked into the wound, causing the little girl excruciating pain as well as opening the wound again. Here, then, was undone all the patient care and attention of weeks past. The reason given was "that the native doctor said there was blood and matter inside that ought to come out," and they had listened and acted accordingly. So discouraged were we that we refused to take the case up again, unless they paid for the dressings and trouble, which they did, but the child is lame, owing no doubt to the attack on the wound with the knuckle bone.

One more instance must suffice; although discouraging and trying to the human being, yet it eventually made us some good friends from among those that had been our greatest tormentors and hinderers. Our chiefs had gone on "ghuzzu," — a plundering expedition, — and in a skirmish the eldest son of our sheikh, and heir to the chieftainship, was badly wounded in the head, the scalp having been

cut by a sword. I was called out to attend him in his tent in an encampment about three hours' ride from Kerak. I found an ugly wound stuffed with ground coffee and flour that had been mixed and forced into the cut "to keep out the cold." It had set like cement, but by dint of patient working I gradually removed it, much to the objection of the interested onlookers. Doing what I could during the few days that I stopped, I was able at last to leave him, promising on the third day to return and see him. They promised me they would not interfere in any way with my dressings.

The third morning I rode out; it was snowing, but I wanted to keep my word. I reached the tent, tied up my horse, and before any one was aware of it I had pushed aside the tent cloth and entered. What did I see? The native doctor at the head of my patient putting on a plaster made of donkey's manure and cow's urine! I stood and looked; no one spoke. I went over to the patient, calmly took the plaster off his head, and put it on the fire, then told the native quack to get outside at once. Without a word he obeyed. Then they told me my medicine had not cured the man, so they had called in the other and paid him five

MR. FORDER WHEN SITTING WITH THE ARABS

In Arab tents or houses chairs are practically unknown. With their legs folded under them, the natives rest quite comfortably, whilst the large cloak covers any appearance of awkwardness by sitting in such a position. The loose flowing garments of the Orientals are very suitable for such an attitude of repose.

mejedies, about four and a half dollars, for his supposed cure. I pretended to make for my horse to leave them, but they begged me to stay and do something; all the lint, bandages, and ointment I had left had been burned by the quack's orders, so I could do little but again cleanse the cut of the filth of the past two days. Three times they served me thus, but in the long run I won, and the fellow got about again. The ride through the snow-storm impressed them, made because I would not break my promise to be with them on the third morning. The recovery of the young chief was attributed to my careful and wise treatment, and many of that family became favorably disposed toward us.

The foregoing have all been connected with a people hardly semi-civilized, and so in some ways to be pitied for their ignorance and treatment toward those who wanted to help and befriend them, but the time came when heavier burdens in the way of discouragements had to be borne, from those who are supposed to be civilized and rank with the nations of Europe.

CHAPTER X

AT THE MERCY OF MURDERERS, BRIGANDS, AND RAGING SEAS

IT is not given to every missionary to undergo hardships, dangers, and trials. Some, during long years of patient breaking-up of new ground, or seed sowing, have to endure things that the reaper has no experience of. The dangers and trials endured by Mackay, of Uganda, or John Paton, in the South Sea Islands, were followed by remarkable times of reaping by those that came after them. The workers at Kerak in Moab are not called upon to endure the hardships or humiliations of those who started that mission in face of danger, fatigue, and privation. How true the Scriptures respecting work of to-day and many of the workers, "One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors." Happy those who so labor "that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." Unfortunately, sometimes the reaper forgets the long

years of weary breaking-up and sowing before he went in to gather in the sheaves. "Render therefore to all their dues; honor to whom honor is due," and praise to whom praise. The life of the pioneer, whether missionary or otherwise, must of necessity be one full of danger, trial, and fatigue. The difference between the two classes is this, that the explorer, scientist, or hunter generally goes relying on his firearms, or foregained knowledge of the people or land, to carry him through, whilst the missionary should, if he does not, rely solely on God for protection and guidance under all circumstances. A man in the possession of firearms will be sorely tempted to put his trust in them when danger comes, and so weaken his faith in God, and to spill blood among the Arabs would mean lifelong enmity and perpetual absence from the country and people where such a thing had happened.

This chapter is not written to create sympathy or pity, but that the reader may know that there is a God that can, and will, deliver, and also that a missionary's life is not all honey. The first marked deliverance I had after I reached Moab strengthened my faith in the living God. As I was attending the patients gathered about my door one morning, a big

burly fellow, son of one of the sheikhs, came up, and, pushing his way through the crowd, laid claim to my medicine chest. To him it was useless, but he thought to me most valuable, because without it I could not doctor the people, and so my allowances from the Queen of England would cease and I would suffer loss. He refused to give up the chest unless I gave him money. He not only claimed the chest, but entered the house and sat himself on the ground, saying, "Here I stay until I get the money." He sat some hours, although many attempts were made to persuade him to go away. But he was immovable; I noticed that the key of the door was in the lock on the outside, so rising and going toward the door I jumped up the four steps, pulled the door to behind me, turned the lock, and had my unwelcome visitor prisoner. He began to shout and kick the door, asking that it be opened, but I went away and left him inside. Up into the city I went, and came upon my prisoner's father, and other of our chiefs and their sons, sitting in a circle in the sun. I went into the midst of them and told them what had happened, and how I had Abdullah prisoner. They laughed, but were angry, told me to go and release him, and they would tell him not to trouble me again. I

requested that two or three of them should go with me and bring him away, so jumping up three called me to follow them. I gave one of them the key, and told him to unlock the door, which he did, and out came the prisoner with a bound, not to meet me, as he expected, but into the arms of his fellow-chiefs. He cursed and raved, and swore by the life of God and Mohammed that next time he met me out he would kill me. Thinking it likely he had taken something from my room whilst locked in, I asked that he be searched. They felt his garments, but found nothing, but I noticed that one of his arms did not move freely, so got hold of it and lifted it up before he knew what I was up to. From under his cloak fell my small clock; he had secreted it in his armpit, thinking no one would notice it. At last he was taken away, and I was left alone with his threats in my ear. I saw nothing more of him for three weeks, although hearing from one and another of his purpose to harm me.

One morning I was riding out to an encampment to attend a wounded man. I was alone. Coming toward me over the plain, I saw in the distance a horseman. Soon he commenced to canter, then came on at full gallop. As he came nearer I saw it was my prisoner of three

weeks before. He was armed with his long spear, and as he rode up to me, pulled from his side a revolver and levelled it at me, laughing and saying, "God has given me my opportunity; now I will kill you and throw your body into a pit, and no one will know where you are or what has come of you." I replied, "If no one else knows, God will, and He will punish you." At once he dropped the arm holding the deadly weapon and said, "I never met a man like you: had you been one of our own people, you would even now be dead. Why are you not afraid?" "I trust God to protect me from evil," I replied, "and that is why you could do nothing." "No," he said, "when you said 'God will know,' all the power went from me." He then asked me where I was going, and on being told said he would return with me and see that no harm came to me. So he did, and next morning returned with me to my home, and from that time we were fast friends, I ofttimes appealing to him for help in time of difficulty or need. Some months later I had a different experience, this time at night. I had been to attend the chief of a village about six hours' ride away. I found he had been badly shot and cut about by some of the young chiefs of Kerak, because of a quarrel over

some sheep some time before. By careful attention to the wounded man, I was able, after about eight days' stay, to return to my home in Kerak. There were two ways to the place I had gone to, one very lonely, leading through large boulders of rock that had fallen down from the sides of the valley. I had been taken this route, but returned alone another way.

On arriving at my room I was asked by my fellow-worker, a young woman who lived in the next house, if I had been molested on the way. I replied, "No; why?" I was told that the three men that had tried to kill the chief I had been attending were hiding between the rocks on the way, with the intention of shooting me on my return. They were very angry because I had helped restore the wounded man to health, hence their action; but as I had taken the other road home I had escaped them. That night I had gone to bed and was asleep in my room all alone. About midnight I was roused by a banging at the door. I called to know what was wanted, because it was so unusual to be disturbed in this way. The answer was, "Open the door or we will break it in, quick." "Who are you, and what do you want?" I asked from inside, but I only got the same reply as before. I got up, lit the

lamp, put on some clothes, and went and opened the door. Without any formalities, in walked three men, their faces covered with handkerchiefs, with only their eyes visible. They shut the door behind them and said to me, "We are come to kill you." I walked up to them, one at a time, pulled the covering off their faces, and recognized them, saying, "You are Bedr, you Mc-mood, and you Salamey," three of the cruellest and most bloodthirsty of our tribe. They were rather surprised at my action and that I knew them. I asked them to sit down, stirred up the ashes on the hearth in the middle of the floor, and soon had a fire going. Whilst I was doing this and making some tea I had an eye to them. They had daggers and revolvers with them, the latter fully charged, as they soon showed me. They made me sit down with them and answer questions. "Why do you go to our enemies?" "Where was the man wounded?" "How did you treat him?" "Will he recover?" and such like, all of which I answered. Then they went on to tell me why they had tried to kill the man, how they had waylaid him and shot him, and how angry they were when they were told I had gone to doctor him. They said they had been waiting five days for me to return, and

had intended shooting me from behind the rocks. Hearing I had returned, they came to the city, and without any one knowing had come to me in the night with the intention of murdering me. "In the morning you will be found dead here; we shall be away from the city before then, and no one will know who killed you," they said. I told them I was not afraid of being killed, but if no one was near to see them, God would know all about it, as He knew everything. They showed me their daggers and pistols, and I told them to be quick or to go and leave me. They were slow to act and talked among themselves in an undertone. At last they said, "If you will give us each ten mejedies, — about ten dollars, — we will do you no harm." I soon told them I should do nothing of the kind. They lowered the amount, and finding I still refused they began to threaten. I kept firm, and again they held a conference, the result of which was a demand to be shown the pictures — the magic lantern. They had heard about it and must have a show to themselves. I told them of the trouble to fix up the sheet and lantern, but they insisted, so I had to get it out, fix it up, and give them an exhibition. They were highly pleased with the pictures, all Scripture

subjects, and what I had to say about them, working in all the gospel I could. Having seen about twenty, they asked to be shown "the one that boils," meaning the chromotrope. I put it in and set it turning, in and out, out and in, and they were delighted. One of them, on turning round to see the lantern, noticed that the day was breaking and told the other two of it, and they said they must be off or they would be seen leaving and have to give an account of themselves and their being out so early. They asked me to promise them I would never again go to their enemies, but I refused. Then they asked me to give my word that I would not tell any one of their doings that night, and to please them I promised, and away they went, leaving me to ponder over the night's doings and the wonderful way I had been protected and upheld.

On another occasion I was sitting with two of our lady workers in the living room after our day's work was over, when all at once, without any warning, the door burst open and in came a young man named Fellah, the only son of his father, a much-respected chief. This young man was well known for his daring and boldness, and so had taken the liberty to enter a house in which were two single women, and

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

BEDOUIN WOMEN, DAUGHTERS OF THE DESERT

These three women faithfully represent millions who live in tents in the solitude of the desert. Their large garment is of blue cotton and made in one piece. Few women wear shoes or even sandals, and most of them smoke. They have many superstitions about the " evil eye," which makes it very difficult to secure pictures of them. It was quite a favor for Mr. Forder to be allowed to photograph these women.

that at night. I met him before he got far in and ordered him to leave, but he only laughed at me and refused. Finding he was obstinate, I took him by the back of the neck, and before he knew it I had him not only outside the house, but beyond the outer gate. To be treated thus hurt his dignity, and he commenced to shout and threaten all kinds of things that he would do to me. Hearing the noise, our landlord's son came over from their room near by, and tried to pacify the young man, telling him how different our customs were from theirs and such like. But his anger was roused; he hurried to a house near by and came back with a rifle. Placing a loaded cartridge in it, and one in the hand of the landlord's son as a confirmation of what he said, — a custom among them, — he swore that he would not sleep or eat until he had killed me. He called on Abraham, Mohammed, and others to witness the oath he had taken. Meanwhile others had come, attracted by the shouting and much talking. I was inside with the ladies, not knowing then all that was going on outside. In due time we had prayers, and I went out to go over to my own room; the young fellow had taken up his position on my roof, but had not seen me cross over to my room. I went to

bed, but was kept in mind of his presence on the roof by the constant thump from the butt end of his gun. He kept his watch all night, and then day came. The people, as they gathered for medicine, were much concerned for me when they heard the story. I got up, had my breakfast, and much against the wishes of the natives commenced the medical work. The young man on the roof was shouting out threats against me, accompanied by awful curses; I bore it as long as I could and then went out, up on to the roof, and straight up to him. "If you want me, here I am; do what you wish, or else be off away from here," I said to him. He was cowed and said nothing. I insisted on him getting off the roof and leaving me to my work; after some hesitation he went down and I followed him, and as he went away he said, "I will give you a bullet when I meet you out alone." Some of the leading men of the city appeased him for the time by a little raw coffee, but he stuck to his determination to harm me, because of his vow and the cartridge he had given as a pledge, and which he would not take back, although urged to do so. The next time I saw that young man was under very different and sad circumstances which it may be of interest to relate, thus proving how

true the Arab's proverb, "Mountain may never meet mountain, but man may meet man," teaching that it is best on separating to be friends and not foes.

There had been a wedding at an encampment some four hours' ride north of Kerak, and all the young chiefs of the tribe had been called to join in the festivities. As is customary, the young men played on their horses, racing and wrestling, the horses seeming to enjoy it as much as the riders. A sham fight was in process when my troublesome friend of some weeks before galloped his horse across the course of a bullet shot from a rifle, the missile entering the windpipe on one side and coming out on the other. He was carried to a tent, and a horseman despatched for me, the name of the wounded man being kept secret. On arriving at the encampment, I was taken to the tent, to find it was Fellah that was down and needed attention. His first words, spoken with difficulty, were, "How could you come to me after the way I served you?" My answer was in their own style, "What's past is past and what's dead is dead," equivalent to "Let bygones be bygones." I did my best for him, staying five days and nights. One afternoon he was leaning on my arm, and I was feeding him

with some milk, when suddenly he fell back dead on my breast. Great was the consternation among the crowd of sympathizers in that tent; the women screeched and rent their clothes, the immediate relatives falling on the body, hugging and kissing it, whilst the men wrung their hands in agony or cut off their hair as a sign of their great grief.

At once the cry of "Revenge!" was raised; the men jumped up, seized their rifles, and, mounting their horses, were soon galloping in the direction of the camp in which the young man was from whose rifle that bullet had come causing the death of the chief's son. Accidents are not recognized among the Arabs; life had been taken, and the custom requires a life in return. I took the opportunity to ride away on the only horse left, and was first to tell the sad news in the city. Said one man to me that evening, "Fellah swore to give you a bullet, but got one himself; it is the work of God; every one must eat his fate."

Next morning the body was brought in to be buried, and the sight was one I shall never forget.

To complete this incident I must tell that the supposed murderer saw the armed horsemen coming toward the camp, guessed what

had happened, and claimed the protection of the chief of the encampment, and so saved his life, although afterward the penalty of two years' exile and the loss of all his belongings was put upon him, the dead man's relatives getting all the property that had been forfeited as the price of their lost son.

Another narrow escape came about in quite another way, and under very different circumstances. I had been into Jerusalem, and was returning to Kerak, but had to take the route by Hebron and the south end of the Dead Sea, one generally avoided for two reasons, viz. the scarcity of water and the fear of robbers, because the road via Jericho and Medeba was possessed by a tribe of Arabs unfriendly to any from Kerak. I had with me three Arabs, one an old man named Salem, who had travelled much with me and had always proved faithful, and to whom on this occasion I owed my life, not excluding of course an all-seeing Providence.

We were going along the eastern shore of the Dead Sea, and came to a tiny stream of fresh water, where we determined to camp, as the sun was about setting. The place was very stony, and not such a one as we generally choose, preferring, if possible, open ground, so

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that any one or anything can be seen approaching, but as there was no water ahead of us we had to stay there or go thirsty. We had our supper, and put the nose-bags on the horses, but noticed that they did not eat. Old Salem said to me, "The animals are restless and cannot eat their suppers." Time passed and still our patient steeds remained supperless, but not motionless. With their ears pricked up and their heads well lifted, they were keeping a sharp lookout ahead of them, first in one direction and then in another, turning this way and then another. Their behavior told my experienced old Arab that somebody besides ourselves was about, and the horses could see them moving about, although it was dark. This was causing their restlessness and abstinence from their suppers. We all made up our minds to sit and watch, but weary with a long day's ride I soon fell asleep under the cover of a great boulder. It was about midnight, and I was lying half awake and half asleep, when almost together, within a few moments of each other, the horses whinnied, and old Salem called to me, "Get up, quick." Up I jumped, and on looking out I saw three men running away as hard as they could go. They had crept up to us under cover of the large

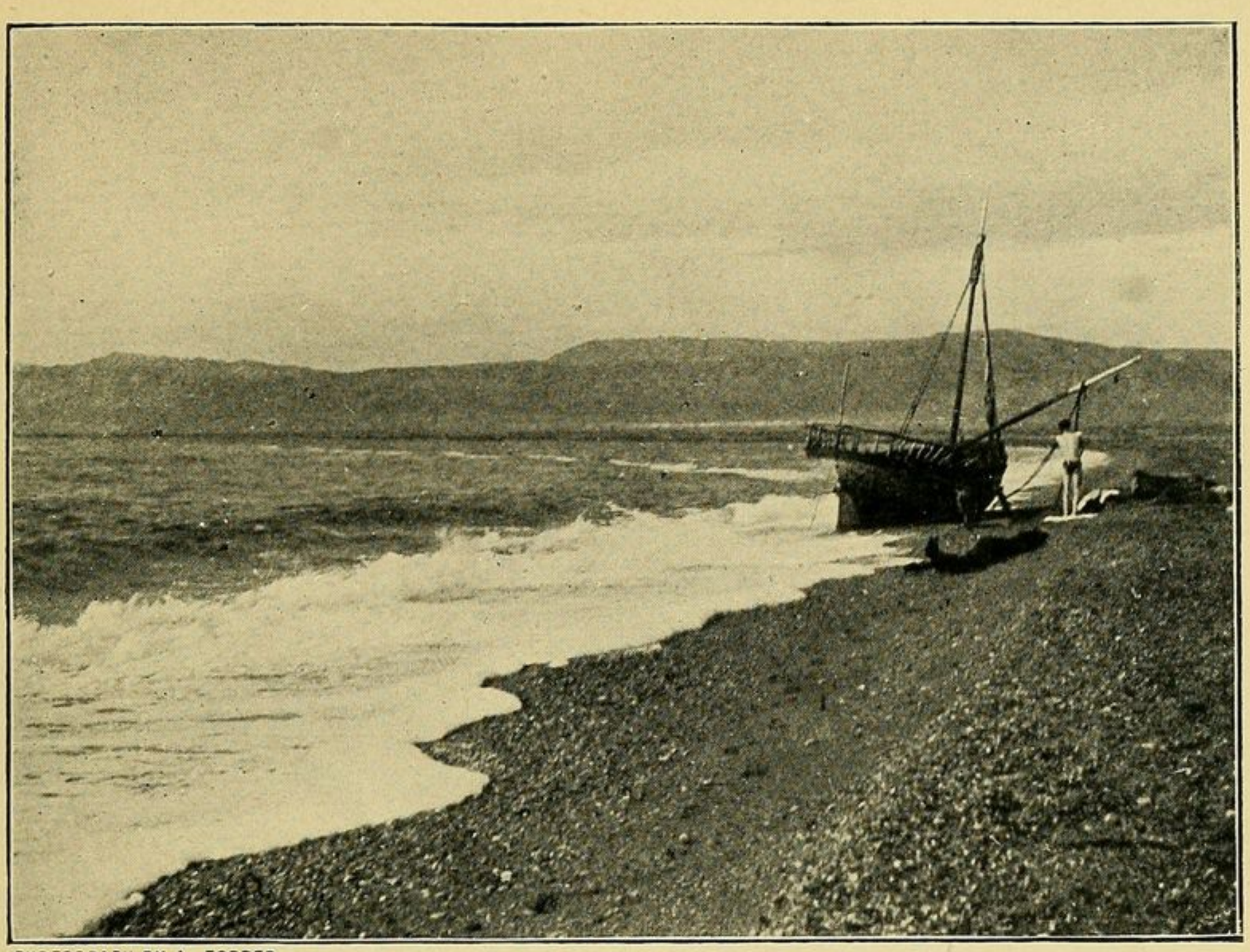
stones, no doubt thinking we were all sleeping. But the horses saw the nearest one, and gave Salem the alarm. He saw the nearest man standing over me with a huge stone in his hands that any moment might have been dropped on my head and so have killed me. As I jumped up quickly, the stone missed me, the men making off on finding that they were discovered.

After this the animals settled down and ate their supper. Old Salem would not sleep, however, for, said he, " Just before dawn, when it is darkest, and the robbers think we are weary with watching, they may return, so we must be prepared for them." Sure enough, they came again at the expected time, but a good fire gave warning that we were about, and at dawn we loaded up and went on our way. We never knew who the thieves were, or where they came from or went to. We were thankful for the escape from them, and our steeds had an extra feed for the share they took in warning us of the presence of an enemy. That same morning we met a band of wild fellows that far outnumbered us and helped themselves to such things as they fancied as they leisurely turned over our belongings, leaving us lighter than they found us, and me with a few bruises from

blows of heavy clubs because I objected to their behavior.

The foregoing dangers and deliverances all have been experienced on dry land, but one yet remains to be told that took place on the water — not the blue ocean of either the Atlantic or Mediterranean, but on the historical salt sea, or, as is better known, Dead Sea. Our recollections, however, lead us to let go the title "Dead," and substitute "Living." It came about in the year 1895, if memory serves me right. I had come in from Kerak to Jerusalem to take back my wife and four-months-old baby. About that time a good-sized sailing boat was going, as wind permitted, between the nearest point to Jericho on the north and Morab on the east. By this route the journey to Kerak could be shortened by three days, and was less fatiguing.

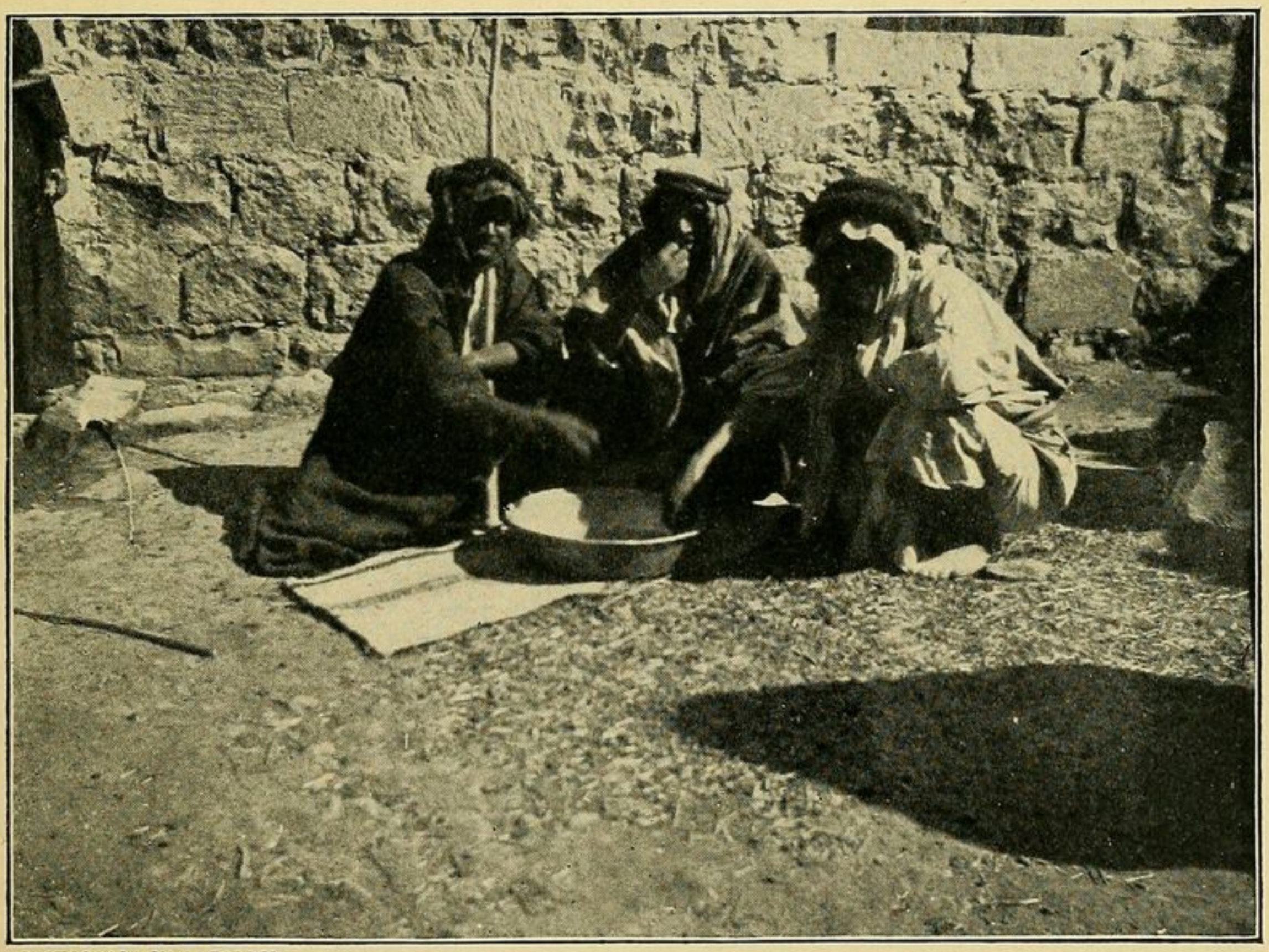
We found out the time fixed for the boat to set sail, viz. sunset, and made arrangements accordingly. Our heavy luggage was sent by mules, and some Keraky were to meet the boat on the eastern side and take us up to the city. Our party was made up of two friends going on a visit with us to Kerak, my wife, baby, and myself. We reached the seashore in good time, saw our few belongings put into the boat,



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

THE NORTH SHORES OF THE DEAD SEA

This shows the only boat on the Dead Sea. It was just back from a rough trip on the lake when the picture was taken. The foam on the beach shows with what force the sea comes up on the stony beach.



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

ARABS ENJOYING A SOCIAL MEAL

Among the Arabs, food is served in one large dish. The chief invites his guests to sit round and eat, but will not join them; he counts it an honor to serve. In the absence of spoons and forks, fingers have to serve every purpose.

and then we took up our places. The boat was loaded with iron girders and timber for the Government in Kerak. This was good because of the buoyancy of the water. A good breeze blew from the north, and we sailed along merrily. All went well for five hours; the moon rose and we knew we must be nearing our goal. The wind had increased, and we were going at a good speed. Our two boatmen, like real Arabs, were both asleep when they should have been most awake. All of a sudden we stopped, the boat veered over on one side, and the waves, now quite high, came dashing over us, wetting us through and through before we could recover ourselves. Poor baby got a drenching as well as all the others. The sudden stop roused the man at the rudder, and we soon found we had run sideways on a sand-bank. So fast were we going along that the boat had cut deeply into the sand and was immovable. It was about 11.15 and moonlight. The men tried to move the boat by pushing her off, then we got down into the water, which was chest deep, and pushed, but all to no purpose. We threw the iron girders into the sea, then the timber, but the boat stuck. Baby was crying for milk, so had to be content with it cold; no spirit stove

would remain lit a minute for the wind and water. Meanwhile the boat was getting more and more on one side, so we perched up on the side highest from the water. We guessed we were near the land because reeds were near by. I got down into the water and set out landwards, but soon found that mud was abundant and the water deeper as I neared the reeds, so I returned to the boat to await the daybreak. We shouted ourselves hoarse, hoping to attract the attention of any Arabs that might be near, but it was no use. Then our two boatmen, after many attempts and appeals to Abraham and Mohammed for help, said they would swim off and try and get help. So away they went, leaving us alone until past daybreak. Then we saw them away on the shore, and they came off to us, followed by our kind Arabs that had been waiting for us according to our orders. They had heard the shouting in the night, but thought it was the Arabs near by keeping the wild pigs off the grain and gardens, so had not responded. I made one trip to land, walking through the sea and mud for about three hundred yards, then, having an idea of the way, returned to the boat, took the baby, and carried him to land, held high up out of the water. He enjoyed the

trip more than I did, and was safely deposited with an Arab on shore whilst I returned to the wreck. My wife and our lady friend had been obliged to take to the water, their skirts making their progress difficult and slow, but with the aid of our willing Arabs at last reached the land and took shelter in the tent that was pitched a short distance away. One or two more returns to the boat brought our belongings to land, all spoilt by the salt water of that "lively sea." The boat remained fast for some time, but at last was set free by the combined strength of the Arabs of the district. Our men had the good sense to have ready for us a large pot of chicken broth, with plenty of rice in it, and a good kettle of tea, of which we imbibed a good quantity. Clothes were washed in a stream of fresh water near by. Whilst this was in process, the ladies were isolated in the tent until their garments had dried sufficiently to be donned. I stalked around in a pair of my friend's trousers whilst my own were drying. Fortunately the place of landing was in the plains, and so very warm, or the consequences to our health might have been serious after the night's exposure to wind and waves. We were thankful to have escaped with our lives, although we lost nearly everything else.

CHAPTER XI

UNLOOKED-FOR CHANGES, AND MORE PERSECUTIONS

THE first three years of my life among the Arabs passed all too quickly. Although there had been discouragements, opposition, and bereavements, these had been counteracted by advance, the breaking down of prejudice, and the making of many and fast friends. Everything seemed to be going well and promised fair for the future.

During one of my brief visits to Jerusalem I met my second wife. She had been in the land some years and was already acquainted with the language. Our aims were one, — the salvation of the people. She returned with me to Moab, where she lived until circumstances compelled us to retire to Jerusalem. Much of what is recorded in these pages is due to her readiness to remain at home, and her willingness for me to go into regions unknown so that the way of the Lord might be prepared in the desert. Let not a one-sided thanksgiving or admiration be any result of the read-

MRS. FORDER, THE WIFE OF THE AUTHOR

Mrs. Forder is a Scotchwoman who has lived in the Orient for many years. She speaks the Arabic language, and is much beloved by the Arabs where she is known to them. Ten years ago her name was changed by the Arabs to " Umm Jerius," i. e., mother of George, in honor of her first child whose name was George. She is in full sympathy with the work being done by her husband among the Arabs.

ing of this volume, but let all remember that "as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff." Staying home without news for weeks and months is more difficult to endure than the actual being away, the anxiety and suspense sometimes being increased by rumors of robbery and even murder.

Progress had been made with new buildings which were the admiration and wonder of the Kerak people; school, medical, and evangelistic work were all going on in regular order and with an encouraging measure of success. One day we heard rumors of the coming of a Turkish army to put our district under control, establish a civil capital, and place a garrison in the very city in which we were living. We were saddened by the news, because we knew that the incoming of the Turk would mean opposition and hindrance to our work, also oppression, heavy taxation, and bloodshed for the natives. We were not long in seeing and experiencing all these come about.

A few weeks after the rumor several thousand troops camped on the plains opposite our mountain home. Field cannon were mounted on the highest hills overlooking the city, and every plan arranged to take the place. The

people were alarmed; women and children fled to the encampments or the mountains on the west side of Kerak toward the Dead Sea. The men prepared to defend their city and homes and meet the unwelcome enemy as soon as they attempted to enter the place. Warning was sent us that we had better leave at once, but we preferred to stay by our many friends, believing that they would need our services before very long. We were not mistaken, for as soon as the enemy had gained an entrance into the city they were turned loose on the helpless people, and many of them were shot dead, or wounded, because they defended their homes and women from the intrusion and insults of the soldiery.

For a week we were besieged; every day the troops tried to scale the steep sides of that Moabitish town. They were repulsed and turned back by the huge stones rolled down from above by the natives and by the bullets of those possessing rifles. At length, through bribery and the promise of large money and costly presents, the chiefs of Moab allowed the wily Turk to enter, believing him when he said, "We will only stay three months." With bullets whizzing over our heads every hour of the day, cannons facing us from the hilltops,

and an excited, fanatical army eager to take possession, we entered into the experience of the Psalmist under like circumstances. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? . . . Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident."

The day the Turkish army entered Kerak will long live in our memory. It was in November, 1893, and from that time on for another three years obstruction, opposition, and humiliation at length led to our separation from our hardly won Arab friends and the land which had become ours by adoption and, as the Arabs often reminded us, by reason of my dead having been buried in it.

The man who had been appointed civil governor of the new district was one who had been a leader in the massacres in Armenia, and because of his successes in those parts had been promoted to this important post. He took up his abode in the Greek priest's house, and turned the boys' school into a court-house. The day after his arrival he requested our presence, and informed me that from that time on our school and medical work must

cease. Said he, "You have the favor and hearts of all these people, and now that I have come for the Sultan of Turkey you must leave. If I cannot wean the people away from you, I will separate you by force and persecution."

Soldiers were placed around our premises to keep the people from coming to us, and if by any means some did reach our doors and were caught going away, they were arrested, put into prison, and heavily fined. The chiefs protested to the governor, but to no purpose. They argued thus with him, "You have deprived us of the help our friends gave us when sick or wounded, the schools in which our children were being taught you have closed, our best friend you forbid us to visit, and you give us nothing to replace what the English were giving us."

The men working on the new buildings under my supervision were again and again driven off the work by the soldiers, who made my innocent laborers' backs smart with the lashes of heavy whips. Time after time I faced that governor, demanding from him the return of my tools and the liberty for men to work for me. Again and again he told me, "If you were an Arab, or one of our own subjects, I would have had you killed long ago, for no one

has ever spoken to or treated me as you have."

On every occasion he had to yield to my demands, but not until after many stormy interviews which needed grace, patience, and wisdom.

I well remember one occasion when I made this despot yield to my demands. I received word one morning that my best man, "Old Faithful" I called him, had been put into prison without any apparent cause. His old father appealed to me to get him released, assuring me that there was no reason why his son and my friend should be imprisoned. I went at once to the governor and asked why the man had been arrested and thrown into prison. He told me because the man had said he would become a Christian, also because he would persist in coming to our house to supply us with eggs and milk. Both these statements were false, and had been fixed up by some enemy of my "Old Faithful." I told the governor the charges were untrue, that I had not seen the man for quite a month, and that I wanted him released at once. The hard-hearted, wily Turk laughed a contemptuous laugh, and said, "You have the hearts of all these Arabs; every day before me they are praising you, saying that you are their father. I have tried to

wean these people away from you, but now I will force them to leave you, and this man now in prison will be an example and a warning to the others, for I will treat all thus, and will not rest until you are compelled by me to leave this land. I will not release the man; let him remain in the prison a time, so that others may be afraid to disobey my commands."

Before a crowd of wondering Arabs, chiefs, and soldiers, I stood my ground and persisted, and finding that he would not yield, I finally said, "I will not leave your room in which I now sit until that man is released and given over to me." Hour after hour I sat there; time after time he told me to go, it was useless to wait. Supper time came, and I was still there; bed-time came, and I was prepared to pass the night there. That official had to learn that my word on such an occasion could not be changed; one of us had to yield and that one was not to be the writer. It was nearly ten o'clock, and the governor wished to retire, but could not go away and leave me alone in his room. A last persuasion and another refusal resulted in a command to a soldier to have the man set free. I demanded that he be brought from the prison and delivered to me so that we might go away together. From the prison in the old Moabit-

ish fortress near by, my Arab friend was brought, and together we left the official room of that governor, who was none too pleased that right had won and he had been humiliated before the people.

