

CHAPTER XXI.

Naples at Night from the Sea—Stromboli—Paul's Journey by Sea—The Mediterranean—A Bill of Fare—Egypt—From Alexandria to Cairo—Scenes from the Car Window—Villages—The Desert of Shur—The Bazaars of Cairo—The Mosque—The View from the Citadel.

ON a beautiful evening in August I took ship at Naples, and sailed for Egypt. The farewell sight of the city twinkling at night, in ascending lights around its semi-circular bay, is an Italian picture that memory loves to recall. Vesuvius had his red plume of war floating in the night wind, while a bloody gash in his left side looked foreboding.

Next morning we sighted and passed Stromboli—that most peculiar volcano island. It rises up suddenly from the sea all around, forming a cone and reaching the height of three thousand feet. One would think that people would be slow to settle where they would be rendered doubly helpless in time of peril by fire above and water all around; and yet here, nestling at the foot of this volcano, whose fires never go out, is a large town or city. America has countless thousands of acres of land with no natural convulsions to disturb the

settler, to which she invites the nations ; and yet the people of this volcano belt prefer to scrape a living from these hard rocks, having their houses occasionally knocked to pieces by earthquakes, and every four or five years running a race for their lives against streams of lava, and under showers of scorix.

It has been both pleasant and interesting to me to discover that I am traversing the same route by sea that Paul passed over in coming to Rome. According to the last chapter in Acts, he took a vessel that had sailed from Alexandria ; I took one that was sailing to Alexandria. He landed at Puteoli, just nine miles above Naples. Passing this place in the day, as he evidently did, from the narrative, his eye rested on the beautiful bay and the smoking summit of Vesuvius. This was the very year in which the terrible earthquake occurred that almost overwhelmed Pompeii and several other cities. God was letting the corrupt land know that his servant had arrived ! Luke says that they came from the island of Melita, thence to Syracuse, and touched at Rhegium. With what interest, as our ship passed down the Straits of Messina, did I look at this old city of Rhegium, and at the mountains that line both the Italian and Sicilian shores ! The thought that this noble herald of the gospel had passed this way, and that his eyes had surveyed the landscapes before me, gave a charm

to them over and above that which they possessed naturally. What a spectacle for men and angels was this journey of the apostle! I can realize its moral sublimity here as I could not far away. Christ's ambassador in chains! God's invading army, consisting of a single individual, and he a prisoner! South of Sicily we turned eastward, and ran parallel with Paul's course for six or seven hundred miles.

The Mediterranean was calm and lovely throughout the entire trip. Blue waves in the daytime, purple ones at night, beautiful sunsets in the evening, and a few snowy sails on the horizon were some of the pleasing features of the voyage.

Nothing strikes the traveler more forcibly on an ocean trip than the loneliness of the sea. For days we steamed on over the deep without seeing a single sail in the offing. The first impression is that there are few ships on the waters. The real explanation is the vast expanse of the sea. After sailing steadily for a week over endless fields of waves and illimitable prairies of water, this fact comes with peculiar and almost overwhelming power upon the mind. What are ten thousand ships upon the ocean that covers three quarters of the globe? Just what an hundred men would be, scattered over the United States. How often does the reader think they would meet?

The steamer on which I sailed was an Italian vessel. I knew not a word of the language, and

the officers and crew knew nothing of English. The consequence was that there was silence for six days on the Mediterranean. A bow which I regularly rendered to the captain on entering the dining-saloon, would be answered by him with one far deeper and more profoundly impressive. His moustache would almost sweep the plate in his courteous greeting. This would be all. Then the captain and myself would observe an eloquent silence toward each other. Thought was busy, the powers of mastication were employed, but words were few.

I herewith offer for inspection a kind of photograph of one of our breakfasts at sea; it could hardly be called a bill of fare:

BOTTLES OF WINE. (I did not partake.)

SOLEMN DISTRIBUTION OF ICE.

SOUP AND POWDERED CHEESE.

Change of plates.

SALT FISH (Sardine size) AND OLIVES.

Change of plates.

VERMICELLI AND POWDERED CHEESE.

Change of plates.

FRIED FISH.

Change of plates.

STEAK AND POTATOES.

Change of plates.

CHEESE AND FRUIT.

Removal of plates.

COFFEE

TOOTHPICKS.

This meal, or rather rattle of plates, lasted over one hour. I often arose hungry from these matutinal banquets of the sea. The name of one of Shakespeare's comedies, "Much Ado About Nothing," would well describe some of these Italian table scenes where I have languished with an unsatisfied appetite and lost much valuable time beside.