Does the reader wonder that I have many friends in Arab lands? Few indeed have been the friends poor Ishmael has ever had, and they, like people in other lands, appreciate and respond to kindness. Next morning I was summoned before the angry official, who addressed me thus, "Mr. Forder, if your Society are not proud of you, they ought to be; no man ever faced me as you have. I am sorry you are an Englishman, for you would make such a good Turk. Yesterday you gained your victory, but I will gain one yet, for I will not rest until I have got you out of this place."

Then followed a time of trial, humiliation, persecution, and suspense that few have had to endure. That governor laid false charges against me, to my Society and to our consul in Damascus. Soldiers followed my wife and myself wherever we went; from early morning until late at night our gates were guarded, and no one was allowed to come to us with food or other things to sell. Messages were sent us again and again that unless we were gone in

so many hours soldiers would be sent to drive us out and break up our home. To all this we gave no heed; we simply "committed our way to the Lord, trusted also in him, and he brought it to pass."

It would take a volume to detail all that we endured for nearly three years at the hand of that Turkish governor, but it must remain untold in these pages. It sufficeth to say that he went to such extremes that he overreached himself, and at last, through our complaints and the demands of an energetic consul in Damascus, he was removed and degraded, much to the delight of the natives and many of the minor officials.

All through this time of opposition and discouragement I forged ahead with the new buildings, so that by the time the oppressor was removed we had ready for our work five roomy houses, all above ground, with windows, air-shafts, and paved floors, also a dispensary, consulting room, and large assembly hall, in which the people now gather to listen to the gospel message before being treated by the medical missionary.

With the going of the governor the opposition and hard measures ceased, and better times began to dawn. The coming of the Turk to

Moab was not only a time of disaster for our work, but also for the Arabs. Two calamities followed the advent of the troops, viz. the coming of the locusts, which resulted in a time of semi-famine throughout the land. Midst times of doubt and perplexity amusing incidents occurred to break the monotony of the situation.

On one occasion we had invited a lot of women and children to partake of a warm meal. They gladly responded to the invitation in spite of the orders of the governor forbidding any to enter our premises. As they were eating, a furious knocking at the locked door was heard. Those outside were soldiers, who had been sent to take to prison the women and children who were satisfying the demands of hunger at our expense. I refused admittance to the soldiers, so they decided to await the dismissal of the frightened and helpless people. The feast over, I helped the women and children to leave by means of a ladder leading to our flat roofs. Many got away without being detected, but somehow the last ones were seen getting away, followed by the soldiers, and stopped. The order to line up and walk to prison was not obeyed by the daughters of Moab. Instead, they sat down in the street and mockingly told

the soldiers, "If you want us in prison, carry us there, otherwise we shall not get there." Whilst this street scene was being enacted, much to the delight of even the sedate Arab, I was having a stormy interview with the governor in his room, and sarcastically taunting him with some such words as these, "The government of the Sultan was becoming bad indeed, when its representatives had nothing better to do than to imprison women and children for appeasing their hunger. Had it come to prisons for women in a land and empire where they were considered more or less free from interference by men?" Such arguments prevailed, and orders were sent that the women and children were to be released and not molested again.

Such trials and experiences endured for any time unknowingly have their effect upon human nature; we felt the long strain severely and were glad when it was relaxed. No sooner, however, was one term of difficulty over than another, from a less expected quarter, came.

We had been supported for some time by the Episcopal Church Missionary Society, with whom we had worked amicably and acceptably, when the question was raised concerning our denominational standing. I had been trained

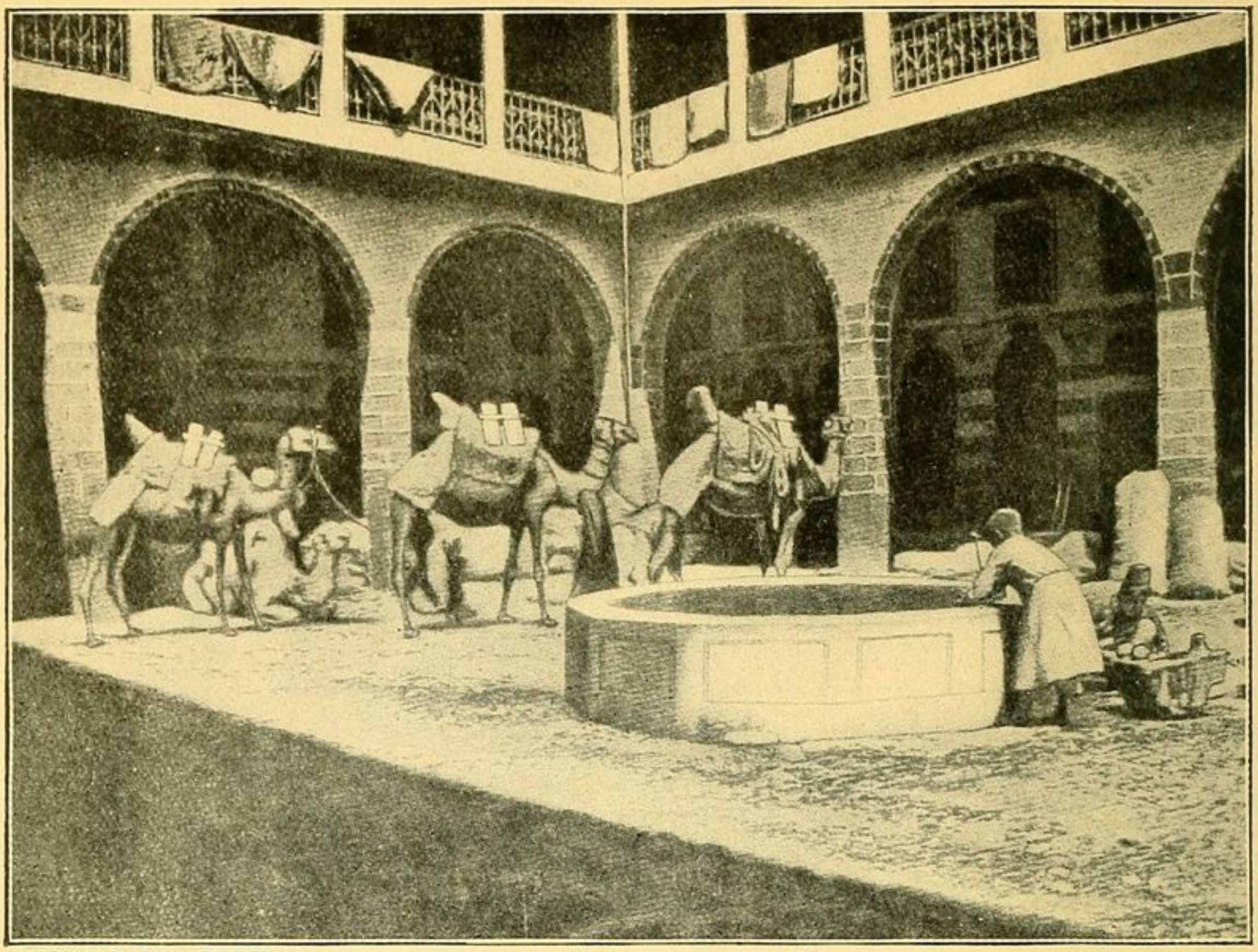
and brought up in the Wesleyan Methodist Church, and was now employed by the State Church of England. Everything, except in one point, was favorable to my continuance as a missionary of that denomination; the missing qualification was that I had never been confirmed. Ritualistic and religious barriers excluded my being engaged as a missionary of an Episcopal Society, so I had presented to me the choice of two things: first, being confirmed and becoming a fully fledged Episcopalian and remaining where I was; and second, that of retaining the beliefs and teaching of my early days and conscience, and sever my relation with the Society I was serving. The temptation to hold on was strong, but conscience prevailed; refusing to become an Episcopalian practically meant commencing life over again, but God gave me courage and grace to stand by my convictions.

A few months later we left the people and land, both of which we loved and were willing to spend our lives for. The separation was a hard one; the people never understood why we left them for others to take our place. God grant that they never may know of the jealousies that keep men bearing the name of Christ from becoming one under that name!

At dawn one morning we quietly left our mountain home in Moab, driven out not by the semi-civilized Arab or the jealous, fanatical Turk, but by those who put ceremonial requirements and sectarianism before the qualifications, suitability, and willingness of those willing to give their life for those still in the bondage and darkness of heathendom or Islam. I left Kerak knowing that I had done my best for every one I had tried to serve, whether the Moabite in his city or the nomad in the wilderness. It was at least encouraging to know that those I was leaving were sufficiently satisfied with the way I had served them to give me the following recommendation: —

"Mr. Archibald Forder has been engaged in mission work at Kerak on the east of the Jordan for five and a half years, three of which have been spent in connection with the Church Missionary Society. Mr. Forder is a very earnest Christian and a most energetic worker, and the present promising position of the mission work at Kerak is due largely to his zeal and enterprise under God.

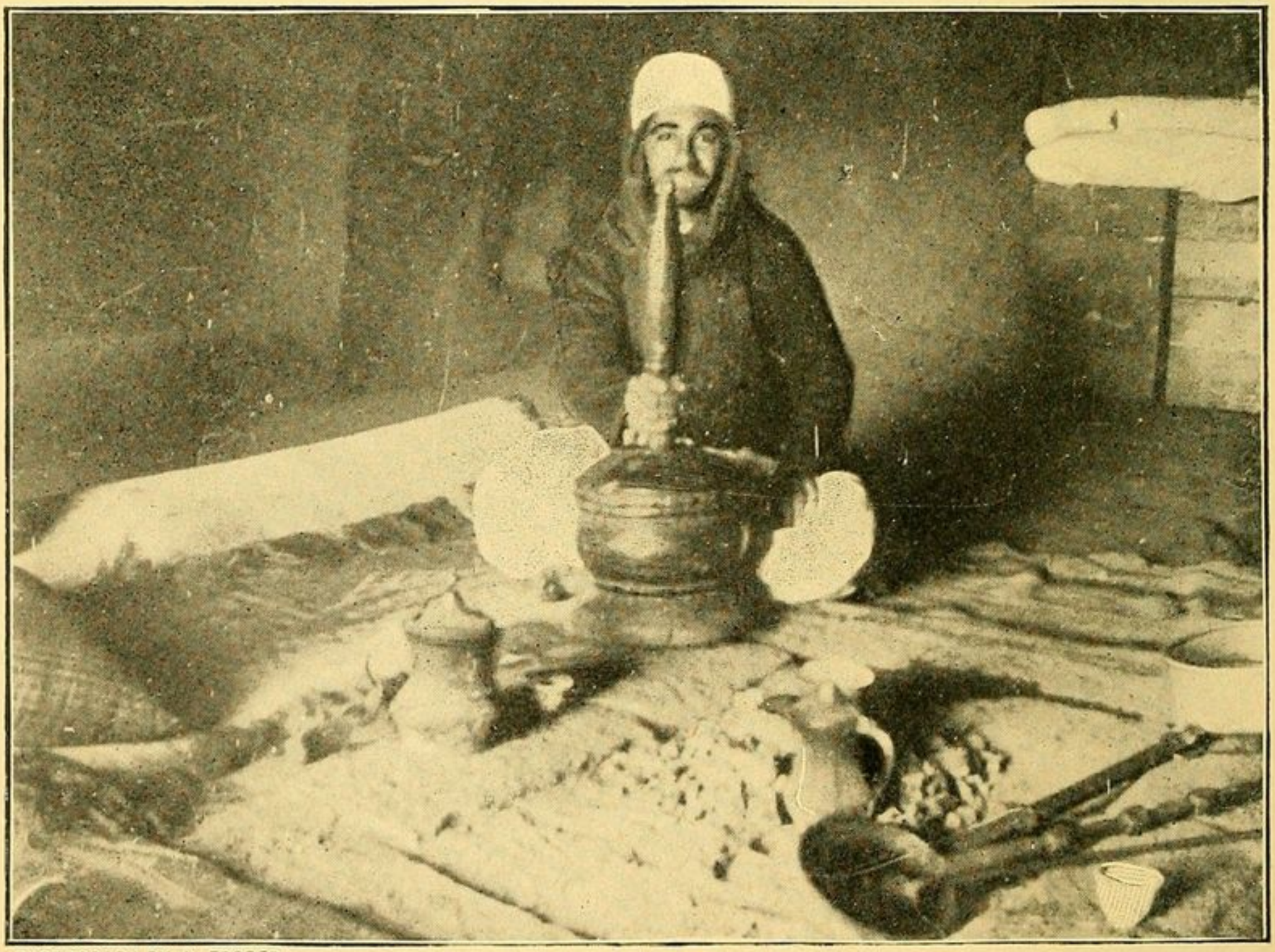
"During the first two or three years that Mr. Forder was at Kerak the work was specially difficult and full of danger on account of the wild and uncivilized state of the people. They



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

AN EASTERN CARAVANSARY

These temporary shelters are found in all Eastern cities. Man and beast may have shelter and drink for about six cents a night. A fountain in the center of the inclosure yields a constant supply of fresh water.



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

THE COFFEE MAKER

Coffee is the only beverage of the Arab. After the berries are roasted, they are pounded in a large mortar. The chief always drinks first, then serves his guests. No milk or sugar is added. A woman is never allowed to make coffee.

were at that time beyond the control of even the Turkish Government, and every man did what was right in his own eyes. The greatest credit is due to Mr. Forder for the tact with which he dealt with the people, which was used by God to the opening of doors for the proclamation of the gospel in very many ways. We are all very sorry to lose Mr. Forder from our mission band, but we trust and pray that the Lord will speedily thrust him forth into other work for Him, and own and bless him even more than whilst he was at Kerak. Wherever he may take up work, the C. M. S. Palestine Mission will always regard him as one of their number.

"J. R. LONGLEY HALL.

"Jerusalem, *February 17th*, 1897."

Thus, for sectarian reasons only, was lost to a difficult mission field well-tried, acclimatized, experienced, and all-round good workers. But larger possibilities were in the future, although the means are still needed to adequately carry them to a successful issue.

CHAPTER XII

INTO NEW REGIONS, AMONG SUPERSTITIOUS ZEALOTS

AFTER leaving Kerak we retired to Jerusalem, and began to consider plans for the future. We had before us some serious and important questions to face and answer.

1. Should the Arab suffer for our leaving Moab?

2. Should the commands of our Lord about "all the world" and "every creature" be passed by heedlessly, with our knowledge of the need of Arabia and its people?

3. Ought we to allow the action of those we had served to hinder us from going ahead to win the Arabs for Christ?

To all this there could be but one answer — No. My desire was to go ahead with what I had in the way of experience and my knowledge of the language. Prayer and patience were soon answered, and doors opened, and supplies forthcoming, to enable me to penetrate new regions and reach tribes and peoples never before preached to. For a time unevangelized districts within easy reach of Jerusalem claimed

my attention, and some account of the visits made to these localities will occupy the space given in this chapter.

Some may ask why I did not stay in Moab and carry on an independent work among the people I knew so well. That was considered, but finally abandoned, because we felt, as did many of our best friends, that an opposition mission would cause questionings among the simple people that would be difficult to answer, and we would not have any work ruined by the Arabs knowing that among Protestants sectarian differences were sufficiently strong to allow one section of the church to treat another as they had me.

But to return to my story. I spent three weeks among the villages around Hebron and with the Arabs in the wilderness of Beersheba.

For the first time in my journeys among the Arabs I used a tent; a friend gave me some money toward it, and by doing a little work myself in spare time I made up the sum needed to buy it. I found it very useful and a great boon. It was a place for the people to come to, so I always had a congregation. Of course, tenting in that land is a hard life — sleeping on the ground, always under a hot sun, and no companions save the Arabs. I often get weary

and long for a soft bed and the comforts of home. But this is the only way to reach these wandering people, so I am thankful for health and strength and the language of the people.

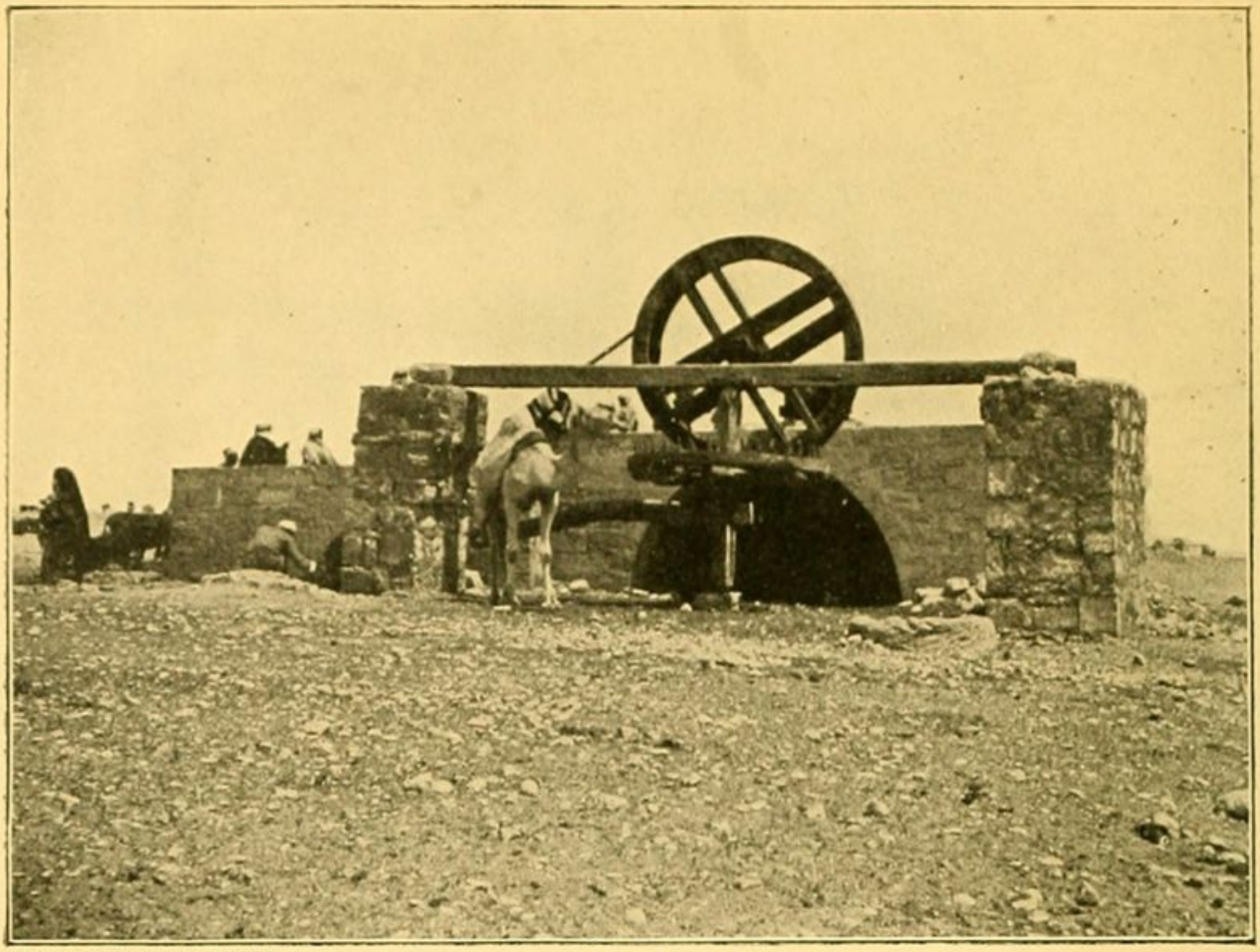
I left Hebron one morning about nine, my things on a mule and I on a donkey, the owner of the animals walking. After about four hours' jogging up hill and down vale, we came to a large village named Dawimee. At the entrance I asked where the guest-chamber was; being shown, I went there and found a lot of men in it. I sat down and was given some coffee; no one welcomed me, and I saw I had a hard lot to deal with. After about an hour a chance occurred to me to talk about sin, leading up to Jesus. Presently a man said to me, "Do you know you are preaching in our mosque, and you a Christian, unclean, an infidel, and one of the heathen; only a short time ago we killed two Jews here and you are all alone!" Then they all got up and went out very angry. I was thinking what I should do, when in came a man and asked me to go to his house and stay the night. "The people are very bad here," he said; so I went with him. He put me in a corner of his yard, and as it was sunset I had my supper. After this my host and his uncle came and sat down with me and I began to tell them of Jesus

the Saviour. For two hours they listened very attentively, and asked many questions. On into the night we talked. They said, "We never knew these things before, now we have no excuse; we are glad you came; there is no way but Jesus."

Next morning early I lay as they thought asleep, I heard them telling others all I told them, so my visit was not in vain. I left during the morning, glad that some at least were willing to hear me. After riding about two and a half hours I saw a man in a large cave near the road. As it was noon and very hot, I went to him. He received me kindly, invited me in, and gave me dinner, — bread, oil, and dirty water. Soon after came two more men that stayed with him in the cave. They were there harvesting. I began to talk with them about Jesus, and for a long time they listened. Then one said he could read. If I had a book to give him, he would like one. So I gave him the Gospel of Matthew, and left him reading it to his companions. From here I reached an encampment of Arabs, put up my tent, and soon had a crowd to stare at me, but, finding them noisy, I shut down the door and went to the guest-tent. During the day I had no chance of speaking about Jesus. The people had some

visitors and had business to settle, so I got my supper of bread, onions, and water, and then, when all was quiet, went and sat down on the ground in the middle of some twelve or four-teen men. As it was full moon I could see them all. On telling them I wanted to speak with them, they told me to go on and talk. When I got to the death of Jesus, a man began to play a native fiddle, but was soon told by the others to be quiet, as they wanted to listen. So here again, far on into the night, I talked with them, and they agreed that all I had said was good and true.

Next day found me at Beersheba, the home and favorite camping-ground of the patriarchs. Thousands of Bedouin gather there from all parts of the sandy desert, to draw water for their numerous flocks of sheep and herds of camels. Beersheba remains much the same as it was in the days of Abraham. The seven wells dug by the "father of the faithful" still remain, and from some of them water is still drawn. During my first visit there an old Arab, sunburnt, half clad, and ignorant, pointed with pride to one of the wells, and was delighted to inform me that their father Abraham dug it and watered his flocks from it. The old stones, deeply grooved by the rubbing and wear of the



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

DRAWING WATER AT BEERSHEBA

A primitive windlass turned by a camel is used to draw water from the wells at Beersheba. These erections are quite modern, although water has been drawn from the wells for centuries. All the woodwork is done by native carpenters.

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

HAGAR'S WELL IN THE DESERT OF BEERSHEBA

The Arabs believe that this is the well from which water was taken by Hagar to give drink to Ishmael (Gen. 21 19). The grooves in the stones have been worn by the ropes of the shepherds as they draw water, and prove how ancient this well is. The shaft is about ten feet in diameter and one hundred feet deep.

ropes, bore undisputable testimony to the antiquity of these life-giving resorts in the dry and desolate region known as the Negeb. It was not difficult to engage the Arabs in conversation about religion, and to those able to read, Scriptures were disposed of with a prayer that the reader might get help from it.

Ofttimes fanatics had to be faced and dealt with, and many unpleasant incidents occurred which might have resulted seriously but for an overruling Providence that makes even the wrath of man to praise Him. Not only was Beersheba visited, but farther into that dreary waste I went. The story of the boy who became an archer and dwelt in that same wilderness was understood as never before, and the story made doubly real and interesting when I stood by the open well in the desert and from a Bedouin shepherd listened to the story of Ishmael and his distressed mother Hagar, after whom the well is still named. No books have taught these ancient truths to the nomads of the desert; they have come down to them from generation to generation with little change. It was near the well of Hagar that I was forbidden to linger, lest my presence should dry up the water. Guns and clubs were ready to be used if I persisted in remaining too long.

Falling in with a good-hearted chief, I accompanied him to his encampment, consisting of about two hundred houses of hair. His people were a surly lot, and but for my host I would have fared badly. I stayed a few days with these dwellers in the wilderness of Beersheba and then induced the chief to accompany me to the historic site of Kadesh-Barnea. Some few men, scared at the presence of a Westerner, attempted to stop me, but my temporary guardian had sufficient influence in those parts to conduct me safely to the oasis so closely connected with the wanderings of the Israelites. My presence at old Kadesh-Barnea was resented and strongly objected to by the superstitious people I met there. Most of them were shepherds, who feared the "evil eye" and the coming into their parts of any with some mysterious qualification that would enable them to cause the springs to dry up and stop the earth from yielding her produce. Rifles were loaded as a warning to me if I attempted any of my mesmeric performances; but there was no occasion for their use, as my actions did not call for anything unusual. A drop of cold tea emptied out of my flask on to the ground near a spring caused much suspicion and excitement, for surely I was attempting to stop the

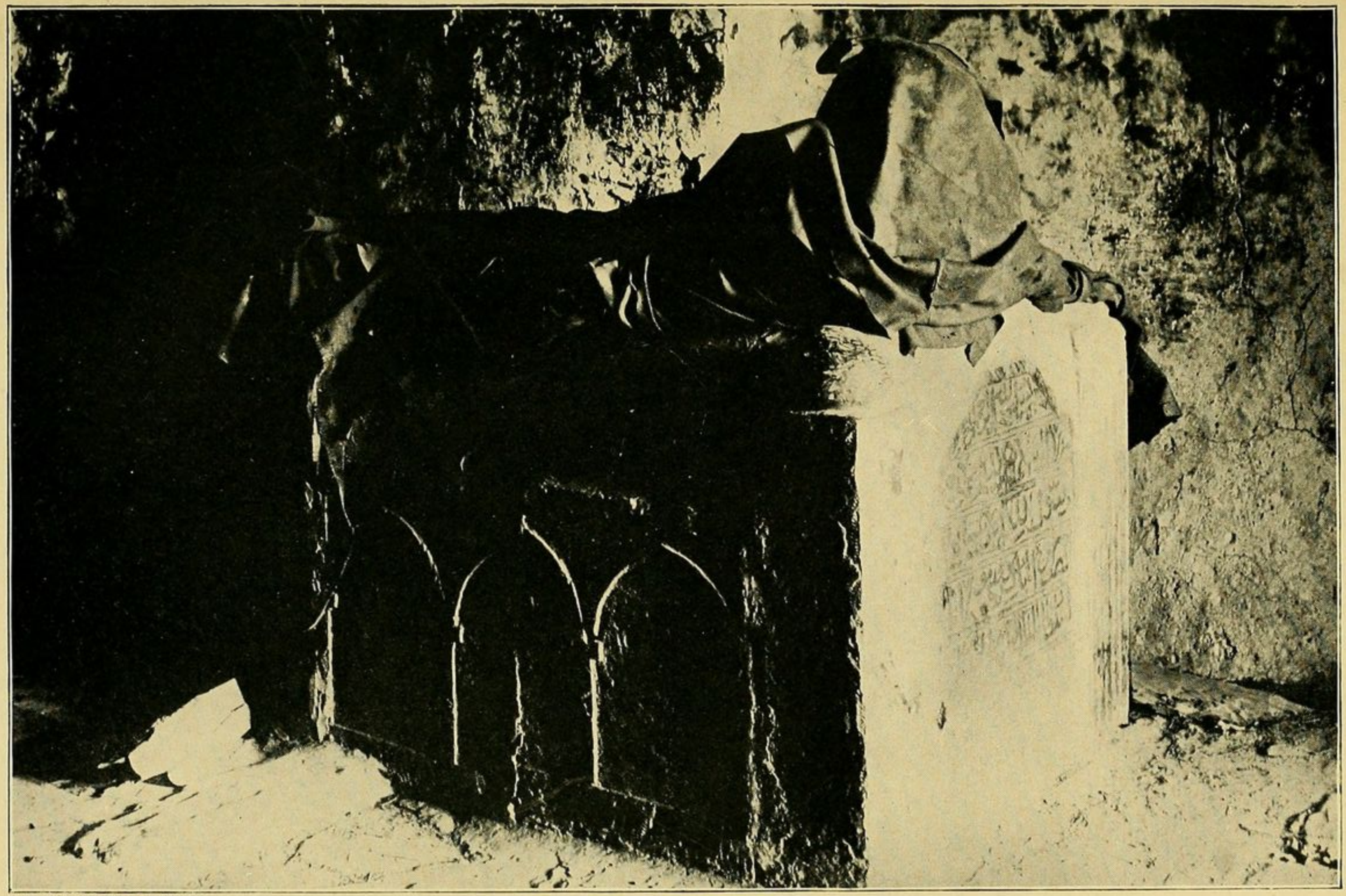
flow of the water that meant so much to those ignorant, isolated sons of the desert. Abuse was freely and liberally showered upon my Arab friend, and he deemed it wise to depart and leave his fanatical neighbors to await any disaster that might follow our visit. Strange it seemed to the wanderer that no ill effects resulted from my advent, either to spring, flock, or individual, and on return visits a more hospitable reception has been given me.

Not only did the country of the patriarchs receive attention from me, but also those parts south of Moab, terminating in the rock-hewn city of Petra, with its magnificent ravines and wonderful excavations, all tinted by nature in every conceivable shade and pattern. Few have penetrated these recesses. The wild nature of the Bedouin and the absence of any human help in case of need debar most people from going to this ancient, rock-hewn city, which is full of historic interest and fascination. My knowledge of the land and people has enabled me to pay many visits there with good results.

On my first visit I learned from an excited and fanatical lot of zealots that I was on ground jealously guarded by religious and sacred memory and instinct, and that the presence of the Christian was unwelcome and undesirable.

By careful and diplomatic investigation I learned from the Arabs of Petra that on the summit of Mount Hor near by they had what they called the Tomb of Aaron. By careful drawing out I learned from them the history, pedigree, and pathetic closing scene connected with the first High Priest of Israel. After hearing them, I read them from the Bible the account of Aaron, dying on Mount Hor in Edom, as it is recorded in Numbers xx. 23–29. They were deeply interested, and assured me that the old tomb on the mountain was still preserved and jealously guarded by them. I expressed a desire to visit so interesting a place, but at once religious zeal and fanaticism came to the front, and I was assured that any attempts on my part to scale the mount and approach the tomb would cost me my life.

They were prepared to preserve the sanctity of Aaron's last and long resting-place, even if it meant killing me. No Christian had ever approached the place, and the doing so would arouse the wrath of the dead, and bring devastation and disaster upon the whole region. So argued and believed these zealots of Arabia Petrea, and the speedy production of firearms and weapons showed that any attempt to force a visit might result in disaster. Reluctantly



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

CENOTAPH OVER AARON'S TOMB IN EDOM

On the summit of Mount Hor in Edom, eight days' journey south of Jerusalem, is the tomb of Aaron, the first high priest of Israel. The erection shown above stands over the old grave, which is in a cave beneath. The Arabs consider this one of their most sacred shrines, and go there to offer sacrifices and beg the help of the saint. Hebrew characters prove that at some time the Jews had possession of the tomb. Mr. Forder has visited this place four times. This picture is exceedingly rare.

I left those parts, a sad but wiser man. Since then, experience and a better feeling and knowledge of the Arabs there have enabled me to ascend the rugged mount and see for myself the ancient, and without doubt authentic, tomb of the brother of Moses.

I count myself fortunate in being the first to secure photographs of this interesting shrine, so carefully guarded and long preserved in the rocky recesses of Mount Seir.

Many journeys were made from time to time to untouched parts, and very profitable visits made with the natives in town, village, or camp. More than one volume would be necessary to chronicle my many experiences during first visits to new places. Patience and perseverance, however, generally wins in the long run, and those once opposed and inclined to be unfriendly are now on my side. Succeeding chapters will reveal still more thrilling and providential experiences and deliverances than any yet recorded in these pages. All that I have escaped I owe to a covenant and promise keeping God, and the realization of the presence of One who said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

CHAPTER XIII

ARABIA THE DESERT OF THE SEA

MUCH moving about among the Arabs in the wilderness and region south and southeast of Jerusalem had made me interested in the unknown beyond. From an occasional visitor to some camp or town I would hear of the cities, towns, and encampments of Arabia, across the sandy plains that I had so often looked on during my stay in Moab. As I considered the vast expanse southeast of Jerusalem, the desire grew upon me to penetrate the desert, and find out what the possibilities were for one who ventured into those regions, openly avowing himself a Christian.

The few works on Arabia, written by men like Palgrave, Doughty, or Burton, did not promise a good time to any who went among the Arabians. I was encouraged to go ahead by people interested in mission work in needy fields, and so prepared to go, and if possible reach the capital of the peninsula, a city named Hayel, and have an interview with the inde-

pendent ruler of that land, Abdul-Azeez-ibn Rasheed.

I propose in this chapter giving a short account of the land I was then preparing to enter, so that a good understanding of its location, history, and condition may be gained by the reader.

Arabia. Its Location

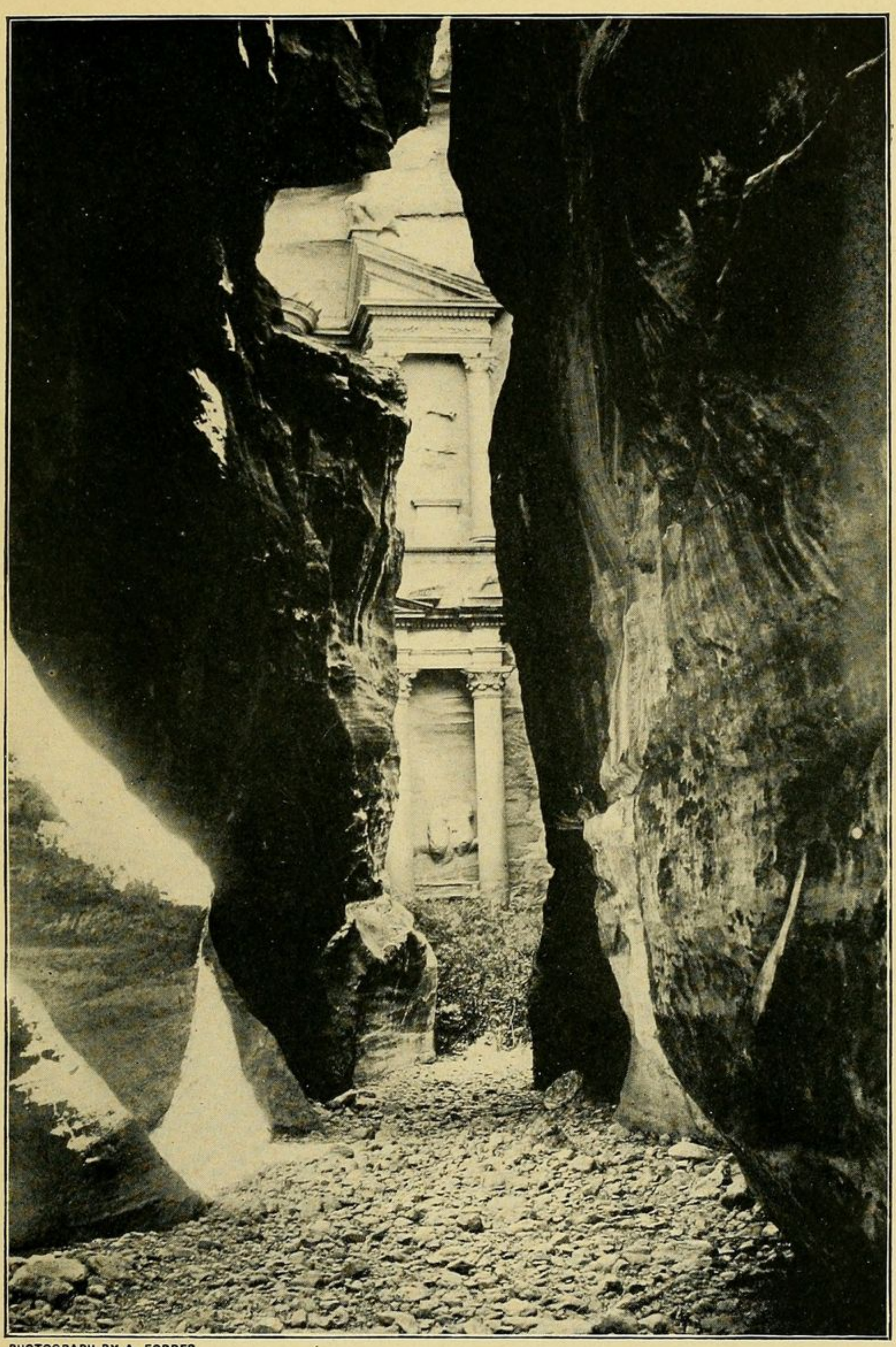
The great peninsula known in these days as Arabia is one of the oldest known parts of the earth. Long before the sons of Jacob went down into Egypt, the sons of Ishmael had settled in the land Providence had assigned them. The boundaries of Arabia are outlined as early in the Bible as Genesis, xxv. 18. There is no doubt that many centuries ago Palestine, Syria, and the Sinaitic Peninsula were important parts of Arabia. Isaiah speaks of it as the "desert of the sea" (xxi. 1), and when one considers it a land largely desert, almost entirely surrounded by water, we conclude that the ancient seer was not far wrong in his designation of the land. Arabia is between Egypt and Persia, to put it widely, also between India and Europe. It has a sea-coast of about four thousand miles.

Its boundaries are: on the east, the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman; the south-

ern coast is washed by the Indian Ocean; the Red Sea and the Gulf of Akaba form the western boundary, whilst an undefined desert on the north leaves us in uncertainty as to the exact limit in that direction. Arabia covers an area of over one million square miles; the peninsula is about one thousand miles long and about seven hundred broad. It is four times the size of France, and larger than the United States east of the Mississippi River.

Divisions

Arabia is divided into three parts, viz. Arabia Felix at the southwest section of the country; Arabia Petrea at the northwest end; and Arabia Deserta, the great interior deserts and high lands. These three main divisions are divided into districts, and known as Yemen, including Hadramaut, Oman, Nejran, and some minor places; El Hejaz on the west coast, which includes in its borders the two sacred cities of the Mohammedans — Mecca, the birthplace of their prophet, and Medina, the place where he died and was buried; Nejd, the great centre, reaching far north and east, thus losing itself in the districts of Aragand Hassa; and Jebel Shomer on the Syrian border, which is really a part of Nejd.



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

A SECTION OF THE SIK (RAVINE), ARABIA PETREA

Arabia Petrea is ten days' journey south of Jerusalem, and famous for the wonderful rock-hewn city of Petra. This city is entered through a long ravine called by the Arabs " The Sik." The rock on either side is of many colors, and in places covered by ferns and creepers. The gorge is about a mile long and terminates in front of a magnificent rock-hewn temple (see page 286).

Principal Cities

In Yemen are Sana the capital, Hodeida the principal port, and many smaller towns, but none of importance. Aden cannot properly be called a city, although a considerable place. In reality it is a fortress that guards the way to India. In Hejaz the principal cities are Mecca and Medina, also Iayf, not far distant from Mecca. The port of Hejaz is Jeddah, and Yambo is used during certain seasons of the year. Nejd has for its capital Hayel. Riad, Aneeza, Boreida, and Dooreeyah are large centres of population tributary to and included in Nejd. Jebel Shomer has only two places of importance, El-Jowf and Sakkaka, both under the government of Nejd. Arag has many towns and cities, of which Baghdad is the most important. Kuweit, Kateef, and Hofoof keep up the prestige of Hassa. In all these divisions and districts towns and villages innumerable are found, but to enumerate them would be beyond the scope of this book.

Governmental Control and Influence

Three powers control the affairs and movements in Arabia. Nearly all of Yemen, Hejaz, Hassa, and Arag is under Turkish government

and control, as is the eastern half of the Sinaitic peninsula. The coast of the Persian Gulf and a goodly track of country around Aden are controlled by the British; Nejd, the great interior, has its own ruler, who is independent of any of the great powers, even its neighbor, Turkey. In spite of many attempts to gain Nejd for Egypt and even Turkey, that great table-land still remains free and independent. The time may not be far distant when a more aggressive and enlightened government may control the peninsula, and use it as a bridge to join East and West and reduce the distance and time between them. What or who that power will be, remains to be seen.

Population and Language

In a country so little known as Arabia, and where no census is ever taken, it is very difficult to even estimate the population. Various statements have been made from time to time during the last century by those who ventured into the land. Some have estimated eight millions as the total of the inhabitants of Arabia, others have put the number at fourteen millions. It is generally agreed that eleven millions is a fair estimate for the three great divisions that

are included in the peninsula. Whatever the number of millions in Arabia may be, we have fulfilled in them the four times repeated promise concerning Ishmael, "He shall become a great nation, that shall not be numbered for multitude."

The language of the whole country is Arabic, with varying dialects, pronunciations, and vocabularies in different parts. The purest Arabic spoken is heard in Nejd, and may be accounted for by its isolation and non-contamination by other languages. The Arabic language is one of the hardest to acquire.

Before leaving for the field the writer was told by a lifelong Arabic scholar, "I have studied Arabic for more than forty years, and am only just beginning to understand it." Let me quote Ion Keith Falconer, who, after passing the Semitic Languages Tripos at Cambridge, and taking a special course in Arabic at Leipzig, writes from Egypt, "I am getting on in Arabic, but it is most appallingly hard." Five years later he writes from Aden, "I am learning to speak Arabic quite nicely, but it will be long before I can deliver real discourses." Progress in Arabic means years of weary, ceaseless plodding and endless diligence. Arabic for mission use is not picked up.

Religion of Arabia

Arabia has always been a land of religion. At different periods in its history it has had its followers of and adherents to Judaism, primitive Christianity, heathendom, that permitted the most cruel, degrading, and disgusting practices. Star, sun, and fire worshippers have all advocated their beliefs, forms of worship, and sacrifices in Arabia, but it remained for the great enthusiast of the desert to gather the people of the "desert of the sea" under one system and lead them to a belief in One God and Mohammed as his messenger.

For thirteen hundred years the Arabs of Arabia have clung tenaciously to the teaching of the Meccan youth, and are now known as Moslems or Mohammedans.

In Yemen, Arag, and on the Persian Gulf, thousands of Jews still reside, tolerated by the Moslem because of the service, plunder, and use they can extort from them from time to time. In Arabia the two branches of the descendants of Abraham have no love or even respect for each other, although they adore and pride themselves on their patriarchal ancestry. In another chapter the present-day religion of the Arabs will be described.

Products of Arabia

From such a land much cannot be expected, and yet different lines of steamers carry away cargoes of things to be used in other lands. Yemen exports enormous quantities of coffee, hides, senna, and incense. From the Persian Gulf shores and the hinterland dates go to all parts of civilization. Nejd, the great unexplored interior, furnishes the British army in India and Egypt with thousands of camels and horses. The great centres of population in Palestine, Syria, and even Egypt ofttimes have their meat supplies replenished by tens of thousands of sheep and goats bred and fed on the mountains and in the oases of the great peninsula.

Animals, Wild and Domestic

The nature of the country is not conducive to anything elaborate in this way. Under wild animals may be named wolf, wild boar, jackal, hyena, fox, wild cow, about the size of a donkey, gazelle, and a few rabbits. Domestic animals are few, but important, by reason of their great utility. They include the camel, horse, mule, donkey, cow, sheep, and goat. The dog is everywhere found, and in the desert is the

protector and alarmist on the approach of strangers. A few birds and reptiles exist; none, however, except the ostrich, of any importance.

Means of Transportation

Until quite recently railroads were unknown in Arabia, and even now only one is in process of construction. Under the Turkish government, paid for by money from all parts of the Mohammedan world, a railroad is being laid down from Damascus to Mecca. If ever this is completed, it will be a modern miracle, and no doubt will go a long way toward opening up the land and helping inquisitive travellers to get into Mecca. Time alone will answer the inquiry, "Will it be finished?" In the mountains, where water can be had once a day, the mule, horse, or donkey may be hired for a journey at a very low rate.

If the desert has to be crossed, and the scarcity of water reckoned with, then the unsightly but useful camel must be sought. With his spongy hoof, long neck, quick eye, and ability to abstain for ten days from water, the camel is well equipped for the desert journey. Treated kindly and regularly fed, this patient but much maligned animal will do excellent service and carry its rider many hundreds of

miles. Wheeled vehicles are practically unknown in Arabia, except on the coast.

What is being done to evangelize Arabia? Little, but thank God something. At Aden a small mission ministers to the physical needs of the Arabs, and in the dispensary the gospel is faithfully preached every day. One man bears the burden there. In the Persian Gulf, on the Bahrein Islands, the Dutch Reformed Church of America has its headquarters of the Arabian mission. On the coast they have a few stations, and they, like others, await the time when, by reason of ample men, means, and support, they will reach the interior. May God speed the time! These two efforts, with the writer's own, is all that at present is being done for the evangelization and redemption of Ishmael.

The writer has been the first as a Christian missionary to go any distance into the country, the account of which succeeding chapters will detail. Arabia needs at once,

The Pioneer Missionary,
The Medical Missionary,
The Evangelizing Missionary,
The Teaching Missionary.

Would that some readers of these pages might give their money to help the missionary claim

Arabia for Christ, just as readily as the millionnaires of New York are doing to fit out expeditions to find the North Pole and get credit to their country for so doing!

Can we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high;
Can we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?

Judging from Arabia, it seems we can.

CHAPTER XIV

ATTEMPTS TO ENTER ARABIA END IN CAPTURE, PRISON, AND BROKEN BONES

THE previous chapter has introduced to the reader the country that it was my desire to enter and open up for future missionary operations. As the desire grew on me the difficulties seemed to accumulate, and those most interested in my movements and work strongly urged me not to attempt the journey alone.

For many reasons a companion was advisable; volunteers were called for, and in response two young men offered their services, each assured in his mind that he was called to such an undertaking and work. The funds necessary for such a movement as was anticipated were all provided, and I waited for my companion. Months passed, and one excuse after another was made for delaying the start. Eventually both volunteers decided to abandon the project, one because he preferred to remain with his newly married wife, and the other lacked the faith and cour-

age to set out on such a hazardous journey without the assurance of any human help. Since then I have been thankful that the young fellows did withdraw, for the following chapters will tell what trials and hardships awaited us, and the possibilities are that those volunteers would have been a hindrance to me rather than a help.

Now the question arose: should the proposal be longer delayed, or should I set out alone? I decided that I would start alone, so set to work and in a short time was ready. Scriptures were packed, my own few necessities arranged, drugs and clothing put in readiness for immediate use, and lastly animals and men hired to convey me to the edge of the desert on the east of Jerusalem. The name of the place I was bound for, as the first stage in my journey, was Maãn, a twin town on the northern edge of the great Arabian desert. From Jerusalem it was about two hundred miles' distance, and from that twin town I felt sure I could find Bedouin, or join a caravan that would take me over the first stretch of desert that would have to be crossed.

Toward the end of 1899 I set out, in company with three men known to me. My cases were loaded on two mules; a third one was at

my disposal for riding. All went well for four days, and then my progress was put a stop to in not an unexpected way. We had reached a large Arab encampment which was pitched on the eastern border of the vast plains of Moab. The people had seen me before, in fact I had treated some of them after a severe battle with an hostile tribe, so I had a hearty welcome and was treated in the best style as an honored guest. Next morning I was up early and ready for another stage of my journey, but the people insisted on my spending the day with them in their tents, so I consented to do so.

Some part of that day was passed in the guest-tent, where many of the men assembled to talk and drink coffee, but they courteously agreed to listen as I read and spoke to them concerning the Saviour and their need of His atonement. I found a few men that were able to read, and they accepted Scriptures and tracts from me. Visiting in the tents gave opportunity to speak with individuals or give a kind word to some of the women busy about some of their many duties.

The evening came, and supper had been served and disposed of, and the making of the after-supper coffee was about to begin, when the sound of horses' hoofs on the hard earth,

and the clanking of chains and arms, was heard. The word "soldiers" came from many lips, and hardly had they been uttered when six Turkish cavalry in charge of an officer rode up in front of the long black tent. They dismounted, tied their horses to the tent ropes or stakes, and came into the tent. "Where is that traveller you have here?" they asked in sharp tones, and for a moment received no reply from my astonished and frightened friends, and as I was dressed in native costume I was not discernible among the many.

I rose and went toward the surly officer, telling him that I was the one he was inquiring for, and asked him what he wanted. He told me that he had been sent to arrest me and take me to the Turkish governor in a place about thirty miles distant. It was suggested by the chief that the soldiers spend the night in the camp, but they refused. They demanded animals for myself and baggage, which were soon forthcoming, and in a very few minutes we were off, I in the midst of the soldiers, and the baggage animals urged on by the Arabs, who unwillingly had been forced to undertake this night march. We rode for about three hours, during which little was said. Once the surly official cursed me and called me a "dog," because I had been

the cause of them being sent post-haste to capture me. That gentleman said little else to me whilst in my company, for he got the length of my tongue, and a reminder that it was neither politic nor advisable for him to call an Englishman a dog. He took the scolding and the warning meekly, and I hope became a wiser and more cautious man; if nothing else, he certainly became a quieter one.

About ten o'clock we saw the flames of camp-fires and soon alighted at the guest-tent. The people knew me and were sorry to see me a prisoner. They were not slow to tell the soldiers how I had helped them in times past, one man giving visible proof by showing the mark on his arm where he had been cut by a spear and I had sewn it up. That night I slept between my captors, and early next morning was roused and escorted on the journey. After about four hours we reached the place from whence the soldiers had come. They took me to the government house and delivered me to the official in charge there. He soon found that he had no great catch in me, but told me that I must return to Jerusalem under escort, as his orders were that no traveller was to pass that way without special permission from Constantinople. I stayed a week in that

Arab city, disposed of most of my books, and then in charge of three soldiers was sent to Jerusalem.

The first attempt had ended in seeming failure, but some knowledge and experience had been gained, which afterward came in useful. My disappointment was His appointment, and was for a wise purpose.

Early the next spring I set out again, this time in company with a gentleman who for geographical purposes and scientific research was visiting Edom and going to Mãăn. As he had government permission, we in due time reached the place I had set out for on my previous trip, but failed to reach. After a few days in Mãăn my friend returned, leaving me alone, with the hope of soon proceeding farther east. Here too in Mãăn I found men that knew me because of surgical or medical help they had received from me years before when in Kerak. No one knows the value of the medical missionary as an agency for opening up new lands; this is another instance among others from other lands. Let none lightly esteem the work of the medical missionary. A house was put at my disposal, and my few belongings and Scriptures deposited therein.

My bed was a sack on the hard floor and my

only covering at night my large native cloak. For three days all went well; in return for Scriptures I received eggs, bread, and fruit, and from a spring near by I drew my water for drinking and in it washed my clothes. Late in the afternoon of the third day a soldier appeared at the door with an order for me to appear at once before the local governor. He was one who had taken a leading part in the massacre of the Armenians some time before, and by the Turkish government had been rewarded by the post of governor at Mãan. I went to him, and he began to bully me and ordered me to leave the place within an hour. I told him I was within my rights in being there, and presented my Turkish passport. He ridiculed that, and said, "as he was governor there he could do as he liked." He then ordered that I should be shut up in a small room, detained till morning, and then sent away under escort. So I was put in safe-keeping with two others, and left through the night. At daybreak two soldiers appeared with a mule, on which were loaded my things. I was ordered to mount, two cakes of dry bread were given me, and in charge of two mounted men I was sent away from Mãan, and so for the second time turned my back on Arabia, more and more de-

termined that I would not be discouraged by these seeming failures.

Having tried the southern way twice and failed on both occasions, I determined to try the northern route and endeavor to join a caravan going down into Arabia from Damascus. After a few days at home I made another start, this time in quite another direction.

On the fourth day out, as we were slowly ascending a zigzag road, the horse in front of mine suddenly commenced to kick, and before I knew what had happened I was lying under my horse on the steep mountain path, with my left leg broken. I lay there for several hours while a man went back to the nearest place to secure a doctor. He arrived, and with my leg tied to a stout pole I was carried back to the doctor's house. The bone had been badly splintered, and for weeks I lay without any progress being made toward the use of my leg. At length I was carried home to Jerusalem and was then informed that the limb would never be useable by reason of the bone being badly set. The only hope for me was to go into a hospital, have my leg opened, the bone broken down, some taken out, and the limb properly adjusted. I did as I was advised and in a few weeks was able to get

about on crutches, later with the aid of a stick, and then to my joy without any help at all.

The entrance into Arabia was again delayed, and sufficient had occurred to quench any superficial enthusiasm, if such had ever existed, which, however, in my case had not. These delays and seeming failures only made me the more desirous to carry out what I believed to be a God-implanted desire in me. Some advised giving it up, for surely Providence was against me. But I could not see my way clear to do that, for was not the EVANGELIZATION of ISHMAEL and the REDEMPTION of ARABIA at stake, and neither of these could or can be accomplished without seeming failures, disappointments, and trials, all permitted by One too wise to err and who

> Moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform.

The capture and imprisonment may have been disappointing and humiliating, and the broken limb looked upon as a bad job, but out of all came blessing in the way of experience, information, larger faith, an extended vision, and, to crown all, the success that many had prayed for and believed in, although long

delayed. The sweets were all the sweeter, and the joys more appreciated, because of what had been experienced before they were realized. My next will tell of better days and my arrival on the edge of the desert.

PHOTOGRAPH BY C. A. HORNSTIEN

A CHRISTIAN WOMAN OF MOAB

This woman is a resident of Kerak, the capital of Moab, and is a member of the chief family there. Compare her with the three women opposite page 150 and the difference made by Christianity is very apparent. Her family is famous among the Arabs for their hospitality, and this woman and her husband always entertain Mr. Forder during his visits to their city, in return for services rendered during a long time of sickness and trouble.

CHAPTER XV

A FOURTH VENTURE BRINGS ME TO THE DESERT'S EDGE

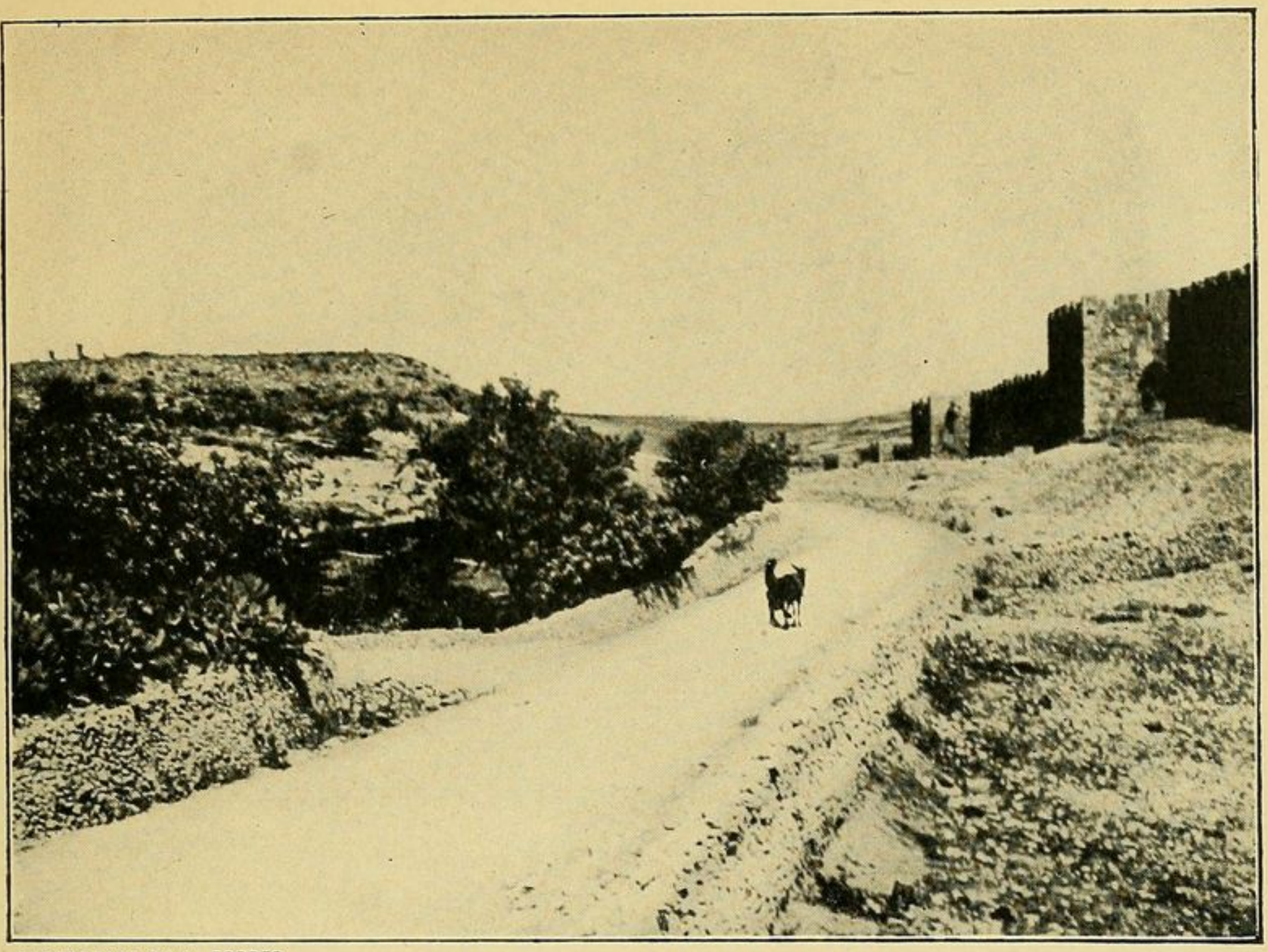
PREVIOUS failures had not discouraged me sufficiently to make me give up the idea of reaching the district and town of the Jowf, the most important and largest town in Northern Arabia. Although difficulties, dangers, and hindrances had come and might still be expected, to have anticipated them would only have led to discouragement. Many of my friends thought that God's time had come for another attempt to be made to reach some part of the regions beyond Moab and Edom. We had hoped that a travelling companion would even then have been forthcoming, but no volunteer was on hand. Accordingly, with some reluctance, our little community had to let me go alone. On Thursday morning, the thirteenth day of December, 1900, a few friends came to our home in Jerusalem, and in prayer we committed each other to God's keeping, not knowing how long it would be before we

should thus gather round the Mercy-seat again. Meanwhile two packhorses were being loaded outside.

Four cases of Arabic Scriptures, tracts, and leaflets, the most limited quantity of bare necessities for the anticipated journey, and one man to accompany me the first few days of my journey made up the advance party and equipment of the first missionary journey into Arabia from the north.

A few friends went with me a little way, and the time came to say the final "Good-by." It was easy enough to bid farewell to the grown-ups, but the last straw came from my little four-year-old, when, on stooping down to kiss him, he said, in his childish voice, "Will you be long, Dadda?" It was a question that none could answer. The future was only known to God. Jumping on top of one of the loads, I got away, wondering when I should see those same kind and praying friends again, and pondering, as I rode along, what would be the outcome of this quiet, simple, and inexpensive movement toward the land and birthplace of the great antagonist of Christianity, the religion of Islam.

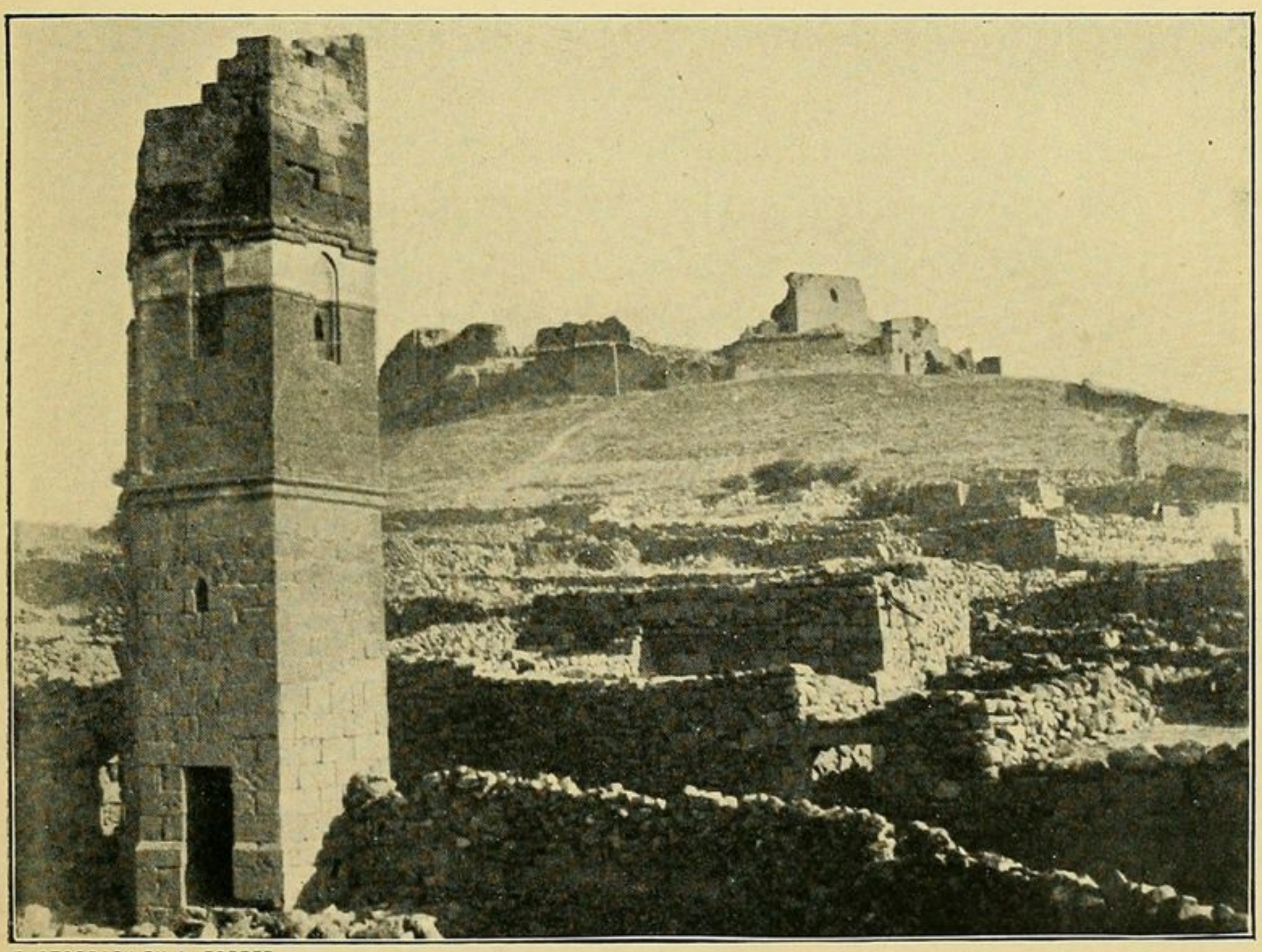
Calvary, outside the wall, and the Mount of Olives, on the east, were soon left behind; a last



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

CALVARY, OUTSIDE THE WALL

The hill on the left side is Golgotha, i. e., the place of a skull. On the right is the north wall of Jerusalem. The road leads to Jericho, and was traversed by Mr. Forder when attempting to enter Arabia.



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

OLD TOWER AND CASTLE AT SULKHUD

These ancient remains of the stone age are on the edge of the desert, southeast of Damascus. How Mr. Forder passed this place in the fog is told on page 164. Turkish obstruction hinders modern travelers from visiting these interesting ruins.

look at Jerusalem from the Bethany road, and then the quiet little village itself was passed, with its screaming children clamoring for "backsheesh." Down into the valley, and on as far as the Good Samaritan's Inn, where a drink of water was begged from the lonely occupant of that venerable hostel, who ekes out an existence by selling a few drinks and providing hasty cups of coffee for passers-by. Soon we reached Jericho and were accommodated by the kind-hearted keeper of the Jordan Hotel. Here I met that cordial friend of travellers to the Holy Land, the Hon. Selah Merill, U.S. Consul at Jerusalem, who, with his two sisters, were seeking a short time of rest and refreshment in the cool and quiet of Jericho. Early next morning we were off again and pursued our way over the plains of Jordan, crossed the swiftly flowing river, on over the plains, and up into the mountains of Gilead. Toward evening we came to a Circassian settlement at the head of the Wady Seir. In vain we tried to get a shelter from the threatening storm. But the Circassian in those parts has no love for the stranger, and we were driven from door to door, until we decided to spend the night in the open, even if it involved sitting up and watching all night.

On the outskirts of the village we met a woman who shouted at us in a very unceremonious style, "Where are you going at this time of the day; it is now sunset, and the night is near." We replied, "We have tried to find a guest-room, but no place is open to us." Her reply was, "My house is open to all comers; turn aside, and spend the night with us."

So, accepting her invitation and obeying her order to follow her, we soon found ourselves lodged in her limited space styled a house. We soon found that we were not the only occupants of those four walls. One corner contained not only our two horses, but the owner's possession in the way of live stock — a mule, two donkeys, a yoke of oxen, some sheep and goats, and the usual crowd of cocks and hens. Add to this our host and hostess, four small dirty children, and the circle was complete. It is needless to make mention of the innumerable company of jumpers, who, by their persistent efforts at feasting, kept me reminded of their presence.

Supper of bread and fried eggs was served, apologies made for the absence of coffee, and then we settled down for a talk, which I soon turned into a religious direction. Introducing the Book, we spent a time in reading and speak-

ing of Salvation, much to the interest, and, I trust, lasting good, of these simple people. Tired out, we lay on the mud floor, wrapped up in our native cloaks, and tried to get rest, but it was difficult. Early next morning we were about. The good woman kindly offered us a batch of bread, if we would wait whilst she baked it, which we did.

The next two days led us to Es-Salt — Ramoth-Gilead — and Gerash, and on to Edrei in Bashan. On the way I met some of my Kerak friends returning from Damascus, where they had been compelled to go, carrying goods for the Turkish Government. The next day, our sixth out, dawned cloudy and windy, but hoping for fair weather, we set out. We had been going for about four hours, with our faces set against a cold east wind, when it began to rain, then hail, and soon we were drenched. We could see far ahead of us the only place of shelter, that being the old town of Bosrah, one of the giant cities of Bashan, with its massive castle and interesting ruins. Our intention had been to evade this place, and so escape the possibilities of being captured by the Turkish officials and sent home under escort, as on former occasions in the south. However, as the storm continued, we were forced to enter

the town. We decided to seek the shelter of some guest-room in the quarter of the town farthest away from the castle in which the soldiers and officers were quartered. But man proposes and God disposes, to show that He can and will deliver. We entered the town on the north side, clambering over ruined houses and tumbled-down walls. We tried the first house we came to, only to find the guest-room full to overflowing. We walked up and down the narrow, muddy streets, hoping to find shelter, but the same answer came from every door: "The sudden storm has filled the guest-room; you must seek elsewhere." One man told us he had just come from the house of the governor, and that his large guest-room was empty. We turned away again, and were leading our beasts along a narrow street, when we came face to face with a man whose dress proclaimed him an official. He stopped and asked us who we were, where we were from, where we were going, to all of which we gave answers. On hearing we were looking for shelter, he said, "Come with me; I will find you and your animals shelter at the governor's house." We could say or do nothing, but just obey and follow. In a few minutes we entered the large courtyard of the head man, and stood

at the guest-room door. The servants — in the absence of the master — greeted us, and carried our belongings into the large room. Our horses were taken off to the stable. A large wood fire was burning on the floor in the middle of the room. We sat down and warmed ourselves at the fire, thankful for the shelter from the cold and rain outside. The official that had brought us to the place had gone away and left us. I engaged the few men in conversation, and was glad to learn that the governor was not a Turk, but an Arab and of local descent. This was encouraging, as I might look for better treatment from such a one than from an outsider. After a time the official returned, clad in full uniform, with his sword on, as his sign of authority. He said to me, "My business as inspector is to examine all cases and goods that are brought into this place; get up and open your boxes, so that I may see what they contain." My reply was short, but to him bitter, "Never; this is no custom-house." He tried first by persuasion, then by threats, to get me to open up my baggage. But I had one reply — "No." At last he said, "If you will not open them, I will." I said, "Go ahead then, when you like." I had told him what they contained, but he said I lied. "You have guns and pow-

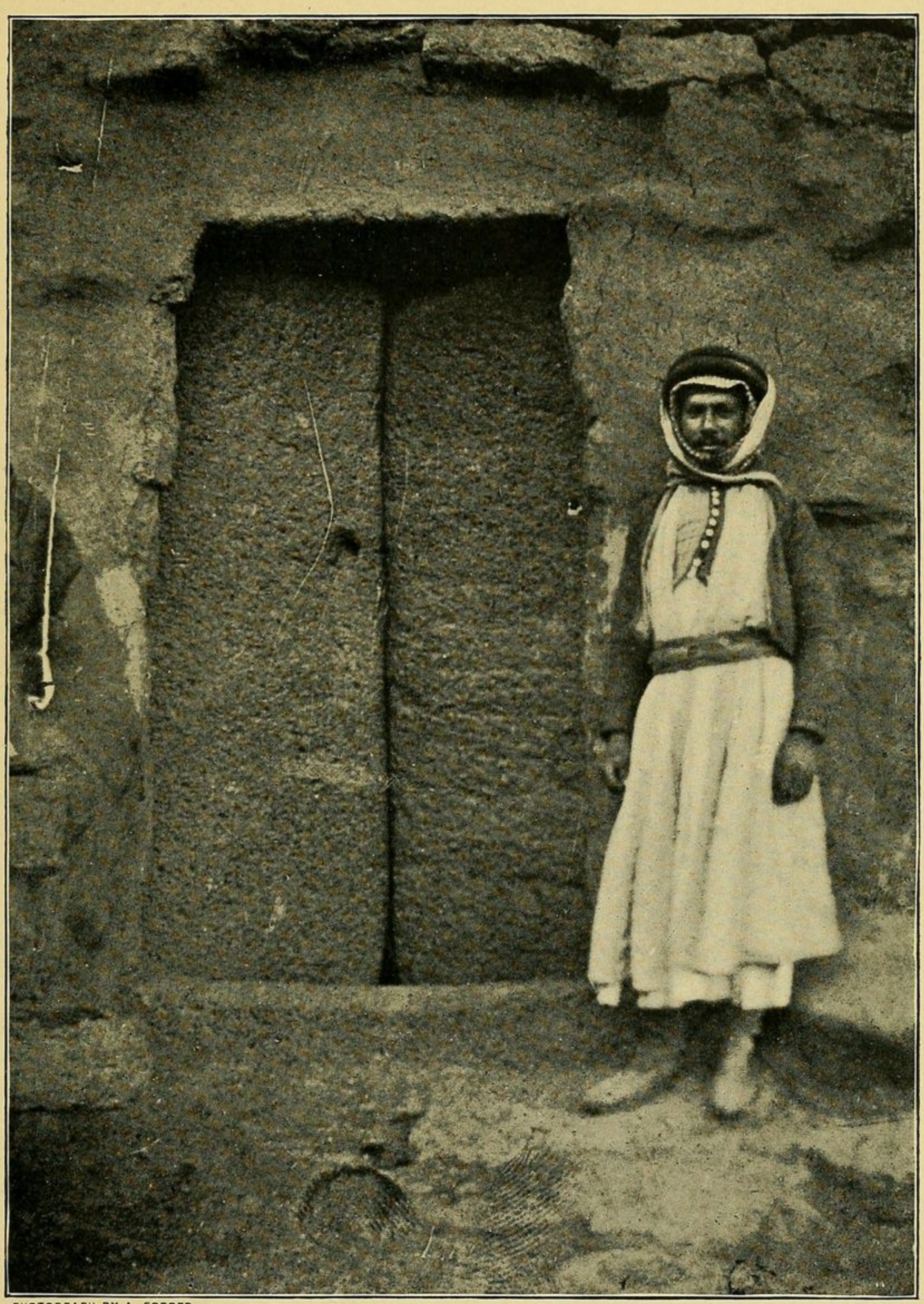
der with which to arm the Arabs and get them to rise against the Government," he said. He was, however, too wise a man to touch my belongings, and he again tried persuasion. At last I said, "I will only open my goods for your inspection on two conditions. First, that you bring from the British Consul, also the Turkish governor in Damascus — three days' journey distant — written orders that I must do so; or, secondly, that you accompany me to Damascus, and, in the presence of the British Consul, if he so orders, I will open for your inspection." With this he went away, saying he was going off to see the head man. After we had supped, the head man came to sit with us. He asked many questions, which I answered. He requested my Turkish passport, which I produced. After examining it, he handed it back, saying it was all right. He then told me that according to orders from the Government no Europeans were allowed in those parts, and he had orders to send back under escort all that came along. "But," he said, "as you seem to be almost an Arab, and are going to Damascus, may God go with you and give you peace." He little knew or thought what a long time it would be, or what a long way round I was going to get to Damascus. We settled down

to a talk. I told him about the officious inspector, and he told me not to mind him. With this he came in, and asked to be given permission by the head man — my host — to open my luggage. He got this reply: "To-night this man is my guest, and as such you must not touch him or his belongings whilst under my roof. In the morning, when he leaves me, you can do as you like, but under my protection he or his must not be interfered with; we respect and protect all who come under our roofs." With this he went away, and I saw no more of him. I then introduced the New Testament, and we sat until past ten o'clock reading and speaking about Jesus. On leaving me to go to his own apartments he accepted a copy of the New Testament in Arabic.