On the fifth day from Naples our ship cast anchor in the port of Alexandria. It needed not a second glance to show me that I was in a new world, in one sense, and in the Old World, in another. The palm trees near the river; the turbans, red fez caps and robes of the men; and the veiled women—all proclaimed, most powerfully, the East. Again and again a view of the Nile, through a perspective of palm trees, spoke like a voice, saying: "You are in the Dark Continent, but also in the borders of one of the most ancient civilizations. You are in the far-famed land of Egypt." Who wonders that I read that night in the Word of God about Joseph and his sojourn here, and what the Gospels say about Jesus, as a child being brought down to Egypt! So I am in one land already that has been made sacred by the presence of the infant Savior.

It seems strange to see a railroad in this old sleepy land; and yet here is one running from Alexandria to Cairo, and a day's journey still farther on up the Nile. In the trip to Cairo,

which takes something over four hours, you are held to the window by a constant interest. The great fertilizing river has already covered the fields, left its rich deposit, and is now retiring, while the farmers are all at work. I judge that these Nile farmers have a power by their ditches and small levees, to throw the water upon any portion of the land that they desire. I saw countless fields of wheat, corn, and rice. The character of the country and crops reminded me much of our Mississippi and Louisiana swamp lands. It would have been easy to have fancied one's self back home, but for the buffaloes plowing in the fields, the camels in caravan procession along the high-road, and the turbaned men and veiled women everywhere to be seen.

The villages of the poorer classes at first puzzled me for a descriptive word ; but, after a few glances, the proper phrase came—they are exactly like large dirt-dauber's nests. The reader remembers the tenement that this interesting third cousin to the wasp builds on our American rafters. The house of a poor Egyptian is simply a dirt-dauber's nest enlarged. The railway often ran for miles by the side of one of the highroads of Egyptian travel. It was like gazing on a panorama to keep the eye fixed on that road. And it was a living panorama of deep interest. There were donkeys, buffaloes and camels ; there were men in all the vivid and varied costumes of the East,

and women black-robed, as a rule, and black-veiled up to the eyes. There is a traveler and his dragoman dashing along on horses, and there a group of travelers with a slow-moving caravan of camels. Yonder is a band of soldiers, and yonder, riding to himself, is a stalwart, bearded man, in red turban and white robe, sitting on the back haunches of a diminutive donkey, who progresses with such a swift, gliding motion that the man looks as if he were sailing along the surface of the ground in a sitting posture. But it is a sight to see his gravity and dignity of mien. The Sultan on his throne, could not look more impressive and magisterial.

In drawing near to Cairo, I noticed on our left a high, yellowish ridge of ground, apparently thirty or forty feet above the level of the plain on which we were traveling. I needed not to be told that it was the beginning of the desert that reaches eastward to Gaza and the Dead Sea, and southward to Mt. Sinai and the lands where God led his people by the pillar of cloud and fire. I could not see over it, but I knew its barren wastes, and remembered what had occurred upon it; and it seemed like a presence to me. Over that plain Abraham had come and returned; over it Joseph had traveled as a grief-stricken youth, and was carried back with honors due to royalty. Over it Jacob had appeared wondering and rejoicing, and was carried back to Hebron with funeral celebra-

tions of such a character and extent that the people said: "This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians." Under the long, sandy horizon line of this desert Moses disappeared with a great multitude of people who never came back. And over this very plain, after the flight of centuries, came and went back again "the young Child and His Mother."

More than once lately have I seen a mother and her young child traveling these dusty roads under a burning August sky. The clinging babe, the downward droop of the mother's face, and the quivering heat beating oftentimes upon them on a treeless road, have thrown a new light and meaning upon the quiet statement made in the Gospel of that journey from Palestine to Egypt: "He took the young Child and His Mother by night and departed into Egypt." How much of suffering is there back of the simple affirmations of the Bible? Truly Christ suffered for us from the very days of his infancy! Truly the Father did not spare His Son! And there is the desert that brings these things to mind. What a monument it is! or, better still, what a wondrous pedestal it is! Forty feet high and over a thousand miles around the base, and upon it History and the Bible have grouped figures, and armies, and scenes, and transactions of the most profoundly interesting and important character.

The bazaars of Cairo consist of a number of ex-

ceedingly narrow streets lined with diminutive shops and crowded with a jostling procession of human beings, camels and donkeys. In front of the shop sits—Turkish fashion—the owner, either smoking his nargileh or dispensing his goods with the dignity of a judge giving forth justice. The scene, as you look, is one of animation and attractiveness. The different-colored turbans and dresses, the veiled women, the clatter of various languages, the sudden and constant looming up of camels with riders or burdens—these and other things constantly interest the spectator.