Next day dawned dull and misty. We decided to make a start, hoping for finer weather. When we got outside the town and turned our faces east, in which direction we were going, we could see in front of us the old, but very prominent, castle of Sulkhud, away some twenty-five miles distant. It was our wish to get beyond that place and spend the night in Orman, a large Druze settlement, where I was to give up my man and horses and let them return to

Jerusalem. Our way lay over a wide, level plain, the road, a small worn path, ofttimes difficult to follow because of the stony nature of the ground. About noon we reached a little village called El-Ghusm, through the midst of which we had to pass. I saw some very old and interesting doors here, solid slabs of basalt, turning on hinges that were a part of the stone, and let into sockets. I was fortunate in getting a good picture of these stone doors. After leaving this place the sky clouded over, and another storm came on. The wind, rain, and hail made it impossible for us to hold up our heads and look ahead; our horses turned against it and got off the track, and soon we discovered we had lost the way. My compass told me we were going south instead of east. Turning in the latter direction we tried again, but all to no purpose. For hours we persevered, but seemed to get no further on. A mist had risen, enough to cover from our view the old castle by which we had to pass. We were cold and wet, and began to think we might have to spend the night in the open, for evening was drawing on.

Presently, Mohammed, my man, saw smoke rising away in the distance. How gladly we hailed it, and jumping off our animals, led them in the direction that it was to be seen. We



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

STONE DOORS, BASHAN

These interesting remains of the stone age are found east of the Jordan in the Druze country. These doors are slabs of black basalt; they turn on pivots let into sockets in the upper and lower lintels. When struck they ring clear as a bell. Some doors still in use are nine feet high and six feet wide. Unfortunately, these ancient remains are being destroyed to give way to more modern fittings.

found it going up from a small hamlet of about thirty houses. We rode up to the door of the first one we came to, and received a hearty "Welcome" from the men inside. We would not have chosen the place for its beauty or cleanliness, but because of our condition and the elements, we were glad to avail ourselves of the accommodation. Our things were carried in and huddled up in a corner. We were offered seats on some old mats round the fireplace. Some fuel, in the shape of dried manure, was brought, and an attempt at making a fire made, but it resulted in more smoke than flame or heat, and I was made to weep bitter tears from smarting eyes.

Some bread was brought us, and a kind of molasses called "dibs," in which we dipped the former. Hunger made it welcome and enjoyable. On asking where we were, we found that we were about two hours off the track, and some two-and-a-half hours' ride from the castle. My idea had been to pass the castle about dusk, so as possibly to escape the notice of the Turkish soldiery that were stationed there. But again my plans were put away in order that I might learn by experience that if I "commit my way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, He will bring it to pass."

This I learned on the morrow.

After supper the men of the hamlet in which we were, and which was named Moonaythree, gathered in to talk and sip coffee with us. My business was soon disclosed, and I introduced Bibles and gospels. Some of the men could read, and, to my surprise, intelligently. They bought some books from me, paying for them in kind — dried figs, flour, or eggs. When the time came for sleep, clad in another man's clothes, — because my own were too wet and were hung up to dry in the smoke, — I curled up on the hard floor, and in spite of small company, cold, and draughts was soon wrapped in Nature's sweet restorer, "balmy sleep." The reader will gather from these records that pioneer mission work is not the easiest or most conducive to comfort. Let the reader of these pages take up the privilege of daily remembering at the Throne of Grace those who represent the home-section of the Church by going into new fields and among new peoples, so that all may at least know of a Saviour from sin.

Next morning I was accosted by a man that had been driven in by the storm and had lodged in a house near by. He had heard about the books I had, and wanted some to take to his town some distance away northeast. To

him I disposed of eight copies — six Testaments and two Bibles — also giving him an assortment of tracts and leaflets. I heard about these some months later on, that they were well received and were being read with much interest. As the morning was fine, we did not stay long; so, getting directions how to regain the track, we started.

Coming up out of the depression in which we had passed the night, we saw ahead of us the old castle, our landmark of yesterday. I was almost certain if only we could get beyond the castle, no more hindrances from the Government might be looked for, because beyond that place they exerted very little power. But the thing was to pass unobserved, and as the path passed close under the castle it seemed impossible to get by unnoticed. We could see the soldiers moving about on the castle walls, and as we drew nearer the north side, the sentry on guard was very prominent. My man quite lost heart and made up his mind to be taken and sent back. I tried to encourage him by reminding him how we had escaped detention at Bosrah, and told him that God would help us. When we got quite near to the hill leading up to the castle, a thick fog came on, quite an unusual thing in those parts, and under cover of

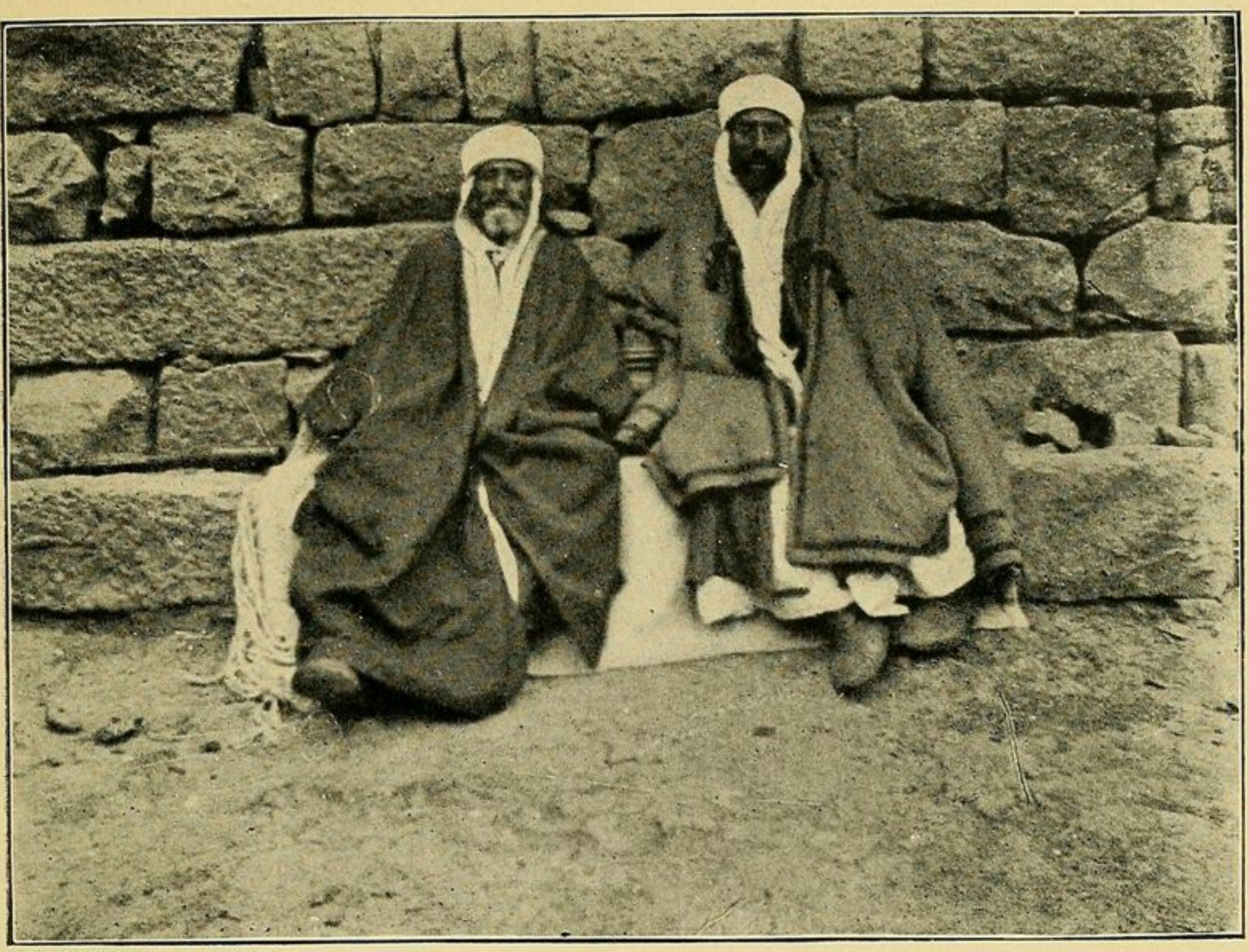
the fog we rode on until we came to several paths leading in different directions. Had it been clear, I could easily have found my way, having gone over the country once before. We took the wrong path and soon lost the way, but could not right ourselves because of the dense fog. I said to Mohammed, "If only the fog would open for a moment and let me see the castle, I should know where we were and how to steer." No sooner had I said the words than the fog divided for a moment, but sufficient for me to catch a glimpse of the castle, which I recognized as the northeast angle. Getting off my horse, I led him back and soon found the track again. Through that dense fog we walked, passed and saluted the sentry, but did not see him, on past the governor's house, and out on to the open ground beyond the castle and town. Five minutes after passing these the fog disappeared, the sun shone brightly, and we saw behind us the castle and house that sheltered the representatives of a Government opposed to all Christian movements for the spread of the gospel.

I recognized in this second marked deliverance the hand of God, and was encouraged to go on, believing that God would prosper this simple movement toward Arabia. One hour

after passing this place we reached the large Druze town of Orman, situated on the edge of the sandy plains that lead away toward the Jowf. This was the first stage of our journey, and although some parts of it had been rough, yet I felt that the good hand of God had been on me, and I had the assurance that the next stage of the journey would be accomplished in His own way and time.

We put up in a large guest-room on the outskirts of the town. My hosts consisted of three brothers, all of whom treated me kindly. I proved here the truth of the Arab proverb, "Mountain can never meet mountain, but man may meet man." One of the brothers knew me, having met me in Damascus two years before. My things were stowed away out of sight, and I was given to understand that I was to be quite at home. So on the 20th of December I took up my quarters among these strange people, the Druzes, with their secret religion. Early next morning Mohammed left me, taking with him the horses. He begged me to return to Jerusalem with him, reminding me of the danger and hardships I should have to endure if I went any farther. After he had gone I felt that another cord had been severed that was likely to have kept me from

the desire of many years. I was sorely tempted to give way and return, but the thought of the promises in Psalm cxxi settled the matter. I had no idea what the future would reveal; that we must leave for the next chapter.



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

DRUZE CHIEFS

The Druzes live southeast of Damascus. They have a secret religion, and worship at night. In manners and customs they are like the Bedouin; their white turbans distinguish them from the Arabs. These two entertained Mr. Forder when going to Arabia.

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

GETTING READY TO MOVE HOUSE

The Bedouin move every few days. The work of pulling down and setting up the tents is done by the women. Notice the baby slung on a tripod whilst the mother is preparing to move. Early morning is the time generally chosen to move camp.

CHAPTER XVI

BETWEEN DRUZE AND ARAB I GET INTO THE DESERT

A PROLONGED stay at Orman gave me a good opportunity for mission work among a people that, to my knowledge, had never been visited before. One thing is certain, no copy of the Scriptures had been taken there, or if so, had been lost sight of. My first few days were spent in visiting among the people in their homes. I inquired for the Scriptures, but found no trace of them. I had daily opportunity for speaking with the people about salvation and the Saviour.

After supper, two hours were generally spent with the guests that had come in to spend the night. The best attention was given to all I said, and these evening gatherings ofttimes resulted in the sale of a few gospels or Bibles. These were carried away to different places by the owners as they went to their homes next day. In Orman itself I left about forty copies of the New Testament — many of them were bought by big boys that were able to read

quite well. Some kind friend had sent me from England, some time before, fifty copies of the life of Joseph and the gospel of John bound together; these I found very useful and most acceptable among these people. One day I entered a house and found, sitting on the floor near the fire, an old Greek Priest. I engaged him in conversation, and soon found that he was, like hundreds of others in a like capacity, entirely ignorant of salvation by faith in Christ; he also told me he had never had a Bible. He could read well, so having with me a few extra good quality of binding Arabic Bibles, given by friends in America, I offered him one. He very reluctantly accepted it, thinking that such good fortune was not for him. The same day I saw him ride off to the village he lived and officiated in, with his newly acquired present wrapped in a handkerchief, and stored away in his bosom. The days spent in Orman were unpleasant and comfortless. Most of the time it rained or snowed, causing deep mud and slush. The only fuel was dried manure. I much preferred to endure the cold rather than the thick, stinking smoke that issued from the smouldering mass on the floor in the middle of the room.

At night I had to lie on the hard floor, with

only a straw mat under me. A covering was given me that was full of vermin, so that it is needless to say I did not use it after the first night. The people were very kind in asking me to their homes to a meal, generally made of large white peas, boiled, and then well covered with oil or strong fat melted down. These meals, always served hot, were very acceptable and helped to warm me, and I was very thankful to God for such a provision. There being no shops, I was unable to buy any food, and the Arabs will rarely sell food to a stranger. I shall never forget the Christmas Day I spent in that place. Heavy snow had fallen, followed by rain, which turned the whole place into a mud pond. It was also very cold, and as no fuel was to be had because of the snow and rain, I had to sit about all day enduring the cold and damp. The roofs of the houses being only mud, it is an easy matter for the rain to penetrate and come through into the house. Such was the case this Christmas Day. The rain was dripping through in some eight places, and it was a difficult matter to find a dry spot even in the house. Soon after my advent into Orman, I began asking questions as to the possibility of getting to the next place I wanted to reach — a spot marked on the map as Kaf.

I gathered it was some six days' journey away southeast, and the country between was waterless and very dangerous to travel over because of roving bands of Arabs that were always on the lookout for passers-by. The people in Orman were not much acquainted with the name Kaf. I found in common, everyday talk they always used the word "Kurrey-ya-tayn," which means "two villages," or ofttimes they spoke of them as "Deree-el-milh," that meaning the "salt district," as the work of the Arabs there was that of salt-gathering, which they sold to the people who organized caravans for the purpose of getting this everyday commodity. When I made known the fact that I wanted to visit the settlement of Kaf, the people shook their heads and said, "Don't go; the Arabs there are a bad lot; when we go there, in large parties, we never let the rifles out of our hands." As I was importunate, my host said he would try and find me a Bedouin that would take me to Kaf. From time to time such desert rangers came into Orman, and for money could be induced to conduct travellers over the sands. As they knew fairly well the whereabouts of the Arabs, they were the best suited to guide one in safety to Kaf. Two or three such men were found, but on being told that the intended traveller

was a Christian, they at once said they would have nothing to do with such people, as their religion made them the enemies of God and of the followers of Mohammed. It was soon very evident that I must wait a long time to find a Bedouin willing to take me, so I requested my host to undertake for me. He gave me many fair promises, but kept none of them. After all attempts had failed, and it seemed unlikely that I should get on, I one day stated my case to the sheikh — chief man — of the place, and asked him to help me. He was a very nice, fatherly old man, and set about advising me not to go. Again I had brought before me the dangers of the desert, the fatigue, and the possibilities of death from thirst or the fanaticism of the Arabs of Kaf.

I told the sheikh I was willing to face all that, and as I was trusting God to protect and keep me, I believed He would do so. Promising to free the chief from all responsibility if he would help me to get away, he at last said he would make arrangements for me to go on the morrow. I went back to my lodging, repacked my books and few belongings, and sewed some of my money into the waistband of my trousers, giving the remainder to my host to keep for me until my return at some unknown future date.

Money given like this, as a trust, is quite safe, even in a stranger's keeping. Next morning I went to the sheikh. He began to make excuses for not being ready to start me, went over all I had heard before, and again he tried to persuade me to give up the journey. I reminded him of his promise, and told him that as a sheikh I looked to him to keep his word, not break it. This put him on his mettle. He called a man and told him to get a camel, load up my things, letting me ride on top, and take me out and hand me over to the owner of the first Arab tent we came to. The order was soon obeyed, and we rode off.

We went until sunset, but found no tents, spent the night out, and early next morning started again. In the afternoon we saw a few tents away in the distance, and went to them. Our reception was not a very hearty one, and I saw I was not very welcome. We were asked in, and my things were carried in and piled up one on the other. The man that had come with me told the men in the tent where I wanted to go; they received the news very sullenly. Then he said he would return to Orman. But I felt constrained to ask him to stay the night with me, and it was well he did. We had supper, all sitting round the same dish, and used our fingers

in place of spoons. Being very tired, I was soon asleep, not waking until morning, and was then roused by finding the heavy tent-cloth down on me. I crawled out from underneath, and saw the women pulling down the tent previous to moving. I asked them why they were doing this so early in the day. Their reply was, "The men have ordered that we move to another place; they fear to give shelter to a Christian, one that is unclean, and would cause trouble to come on us. Soon the tent and their household goods were loaded up, the cocks and hens tied on top of the load. The few sheep and goats had been led off early in the morning.

The little nomad community were soon off, leaving my companion of the previous day and myself standing there alone. He suggested that he should ride the camel and go and look for more tents and return again to me. I was to stay and watch over the luggage. I objected, as I knew that if once he got away on the camel it was very doubtful if I should ever see him again. So I said, "Leave the camel with me, whilst you go and look for more Arabs." He consented, and went off, leaving me about seven in the morning. Noon came, and he did not return, and I waited until nearly four in the afternoon, and was begin-

ning to think he had really left me, when I saw him coming. He had found one tent near by, and had spent the day with the men, talking, eating, and sipping coffee, not caring about me out under the hot sun, hungry and thirsty. Again we loaded, and set off for the tent, reaching it in about an hour. I sat down and ate some bread, and was glad to gather from the conversation of the men that a large caravan was expected to pass that night, on its way to Kaf; it was going to get salt. After supper we talked, and settled that if possible I should join the caravan, and so reach Kaf with it. It was full moon; we were sitting round the fire in the tent door, when a man came in and said he could hear the bells of the camels, and it was the caravan.

Quickly my things were loaded on a camel. I jumped on top, and my new host led off into the desert. By the light of the moon I could see coming toward us a great dark mass: that was the caravan. We went for about a quarter of an hour, and then stopped to await the arrival of the caravan. Soon some Arabs on horses galloped up to us, shouting to us, "Who are you? What do you want?" Their questions were soon answered. Then came the first part of the great company, made up of

about four hundred camels; they passed us; then a second, then a third, and then the last part. Each section was guarded by about fifty horsemen, armed with long spears, rifles, swords, and revolvers.

As they passed us, the man with me kept shouting out the names of men he thought likely to be in the company. The first three sections of that great caravan, made up of sixteen hundred camels, passed, and no one answered the call of my man. In the last part, however, some men were found, and with a hasty explanation as to who I was and where I wanted to go, my baggage and self were transferred to another camel, and I was soon in full swing with that moving mass, on my way to Kaf. No terms had been made as to payment for the animal I was on, or any arrangement made about food and water. I joined the caravan at quarter to nine in the evening, and was supposed to be four and a half days' journey from Kaf. As we rode along I got into conversation with some of the men near me. They told me we were to make the journey in easy stages, because the camels, being loaded with wheat and barley that was to be bartered for salt and dates, could not travel long distances without resting. But I soon

found that they were only telling me lies, so that, as they said when I told them afterward, "I should not ride with a heavy heart." We rode all that night, until half-past six the next morning, when a halt was made. "If you want to sleep, do so," they said, "for we only rest two hours." I lay down on the sand, covered myself with my native cloak, and was soon fast asleep. But I was roused in a quarter of an hour, and told to "Get up, the caravan is off." And so it was; they were nearly all gone, and, jumping on my camel again, we soon followed, just twenty minutes after we had put down.

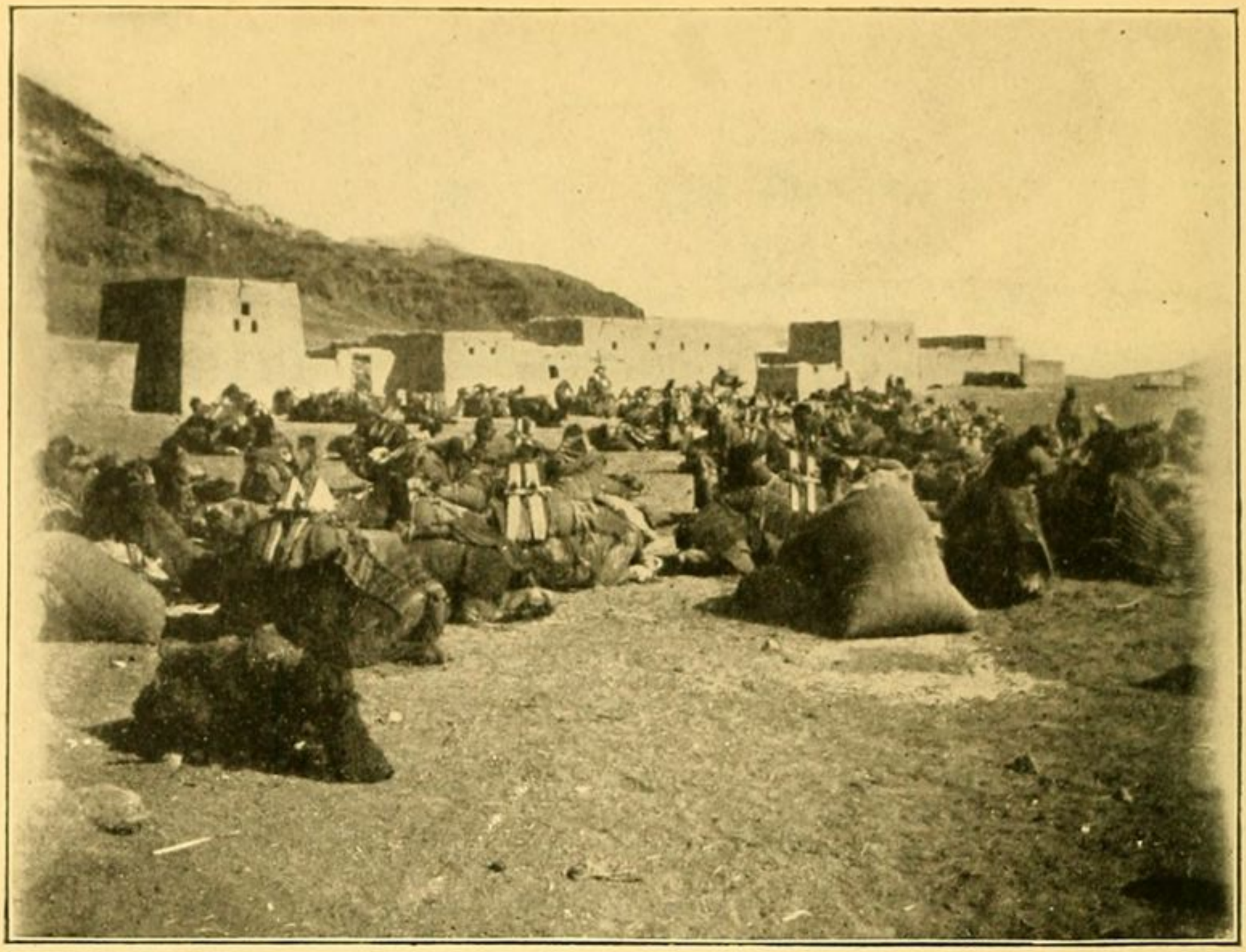
On and on we went, never stopping until half-past five in the afternoon. The camels were made to kneel down, and rumor said we should rest for hours. As the men were about to remove the loads a cry was raised that Arabs were near.

Looking up, I saw on some high ground overlooking us some mounted men—about ten. Some of our horsemen jumped on their horses and made off. The newcomers galloped away. Our men, although riding as hard as they could, fired their rifles after the pursued; one was hit in the arm, causing him to drop his spear. I had mounted a hill near at hand and watched

them. Our men were gaining on the others, and soon came up with them. Being outnumbered, they threw down their arms. They were from a large tribe that were camped about a mile away. Our men made them return with them. The order was given to load and start, and just fifteen minutes after putting down we were on the move again. A man thrust some hard bread into my hand as we moved off, and I nibbled at it as I rode along. The captured Arabs were made to go with us, and were placed in the midst of the caravan. This was to prevent them from returning to their camp and calling others, who might have harassed the caravan all night. We rode on through that night. As the sand was hard in those parts I walked a good bit of the way, for two reasons — to keep awake, and to keep warm. The day dawned, but no halt was made. The captured Arabs were allowed to return, as there was now nothing to fear from them or their people. The sun rose, but on we went. About ten o'clock some of the men called to me, "Look! see the palms, they belong to Kaf; we shall soon be there."

About eleven o'clock we rode into the place, and in the square formed by the houses the camels were made to kneel down, were un-

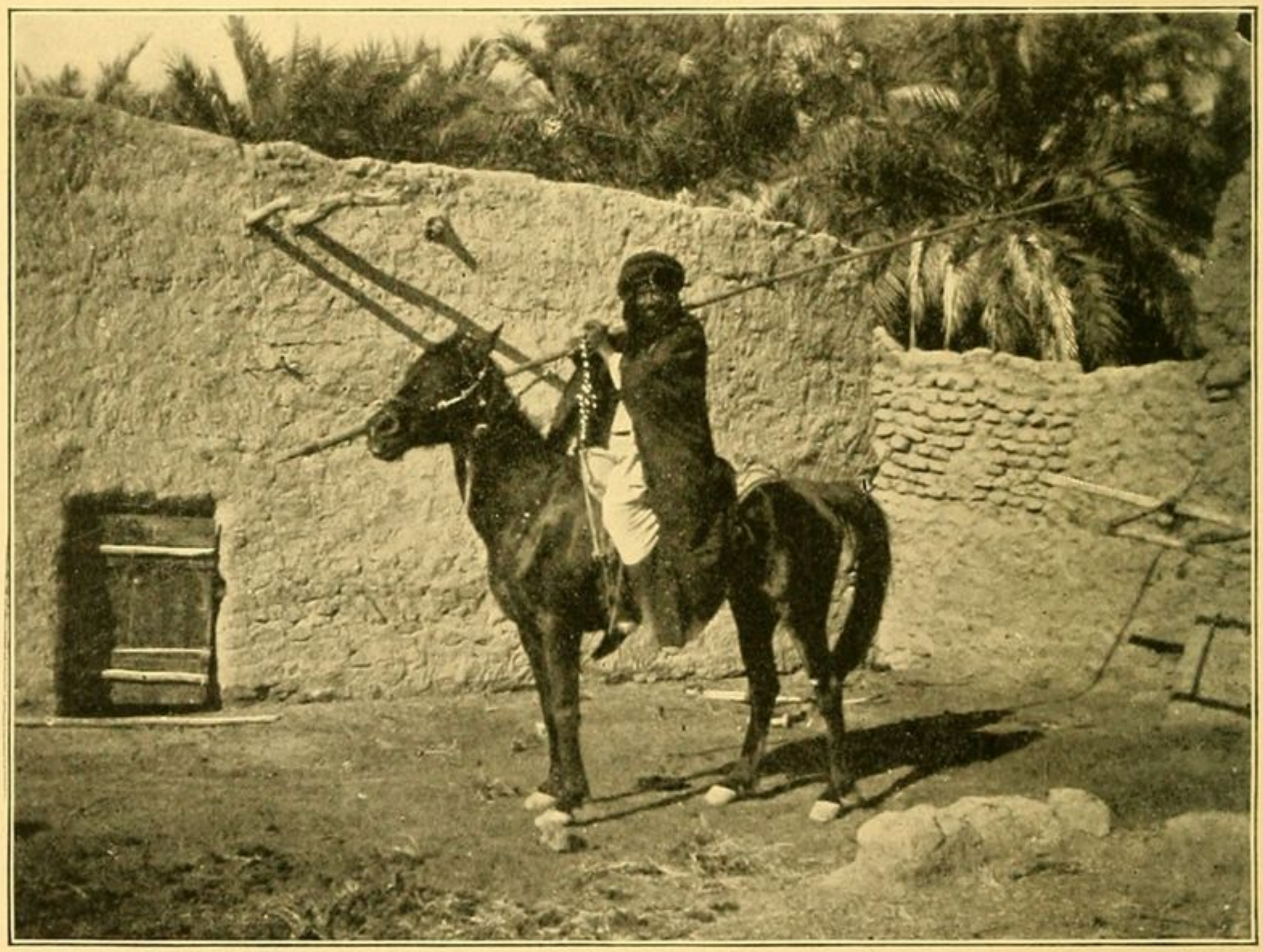
loaded, and given food. We had ridden for thirty-eight hours with only half an hour's stop. The return journey was made in six days. It is needless to say I was tired, thirsty, and hungry, but the thought of really having got to Kaf — the desire of years realized — made me forget the fatigue of the journey in the joy of being there. I left the hubbub of the square and went off to the palm gardens near by and jumped for joy, then sang the Doxology, and afterward gave thanks to my Heavenly Father for the fulfilment of the promises I had trusted in, as written in the 121st Psalm. I then went to a spring of warm sulphur water and had a wash, then returned to the men in the square. They took me into a small mud house near by, the owner of which was known to them. A large tray of dates was brought in and we ate as many as we could; then, being tired after our long and hurried ride, I lay down on the floor, put my head on my saddle-bags, and was soon asleep. When I awoke it was nearly five o'clock, and the sun was getting low. I went outside and found some of the men I knew. One of them said to me, "Come, I will take you to the chief's house, and ask him to care for you." I went with him to the adjoining village. He was sitting outside with a lot of



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

CARAVAN RESTING AFTER A JOURNEY

This shows the camels with their heavy loads off, after a continuous journey of thirty-eight hours across the desert. The heavy saddles are rarely removed. The Arabs fear the camels will get cold if too much air is allowed, for the beast is very susceptible to cold.



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

THE CHIEF OF KAF

This man showed great kindness to Mr. Forder during his stay with him. The Arabs he rules over think much of him because of his bravery. Kaf, where he lives, is a twin town hidden in the midst of beautiful palm groves.

men, but rose and came forward to greet me. On being told about me, he said it would be best if all my things were brought and put in his guest-room, and I might lodge there. He called a boy, told him to take a donkey, and go and bring my things over. Just then I heard a gun go off, and found it was the signal for the caravan to load up and start on its return journey. The men I had travelled down with came to bid me farewell, and persuade me to go back with them. "Why will you stay with these cursed people?" they asked me. "They will surely kill you, because you are a Christian." At last they left me, and I saw the caravan go away. I watched it as it slowly disappeared over the sand-hills, and was sorely tempted to go after it, but grace and help was given to overcome the temptation, and I went back to the chief's house. Never shall I forget the feeling of loneliness that came over me as I made my way back to that room. Everybody about me strangers — not only nationally, but religiously, and, as I well knew, of a kind not favorable to Christians. The thought that I was the only Christian in the whole district was one that I cannot well describe.

CHAPTER XVII

A KIND CHIEF BUT UNKIND SUBJECTS

KAF is a large village in two sections, and is divided one from the other by palm groves. The dwellings are built of mud bricks, and so arranged as to serve well for defence in case of attack from outside, whilst the front of the houses face on to a large square. In this square all the business done by caravans is carried on, and during the stay of one of the caravans the scene is a busy as well as a noisy one. Traders come from Syria, bringing with them wheat and barley, which they exchange for coarse salt. The Kafees get this salt by evaporating strong brine, of which there are numerous never failing springs quite near the place. Kaf has an abundant supply of water: some of the springs are sulphuric and quite warm; these are used for medicinal purposes. During a large portion of the year the people migrate into the deserts, only returning to their homes in the village for the date harvest, a

time equal to the grain harvest in other parts. The women are not secluded, neither do they veil their faces, but do not sit with the men. They have their liberty, and in this respect are better off than thousands in other parts of the Mohammedan world.

The palm trees and extensive groves of Kaf pleased me immensely, and I passed many hours in them in company with some of the men who were kindly disposed toward me. On one side of the village is a high mountain, most of the stone as black as ink. On the top, which has been levelled, are the remains of what was once an extensive castle and fort. Much against the wishes of the people, I climbed the mountain and explored the ruins, but was not allowed to make notes or take photographs. As I passed, the men of Kaf gathered in groups; the only word I heard was "Nisraney"—Christian—one of the cursed ones, the enemy of God and all Moslems. Not having been so exiled among such isolated followers of Mohammed, I was not quite sure what treatment I might expect from them. On reaching the chief's room, I found him and some men there. Supper was brought in, served up in a large iron pot. I ate my share, not knowing what it was, and even now have no notion off what I supped. All

I know is, that it was very hot, slimy, greasy, and tasty, the latter making it appetizing.

After supper we sat round the open fire on the hearth, and coffee-making began. The green berries are roasted over the fire, then pounded in a large wooden mortar. When sufficiently fine, the coffee is put in boiling water, and allowed to filter to the bottom of the pot; then boiled up quickly for a few minutes, and set aside to settle. Sometimes, if guests are on hand, spices are bruised and put in to flavor the coffee. Having stood a few minutes, a small quantity, say about a tablespoonful, is poured into a handleless cup and handed round, the chief tasting it first and then the guests. About four ounces of coffee is put to a pint of water. This makes a very strong and black beverage, and it is drunk without milk or sugar. A man's generosity is judged by the quantity of coffee he gives his guests. A favorite way of speaking about a good host is to say "the coffee-pot is never off the fire." Coffee is the only luxury these Arabs have; intoxicants have not yet reached them, and they have no native-made drinks that take the place of alcoholic liquors — long may they remain in such a state!

Whilst coffee was proceeding, we were talk-

ing about the possibilities of my getting farther into the country. Opinions were divided; some thought I could go safely, others said there was much danger, besides hardship and fatigue. The chief advised my return to Orman, but saw no way of sending me back. Then a man came in and said a party of Arabs had arrived, that were leaving early in the morning for Jowf, a large town some eleven days' journey southeast. I had intended, if my way was prospered, to reach this town, it being the largest and most important in Northern Arabia, and I may mention here that Kaf, the place I was then in, was under the government of Ibn Rasheed, the Sultan of Arabia, resident in Hayel. The chief, whose name was Mohammed-el-Bady, sent for the man in charge of the caravan. He soon came, and was told that I wanted to go with them to the Jowf. Would they provide me a camel and let me journey with them? The man at once saw I was a Christian, and gave his answer. "If I took a Christian to the Jowf, I am afraid Johar — the chief there — would have me killed for doing such a thing, so I cannot do it."

Other men were called in, but all gave nearly the same answer. One said to me, "If ever you want to see the Jowf, you must turn Moslem, as

no Christian would be allowed to live there many days." This was somewhat discouraging, but the chief told me to "keep my heart strong" and we would try again in the morning before they started. Then the matter dropped, and I introduced the Bible. A man present, being a good reader, took the Book and began to read. I found him the third chapter of John's gospel, and as he read a verse I would speak on it. I ofttimes get a man to read for me so that those listening may believe that what they hear is really written in the book they see. Arabs have said that I have made up some of the things that I have read to them, but one of their own number reading does away with that foolish idea. The men that were gathered in were most attentive to all I said. It was something quite new to them.

They asked me lots of questions about the religion and customs of the Christians, pitied us because we could only have one wife at a time and because we had no date-palms in our country. Before separating for the night, the man that had been reading for us asked me to give him a Bible. I told him he must buy it. He said he could pay for it in dates if I would take payment that way. I agreed: so next morning he brought me some dates and took

away his book; this led to the sale of eight or nine other copies, either Psalms and Luke bound together, or Genesis and John. I was up early in the morning and out with the sheikh, who did his best to get the men that were leaving to take me along with them, but they were firm in their refusals. So I had to see them load up and leave, feeling that the possibility of getting on was a very poor one. That day I spent in the homes and gardens of the people. They treated me in a kindly way, but it was spoilt by their continual hard sayings against me as a Christian. That same evening another party of men called in at Kaf to stay the night. In vain my host tried to induce them to take me on, but the same excuse as the previous night was made. I saw them leave next morning and wondered if ever I should get away. After they had gone, Mohammed, my host, came to me and said, "As no one will take you with them I will go with you to the next place, named Ithera, and perhaps from there you can get on to the Jowf." About noon he called one of his servants to bring in a camel and his horse, and we were to make a start. The things being loaded on the camel, I got on top, he mounted his horse, and we were just riding out of the gate that led

into the town when we met about twelve men mounted on camels. They were chiefs from a tribe camped near by, and had come to visit my host. So we turned back, and I had the choice of waiting another few days, or being sent on in charge of two young men, servants of the chief. I chose the latter; they mounted the camel, and I was given the horse to ride. We rode off again, and about sunset saw in the distance the palms of Ithera, just about four hours' ride between the two places. I noticed the two men ofttimes got off the camel, and twice made it kneel down as if to adjust the load, but I found out later on that they had rifled my belongings and had buried them in the sand.

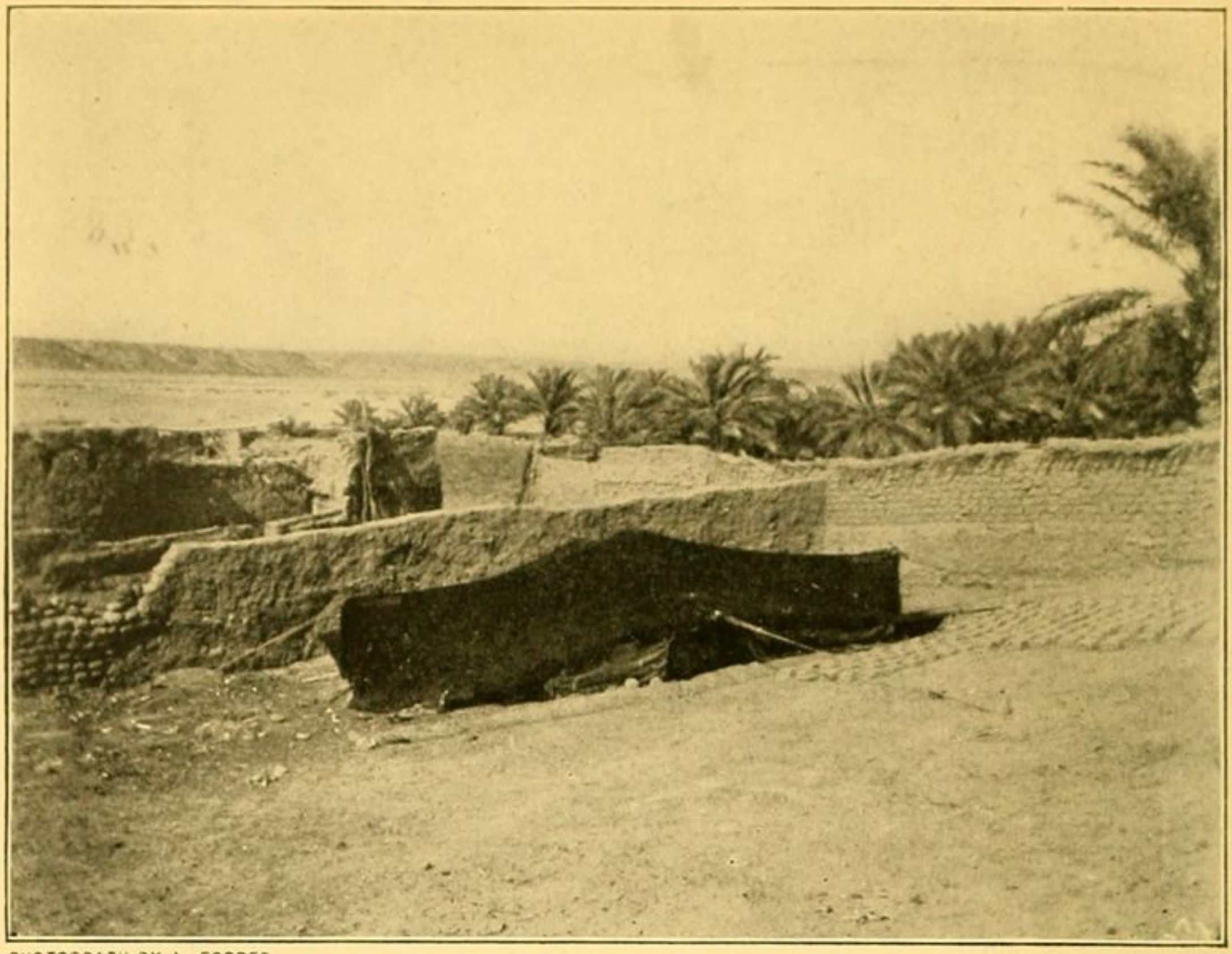
When I returned, nearly three months after, the sheikh of Kaf handed me the things the two men had robbed me of. They had told their townspeople how they had treated me, and the chief, hearing of it, made them give him my things and gave them a good thrashing for their treatment of me, his late guest.

Ithera is a much smaller place than Kaf and has its own chief. The population would be from six to eight hundred all told. The place, like others in Jebel Shomer, is built of mud brick and surrounded with palm groves. A good spring in the centre of the village sup-

plies drinking water for man and beast. All the houses consist of one large room, many of them doorless and quite bare of furniture. I noticed and thoroughly examined a large ruin, now in the middle of the place; it was built of large blocks of stone, roughly hewn and black in color. I concluded that it was at one time a guard-house, as there was ample accommodation for man and beast. Some of the chambers in the ruin have been turned into dwellings and storehouses and are more substantial than the more modern structures. Here too I noticed that the women were quite free and went unveiled.

The guest-room of the chief of Ithera was quite near the principal entrance to the place. We rode up to the door of the simple room, and I, with my few belongings, was put down at the entrance. The younger of the two men that had come over with me from Kaf went into the room and shouted to all the men sitting round, "We have brought a Christian and stick him on to you; do what you can with him." In this manner I was deposited in Ithera, and delivered to no one in particular. According to custom, the chief should have been sought out and I handed over to him personally. As it was, no one was responsible for

me. I carried my goods inside and put them in a corner. There was no salutation of welcome, and no one made room for me. I was left standing just inside the doorway. It was a very large place, about thirty feet long and fifteen wide. The doorway was in one of the side walls. It was as usual very void of comforts. The floor was strewn with sand, on which the men, about thirty in number, were squatting. A black man with piercing eyes and face like a demon sat at the coffee, pouring it out and handing it round. The chamber was put to two uses. The part on the right hand of the doorway was set apart for the accommodation of the men and visitors; that on the left side was used as a stable, and was abominably dirty. There were some horses and camels tied up there that belonged to some Arabs of the Beni Sakhr tribe, that had come in to transact business and were to stay the night. As I stood in the entrance awaiting an invitation to join the men, I heard them speculating as to who or what I was. They no doubt thought that I did not know Arabic and so could not understand what they were talking about. A man sitting near me informed the others that I was a Christian from Jerusalem and was to be shunned, because he had visited



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

A TEMPORARY HOSPITAL IN THE DESERT

To this tent the author was sent to keep company with an old man suffering from a very loathsome disease. The Arabs hoped Mr. Forder would catch the disease and die, and so they would be saved the trouble of killing him.

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

MRS. KHY-KHAN, THE CHIEF'S WIFE

This woman is preparing the morning meal. Bread is baking on a hot sheet of iron. Mr. Forder was kindly treated by this woman during his enforced stay in her town. The look of surprise was caused by her interest in the camera.

that city and had seen the Christians there — not Protestants — worshipping pictures and images. This, unfortunately, is all too true, and can be seen in any of the churches belonging to the Eastern sects representing Christianity. A man sitting in another part of the assembly differed from the first speaker, and volunteered the information that "I was not a Christian, but one from among the Jews." But a third thought he knew better, and speaking in a loud voice said, "This is neither a Christian or Jew, but one from among the heathen, an infidel, one that knows not God, nor his apostle Mohammed, on whom be peace."—This information, however, did not satisfy the whole company, evident by one man, who, with more boldness than the others, rose and said, "This is neither Christian, Jew, nor infidel, but a pig."

All that know anything about Mohammedans will know that this was the greatest insult possible to offer any one. To call a man a dog is bad enough, and sufficient to cause lifelong enmity, but to liken one to a pig would be beyond forgiveness, and possibly result in death. Having given vent to his ideas about me, the speaker left the place, maybe from fear of what he had said, and in came the chief man of the

place. He heard the last words of the disappearing speaker, and also what I had ventured to say in reply to criticisms about me. I just said, " Men, I am neither pig, infidel, nor Jew; I am a Christian, one that worships God, the same God as you do, but not of those Christians who bow down to and worship pictures and images; as there are four fingers on your hands, each one different from the other, so there are different kinds of Christians." The old sheikh then addressed me, saying, " If you are a Christian, go and sit among the cattle." I did as I was told, and went and sat on the ground between a camel and an old white mare.

I had not been sitting long when in came a man, by whose dress I knew must be a stranger. He soon proved it by walking over to me, putting out his hand, and shaking mine. Never in my life was a proffered hand more acceptable than that. It spoke in a very assuring way of sympathy, pity, and comfort. He sat down beside me, and then followed this short, but to me instructive, conversation in an undertone: —

Stranger. — Who are you and from where do you come?

Answer. — From Jerusalem. I am a Christian, a preacher.

Stranger. — What do you want here?

Answer. — I am come to see the land, people, towns, villages, and have with me books for sale.

Stranger. — If you value your life, you will get out of this as quickly as you can, or the men, who are a bad lot, will kill you.

Question. — What kind of a man is the chief?

Stranger. — Very kind, and has great influence; makes much of his guests.

Question. — Who are you and what do you do here?

Stranger. — I am a Druze, and have the only shop here. I am allowed to remain because I pretend to be a Moslem.

With this he got up and went away, and I saw him no more during my short stay there. I then pricked up my ears to hear what the men at the far end of the room were saying. I heard them discussing with the chief plans for getting rid of me; one man offered to cut my throat whilst I was sleeping that night. But the old chief said, "I will not have the blood of a Christian on my house and town." Another suggested that the supper that was given me should be poisoned; that would save them killing me, as I should die in my sleep; then I could be buried, and if any one from my people or Government came looking for me, — as they

would, — my grave could be shown, and, if necessary, my body, but no marks would be seen to show that I had been done away with. To this, however, the chief objected, and it was suggested that I be driven out into the desert to die of hunger and thirst. It was at last settled that I be left until the morning, and the old chief said, "Lest any harm come to our beasts by having a Christian with them, he had better spend the night in the gardens under the palms." Then supper was brought in, and, after all the others had supped, I was called to eat. I sat down by the large round bowl, and, being hungry, ate and enjoyed an unknown mixture, conveying it to my mouth with my fingers in place of spoon or fork, things evidently unknown in those parts. Having seen the others partake of the same food, I knew there was no harm in the dish. Then I was called to follow the chief, and he led me out into the gardens quite near by. I sat down under a large palm tree and prepared to spend the night in the open. After half an hour the chief came back again, saying, "I fear if you stay here you will affect the palms in some way, and my crop of dates will fail this year; come with me." He led off, and I followed him. It was nearly dark. We got outside the walls of the place,

and he showed me a solitary tent near by, under the shadow of some old walls. "Go in there and stay," said he; and I did so. Inside this tent I found there was an old man suffering from a very loathsome disease, much like leprosy; he was in a bad state, and was most repulsive. He told me he could no longer be tolerated inside the village, so had been isolated until death relieved him from his sad state. I felt if ever there had been a time that I needed courage and help, it was now. I had, by oft reading, learned by heart the 121st Psalm, and I laid claim to verse 7 as never before. The next morning I was up early, and awaited the events of the day. No one came near. I had no idea where my things were. All I had was my pocket Bible, and all I could read in it was the Psalm I have just named, viz. 121. Toward noon I saw a few men with the old chief, whose name was Khy-Khwan, crossing over in front of the tent. I followed them unobserved. They sat down and began to talk, not knowing I was near and listening to all they were saying. I gathered from their conversation three things:—

1st. That a caravan was to be made up to leave for the Jowf on the following Friday—this was Wednesday.

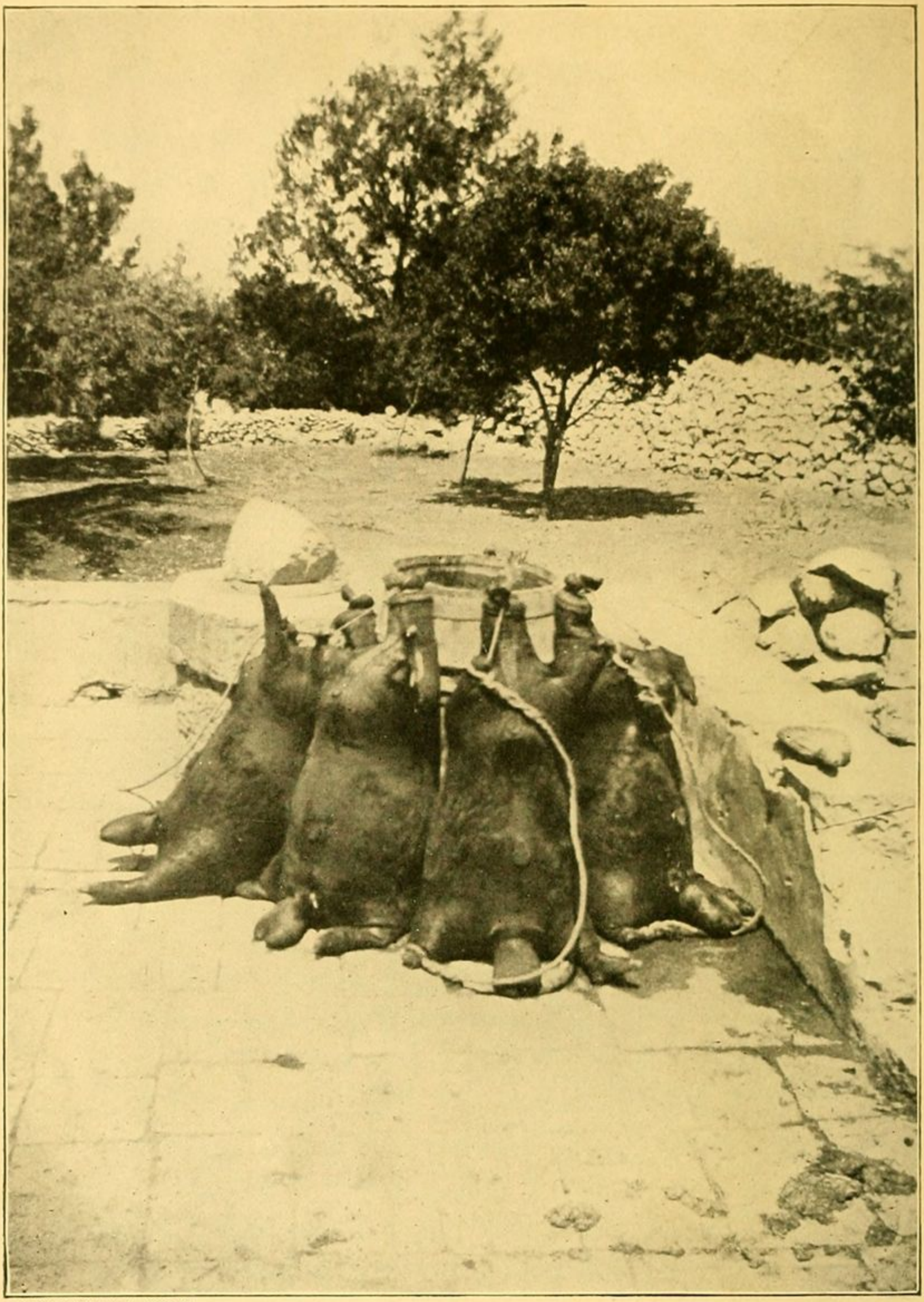
2d. That the old chief himself was to conduct the caravan.

3d. That the two parties I had seen leave the last town, Kaf, had both for some cause or other been delayed, and were to join the caravan leaving on the Friday.

These things made me glad, and I determined to face the chief about them. The men having gone away, I followed Khy-Khwan and spoke to him thus: "You are going to the Jowf; will you take me with you?" He gazed at me in wonderment. Said he, "You will never leave here alive, and if you did and reached the Jowf, you would surely be killed. This is the land of the Moslem; no Christians come here; you are our enemy and the enemy of God." I replied, "I will pay you to take me with you, and am ready to face the Jowf with its dangers." His answer was: "Do you know how far it is to the Jowf? It is ten days' journey. The desert journey, the dangers from robbers, hunger, thirst, and fatigue will kill you." Again telling him I was prepared for all that and had no fear, I asked him, "How much do you want to take me — for the ten days' journey there and back again, provide me a camel, food, and water for the journey, and help me all you can whilst we stay in the Jowf?"

His answer was short and decided, "Two English pounds a day, equal to ten dollars — ten days going, ten returning, and a stay of fifteen, making thirty-five days — put me down seventy gold pieces, English ones, and I will take you." I told him it was impossible, that it was more money than I had; he must ask less. "If you can't give it, go back to your place," he said; so I returned to the isolated tent. I was strongly impressed that it was God's ordering that I had come to Ithera just when I did. To find a man like Khy-Khwan just about starting to conduct a caravan to the Jowf was most providential, as was the fact that the different parties I had seen leave Kaf had been delayed here in Ithera. I felt it was the time to act, so on returning to the tent I sat down to pray and meditate. I was led to make an offer of money to the chief, but not as large a sum as he expected. I had a few Napoleons — French gold pieces, value four dollars each — sewed into the band of my trousers, so ripping out four of these I went off to find the sheikh. I found him alone in the guest-chamber. Walking up to him, I held in my hand the money, at the same time saying, "If you will let me go to the Jowf with you, find me a camel, water, and food, I will give you these

four gold pieces." He looked at the money and then at me, then said, "Give them to me now, and we'll start after to-morrow." I said, "No; you come outside, and before the men of the place I will give them to you; they must be witnesses." Had I given him the money, most likely he would have denied ever having had it. So away we went, and, in presence of the men of Ithera, the money was handed over and the bargain made. That night I was allowed to sleep in the guest-room, with a horse on one side of me and a camel on the other, my only fear being that the horse might tread on me, as I was on the floor. But I had a good night's rest, and on waking next morning found the place empty. I went out to a spring near by, had a wash, the first one for many days, then went in search of some of the men. I met a woman, who turned out to be Mrs. Khy-Khwan; she kindly asked me to go into her house. I did, and she set before me a dish of dates, some warm bread, and a bowl of sour milk. Off this I made a sumptuous breakfast. She talked long with me and sympathized and pitied me because I had had to run away from my own land, people, and kindred, and seek shelter among the Arabs. "Tell me," she asked, "what crime you committed, or who you



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

WATER SKINS FILLED, READY FOR A JOURNEY

These skins are removed from the carcass without being cut, and after curing are used to carry liquids in. The four seen above filled with water were for the use of Mr. Forder and the chief that accompanied him for ten days across the desert. When not in use, olive oil is rubbed on and put into the skin to prevent it from drying and cracking, and so becoming useless.

murdered, that you had to run away." I told her the real reason why I had come to the desert region of Arabia, but she, poor thing, could not believe that I would leave wife, children, home, and country, and live such a life as I was enduring, just to tell people about a Saviour. I asked about the proposed journey. She told me her husband went once a year, and this was the time. He was taking the yearly tax from the district that had to be paid to the chief of the Jowf, who would send it on to the capital city, Hayel. She told me the men were a "cursed" lot, but encouraged me by saying, "If you are with Khy-Khwan, no one will hurt you." I spoke to her about her soul, but I got the usual reply, "We women are no better than our camels or donkeys; we have no souls; when we die, there is an end of us." Then I went out, and in walking about saw water-skins on all hands being prepared for the journey. In a garden by a cistern there were four ready to be hung on the camels. I knew that the start would soon be made and I was not disappointed.

CHAPTER XVIII

TEN DAYS ON THE DESERT

THE call to noonday prayers was heard, and I returned to the house. As soon as prayers were over a hurry and bustle began. A camel was driven in, and I was told to load up my things quickly, as the caravan was off. I put my belongings on the camel, jumped on top, and rode outside the village. There I met the chief, who sent a man to get me a stick to guide my beast with, as it had no halter or rope on its head. Then we started; my load slipped off — so did I — because it was not tied on. Some men were sent to adjust and secure it, and I soon overtook the others. I counted about one hundred and twenty camels and about eighty men in the party. Some of them were especially unpleasant and rude fellows. They gathered round me, showing their daggers and guns, telling me over and over again that such things were for Christians. They told me I should never reach the Jowf alive; they would leave my dead body on the sands.

They began extolling the religion of Islam, and told me I must change mine if I lived in their country. The start for the Jowf was not encouraging from a human point of view, but inwardly I felt that God was with me, and the arrangements I had been able to make, and for so small a sum of money, encouraged me to believe that all would be well. I did not ignore the fact that there were dangers, but relied on the promise that they should not prevail over me. We rode away from Ithera about one o'clock, and went on until sunset. Just before five o'clock a cry was raised, "Look behind." Coming after us, as hard as they could ride, was a party of wild Bedouins; they were robbers. The camels were all driven up close together, and made to kneel down; this was for protection. The old chief came to me and said, "Your being with us has caused us this trouble, and the first day out, too." He then told me to lie down and seek shelter between the camels, for he feared I should be hit by a bullet, as they had begun to fly about us. I did not care to take such an undignified position as was suggested, and told Khy-Khwan so. He said he feared I might be killed, and he very vehemently cursed the day that I came to him. Quite an exciting battle took place between the

enemy and our men, some of the latter acquitting themselves very well. I congratulated them afterward, and we became more friendly. The robbers made off, and the order was given to spend the night where we were. My supper of dates and warm, heavy bread was given me, after which I lay down on the sand and was soon asleep. The robbers appeared again after about two hours, but were driven off.

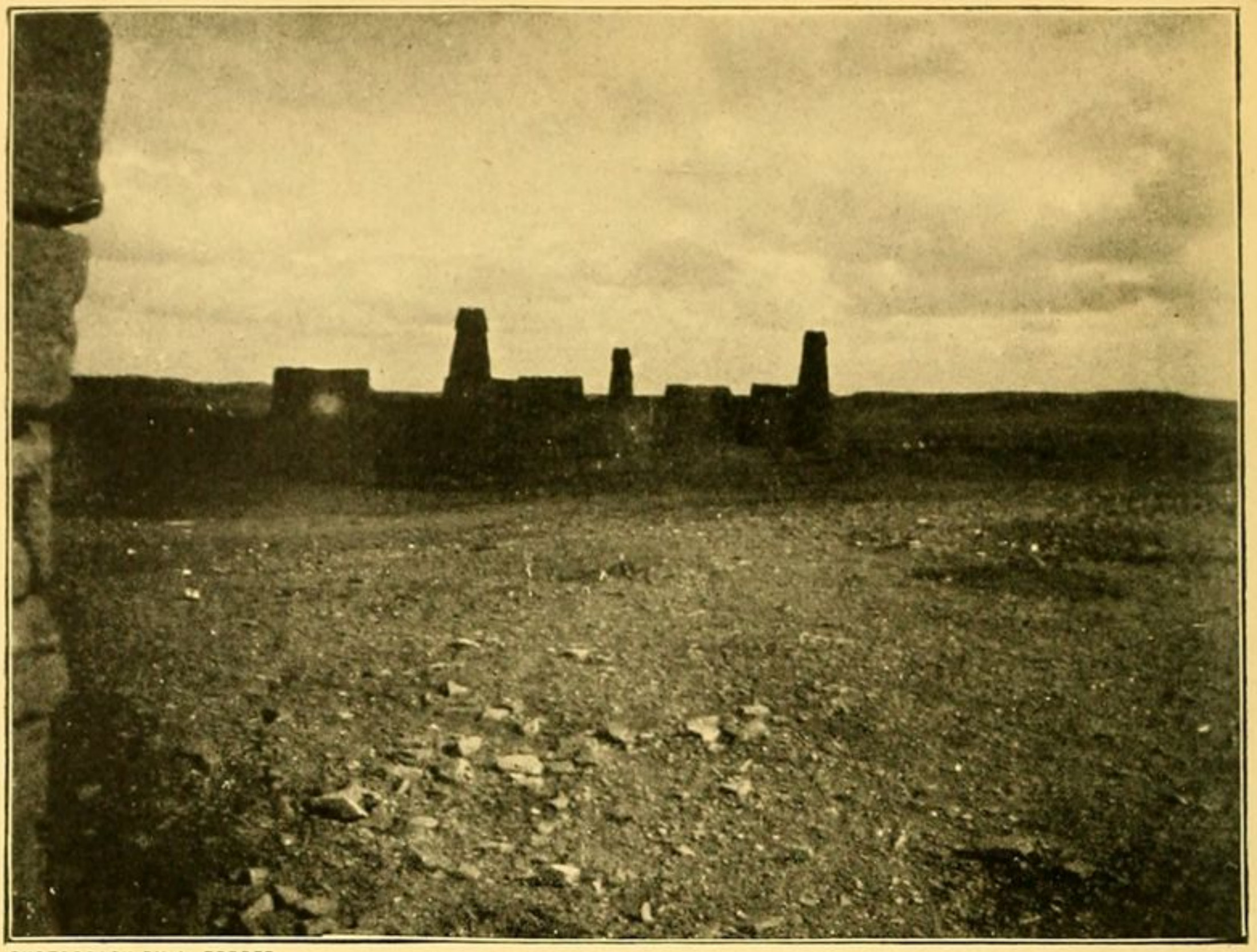
Next morning we moved off at sunrise, and soon reached a spring of brackish water. Here we filled up the skins, and moved on as quickly as possible. We never linger around water. Other Arabs might come up, and, if unfriendly, a quarrel might ensue. Much of the fighting among the Bedouin and Arabs is caused by quarrelling over water — springs and wells (Gen. xxvi. 18–21). That night we drank all the water we had carried away from the spring, and hoped next day to find more. But we found none for five days, and consequently were very thirsty. The evening of the fifth day I induced our men to search for water, and they set out in all directions to do so. Presently one was seen waving his "abba" — cloak — over his head, thus indicating that he had been successful. The camels set off at a run toward him; I brought up the rear. On reaching the

spot I saw about ten of the men down on their knees digging in the sand, just as a dog would do. I asked where the water was, and received the answer, "Wait; you are a town man and don't know the wilderness; we are sons of the desert, and know how to manage." Down they dug — three feet, four feet, five feet, but no appearance of water. Then, instead of sand, came gravel, and soon the valuable liquid that we were all so anxious to have a drink of. In turn we were given drink. The men had pity on me and gave me the first draught, knowing I was not used to such long abstinence. The water was dipped up in their dirty, greasy skull-caps, that had never known soap and very little fresh air, being worn next the head, under the large handkerchief that serves as a covering for the head. It was no time to stand on ceremony; we were all too eager for a drink to care how it was conveyed to our mouths from its gravelly bed. My cup and enamelled bowl would have come in useful there, had they not been stolen by some one anxious to relieve the Christian of those useful additions to a very limited outfit. Having water, we could have bread for supper instead of dates. Dough was made, and baked in a bed of hot ashes on the sand. When taken from the hot coals, the

thick cake was divided between us; sometimes, if the divider was not kindly disposed toward me, I came off badly, only getting a small piece. On one occasion I had only received a tiny share, not enough to nearly satisfy me, so remembering I had in my saddle-bag the remains of what was given me in Orman, sixteen days before, I took it out, intending to eat it. It was musty and as hard as a stone. Knowing the dislike the Arab has of seeing bread thrown away, I determined to soak it and give it to my camel to eat. I did this, thinking no one had seen me. Next morning, bread was made and divided out as usual, but none was given to me. I did not ask for any; that would be contrary to custom. So we started on another day. How sorry I was I had given the camel the hard bread; it would have served me now I was so hungry. I might have damped it and managed to allay the hunger, but it was gone. Little did I think that my feeding the camel with these few hard pieces would result in my having to go hungry for the next day, but such was the case. Some of the men saw me soak the musty remains and give it to my camel, and they thought me wasteful. I told the old chief about it during the day. He said he thought I had been given my share, as the

usual quantity of flour had been doled out as hitherto. On asking the men who made the bread why none had been given me, the answer given was, "The Christian feeds his camel on bread, and as he is wasteful we did not give him any." I tried to explain, but I had committed an offence that could not be easily overlooked. I learned a lesson I shall not soon forget. I well remember the night that followed that day. We put down near a wild palm; water was brought from a small spring about half a mile away. It had been windy all the day, but at sunset a terrible wind from the northeast commenced to blow, whirling the sand in all directions, and so keen and sweeping was the wind that we could not even have a fire — it was carried in all directions. The chief kindly made a barricade of some of the sacks of wheat we were carrying, but it was of little use, and did not shelter us much. The cold made sleep impossible and I rested little, and was glad when the day broke. The wind ceased with the sunrise, but I was chilled through and was obliged to walk for quite two hours so that I might get warm. We were getting near our journey's end, and all were eager to reach the Jowf. Beyond the fatigue of the journey all had gone well. The attitude

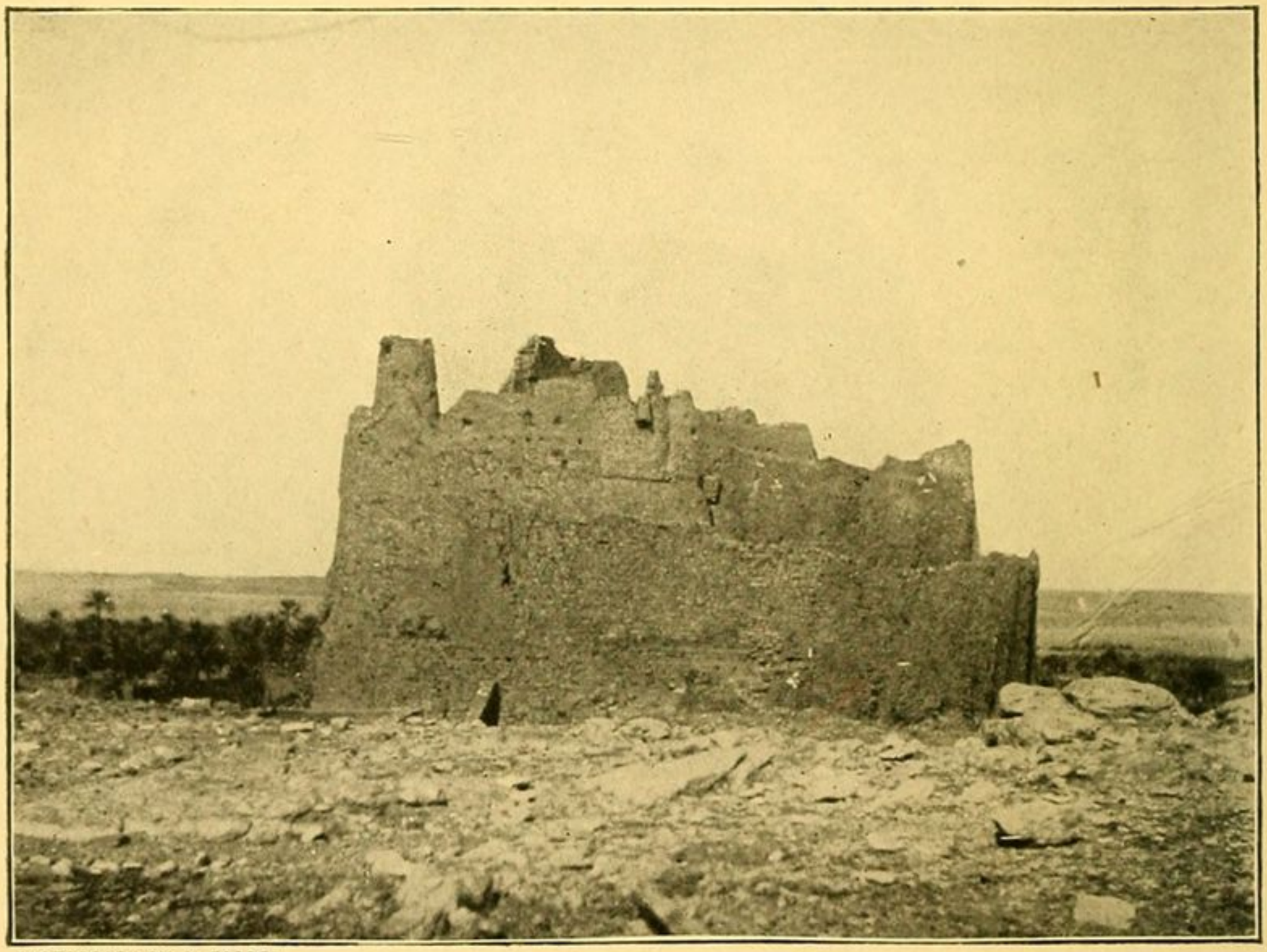
of the men had changed toward me, but they never lost an opportunity of trying to frighten me because I was a Christian. We ofttimes saw skeletons of camels on the sand, and twice saw human remains. On coming across a skull one day, the men called my attention to it and tried to impress me with the fact that it was a Christian's skull — one that like myself had ventured into the land of the Moslem, but had perished in the desert, and his remains had been left as a warning to any Christians that came after. "Such will be your fate" was the comforting assurance they offered me. The last night we were out I made another unforgivable mistake. As usual, I was up before daybreak, and had boiled a drop of water to make me a cup of beef tea before starting out. There was no food that morning, as we were nearing the end of the journey, and, on picking up my kettle to put into my saddle-bag, I found it still had a drop of water in it, not more than a teacupful. Here was a chance for a wash, so filling my hand I rinsed my face and hands, glad to be able to remove the top layer of dust and dirt. I thought no one had seen me, but alas, eyes were on me, and on asking for a drink later on I was told, "If you use water for washing, you cannot have it for drinking." To ex-



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

THE CASTLE OF THE JOWF

This shows the chief's residence, on the outskirts of the town. The picture was taken after the accident that nearly killed the chief, hence only three towers appear on the walls. It was never known that this picture was taken, or the Arabs would have made more trouble than they did.



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

MARID, THE STRONGHOLD OF THE JOWF

This castle is at the north end of the oasis of Jowf. It is very large and circular in shape. The Arabs believe that much treasure is hidden under the walls, and only the Christians know where to locate it. Once a year worship is conducted by the Arabs inside this massive ruin.

plain was useless. I had done a dreadful thing, and could not be forgiven. Soon after I saw the men empty all their water-skins out on the sand. And what I fain would have quenched my thirst with was wasted before my eyes. Before us in the distance could be seen the palms of the Jowf, and rearing itself above the palms was the fine old circular castle, no one knows how old. I was forbidden to go near it for various reasons. About four in the afternoon we entered this secluded desert-bound town, and were soon lodged in the spacious guest-room of the three sons of the chief, whose name was Johar — or Aboo Amber, *i.e.* the father of Amber.

CHAPTER XIX

THE CHIEF'S PLAN TO CAPTURE ME FOR ISLAM

SOON after sighting the old castle I saw men, women, and children coming out to meet their relatives and friends that were arriving from the desert journey with its dangers and fatigue. For a time all attention was taken off me by the greetings, salutations, and welcomings of the long-separated relatives. But soon it was discovered that a stranger was with the party, and for him there was no word of welcome. Such expressions as these were meant for me: "May God curse him!" "The enemy of God and the Prophet, may we be delivered from him!" "Infidel, Unclean!" and such like were hurled at me by all classes, especially the women and children. I was much interested in the old mud towers that I saw on all hands as I entered the Jowf from the north. I found out afterward that they were for the purpose of defence. It was impossible to get any pictures of them because of

the constant eyes on me. We rode along the side of this beautiful oasis in the desert. The beauty and prosperous condition of the thousands of palms impressed me. The Jowf as a town is about two miles long, and, on an average, a quarter of a mile wide. The houses, many of them, are hidden away in the palms, and so give one the impression at first sight that the place is thinly populated. I learned from the chief, later on, that there were about forty thousand inhabitants in the Jowf, all told. The buildings, except the castle, are all of mud and sand brick, dried in the sun; some of the houses have three stories, built, of course, in a very primitive style. The roofs are all flat, protected by a wall about waist high. The women, there secluded. frequent these roofs, as they are free from all observation. The interior of the houses are as bare as possible, the hand-mill, coffee-pounder, and an old rug or two being about all that is visible. Most of the houses are doorless, owing to the scarcity of wood. The people live mostly out of doors, in the hottest months seeking the shade of the palm groves and gardens, and in the cooler months basking in the sun on the sand. Rain is scarce in the Jowf; they told me three falls a year were about all they had. The water

supply is good, drawn up by camels from springs deep down in the earth. There are some warm, sulphurous springs there, used by the people for ablution purposes. I saw no shops in the town, and on asking how the people got the necessities of life, such as clothing, cooking utensils, coffee, etc., they told me they relied on caravans that came from Mecca, Bagdad, or Damascus.

The men make their own "abbas" — cloaks — on rude looms, also a few for sale. I got a very good one for about three and a half dollars. The abbas of the Jowf are much valued and sought after in Palestine and Syria. I also saw men making "mereers," the double rope that they wear on their heads, and was intensely interested in the simple, yet neat, way they did it. Saddle-bags and carpets are also included in the industries of the Jowf. The staple food of the place is dates and "temmin," the latter a cereal inferior to rice. Bread is a luxury and is only eaten by the head men of the place, and that not every day, A kind of bread is made from flour, ground from a small seed almost as fine as sand and dark red in color. The name of the seed is "semmah," and the taste of the finished article abominable. The people are fortunate in having a good

supply of fruit. Besides the many varieties of dates, they told me they had grapes, apricots, plums, citron, melons, tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, pumpkins, and other things not known to me in English. Like all Eastern towns, there were no sanitary arrangements. The only beverage of the Jowfees is coffee; intoxicants there are none — long may it be so! Many of the men smoke, not all. I was agreeably surprised to find so many of the men and boys able to read intelligently, and also to see that many of them possessed watches. The ignorance of outside affairs surprised me. Absence of posts, telegrams, newspapers, and railways keeps them isolated. Truly Ishmael dwells alone (Jer. xlix. 31). The government of the Jowf, as also Ithera and Kaf, is in the hands of Abdul-Azeez-Ibn Rasheed, who resides at Hayel, a city six days' journey from the Jowf. He is represented in the Jowf by a very influential old man named Johar, whose fame I had heard some years before. Just, liberal, open-hearted, and firm, he is feared and respected by all that know him or have anything to do with him. He is also responsible for the taxes and good behavior of a town six hours east of the Jowf named Sakaka; report said it was as large and flourishing a place as the Jowf.

Time and circumstances did not allow me to pay a visit to this unknown place, much as I should have liked to do so.

Having introduced the reader in this brief way to the Jowf and its people, I will return to my story. A sharp bend in the road revealed the imposing castle of Johar with its four lofty towers on the corners of the outside wall. Our company had gone into all directions, and I was riding behind Khy-Khwan. He pointed out the castle to me and told me it was the residence of Johar, the chief. He rode on, I following, until we reached a large square with many men sitting about in the sun. Near by was a large house. We dismounted; many were the greetings for my conductor, but none for me. Then we were invited inside and were asked to be seated. I was the object of attention, everybody asking the same question, " What does he want here? he is a Christian." I kept quiet, and left Khy-Khwan to answer all questions, which he did in his own way, not always telling the truth, however. As it was " Rumathan " — the month observed by Moslems for fasting by day and feasting by night — no coffee was made or food brought. We had not been sitting long when a man came in to say Johar had heard of our arrival and was coming to see us. In a few

minutes he appeared, accompanied by six or eight of his attendants and a short, thick-set negro, clad in many and various-colored garments and carrying a heavy whip in his hand. We all rose to receive him, and he was given the seat of honor at the far end of the large room. He invited Khy-Khwan to sit on his right and me on his left hand. Salutations were exchanged and a few questions asked, and then Johar turned to me, "You are a Christian, eh?"

"Yes."

"What brings you here?"

"To see the Jowf and its people, also to sell God's Word to any that will buy."

"Are you not afraid of the people, or myself?"

"No; I believe God will keep me, and I believe that under your protection no harm will come to me."

"Have you heard about me before?"

"Yes, in Kerak. I ofttimes heard of you from the Bedouin that came in to buy grain. Your name is sweet everywhere, and I am glad to be in the Jowf and under your protection."

"I fear you will get killed if you go about here alone. The people are haters of Christians, and may harm you."

"I will be careful and not go far away from the houses," I replied.

He then ordered a man to go and bring a tray of the best dates for me, saying to me: "We are fasting and dare not eat. You must be hungry; don't be ashamed; 'kool wahud ala deenoo' — every one to his religion. Eat," for the dates were before me, enough for twenty men to feed off.

I hesitated, not liking to eat alone, knowing that every one else was fasting. "I can wait until sunset," I said. "Like you, like me."

But he insisted, and I ate a few of the dates, and whilst thus engaged he rose and went out, followed by his eldest son, named Faleh, and his attendants. Soon I was called outside, and was addressed by Faleh, who, here I must say, was a very nice, kind-hearted young man of about twenty-five. "My father says you must not be allowed to remain in the guest-room with the men. Being a Christian, you will defile them; you are unclean; you are to have a small place near by where you must sleep and sit. He will also send three men that will be with you when you go outside — one of them will always be with you in your room." He showed me a small place adjoining the guest-room. It was about twelve feet deep, four feet wide, and seven feet high, entered by a rude doorway about four feet high; it had a door without

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

ARABS OF NORTHERN ARABIA

These three men, residents of the town of Jowf in North Arabia, were my guardians during my stay in that extensive oasis. In reality they were set over me to take note of all I did and report to the chief. The one on the left-hand side roused the fanaticism of the Arabs after the castle had fallen in and injured the chief.

any fastening on it to secure me from intruders by day or night. The floor on which I had to lay was made of large stones set edgeways in mud. No air or light could enter except by the door, and that entrance was darkened by a flight of steps that led to an upper chamber, which was the sleeping apartment of the youngest son. My belongings were carried in and put down anyhow. The place was filthy, having been used as a stable and general rubbish-room. I was grateful for this separate place; although not all that could be desired, I had some privacy, and was enabled to pray and meditate without a crowd of curious spectators, and I also had my nights to myself, and was thus saved the unpleasant task every night and morning of looking through my clothes in search of sundry irritating and undesirable creatures that abound in Arabdom and quickly transfer themselves from man to man, encouraged no doubt by the prospect of something fresh in the way of drink and food. I got my share of visitors in spite of my semi-seclusion; I was invited to supper in the guest-room, and did my best to empty the dish, having been without food for nearly twenty-four hours. In spite of Johar's orders, I was invited to join the men round the fire and partake of coffee with them.

Next morning I was up early, and spent a time at a warm spring, washing my clothes. The sight of soap induced others to join me, to take the opportunity of using soap on their hands and heads; so my soap quickly vanished. After a breakfast of dates from a large trayful that had been put in my small room so that I could eat when I liked, I thought I would go over and see Johar at his castle. There were no men about the premises, and I could not find any women. So off I started, and in about fifteen minutes reached the outer wall of the castle. I walked round it to find the entrance, when suddenly, on the south side, I came upon Johar holding his daily Court of Inquiry. He was mounted on a dais about three feet high, with his scribe at his side. Before him in a semicircle sat scores of men, listening to the various cases presented to him to give judgment about. On seeing me, he beckoned me to him, and asked me to sit by his side. He finished the case he had in hand, and then turned to me:—

"Did you come over here alone?"

"Yes."

"Were you not afraid?"

"No."

"Have you no fear of any one?"

"Yes, I fear God and the devil"—a common saying among them.

"Do you not fear me?"

"No."

"But I could cut your head off."

"Yes, I know you could; but you wouldn't treat a guest thus."

"No," he said, "I wouldn't; but I would Khy-Khwan,—turning to him,—if he were not such an old friend of mine, for bringing you down here with him."

Then, calling one of my neglectful attendants, he told him to return with me to the house, have bread made for me, and see that I was never hungry, "and don't let him go out alone," he bawled out as we departed.

I passed a few hours quietly with my companion, reading and writing in my diary,—afterward I was strictly forbidden to write,—when we were told that Johar was coming. Soon he arrived, and a crowd with him. The large hall was filled with men, and I was called in before him. He asked me a few things about our country and religion, and I answered him. Then he said he wanted to see God's Book. So I went and brought in a large Arabic Bible, bound in morocco, with gilt ornamentation. I had brought this book for him,

but did not want to force it on him. We uncovered it, and he took it, kissed it, and examined it from outside, and concluded it was a nice book. Then he opened it, put on some ancient spectacles, and commenced to read. Opening at Genesis, he read the whole of chapter xxiv, shut up the book, and asked me to give it to him. "You must buy it," I said; "it is worth an English pound, *i.e.* five dollars. I will sell it you for half." He said, "Leave it till to-morrow." Then he said, "Christian, I want to speak to you." I said, "Good; speak on." Said he, "You are come into the land of the Moslem, the believers in Mohammed, the prophet of God; here are no Christians; we don't allow them to stay here; we are taught by our religion to kill all such. I must ask you to give up your religion and become as one of us. What do you answer?"

Here was a strait place to be in. I remembered that to displease Johar might cause serious times for me; also, that hundreds of miles of desert lay between me and any Christian, and I could tell that the whole thing had been arranged.

Johar went on to say: "I praise God that through my influence six Christians that came here at different times have become Moslem,

and one Jew also. There is a man living here in Jowf that was formerly a Christian, but has resigned himself to God and the true religion. [This latter was true, for I met the man ofttimes after, although he was ashamed to speak to me.] Repeat the witness, 'There is no God but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet,' and at once you will become one of the faithful, and be acceptable to God and His people." They were all awaiting my answer. With a short, silent prayer to God for words to speak, I replied, "Chief Johar, I would ask you two questions and hear your answers." "Good," he said; "speak." "First, if you were in the land of the Christians, guest of the Queen [I did not know she was dead], and she asked you to become a Christian and give up your own religion, would you do it?" "No, not if she had my head cut off," he replied. "Secondly, which do you think it best to do, to please God or please man?" "To please God," was the ready reply he gave. Then I said, "Johar, I am just like you: I cannot change my religion, not if you cut off two heads, if I had them, and I must please God by remaining a Christian. If I repeated 'the witness,' you would all be pleased, but it would only be from here (touching my lips); my heart would still remain

Christian, and so by pleasing you I should grieve God by becoming a liar and deceiver. I cannot do what you ask me; it is impossible." He rose and went out, much displeased. I was glad to get away to my room. Here was an attack on the soul, not the body, and the verse in my Psalm came home forcibly to me: "He shall preserve thy soul." The men came to me frequently that evening and told me how foolish I had been not to do as Johar had asked me.

"To-morrow is our great feast day, and your conversion would have made it a great time of rejoicing," they said.

I was glad when night came, so as to be alone, and I prayed earnestly for guidance and help for the coming day, then lay down on the stones to sleep, body and mind not in the most perfect state of rest. Next morning, just after daybreak, I was aroused by two men, fully armed, pushing open the door, coming in, and shouting, "Christian, get up; Johar has sent us for you; come quickly to the castle." "What does he want," I asked, "and where is your authority?" "We don't know; here are our swords, showing we are on duty."

I quickly dressed, all the time wondering what was going to happen, for I had made up

my mind to keep quiet and not expose myself, because the people would be so excited keeping feast, and my presence might have excited them more and caused me harm. I followed the men over to the castle and saw crowds of people going toward it from all directions. On reaching the same spot as I had before, I saw Johar mounted on his elevated seat, clad in garments of many colors. He was all smiles and greeted me heartily. I gave him the usual salutations and the special ones customary on high days and festal occasions. He was pleased, but surprised that I could do this. He bade me sit by him. There were hundreds of men and boys sitting in the sun on the sand in front of him.

Said he: "To-day is a great feast with us, and we have been to the old castle and had prayers and service; why did you not come and 'furrage' [*i.e.* to quiz in a curious way] us at our prayers and see all that we did?" I replied, "We do not think that people should go to prayers just for the sake of quizzing what others do; prayers to us are sacred, and we like to be quiet and alone, and I thought you would not like me to come and watch you." The answer pleased him, and he patted me on the back, saying, "You are better people than we are, if only you would accept the Prophet as we do." Then

he told his servants to bring out the things prepared for breaking their fast.

The great castle door with its iron plates on it were opened, and inside I saw a rusty old cannon. In a few minutes several men appeared, carrying on a carpet a circular dish about four feet in diameter, filled with meat and "temmin," — a cereal inferior to rice, — strongly flavored with curry and cayenne and soaked in liquid grease. This was placed in front of Johar and myself. Nine other dishes followed and were placed round in a circle. Then Johar told me to sit down on the sand, as he already had done, which I did. He called Khy-Khwan and one or two others. Then saying in a loud voice, "Bismillah!" — In the name of God, — he told all to eat, and the men began to feast. The meat — camel's flesh — was in large lumps, but was soon torn into fragments and devoured. The quantity consumed by one man was astonishing. Johar was very attentive to me and kept putting into my hand lumps of meat, and especially fat, the daintiest part, that he had pulled off the lump in the midst of the bowl. "Eat, Christian; enjoy yourself; don't be ashamed," he said The sight was sufficient, but I had to eat. I was glad when Johar got up and went back to his seat. I quickly followed. We

watched the crowd pushing and grabbing to get their share of the provision. I shall never forget that sight. How I wished I could have taken some pictures of it, but it was impossible. Said Johar, "See the savages, like dogs; do you thus in your land, Christian?" I said "No," and he laughed.

After the dishes had been emptied and well cleaned they were taken back into the castle, and the assembly broke up. I then went inside the castle and had coffee with the sheikh. Johar then called one of my attendants and told him to go back with me to my room and stay with me, lest any one should harm me. So we went back. I learned that three camels and four loads of temmin had been cooked at Johar's expense for the feast. He did this every year. We stayed indoors for an hour or so, and then I said I would like to go into the palm groves and gardens and spend a time. The people, all being taken up in visiting one another to exchange greetings, had no thought for me, so I slipped away alone, and in the quiet time made use of my camera. Late in the afternoon Johar came again. I was out in the groves when a man came to call me. I hurried back and found the large guest-room full of men. I was invited to sit by Johar. All were very silent. Then

Johar addressed me. "Christian, what I asked you yesterday was a hard thing, and I think there must be things that make it difficult for you to become a Moslem, but I will help you. Are you married?"

"Yes."

"Have children?"

"Yes, three."

"Have you money?"

"No."

"Do you trade, or keep a shop?"

"No. God sends me what I need."

"Well, listen: If you will become Moslem, I will give you four wives instead of the one you have, and you will soon have more than three children. I will also give you camels, palms, and money, so that you can trade and soon become rich. We will give you a house and all you need if you will become a Moslem like we are."

I thanked him for his kind offer, but told him I could not change my religion for all he might offer to give me.

He got up quickly and went away to his castle, murmuring "that it was a cursed day when I came among them, and that if I stayed in the Jowf, some harm would befall them."

That evening he sent Faleh, his son, to me,

requesting that I give him the Bible he had seen. So I sent it to him.

Next morning early, two men came to me with this message, "Johar has sent us to tell you that you must leave the Jowf at once; you must not stay here; you will do some harm if you remain."

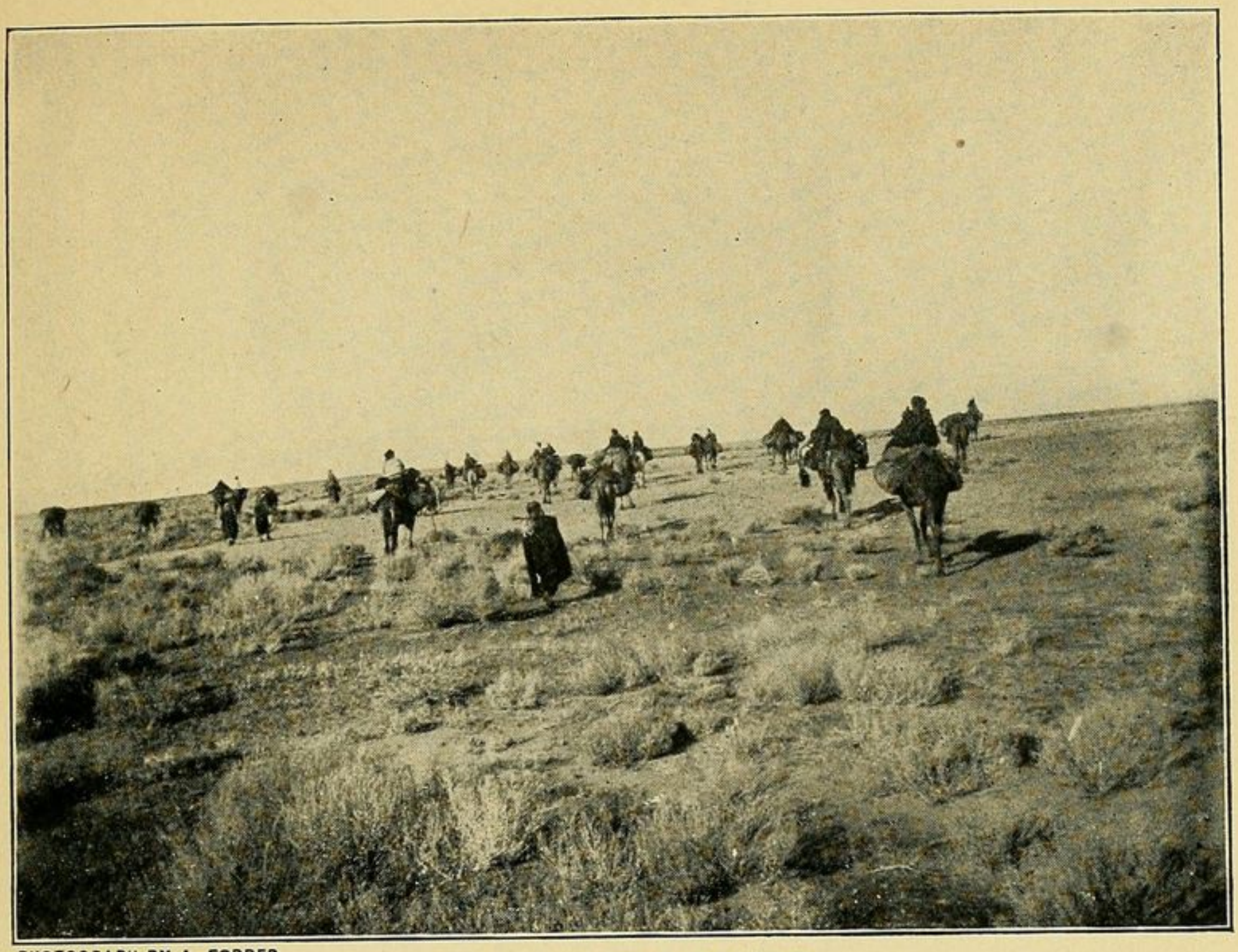
My answer was, "Respects to Johar. Tell him I can't leave the Jowf alone; I have no one to go with. When Khy-Khwan returns, I will go with him; I have paid him for the return, so cannot go with any one else." They went off and told him, and soon returned, saying, "Johar says you must leave at once; you cannot stay here." I said, "You go and tell Johar if he wants me to leave this place at once, he must send a camel and some men that will go with me to Ithera, where I came from. If he won't do that, I must wait till our party returns." Soon they were back again with this message, "Johar says you may stay, but must not leave your room. If the Sultan at the capital hears you have been here doing as you like, he might punish Johar for allowing you to remain." This was a relief to me, but I felt I must be careful.

CHAPTER XX

A CALAMITY THAT NEARLY COST ME MY LIFE

A FEW days after the events recorded in the last chapter, as I sat by the fire in the guest-room with about twenty men, the head man of the community, a sort of priest and a fanatic, came in and launched into a sermon full of hatred against the Christian religion. He repeated all that the Koran had to say against Christians, and reminded the listeners that the words of their prophet commanded the faithful to exterminate the unbelievers whenever they came across them. The whole thing was directed against me, but I took no notice of it. The preacher went away, and I went to my dark corner and prayed for help and guidance.

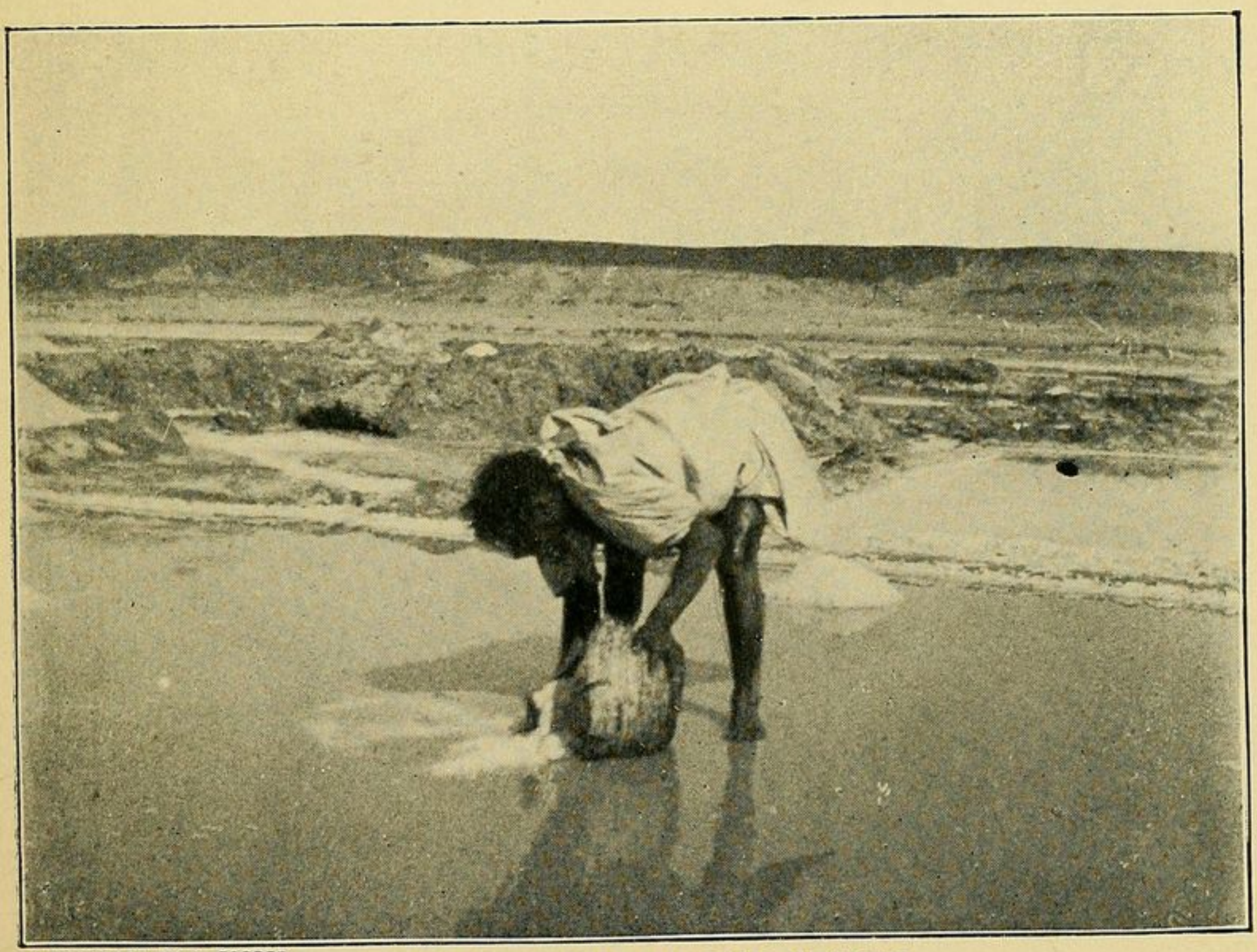
Early next morning kind-hearted Faleh came to me and said, "Don't fear, Aboo Jerius [my name among the Arabs, meaning "Father of George," the name of my eldest son], no harm shall come to you if I can help it. Don't make the people angry; some like you, but



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

CROSSING THE DESERT

This picture was taken from a camel's back as the author rode along. It shows a caravan on the desert. At any sign of danger, the camels are brought together and made to kneel down. The Arabs find their way across these trackless plains by watching the sun and stars.



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

GATHERING SALT IN THE DESERT

In northern Arabia there are many brine springs. From these the Arabs get quantities of good crystal salt, which they barter to traders for wheat, clothing and sometimes money. Two sacks of salt, a camel load, is worth about thirty cents.

some that are ignorant hate you." That day, as on previous ones, I sold and distributed many Scriptures to both men and boys, all having proved to me that they could read. In the afternoon Faleh came to me with three men that he said were from Hayel, the capital. They were just starting back, but each wanted a Bible to take with them. Would I give them one each? I was glad of this opportunity of getting the Word taken on to Hayel, especially as I could not reach it myself, so, bringing out three nicely bound copies, I gave them to the men, and they left me and started for the seat of government in Central Arabia. Some day we may hear what was done or caused by these three books taken into this stronghold of Islam.

That afternoon, late, I was alone in my room, when a most unfortunate affair happened that nearly cost me my life, and that more than ever set the majority of the Arabs in the Jowf against the Christian.

I have already stated that Johar, the chief, resided in a castle a little distance off the Jowf at the south end. This castle, made of mud, bricks, and stones, had three walls, and on each corner of the outside wall rose a lofty tower about forty feet high. The apartments of

Johar were in the centre of these walls. These towers were for the purpose of defence.

The morning of the day I am writing about there had been rain and a strong wind blowing from the east. The rain had thoroughly soaked the exposed side of one of the towers, and, being only mud brick, had softened it to such an extent that it fell. Unfortunately it fell in and not out, and, to make matters worse, crushed the apartment in which Johar was sitting reading the Koran, and the much revered and feared governor of the Jowf was buried under the accumulation of rubbish.

Sitting alone in my room, I heard shrieking and shouting outside. I went to the outer gate and saw men and boys running toward the castle, and I wondered what had happened to cause such excitement in the Jowf. I soon learned what had happened, but thought best to stay where I was. Johar was, after a time, rescued and dragged out from the debris. It was soon found that a leg was broken, and that he was cut and bruised badly. As he lay on the sand of the courtyard of his castle some one remarked, "This is the Christian's doing; he must have been out and looked at the tower and affected it so that it has fallen; it is the beginning of evil." This was like a spark to

a keg of gunpowder. It was quickly agreed to be my doing, and the cry was raised, "Let us kill the Christian." As I stood at the gate of the court I saw the crowd come round the corner, and heard the yell, "Kill him, kill him, the Christian, the Christian!" They had clubs and daggers and some revolvers. On they came, nearer and nearer. I did not run away; to have done so might have meant death, and would have appeared as if I had done something. When they got within about eighty yards of me, Providence interposed. Three men came from behind and ranged themselves in front of me, crying out, with their revolvers in their hands, "Not one of you come near this Christian." The crowd stopped, and I was slowly backed into my room, the three men remaining at the door. The crowd soon melted away, and my deliverers came in to me. I thanked them for their kind and ready help and asked what led them to act as they did. Their answer was a good one. "We have been to India and have seen Christians there, and know that they work harm to no man; we have also seen the effect of the English rule in that land and in Egypt, and we will always help Christians when we can; we wish the English would come here; Christians are

better than Moslems. These people of the Jowf are ignorant of the ways of Christians and would have killed you if we had not come along and defended you." Then my host and kind friend, Faleh, came, broken down and crying because of the accident to his father. He said, "Don't fear, Aboo Jerius, I know this is not your doing; it was decreed, and had to happen; I hope my father won't die." Then in came the other two sons and sat with me, and I did my best to comfort them. Next day I kept in or near the house. Faleh said it would be better. My old chief, Khy-Khwan, was missing. I had not seen him for two days and wondered what had become of him. Toward evening a man came to me saying, "Khy-Khwan has sent me to bring you to him; he is in a house at the other end of the town;" so, believing him, I got up and followed him. It was quite half an hour's walk to the house I was taken to, but no Khy-Khwan was there. I asked for him and was told he would come at sunset.

But the sun set, and he did not come. I said I would return to my room, as by the actions and bearing of the men about me I suspected mischief. Some dates were brought and I was told to eat. "We will have supper later on,"

they told me. I ate a few dates and made as though I would return, but it was dark and the men would not let me go. I insisted on going to Khy-Khwan or him coming to me, but was made to sit down again. About ten a dish of food was brought in and put before me and I was told to eat. I do not know what it was. I tasted it, but did not like it, so refused to eat any more, and as none of the others were asked to eat I suspected it was poisoned. At last it was carried out untouched, and they asked if I would sleep. I said "No." I guessed they meant mischief, and had enticed me away there by saying my travelling chief wanted me. All that night I sat up. Many times they begged me to lie down and sleep, but I refused. At last the morning came, and as I was preparing to leave these men, I was glad to see appear at the door the best disposed of my three attendants. He said, "I only missed you this morning and set out to find you; you must not go off alone like this." When I got back, there was Khy-Khwan sitting at the fire. He said he had never sent for me; so it was a trap to get me alone and do me harm, but it failed. We had been now many days in the Jowf, and I had disposed of a number of Scriptures. One morning, on opening the door of my room, I

found most of them piled up in a heap, having been returned during the night. I put them inside, knowing that if I kept quiet, I should find out why they had been brought back. Soon Faleh came to me, saying, "You must not be angry at the books being returned; my father gave orders that the people must return them; he says there is something bad in them." I asked him what it was. He told me it was in the 2d Psalm, verse 7, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." I said, "Many others will be glad to have these books, but why has not your father sent back his book?" "He wants to keep and read it," was the answer I was glad to hear. That day Khy-Khwan told me we must leave soon. "I wanted to stay a month, but for your sake we must get away soon," he said. Next day the people came back and asked for their books. I reminded them of what Johar had said. Their answer was, "We have done as we were told and returned the books; we were not ordered not to take them a second time. Give them back to us, and we will hide them until you are gone away." So I gave them the books again and heard no more of them. That afternoon I went to the castle to say good-by to Johar, as we were to leave early next day. I was kept

at the castle door whilst word was given him I was there. I was allowed inside and saw the old man lying on a bed on the mud floor in one corner of a large room.

Many men were sitting with him. I was not permitted to go near him, so from the doorway said, "I am journeying to-morrow and came to say farewell; thank you for your kindness; may God grant you peace and soon restore you and your leg." Then a hand was put on my arm, and I was led away outside the castle. Thus ended my intercourse with Johar, aboo Amber, the much respected and feared chief over the town and district of the Jowf. I have heard no more of him from that time up to the present. Maybe some time in the future I shall return to those parts; past experiences encourage me to do so, believing that on a second visit I should fare better. That night I had gone to rest and was asleep when I was aroused by men shouting outside the door. I got up, and upon opening the door found two men, and by the light of a tiny lamp they had I saw that between them they were bearing something in a sack. They pushed their way in and deposited their burden on the floor, saying, "Faleh has sent you these dates to eat on the journey. He may not see you in the morning, so he sends 'salaams'

[respects] and wishes you a safe journey." They emptied the dates, about two bushels, into my largest saddle-bags, and then produced a good-sized skin of dates, saying, "These are from Faleh also; they are for your wife and children in Jerusalem; you must carry them to them with many 'salaams.'"

Next morning I was up early and saw that preparations were being made for a start, but ere we set out my companion Khy-Khwan and myself had six invitations to breakfast, which we accepted, eating a little at each house. On returning to our lodging, the camels were at the door ready loaded. Faleh was on hand, and with him a bag of warm bread, which he gave me, saying, "It will serve you a few days, and help you over the desert."

Farewells were exchanged, and with mingled feelings of joy and regret we rode off. Faleh was very kind to me all the time I was there. Every morning about ten o'clock he would come or send for me and take me on to the roof, three stories up, and give me a good breakfast of bread, date syrup, native butter, and milk. This was the best fare the Jowf could produce. "Eat and enjoy it; we don't give such to ordinary guests; you are my friend, hence bread," was always his set speech. He would sit and

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

A DATE PALM WITH FRUIT RIPE UNTO HARVEST

The date is to the Arab what bread is to the European. There are many varieties and sizes. The bunches hanging on the palm shown above would make a heavy load for a man to carry. No part of the palm-tree is wasted; ropes, mats, baskets and boards are produced from it. Even the date stones are utilized. After soaking they become soft and make good feed for the cattle.

eat with me, not being afraid to put his hand in the same dish as the Christian. He told me he had been twice to Mecca, and I observed he was most careful to remember the times of prayer.

Arriving at the north extremity of the town, the caravan was waiting for us. Khy-Khwan got down, kissed the men all round, and then gave the word to start. With ejaculations to Allah, — God, — Abraham, and Mohammed to prosper and protect them, we said farewell to the Jowf and its fertile gardens and shady palm groves.

CHAPTER XXI

EXCITING TIMES IN DESERT AND TOWN

FOR four days we journeyed over the desert without finding water. We had expected to find surface water, but were disappointed. Two hours after sunset on the fourth day water was found in a large basin in some rocks that we had come amongst. It was dirty and strong, caused by camels having bathed and stood in it during the day, and ere we could fill our skins our camels pushed their way in, stirring up the sediment and adding to the filth. We were thankful for the find and drank freely, also using it for making bread.

The next day, whilst on the move, my camel dropped down under me and refused to get up again. I called some of the men, and they, seeing tears streaming from the beast's eyes, informed me, "Your camel is drunk — cannot walk because it is giddy." It had been eating some herb that had made it so. They called for water, damped some grass, and tied it on

the beast's head, then set about making a syrup of some dates, mixing in salt and flour. Having prepared this draught, the camel's mouth was held open and the mixture poured down its throat. In about half an hour the tears ceased flowing, and the now sober beast got up and went on with the others. That night we found a pool of water, worse than the other, and camped not far from it. Next day we had a fright by seeing a man in the distance coming toward us. Some of our men went off to meet him, not knowing if he were the scout of friend or foe. They brought the poor fellow in with them. He could not speak. He signed for a drink, which was given him. Then he told us that he was one of nine that had started out over the desert with their camels, well provided with food and water, but they had been met by robbers who had taken everything from them, and for eight days they had been without food or drink. His companions were lying helpless on the sand some distance off. They had seen us in the distance, and he being the strongest had come after us. A skin of water, some flour, and dates were given him, and we left him rejoicing in his good fate.

That evening, as we camped in a valley full of brushwood and stones, we had another alarm,

which, happily, ended peaceably. The men were seated round the fires when the word was passed round that voices had been heard coming up the valley. All were silent, and, sure enough, on the still night we could distinctly hear the sound of men talking. Those of our party that had arms got ready for an attack. The fires were quickly douted by sand being thrown over them. We were ready for whatever might come. As no one came down on us our men went out to find out who was about. Soon we heard the report of the guns and guessed that the sound of voices had come from enemies. But following the firing of the guns came the welcome shout: "Friends! friends!" In about ten minutes our men returned, bringing with them twelve of the wildest-looking fellows it was possible to come across.

One look at them was sufficient to tell that they had suffered privation and fatigue. The fires were relighted, and conversation began again. Coffee was given the newcomers; then they told their story, which in brief was as follows: They had set out from the Jowf two weeks before, intending to get to Damascus and find work. They had no camels, but sufficient food to last if all went well, and skins

to carry water if they found it, as they supposed they would. The skins they had with them were hard and cracked, proving their long fast from drink.

Not knowing the way any too well, they got off the track and were lost in the desert. Food and drink were finished. For five days they had been wandering about hungry, thirsty, and weary. That day they came across the foot-prints of our camels and men, had followed them, and so overtaken us as we were camped. Bread was made for them, and, whilst baking, I took them a good lump of my dates, for which they were grateful. Next morning they journeyed on with us, and the next day, the noon of the tenth since leaving the Jowf, we saw in the distance the palms of Ithera once again. We had been absent thirty-three days, instead of thirty-five, as Khy-Khwan had said we should. On arriving at Ithera, the first thing I noticed was the absence of the tent that sheltered the diseased man. I suppose he had died and the tent had been removed. After a few hours' rest Khy-Khwan, who had faithfully completed the contract made for the four gold pieces, came to me, and leading me a little distance away from the guest-room showed me a small hut built of mud brick, with a door about three feet high and

two wide, and told me it was to be my lodging place as long as I stayed at Ithera. I told him I should like to get away as soon as I could. I had been away from my home and friends for some months, and no news had been exchanged between us. There was no opportunity. I went into the hut; it was very dirty and dusty. Lying about were old earthen jars and a few rough, wooden boxes. These had some old dates in them, and I was told I could eat all I wanted. The dust on the floor was inches deep. I carried my two saddle-bags up there and sat down. Evening came and I was given a bowl of water and a little bread. No light was brought, so I went in search of Khy-Khwan and asked him for a lamp, and something to lie on and cover myself with. These were refused me, and I was told to return to my place. I did so, and being weary I lay down in the dust, put a large mud brick for a pillow, and tried to sleep. But I soon found I was not alone; creepers were in abundance. I felt them on my face and hands, got up and struck one of my precious matches, and revealed a variety of creeping things, including scorpions and lizards. The situation was not inviting, and I could only keep on the move all that night and wait for the morning. At last it came, and I

sought out Khy-Khwan and told him he must send me on my way home. I would not stay in the hut he had consigned me to. He said he was going my way in three or four days, and we would journey together. He took me to his house and told his wife she was to give me breakfast. I then went among the men of the place, asking if any of them would go with me to Orman, a six days' journey. They all had one answer, "Give three English pounds a day [fifteen dollars], and we will convey you to Orman." I soon found that a price had been fixed for me to pay to any one that I could arrange with. Almost every day of the eleven I was detained by the immovability of the people. I saw companies of men leave for the districts north and west. If they had been able to provide me a camel to ride, I might have gone with them, but they were walking. I made friends with one man, who, I think, pitied me. He would go with me into the palm groves and tell me all about the treatment of the palm. I learned some interesting things, helping me to understand Psalm xcii. 12 in much of its teaching. The palm is useful, beautiful, fruitful when joined to another, grows from inside and not from the exterior, rejoices the heart of man, and other things, all possible to the righteous.

The same man took me out and showed me how the Arabs there, as well as at Kaf, procured the salt they sold to the caravans. In the sand were many springs of strong brine. This was ladled up and poured into beds on the sand, and allowed to remain until nearly all the moisture had evaporated. Then a man with a basket and a board waded into the deposit and scraped up the snow-white crystals. These were put up in heaps to dry, and then carried to the village and stored in bins of mud brick to await buyers. The money value of a camel load of salt was about thirty cents.

During three days of my enforced stay there I had fever, but no one cared. The nights were the worst part of the time. I could hear the creepers moving about overhead and around me, and one morning saw in the dust distinct traces of a snake that had passed by me. I felt that I was a prisoner and that the story of the chief going my way was all false. He hoped the delay would have made me offer money, but I had none to offer, for all had been taken from me, as well as my shoes, kettle, soap, comb, towel, underclothes, and many other things all useful to me.

One morning I saw a man come in that I had seen in Kaf. I went to him, and he told

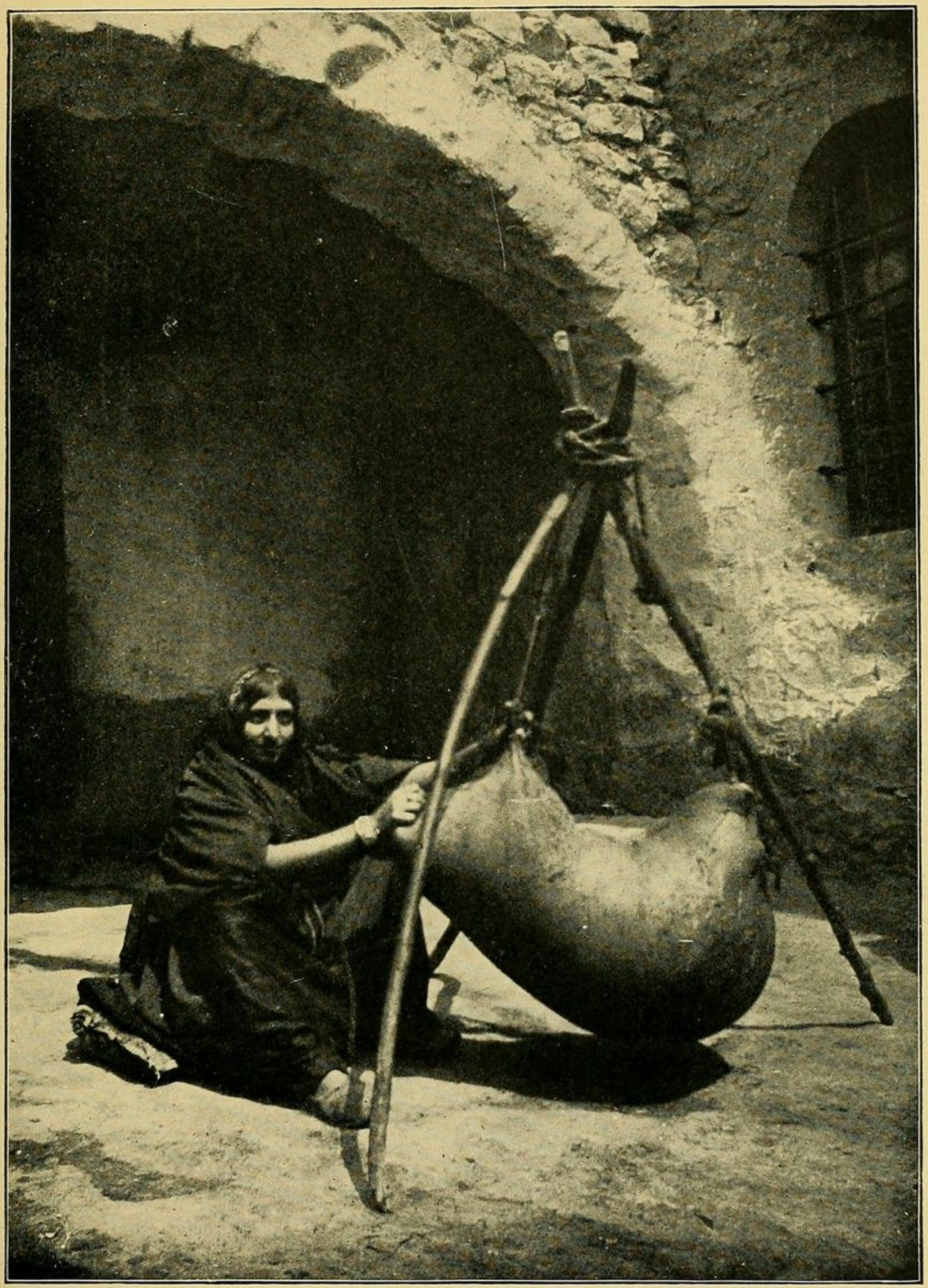
me what I had heard the third day of my arrival, viz. that the chief of Kaf was away. Had he been at home, I would have walked over to Kaf and thrown myself on his mercy. At last I made up my mind to tackle Khy-Khwan in earnest. It was the morning of the eleventh day. I found him and said, "If you don't send me away to-day, I will start out into the desert alone, and if I die, my blood will be upon you."

He began to excuse himself, but I kept at him. At last he said, "Well, I will send you away; and may you never return again!" He called a man and told him to go and bring a beast for me. In about an hour a poor, skinny donkey was brought that could hardly carry my now almost empty saddle-bags.

I asked for a camel so that I might ride, but was told I must walk. So, minus breakfast and farewells, I set off with this unknown man. He had been told that he was to leave me with the first lot of Arabs he came across.

Walking through heavy sand under a hot sun was hard work, and after two hours I gave in and sank down on the sand exhausted. The man was a little ahead with the donkey; I called to him, and he stopped, took the bags off the donkey, and turned all the contents on to

the sand. He handled the boxes of exposed plates, and their weight made him think it was money. With his dagger he ripped open two boxes and emptied two dozen plates out on the sand, not knowing what to make of such things. He appropriated my last pair of socks, some papers, and a jar of beef tea, thinking it was ointment. An empty soup tin I had kept to boil a drop of water in he took. Having buried these things in the sand, he came back to me and told me to get up and follow or he should go and leave me; I rose and hobbled after him, keeping it up for two hours, although in agony from aching limbs and thirst. At last we saw in the distance a palm and pitched near it, an Arab house. Never was a sight more welcome, or a shelter so acceptable. The owner of the tent came out to me and carried in the bags, then helped me in, and gave me a corner in the tent. The children, nearly naked, and his four wives, sat down near me and watched me, giving vent to expressions of pity for me and curses and oaths for those who had thus treated me. Some dates were given me to eat and some dirty butter to help them down. I stayed five days with these simple people of the desert, and they showed me no small kindness.



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

AN ARAB WOMAN CHURNING BUTTER

The Arabs make many things from milk, which is plentiful in the springtime. Here is seen a very primitive churn,— it is a sheepskin slung on a tripod. By being jerked to and fro, the fat in the milk accumulates and becomes butter, which is eaten with dates and considered a great luxury.

On the fifth day a party of men with camels came to the tent. They were on their way to Damascus. I had hoped to be able to go due west and so reach Jerusalem, but it was impossible. So after much bickering with the leader of the party, composed of twelve camels and eighteen men, he consented to take me on to Orman on payment of about two dollars. But I had no money, and he insisted on payment beforehand. I told him I had money at Orman, and at last he said he would let me ride on the top of one of the loads; so I set off on another stage of my homeward journey. All went well for the first two days; the men were a decent lot and kindly disposed. On the third morning I got up, ready for an early start as usual, but was told that six of the camels had strayed away during the night and some of the men had gone off to look for them. We wasted that day staying where we were, but no trace of the camels could be found, so the six loads of salt, twelve sacks, were emptied out on the sand, the sacks buried, and it was settled to start about midnight. The next two days passed and I asked when we should reach Orman. The answer was, "We are not going to Orman; I killed a man there once and I am afraid to enter the place. We will leave you

at a village named Umm-Rowman, about two hours away from Orman." I was sorry to hear this, as it meant going among strangers again and having to arrange to get to Orman, and, being moneyless, it was hard to do.

On the afternoon of the sixth day we came to the hamlet of Umm-Rowman, the inhabitants being Mohammedans, Druzes, and a few Catholics. I was lodged with a man known to the one that had come with me, and he made arrangements for me to be taken to Orman, and for the man that took me to bring back the money in payment for my journey. Next day I was taken to Orman, and had a hearty welcome from the people I had left many weeks before. It was most encouraging to me to hear them say, " We have never let a day pass without asking God to keep you and bring you back to us safe and well." Of course I had to tell them what had taken place and all that had occurred on my journeys. The man I had left my money with gave it back to me as I had given it to him.

I stayed a few days with these kind people, and was besieged for Scriptures, but I was sold out. Then, mounted on a donkey, in company with one man, I left for Damascus. The night before I left a soldier came to the guest-room

asking for the Christian that had returned from the Jowf. The official at Sulkhud, the castle and town I had passed in the fog, had heard of me, and wanted to see me, and I was to take him a Bible, if I had one. So next morning I went over to him. He was very civil; told me I had done a bold and dangerous thing, and he would have stopped me had he known about me earlier. I did not enlighten him as to how I passed him three months before. He was glad of the Bible, and told me he wanted to read it. Five days later I looked down on Damascus, the earthly paradise of the Arab, and soon after was lodged in the home of one of my native friends there. A hearty welcome was given me by my kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. Richards, at the British Consulate. They were much relieved at my turning up after so long an absence. From there I sent word of my safe return to my family and friends, who, by this time, were getting anxious as to my safety. Having rested a few days, I set off again, this time under better circumstances, for my home in Jerusalem, and, after nine days' riding, at last looked down on the Holy City once more, just three and a half months from the time I had left it. The first move toward Arabia from the north was over; fifteen hundred miles had

been traversed during the journey; about two hundred and fifty Arabic Scriptures were sold or distributed among these hitherto neglected people; hundreds of leaflets and booklets given away, all bearing on the plan of salvation; and it is not saying too much to say that many hundreds heard by the spoken Word that without faith in Jesus the Son of God there could be no forgiveness of sin or eternal life. Looking back on these accomplishments, we ask, "What will the harvest be?" and, looking on, wonder how long must elapse ere —

Arabia's desert ranger
To Him will bend the knee,

and "the kings — chiefs — of Sheba and Seba offer gifts, and fall down before and serve Him" (Ps. lxxii. 10, 11). If the perusal of these pages will lead the reader to take an interest in the inhabitants of Kedar, and give themselves to obey the command of Matthew ix. 38, the fatigue, hardships, and dangers of my journeyings will be amply repaid.

Let all be in the spirit of expectation for the fulfilment of Psalm lxxii. 9, when "The dwellers in the desert shall bow before Him."

CHAPTER XXII

THE RELIGION OF THE ARABS

MANY years of close intercourse with the Arabs, of both town and tent, have given me a fairly good insight into their religious as well as social life. The religion of Islam, embraced by the majority of the Arabs, is one that holds its adherents as in a vice. There is nothing in it that is ennobling or helpful to social or domestic life. On the contrary the followers of Mohammed are under a heavy yoke because of the requirements of their religion. I will try and give the main beliefs of this people to show the reader how earthly and exacting are the things that the Arab has to carry out in order to get the favor of God and Mohammed. But first a short account of the institutor of this religion with its more than two hundred millions of adherents.

In the sixth century the Jews and the Christians had their synagogues and churches in Arabia. In that land of freedom the Magians reverenced and practised the doctrines of Zoro-

aster, and the Sabians adored their planetary deities. The worship of the sun, moon, and fixed stars was the primitive religion of the Arabs, and was a system naturally formed and adopted by a people who, in travelling through immense deserts, contemplated and were guided by the regularity of the motions of the heavenly bodies.

Of all the various tribes of the Arabians, that of the Koreish held the distinguished rank. To them had been consigned the honorable office of guarding the Caaba, the sacred temple at Mecca, and the supremacy in religious affairs was accompanied with submission to their temporal sway. Of this tribe came one, Abdullah, who married the fair Amina of the noble tribe of the Zarites, and from them came the victorious enthusiast of the east. The dawn of Mohammed's fame was dark with many clouds. The death of his father in early infancy left the future Lord of Arabia the possessor of five camels and one slave. The childhood of Mohammed was soon deprived of maternal care, and he was — so tradition says — put out to nurse with a Bedouin family. He remained in obscurity until about twenty-five, when the office of manager to a wealthy widow, and soon the possession of her hand

and fortune, raised him to an equality with any in Mecca.

When Mohammed was a youth, and before he married, he made several journeys with yearly caravans into Syria. When not engaged in bartering or trading, he used to visit a monastery near the camping-ground of the caravan. The youth from the desert was favorably received by the monks, and during his short stays and occasional visits, they told the thoughtful lad about the True God, the maker of the universe and all that it contains. The Meccan youth learned also from the monastery residents that God alone was to be worshipped and none other. This teaching was new to Mohammed, and contrary to anything he had learned or seen among his own people in and about Mecca. Two results came from the teaching of the monks. First, the recovery of all Arabia from idolatry to the worship of God, and the birth and spread of a religious system that has become the greatest antagonist Christianity has ever had to contend with.

He had always been remarkable for a serious deportment and strict attention to devotional exercises; every year he was wont to retire for a month to a cave for the purposes of fasting, prayer, and meditation. Such a life urged him

at length to proclaim himself a prophet sent from heaven to preach the unity of the Godhead, and to restore to its purity the religion of Abraham and Ishmael. Thus was founded the religion of Islam in the year 609 A.D., with "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is His Messenger" for its simple creed. This sentence repeated in sincerity by any outsider constitutes him "one of the Faithful."

So rapid has been the spread of this religion that there is hardly a land to be found without its adherents, and that in the short space of about 1290 years. The requirements of Islam are many; only a few of the principal ones can be mentioned in this chapter. First and foremost comes

Prayer

At the appointed times, viz. daybreak, noon, late afternoon, sunset, and two hours later, the Muazzin, inviter, with his face turned toward Mecca, proclaims at the top of his voice from the gallery of the minaret that the hour of devotion has come. This is the proclamation: "God is great, God is great, God is great, there is no God but God, and Mohammed is His Messenger; come to prayer, Great God, there is no God but God." In the morning he adds,

"Prayer is better than sleep, prayer is better than sleep." As soon as the voice of the crier is heard the devout Moslem prepares for prayer. Ministers of State suspend business; the tradesman gives up his dealings with his customers and converts his shop into a mosque. In four or five positions the prayers are repeated; these prayers are merely a vain repetition of the first chapter of the Koran, with petitions added for the prophet and patriarchs, and being interpreted would mean —

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
Praise be to God who the two worlds made;
Thee do we entreat, and Thee do we supplicate;
Lead us in the way, the straight,
The way of those on whom Thou hast compassion,
Not of those on whom is hate,
Nor those that turn aside. — AMEN.

Purification or Ablution

No religious act is acceptable to God unless the body, not heart, has previously been cleansed. In the courtyards of all mosques are to be found cisterns or fountains, to which the faithful resort to prepare themselves for the prayers. The face, arms, and feet have to be well washed, and whilst this operation is in progress, the devotee is muttering short ejacu-

lations to the effect that Satan may be removed far from him. The Koran permits the traveller, in place of water, to rub the prescribed parts with sand and so cleanse himself from all outward defilement. Having no water near at hand ofttimes makes a good excuse to omit prayers and go on with some more urgent business; even in the desert the hour of prayer is faithfully observed.

Fasting

In the religion of Islam fasts take an important place, but none so important as the Fast of Rumathan, observed in remembrance of the yearly visit of Mohammed to a cave to meditate, pray, and fast for a month, during which period the Koran was revealed to him. Perfect abstinence from every kind of support to the body is commanded, from the rising to the setting of the sun. The pious pass the hours in meditation and prayer, the careless grandee sleeps the tedious time away, whilst the industrious mechanic or husbandman, compelled to work, feels the rigor of the fast. Night, minus the light, is turned into day, and *vice versa*. When the fast falls on a month in the summer, with its long days and extreme heat, the abstinence is almost intolerable; men get fretty and cross, and ofttimes are sorely tempted secretly to

give way and break the fast. The Feast of Rumathan is the most important time of the year.

Pilgrimage

The feast being past, the pilgrimage to Mecca begins to occupy the mind of the faithful. The men of rank, weakly through ill-health, or tied by business, perform this arduous duty by the sending and devotions of a substitute. The desert journey is more acceptable to God as entailing more fatigue, danger, and expense, and consequently is more meritorious. On arriving at the precincts of the Holy Land, a prescribed circle around Mecca, the pilgrim must make an entire ablution with water and sand, repeat a prayer almost naked, clothe himself with the Ihram, or sacred garment, and sandals to defend the soles of his feet from the hot sand. So-called spiritual meditation is now the employment, worldly occupations and pleasures being forbidden. Many are the ceremonies and observances of the days spent at Mecca. The offering of sacrifices on Mount Ararat, in commemoration of the offering up of Ishmael, not Isaac, according to Arab belief by Abraham, and stoning the devil are two of the principal things of the pilgrimage at Mecca. The return of the pilgrim to his far-away town

and village is a time of general rejoicing, and forever after the pilgrim is a much-honored man.

Almsgiving

One of the early caliphs said, "Prayer carries us halfway to God, fasting brings us to the door of his palace, and alms procure us admission." A tenth part of the property which has been for twelve months in the possession of an individual is the demand on his charity by the Mohammedan law. The duty of almsgiving is not, however, considered to be performed in all its extent. The productions of cornfields, olive groves, and vineyards are not gathered in the East with minute scrupulosity. To the poor are assigned the gleanings. Mohammed permits his followers to enjoy corn, dates, olives, pomegranates, and all other blessings, but commands that in the harvest and vintage the poor shall have their share. A Mohammedan never refuses food to one that begs for such, and ofttimes accompanies the gift with a coin. On feast days they are unusually liberal.

Meditation

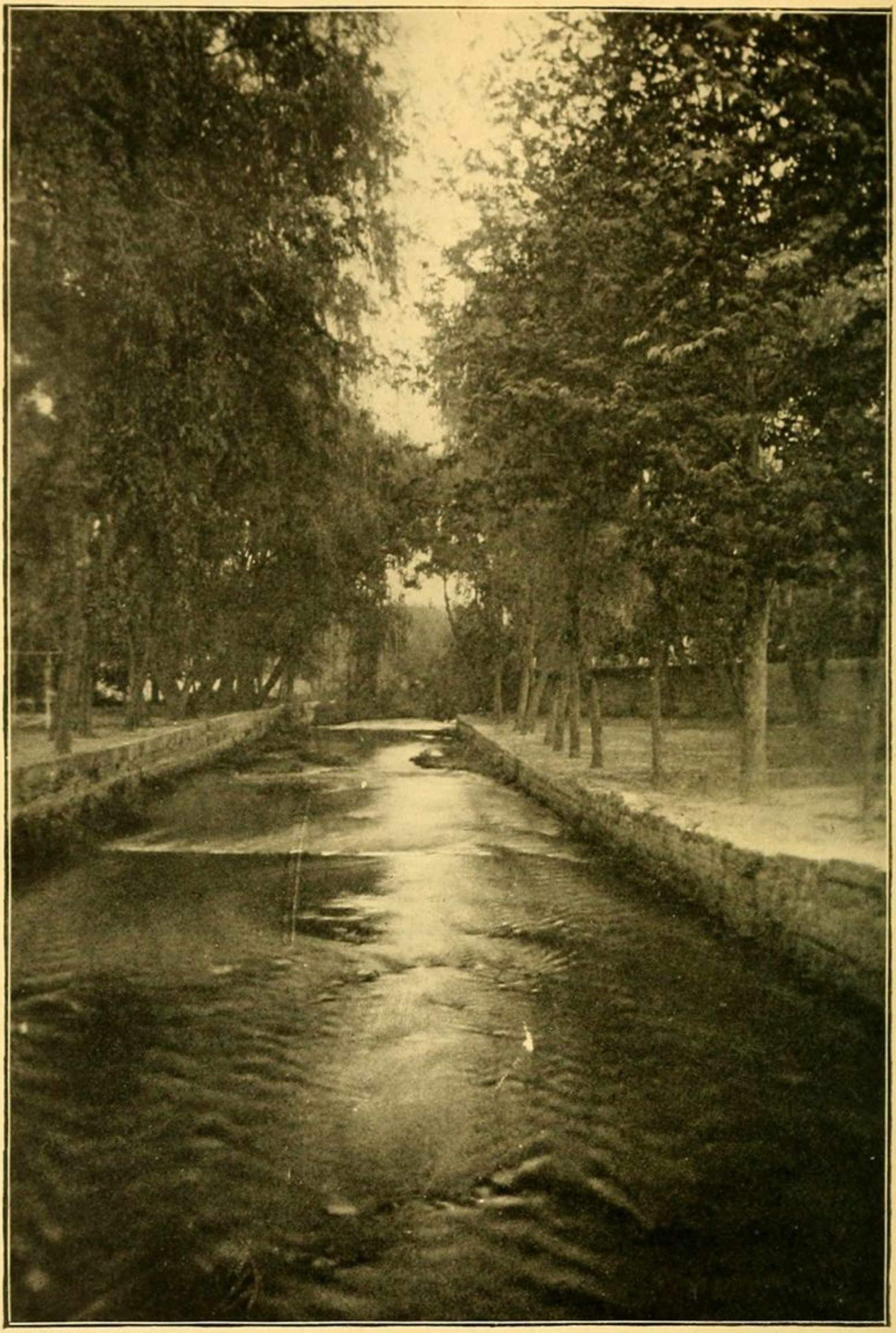
The sacred book of the Mohammedans is the Koran, believed to have been bound in

sections in silk and adorned with gems. It contains the substance of Mohammed's pretended revelations from heaven, which were given to him in his yearly visits to a cave during the month called Rumathan. The substance of the revelations was inscribed on blade bones, leaves of palm trees, and the skins of animals. A copy of these fragments was intrusted to the charge of one of Mohammed's favored wives, and was eventually put into volume form. The Koran is divided into one hundred and fourteen chapters, and these again into verses. The Mohammedans are supposed never to touch or read this book without washing their hands, neither must it be held below the waist.

The teachings of the Koran are many: No God but God; four angels of great importance, and so to be had in dread — Gabriel, Michael, Azriel, the angel of death, and Israfeel, the angel of the resurrection; prophets and Scriptures, the latter of which contained God's will for man, but they have been entirely lost, and what now exists is only a fabrication written and framed to suit the Christian religion. The Koran teaches that Jesus the Son, not of God, but of Mary, was the last prophet of the Jews, the true Messias, the worker of miracles, and

preacher of righteousness; but the crucifixion is denied. Jesus escaped from the Jews and was caught up into heaven, and another in his form and image suffered on the cross. Although the divinity and atonement of Christ are denied, they do admit that he was born in a miraculous manner at the command of God. Thus it will be seen that in this so-called religion God's plan of salvation is ignored and in its place nothing substituted.

The Moslem, if honest, will admit that in his religion there is no salvation from sin, but comforts himself with the assurance, "God is merciful — I will be as good as I can and leave the rest to Mohammed." A paradise full of everything to satisfy the sensual gratification of the follower of the Koran is promised to him who faithfully observes the commands of God and his prophet. In contradiction to the seventh day observed by the Jews and the first day kept by the Christians, the founder of Islam commanded that the Friday be set apart for worship and teaching, hence the name "Yowm-el-Jumma," the day of gathering. All that are able must attend the service at noonday to listen to the sermon given by the religious head of the place. In the towns of the East one can ofttimes see fishing-nets spread over



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

VIEW ON THE RIVER ABANA, DAMASCUS

One of the attractions of Damascus is the beautiful river that flows through it, turning mills and looms, and causing many acres of land to produce large crops. On the banks of the river are many beautiful gardens, and groves of fruit trees, under which the natives sit and pass much of their time. The Abana rises in the Lebanon.

the entrance to a store, meaning that the keeper of the place is gone to prayers.

This short sketch will give the reader a simple idea of the religion and requirements of Islam. Surely the conclusion must be that these people are as far from the salvation of God as the heathen of the islands of the sea, and are as much in need of the gospel being preached to them as any other of the "all the world." "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest" for these who are in the bondage and darkness of Islam.

CHAPTER XXIII

CUSTOMS SUBSTANTIATING SCRIPTURE

IT is not my purpose to enter into all the details of the everyday life and manners of the Arabs, but only to mention a few that stand out prominently among many others, which have their origin in the scriptures. It is interesting to remember that, although the foregoing are in daily practice, it is not because the people get their instructions from the Bible; with them it has been the custom for thousands of years, and has been passed down from generation to generation. The perusal of these things also makes the Bible very real and, without doubt, true. Being in close touch with these people of the East and the land of the Bible gives special facility for the study of everyday life.

Hiding Valuables

Genesis xxxv. 4: " And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears,

and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem." Joshua vii. 21: "When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the midst of my tent." Hidden treasure is always being found even in these days. One popular idea of the Arabs about a stranger coming among them is that he is seeking buried treasure, and being in the possession of books knows just where to locate and find it. The custom of burying treasure and valuables was, no doubt, caused by the absence of any safe deposit with man in which to put things for keeping. Anything buried was only known to the hider, and it ofttimes happened that death or war carried off the depositor, and so his hoard was left to be turned up long years after. That this custom is still common will be substantiated by the following.

In company with an Arab I was travelling over the Plains of Moab; my man had with him a revolver that he valued very much, and if it had been seen by the authorities, it would have been taken from him. We saw coming toward us a body of men that we thought were Turkish soldiers — as they turned out to be.

He was alarmed for his weapon, but was equal to the occasion; coming on a large, flat stone, he sat down by it, and called me to do the same. I did so, and watched him. He carefully turned over the stone, scooped out a hole, and put his revolver in it, then covered it with earth and replaced the stone as before. He told me at some future time he would get the weapon, which he did a month later.

Another time, when living in Kerak, a man came to me begging some oilcloth and sealing-wax to wrap a small bag of money in. He told me he was going out into the mountains to hide it. "I cannot trust my father, brother, or son to keep it, so am going to put it in a safe place," he said; and away he went alone to hide his possessions.

Retaining Garments

Exodus xxii. 26, 27: "If thou at all take thy neighbor's garment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it to him by that the sun goeth down: For that is his covering, it is his only covering, wherein shall he sleep."

Going to bed is a very simple matter with Arabs; more often than not the place where you may be reclining becomes your bed. Guest-rooms and tents are bare of furniture;

mats and rugs are spread, and on these we sleep. Nothing in the way of covering is provided, so that every one must possess his own. Here comes in the utility of the large cloak — abba — of the Arab. When he wants to sleep, it is capacious enough to cover him, and being closely woven keeps out the cold or wind. With one of these handy the sleeper can cover himself just where he happens to be. To keep a man's outer covering is a great crime, as I found out once by experience. It happened in Kerak.

I was sitting in our room with my face toward the open door, when I saw a sheet that had been hung out to dry slowly disappear upward. I ran out and up on to the roof of the house, and saw a man running off with the sheet under his arm. I gave chase and soon overtook him, but could not get hold of him because of his loose, flying garments. I held on to his outer cloak, and finding he was likely to be captured, he dropped the sheet and slipped his cloak, leaving it in my hands, he making off as hard as his legs could carry him. I returned to my room with sheet and cloak in my possession. This was about noon. Soon some men came asking the return of the cloak. I said the thief must come for it himself.

Twice they applied, but I refused to give it to them. They told me I was doing wrong by retaining it, but I was ignorant of their custom then. Just before evening the chief, with some of his sons, came and asked for the cloak, telling me that I was withholding the man's covering for the night, and if he died from exposure, his blood would be upon me. They told me of their custom, and impressed me with the fact that by my action I was doing very wrong. So I gave up the garment, and have since learned that custom with them is a thing not easily broken, even under such cir-cumstances.

Pronunciation

Judges xii. 5, 6: "And the Gileadites took the fords of Jordan toward Ephraim: and it was so, that when any of the fugitives of Ephraim said, Let me go over, that the men said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; then said they unto him, say now Shibboleth, and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right."

Here the distinguishing feature between these two tribes was not dress, action, or appearance, but the pronunciation of certain words, and by this it was known if they were

friend or foe. To-day a man only has to speak, and by the pronunciation of certain words the listener can detect from what town or village he hails from. The pronunciation of Hebron is very different from that of Damascus, and even that of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, only about five miles apart, is very marked. It would be rude, on a stranger entering a guest or other room, to ask him where he is from; the Arabs wait until he begins to talk, and then from the words he uses and his pronunciation they can generally tell where he comes from. A smart man, to conceal his native place, will ofttimes use the terms of those he may be among for the time being.

Hospitality

Judges xix. 4, 5: "And his father-in-law, the damsel's father, retained him, and he abode with him three days: so they did eat and drink, and lodged there. And it came to pass on the fourth day, when they arose early in the morning, that he rose up to depart," etc.

Every town and village among the Arabs is provided with a room open for the accommodation of all comers — the stranger and the traveller. It is the pride of a settlement to have it said about it, "Every house is a guest-

room." To the traveller these places are most valuable, affording as they do shelter for the night, protection from robbers, and provision for man and beast. The head man of the place generally likes to entertain the guests, although the humblest inhabitant will gladly provide food and shelter for any that present themselves at their doors. A saying of the Arab runs thus, "The guest comes in the place of God, and we willingly give what he needs." The guest is entitled by custom to three days' hospitality; during that time he is supposed to be able to transact the business that has brought him to the place. The host likes to have his guests on hand early in the afternoon, so that the best supper possible may be prepared for them. Another saying runs, "The guest of the evening does not sup," because no time has been allowed to prepare for him, so he has to take what he can get. If circumstances keep a man in a place longer than three days, he must go to another house for accommodation.

An Arab is judged by the way he treats his guests. "The coffee-pot is never off the fire" speaks well for a good host. Whilst under the roof or tent of an Arab, the belongings of a guest are considered safe, also his life. Great indignation was caused during my stay at

Ithera because one evening my saddle-bags were rifled. It was the duty of my host to find the thief or to replace my stolen goods, but I spared him the trouble. The person of the guest is also much respected, and no one, even an enemy, must molest him whilst under a host's roof. The story of Genesis xix. 1–11 is made plain, and the action of Lot understandable, when we remember the respect the eastern has for his guest. Lot refused to give his guests to the howling Sodomites, offering to them his two daughters rather than expose his two visitors to the evil designs of the men of Sodom. I have ofttimes experienced the benefit of this custom, especially when assailed by the Turkish official, as recorded in another part of this book; he — my host — would rather offend a member of the government than allow me, his guest, to be interfered with.

A liberal host keeps his guests well supplied with coffee. This beverage, taken without milk or sugar, has many little ways in being dealt with. No more than a tablespoonful must be given at a time — to fill one of the tiny cups would be an insult — and not more than two pourings out is allowed; if a third one is given, it is a decided hint that the receiver is not wanted and had better get away as soon as

possible, possibly because some enemy or the avenger of blood is near. This custom, however, only rules amongst some of the principal Bedouin tribes. The coffee is generally made by the host himself; on no account is a woman allowed to make it. The green berries are roasted in a kind of a frying-pan, as required, and the average amount of coffee for a pint of water is about four ounces. More often than not one cup has to serve for a number of people; every one drinks from the same cup without it being washed.

Hasty Meals

Genesis xii. 2–8; Judges vi. 19: In these two instances Abraham and Gideon had received unexpected visitors. In Abraham's case he concluded that his visitors had been turned aside to his tent by hunger; v. 5 very plainly teaches this, "I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts, after that ye shall pass on, for therefore are ye come to your servant." A very real picture of Arab life and custom this.

Food is never given the traveller early in the day. The first meal of the Arab is taken about ten o'clock, so that the journeyer would lose the best part of the day if he stayed for

breakfast. If a village, encampment, or even tent is passed, it is quite permissible to turn aside and rest for a time and have some food. The Arab women are quick at getting a meal ready. Dough is kneaded and soon baked; whilst this is in process, another is frying eggs, or melting some fat in which to dip the bread, whilst the old mother of the host or his eldest wife will be diving into the recesses of a sack or bundle of clothes for some very savory morsel wherewith to flavor the dish being prepared. If time permits, a lamb or kid is brought in from the flock, killed, dissected, and cooked, and served up in a very short space of time.

I remember well a hasty meal being prepared for me. It was in the country south of Beersheba. We had been riding nearly all day and were hungry. We saw a tent in the distance and were soon sitting in it. Coffee was made, bread baked, and a fairly good meal served in about twenty-five minutes, and in a minute less than half an hour from the time we had alighted at the tent we were on our way again. As soon as we have eaten from what has been provided we resume our journey. Hearty thanks would be ill-mannered; a hurried "May you always have plenty, if God will!" is all the payment given for the kind, ready hospitality of the willing giver.

Feasting

Genesis xxi. 8; xxix. 22 and 27; l. 10; Judges xiv. 12; Esther i. 5; Job ii. 13.

These Scriptures all bear on feasts held on occasions of weddings, deaths, or some other time prominent in the lives of those mentioned. The reader will note that the limit of the time for rejoicing or otherwise was seven days, and that time is still observed among the Arabs of city, village, town, or desert. It may not be out of place to briefly describe the mode of procedure on these occasions. First, we read of a feast being made on the day that Isaac was weaned. A child is rarely weaned under two years of age; ofttimes a child even at three years may be seen at the breast. Having attained the age of two years, the child, especially a boy, is supposed to be able to do without nourishment from its mother and to take solid food enough to sustain it. It has passed through the first stage of life, and having lived to enter the second stage, it becomes a time of rejoicing. All the relations and near friends are invited to a meal, then the neighbors, and any others that may be around, even strangers, are all given an open invitation to come in, feast, and rejoice with the parents because their child has

been weaned. This is kept up for seven days, and is no small expense to the family, although made lighter by presents in kind to the fortunate child passing into a fresh state of its existence.

Other of the references given refer to times of mourning. The Easterners do not keep their dead long after death. Climatic influences are against that custom. On the approach of death some of the male members of the family go out to dig a grave. Immediately after death the body is washed with warm water, wrapped in a new shroud, and carried out to be buried.

Instances sometimes occur when persons are buried before they are dead; having gone off into a state of collapse, the watchers conclude that death has taken place. I well remember a case that occurred in Kerak of a woman that was buried and resurrected. She had been ill and suddenly collapsed; the relatives, thinking she was dead, carried her out and buried her, before the husband, who was away, knew what had occurred. On his return he went to the grave, and as he sat by it thought he heard moaning. He scraped away the earth and stones and found his supposed dead partner alive and able to speak. The earth is kept off the body by means of slabs of stone laid crossways on other stones. The woman was

taken back to her home and recovered, and as far as I know is still alive. I have seen her many times and talked with her. After that I had many calls to examine persons to see if they were really dead, the natives having great faith in the stethescope, or, as they call it, "The Scales of Life."

The short time that has elapsed between death and burial is so occupied with other things that mourning to any extent is excluded, but on returning to the house or tent the voice of mourning is at once heard. The men — for a man, not a woman — will give way to chanting the praises and virtue of the one dead; the women will gather in the yard, or on the roof of the house recently bereaved. They will join hands and form themselves into a ring. One, in the centre, will compose lines on the dead man; this will in turn be taken up by the others and sung in unison. Every few stanzas they will dance round in a circle, the time and harmony they keep being quite remarkable. On these getting weary, another batch will take their place, and so this goes on from early morning until past midnight. The immediate relatives of the dead will visit the grave, and wail and mourn there. These observances are kept up for seven days, during which time outsiders

keep the bereaved family supplied with food, thus enabling them to be free for the mourning. If an important personage, such as a chief or religious head, dies, the usual mourning not only takes place, but all business and work is suspended for seven days.

I had practical proof of this on the death of my wife in Kerak. We could not understand why the Arabs shunned us at such a time. It was very noticeable that those that were most friendly to us did not come near. After a time they visited us again, and on being asked where they had been during some days they replied, "We have spent the days in our houses mourning the death of the lady; we did not know your custom at such a time, so have stopped work, shut our shops, and mourned according to our own way."

The Arabs east of the Jordan have another custom which shows a kindly feeling one toward another. If a man's horse dies, — next to his eldest son his best companion, — his neighbor will bring in another horse and put it in the stall of the dead one and allow it to remain seven days, thinking in some measure to make up for the loss of the dead animal. The women also do something similar when a baby dies. A relation or friend will give the

bereaved mother their baby to nurse and care for during seven days; in that time the parent is supposed to become reconciled to her loss.

Memory calls up a touching incident that occurred in our domestic life in Moab. Soon after our advent into that land my wife had the misfortune to lose a little one. It soon became known, and the women were very grieved about it. A day or two after, a young chief that had always been kindly disposed toward us presented himself at our door. I asked him in; he entered, and from under his cloak brought a tiny white lamb. He put it into my wife's arms, saying, "I am sorry for your loss, and if I had a baby, would have lent it to you to care for until you had got over your grief; I had this lamb, so have brought it for you to look after, feed, and care for." He then went away, and next time I saw him he was dead, having been cruelly murdered by a hostile tribe near by. A month of mourning was observed for him, because he was so brave and generous and such a favorite with all the people. Not only in the country is seven days the time for mourning, but also in the towns of Palestine and Syria.

Marriages are times for rejoicing and feasting, always of seven days' duration. The week

previous to the union of the two parties is wholly given up by the families of each one to pleasure. The bride and bridegroom, each in their own homes, are isolated in separate apartments to receive the congratulations and presents of relatives, friends, and neighbors. The males do not visit among the women, that would be a great breach of etiquette. "Every kind loves its kind," an Arab proverb, finds its place at these times. Outside, for seven days, continual feasting and coffee-drinking is going on. In a good family, twenty or twenty-five sheep will be slain to provide food for the visitors who come to rejoice with the family; in addition to these, quantities of rice and wheat will be cooked to fill up the corners. Fat and grease in abundance speaks much for the liberality of the contending families. Inside, among the women, the shy bride has to undergo daily washings and purifications to prepare her for the bridegroom. This is the only good washing she gets during her lifetime, so a very important time for her, and an arduous one for those told off to scrub her. The bridegroom does not get off without his share of scrubbing; in addition he is smoked with various perfumes to make him sweet. At the end of the seven days' rejoicings a short religious

service brings a week of hard work to a close. The circumcision of a boy is also a time of rejoicing among both sexes. Enough has been said to show that the seven days of the Bible has in no way been shortened, proving how slow has been the advance of civilization among the descendants of Ishmael. Truly "They dwell alone" (Jer. xlix. 31).

Buying Land

Genesis xxiii. 17: "And the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in the borders thereof, were made sure unto Abraham."

It is very noticeable how particular the patriarch was in making this bargain. He might have bought the field, thinking that with it he was buying all that it contained, but on coming into possession, and going to prepare the cave for his dead, he would have been stopped by the late owner, and told, "You only bought the field, not the cave or trees that are in the field." So Abraham, in the deeds, had all in the field and the borders thereof made sure to him by being written down. It is a common thing in the East for a man to own a well in the middle of a garden or field that belongs to some one else. The well was found

by the man who had bought the ground, and not having been specified in the deeds, the well, according to custom, belongs to the former owner of the land. So in buying land from the Arabs some such terms as the following are used: "A buys from B land in such a place, also all that can be seen on the land, trees and stones, also all that shall be found under the ground." This secures to the purchaser all that he finds, even treasure. This custom makes Abraham's action very understandable. An ignoramus would soon be taken in at buying land in the East; the seller would keep quiet so as to get a double benefit. This transaction, we read, took place in the presence of witnesses, a very needy precaution in a land and among a people that do not consider lying or cheating a sin, and where writing and documents are almost unknown.

Leviticus xix. 14: "Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind," is strictly observed by the Arabs of to-day. Any one afflicted is the object of pity and special care, and many of the mistakes made by any that are afflicted are always overlooked because of their infirmity.

Deuteronomy xxiv. 20: "When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the

boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow."

This command, given to the children of Israel three thousand years ago, is still obeyed by the fortunate possessors of olive trees. The olive harvest commences in November. The natives go to the groves armed with sticks or bamboos, ladders, baskets, and sacks. Some of the men go up into the tree, and give it a good beating, causing the berries to fall on the ground; the women and children pick them up and put them in sacks and baskets. A return to the tree is not made; what is left on or under it is for the poor. The olive forms part of the food of the Eastern, and a family owning one or two olive trees is fortunate indeed.

Deuteronomy xxiii. 24, 25: "When thou comest into thy neighbor's vineyard, then thou mayest eat thy fill at thine own pleasure, but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel. When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbor, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing corn."

To eat grapes, or parch nearly ripe corn, is quite permissible in the gardens or fields of the Arabs; none will forbid you, but you must carry none home, except it be given you.

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

AN ARAB FIDDLER

The Arabs have two kinds of music. This picture shows a youth playing a one-stringed fiddle, which is homemade. The other instrument is a double flute made from fine bamboos, and generally played by the shepherds when tending their flocks.

PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

WOMEN GRINDING AT THE MILL

Steam mills among the Arabs are unknown. The women grind the flour as they need it. The mill consists of two stones, the upper revolving on the lower. The mill is fed through a hole in the center. It is considered a disgrace for a man to grind at the mill.

Grinding at the Mill

Part of a woman's work is to grind the flour for daily use. No house or tent is without its hand-mill, and although everything else was stolen or bought from a dwelling or family, Deuteronomy xxiv. 6 would be strictly observed, "No man shall take the mill to pledge, for he taketh a man's life to pledge." An expression of hard times is conveyed by saying, "The mill is silent," meaning, of course, that there is nothing to grind. House mills are of two kinds, those turned by the women and those turned by a donkey. In the latter case the beast is blindfolded so that he may not become giddy by having to go round a circle. It is considered a disgrace for a man to grind at the mill, hence the humiliating spectacle of Samson at the mill in the prison-house, fitted for such work by having had his eyes put out.

Yearly Lamentations

Judges xi. 39: "And it was a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year." Visits to shrines form an important part in the life of an Arab. Every district has a shrine devoted to some

saint or great personage that was supposed to have had unusual power in bestowing special blessings. These places are called "meezars," or "willeys," and anything deposited near them is perfectly safe — supposed to be under the protection of the saint of the shrine. It is quite a common sight to see tents, sacks of corn, ploughs, etc., left near these places; no one would risk the wrath of the spirit by removing any of these deposits.

Yearly visits are made to these shrines, and special blessings asked upon the family or flocks of the visitor to the shrine. Each section of the Mohammedans has shrines to those whom they most revere and whose teaching they follow, but there are a few shrines to which all go and either keep feast or make lamentations.

Some of the principal shrines in Palestine and Arabia are those of Moses near the Jordan; Aaron on the summit of Mount Hor in Edom; the prophets, Samuel, Jonah, and Reuben. The cave of Machpelah at Hebron is an important shrine to both Moslems and Jews alike. The burying-place of Mohammed at Medina, in Arabia, is, of course, the most important to every follower of the Arabian messenger.

This chapter plainly demonstrates that the customs and practices in vogue thousands of

years ago and in constant use to-day by these isolated, semi-civilized people, goes a very long way toward substantiating the accounts of events and other things recorded in the Scriptures. The little advance made by civilization in Arabia has helped to preserve in detail and continuation many other interesting customs not dealt with in these pages, but all too common among the descendants of Ishmael.

CHAPTER XXIV

ARABIA IN ITS RELATION TO THE BIBLE

ARABIA, though chiefly an arid, sandy desert, is a country of much biblical and historical interest. It extends from west to east, commencing at the mouth of the Nile in Lower Egypt, to the Euphrates and Persian Gulf, a distance of about a thousand miles, and fourteen hundred miles from the Arabian Gulf to Syria in the north. The Arabs make two great divisions of their land; the northern which they call Sham, or "the left," and the southern called Yemen, or "the right." But geographers have divided it into three separate regions: Arabia Deserta, Arabia Petrea, and Arabia Felix.

The ancient Hebrews denominated this region "the east country" (Gen. xxv. 6), and its inhabitants "the children of the east" (Judg. vi. 3; Job i. 3; 1 K. iv. 30; Isa. ii. 14). By Arabia they only meant a small district of the country now so called (Ezek. xxvii. 21; 2 Chron. xxi. 16, 17). Thus the Arabians are

placed in connection with the Philistines (2 Chron. xxvi. 7). By "all the kings of Arabia" (1 K. x. 15; Jer. xxv. 24), we may understand the chiefs of wandering tribes who lived in tents. When the Apostle Paul speaks of having visited Arabia (Gal. i. 17), some imply that the country near Damascus is intended, others insist on Edom being the part visited. Whichever is right, Arabia is included, and when he speaks of Sinai in Arabia (Gal. iv. 25), he used the name in its extended signification.

Arabia is supposed to be so called from Arabah, that is, the desert, a district in Idumea. In Deuteronomy ii. 8, we read of the way of "the plain" in connection with Elath and Ezion-geber; in the original it is Ha-Arabah. As the Ishmaelitish inhabitants wandered over the adjoining territories, the name became extended to them also. The Arabah consists of a great valley, deep, dreary, and desolate, beginning at Elath and Ezion-geber and extending to the Dead Sea, which is called "the sea of the plain," or Arabah, in Deuteronomy iv. 49 and Joshua iii. 16.

The parts of the country bordering on Palestine and Egypt were originally peopled by Cush, the son of Ham, hence Cush became a general name for Arabian and African Ethiopia.

The pure Arabs trace their descent to Joktan, or Kahtan, the son of Heber of the posterity of Noah. Moses mentions thirteen sons of Joktan (Gen. x. 26–29), several of whose names are identified by Niebuhr and others with the provinces and towns of Southern Arabia. A native who can clearly trace his genealogy in this line is called "an Arab of the Arabs" to mark the purity of his descent. A third class, and probably those more generally found in these days, are the descendants of Ishmael, whose sons became twelve princes according to their nations in fulfilment of the Divine promise to Abraham in Genesis xvii. 20. Others of the tribes sprang from the second wife of Abraham, Keturah by name.

The whole of these tribes is divided into two classes, the Arab-el-mudn, the dwellers in houses, and the Bedouin, whose habitation is the "house of hair," so called because the tent-cloth is composed of goat's hair, which is spun and woven by the women. This latter class lives entirely in the wilderness and desert, tending their numerous flocks and herds, and to a considerable degree they maintain the prophetic declaration, "He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him" (Gen. xvi. 12).

Arabia Deserta is mostly an extensive desert, with scarcely enough vegetation to support the camels by which it is traversed, and with only a few brackish springs and pools of water. Here and there on the highlands large cities are found around which palm groves and gardens have been cultivated. No river or perennial stream blesses Arabia Deserta, bringing fertility to its barren stretches and life to its isolated dwellers. The desert is encircled or intersected by barren mountains, with summits rising in rugged peaks. The air is dry, and whole years occasionally pass without rain. Scripture gives an impressive picture of Arabia, "a land of deserts and of pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death, a land that no man passeth through, and where no man dwelt" (Jer. ii. 6). A large portion of the country is to the present day but little known, and awaits the advent of the pioneer missionary, who of all pioneers should be the first one to cross and recross that isolated land.

Arabia Petrea or Rocky Arabia derives its name from Petra, "the rock," from the many rocky districts found within its limits. To this wild but interesting region belongs a reverence which no other part of the earth, Judea excepted, can claim. It was the theatre

of many awful and extraordinary events recorded in Jewish history, the sacred eminence of Sinai, on whose cloudy summit the deity made his pavilion of darkness when he first issued a system of written laws to the human race; Horeb, with its burning bush and its caves, which gave shelter to Elijah when he fled from Jezebel; the pastoral solitudes, where the Jewish deliverer, then an exile from Egypt, kept the flocks of Jethro, the priest of Midian; Shur and Paran, with the bitter wells of Marah, and the smitten rock that yielded water; the land of Uz, the scene of the wealth and woes of Job, of the trial of his patience and the triumph of his piety; all these locations are comprehended within the geographical limitations of Arabia Petrea.[1]

Arabia Felix, or "the Happy" is so called because of its superior fertility. It is mountainous, well watered, and yields good crops of grain, coffee, and fruit. The present inhabitants of the land are in a state of poverty, owing to many years of drought and the heavy taxation of the Turkish government. In Arabia Felix, or, as it is better known, Yemen, thousands of Jews reside, having had their settlements there for many centuries.

[1] Crichton's "Arabia."

Among the people who did and who still occupy the three great divisions of Arabia the following are the most considerable:—

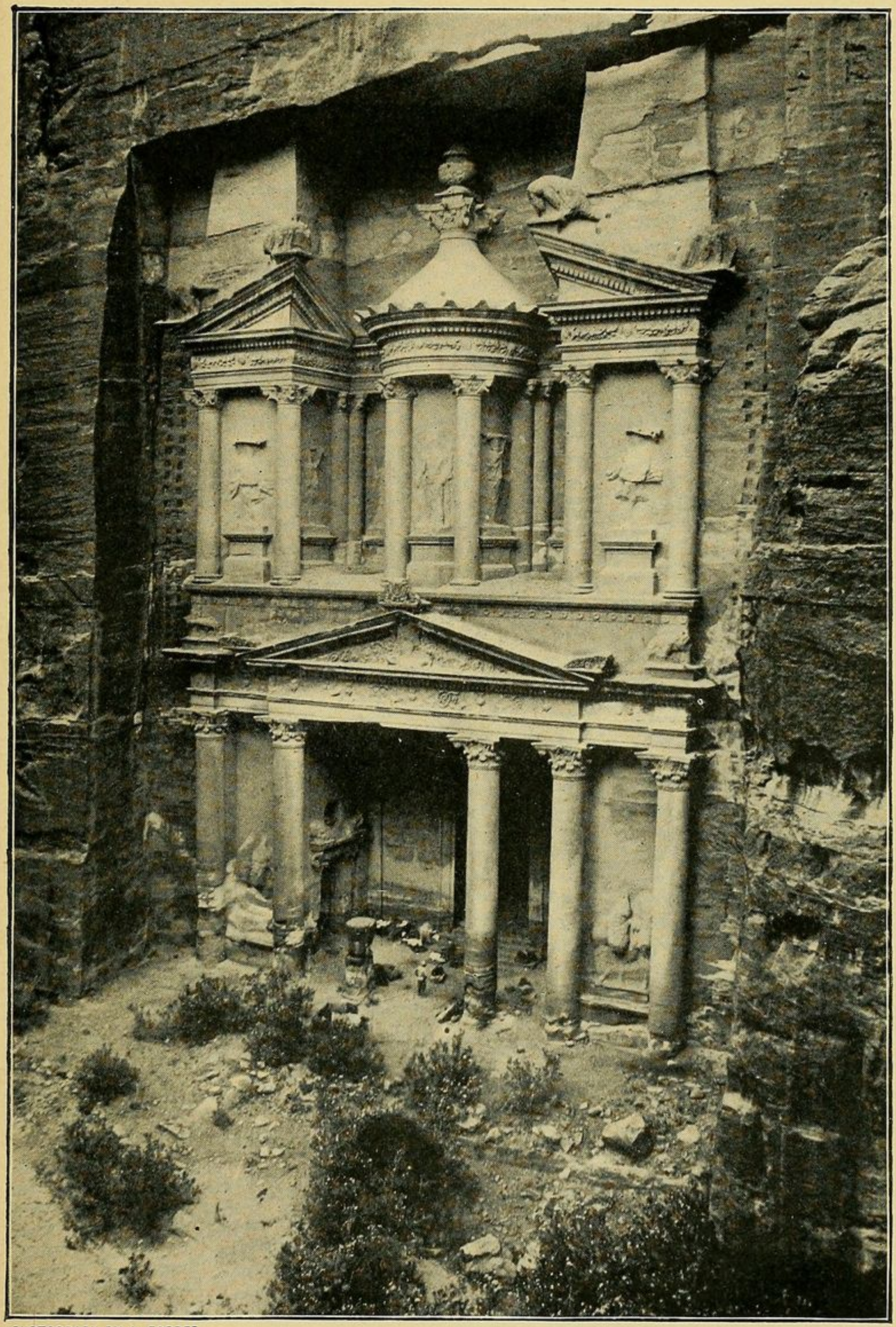
1. The Edomites. The country of the children of Esau, "who is Edom," after he "went from the face of his brother Jacob," was at Mount Seir, an elevated tract stretching from the southern point of the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Ezion-geber. Its earliest inhabitants were the Horims, or dwellers in caves (Deut. ii. 12, 22). It was in after ages called, by the Greeks and Romans, Idumea. The Edomites were a warlike race, and gradually spread eastward and southward over an extensive country. They established several ports on the Red Sea, which were taken by David, and the kingdom of Edom was annexed to his house, until it revolted in the days of Jehoram (2 Chron. xxii. 8–10).

About one hundred and fifty years before the Christian era, the Edomites were again subdued, and were from that time gradually incorporated among the Jewish people, and their national name became extinct. The land which once contained many cities and villages, and was the emporium of the commerce of the East, is now one of the most inaccessible parts of the Orient.

The chief city, Petra, — probably the Jok-theel of Scripture, — was situated in a deep ravine, or defile of rocks, which rises on either side to a vast height and forms a remarkable natural citadel of defence. In these rocks, reaching many hundred feet in height, are cut many of the dwellings and sepulchres of its former inhabitants, fully justifying their being compared to eagles' nests. Silence and obscurity hung over the ruins of this rock-hewn city for ages, until they were brought to light by Burckhardt early in the nineteenth century, and later by Laborde and Robinson. The writer has six times visited these interesting ruins, no doubt breaking any record concerning visits to Petra.

The Edomites were in all ages hostile to the Hebrews; hence, by a figure of speech, the enemies of the true Israel of God are designated Edomites.

2. The Moabites. The land inhabited by the descendants of the eldest son of Lot is on the east of Jordan and the Dead Sea; its history is very closely connected with the children of Israel. The people formed a powerful tribe, though too feeble to offer resistance to the progress of the Hebrews when on their way to Canaan. They, however, succeeded, conjointly



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

PHAROAH'S TREASURY, THE MASTERPIECE OF EDOM

This temple is cut from the rock, which is of rose-pink color. It is over eighty feet high, and more than two thousand years old. It contains three chambers, one thirty-five feet square, and two twenty-five feet square. Its sheltered position has preserved the elegant carving from destruction by the weather. The Arabs call this temple " the treasury of Pharoah." No one knows for what purpose this elaborate excavation was used.

with the Midianites, in enticing the children of Israel into idolatry and sin (Num. xxv). Their capital city was Ar, or Rabbath Moab, on the south side of the great gorge of Mojeb, through which flows the Arnon. By the Greeks it was called Areopolis, or "the city of Mars." Its ruins are very extensive and fairly well preserved.

The citadel or stronghold of Moab was Kir, now known as Kerak, where the writer of these pages lived for many years. The prophet Isaiah describes many of the chief towns of Moab as grieving over the conquest and desolation of the country, caused by the invasion of the Assyrians.

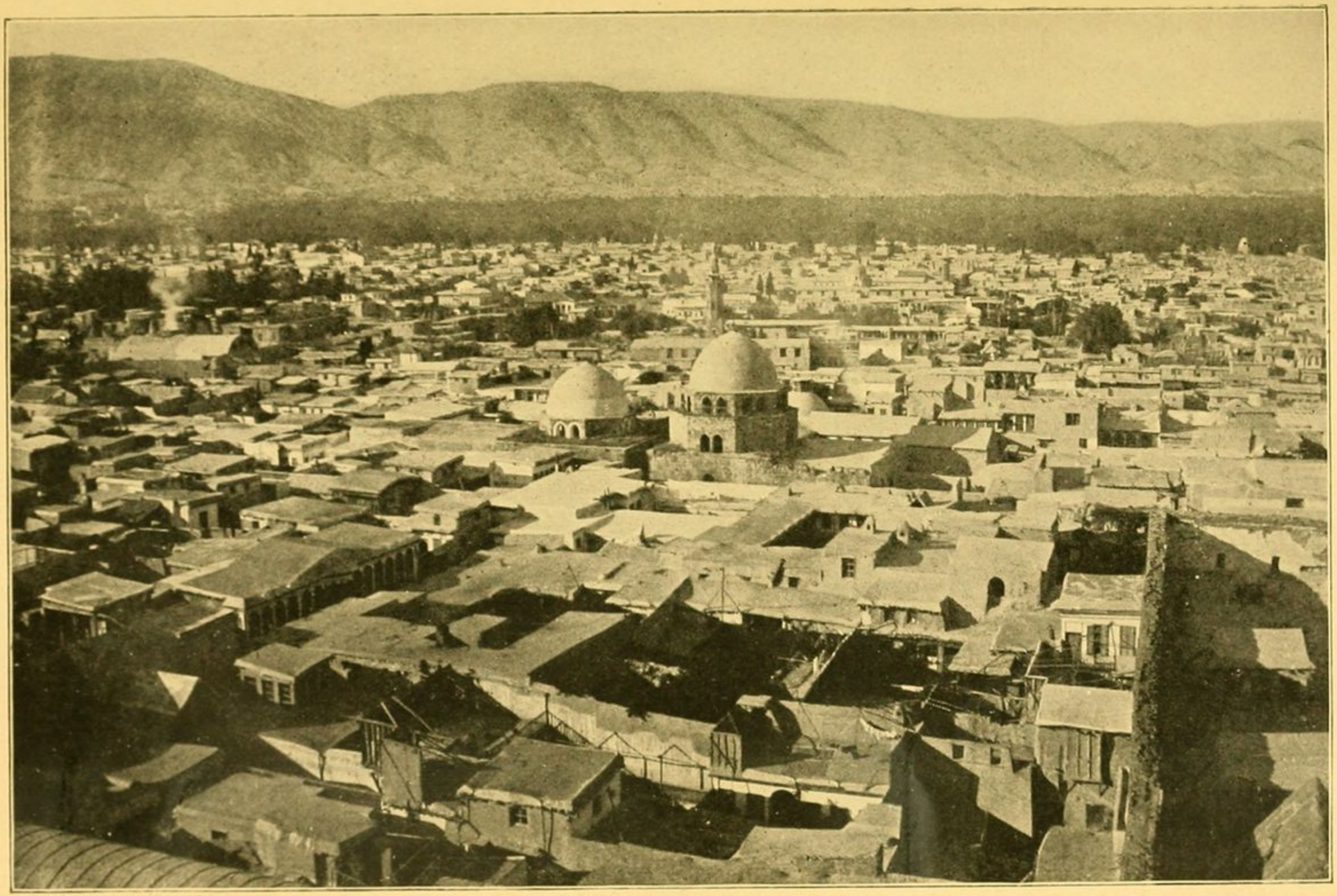
3. The Amalekites had their possessions on the west of Edom; they were called in the prophecy of Balaam "the first of the nations" (Num. xxiv. 20). They are described as occupying the whole region from Shur in Egypt to Havilah, or the Persian Gulf (1 Sam. xv. 7).

4. The Midianites were the descendants of Abraham and Keturah, through their son Midian; they settled near Mount Horeb. A considerable part of their land was traversed by the Israelites on their way from Egypt to Canaan. There was a division or class of this people who were the allies of Moab (Num. xxii. 4, 5), and were overthrown by Gideon (Judges vi).

5. The Ammonites, the offspring of Ben-Amomi, the son of Lot, inhabited the country between the rivers Arnon and Jabbok. They were driven by the Amorites more to the east. These people were in constant hostility with the Israelites, and against them Jeremiah, Amos, Ezekiel, and Zephaniah were directed to prophesy. Their name disappears from history before the birth of Christ; they no doubt were merged into one of the great Arab tribes among whom they lived.

6. The Ishmaelites. Nebajoth and Kedar were the two eldest sons of Ishmael (Gen. xv. 13); the former gave the name to the region about Mount Hor; the latter wandered far into the desert, and abode in tents made of black goat's hair, hence the expression in Songs of Solomon i. 5, "black as the tents of Kedar." They are rich in herds (Isa. lx. 7), and were expert and warlike archers (Isa. xxi. 16, 17; Ps. cxx. 5, 7); Dumah, the third son of Ishmael, directed his way to the east, near the Persian Gulf. A prophecy was directed against his descendants (Isa. xxi. 11). Tema, the ninth son (Gen. xxv. 15), is spoken of in Isaiah xxi. 14, in connection with the caravans of Dedan.

The other sons of Ishmael spread over that part of Arabia which lies south of Palestine,



PHOTOGRAPH BY A. FORDER

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF DAMASCUS

Damascus, the Arab's earthly paradise, and the pearl of the desert, is one of the sacred cities of the Mohammedans. The population is about 150,000. It is in shape like a spoon, and is encircled by gardens with mountains beyond. This picture, taken from a minaret, shows the flat roofs of the houses and the domes of some sacred shrines. From Damascus large caravans go to Arabia and northern Syria.

going as far as Shur, near Egypt, with which latter country they carried on commerce as early as the days of Jacob (Gen. xxxvii. 25, xxxix. 1).

The names of the twelve sons of Ishmael are perpetuated in tribes, families, villages, and districts still existing in Arabia.

7. The Kenites, a tribe of Arabs dwelling near or among the Amalekites in the south-west part of Arabia Petrea. They showed kindness to the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt, and in return, Saul, when he went against the Amalekites, desired them to withdraw, that they might not share the fate of his enemies (Num. xxiv. 20, 21; 1 Sam. xv. 6).

CHAPTER XXV

A LOOK AHEAD

IN a closing word, let me say that I hope my "'Ventures among the Arabs" are not yet over. I have told what it means to pioneer in the land of the Arab. Every year will make such work easier, and every journey will mean less opposition, and the more seen by the Arab of Protestant Christianity in contrast to the Christianity of the Orient, so much more will misunderstanding, prejudice, and fanaticism lessen.

Of necessity, mission work in Arabia must for some time mean isolation, hardship, danger, and it may be death, but such always precede the success and ultimate triumph of the gospel, as illustrated by Judson in India, and Calvert among the cannibal of the South Seas.

Mission stations, churches, and congregations may not for a time be established in Arabia, but that should not hinder the obeying of the Marching Orders.

"Go ye into all the world and preach," and thus by faithful witnessing, constant preaching,

and the distribution of the Word, the Arabs of tent and town may be gradually won for Jesus Christ, as the Africans were by Mackay's faithfulness and the Chinese by Piercey's persistency.

The work that has been represented in these pages has been partly independent. Organized societies have rarely supported pioneer movements in their initiative stages. The consecrated means of God's people have again and again been put at the disposal of the pioneer and used for the opening up of new lands, so it seems to me it must be in the case of neglected Arabia. If some such result comes from reading this book, my labor in writing it will not have been in vain.

God has thus far used me, and knowing well the terrible need, my heartfelt desire is, with the coöperation of others, to consummate the work.

The opportunity to evangelize Ishmael is given us. Doors long closed are slowly opening, the years fast going by, and the arduous work still undone. Reader,

"This matter belongeth unto thee" (Ezra x. 4).

For the time is not far distant when,

"The night shall be filled with music,
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as silently steal away."

The prayerful interest of the reader for the success of "'Ventures among the Arabs," past and prospective, will be much appreciated.

Communications may be addressed to

MR. A. FORDER,
Care British Consul,
Jerusalem, Palestine,

or to the publisher,

MR. W. N. HARTSHORN,
120 Boylston St.,
Boston, Mass.

H 282 85

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