I visited two mosques. Of course I could not be admitted on their sacred floors until my unhallowed feet had been encased in slippers. The first pair were as large as frying-pans. In these I slapped my way along, viewing the dirt, and dinginess, and religious mummery of the mosque of Sultan Hassan. At the next my pedal extremities were again enswathed in Eastern slippers, which were this time as remarkable for length as the preceding pair had been for breadth. Armed at my feet with slippers equal to short swords, I moved my dagger-like way into the mosque of Mahomet Ali. This is as beautiful a building as the other is unattractive. The auditorium is a vast and lofty chamber, surmounted with a dome illuminated with exquisitely colored glass. The lights of the auditorium are ranged in concentric circles, with a few clusters besides, suspended at

certain points. When lighted, it must be a place of great splendor. There are no chairs used in their worship, but the floor is covered with mats. The leader addresses the sitting throng from an airy perch, reached by a carpeted staircase of thirty or forty steps. The females are admitted into a balcony that runs around the sides of the chamber at a height of fully fifty or sixty feet. Here, fenced off and deeply veiled, they get those portions of truth that may happen to fly upward. There is no music in a Mohammedan service. But after listening to their secular or profane music, one has reason for being thankful that there is no song service in their mosques, if he happens to be dwelling in the vicinity. Infidelity has no hymn book, and Mohammedanism has no singing in its worship. Both facts are significant, and mean the same thing, and that thing is that they are both spiritually dead. The dead sing not. "The living, the living, they shall praise thee," said King Hezekiah. I shall have more to say about Islamism in another chapter.

From the citadel I had a fine view of Cairo and the surrounding country. For the first time I looked down on a minaretted city. The church spire and gospel bell give way in this land to the mosque and to the minaret, and the voice of the Muezzin calling four times a day to prayers. But this shall not be long. The promise is that Christ "shall inherit all nations." The sight of the min-

arets and domes ; the uplifted plumed heads of the palm trees ; the windings of the river Nile ; the shipping on its bosom, with mast and spar of bamboo making a curve peculiar, yet pleasing, to the eye ; the sight of the Pyramids, eight miles away, on the edge of the Great Desert—all these made a view striking, peculiarly oriental and beautiful. It was also calculated to impress me with the fact that I was a considerable distance from home. This was the sensation experienced when I saw the Nile for the first time through a featherly line of palm trees.

Traveling as I am now doing, independently of excursion parties, and alone, there are moments when, naturally, a feeling of solitariness sweeps down upon the heart. For instance : It is hard to be seeing constantly striking objects, and have no one to commune with on the subject. It is trying to see parties of friends and loved ones together, and feel shut out from like pleasures. There is a trying experience in being forever surrounded with strange faces, listening to a babel of strange tongues, and moving all the time through strange lands. But there are three things that instantaneously save me from the lonely feeling. One is : That I am traveling for the very purpose of seeing the strange and unknown. Next : A number of years ago I struck up an acquaintanceship and friendship with the clouds and stars. We have been on delightful communing terms for

quite a while. As a boy they spoke to me and said many things that set me to thinking and quieted my spirit. As a child of God, I have recognized a still, small voice coming out from their beautiful sanctuaries. Their voices are kindly, their faces are friendly and familiar. So, all through the different countries I have journeyed, I have repeatedly steadied and cheered my heart with a view of the clouds and the stars. They are the only things that have not changed since I left home. There they are, the same "bright, motionless pillars of heaven" when piled up on the horizon; and there are the same constellations that I saw bend over the land in America. They actually give a homelike appearance to every foreign country. A third fact may be easily guessed by the reader. It is the sense of the perpetual presence and companionship of the Savior.

I possess by my present remoteness a peculiar advantage in respect to the day. While writing this at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, people in the United States are just sitting down to breakfast, or, perhaps, rising from bed. The day with me is far spent. I have looked into its history, lived its life, seen it grow old before they rub the sleep from their eyes. This gives me an advantage. It makes me something like a prophet, in that I have seen what they have not seen. I have dipped, in a sense, into the future, and looked into the face of the unborn and unknown.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Valley of the Nile—Historic Egypt—The Donkey-Boy—Oriental Scenes and Attitudes—The Pyramids—The Desert of Sahara—Occurrences on the Summit of Cheops—The Sphinx—A Cruel Scene Interrupted.

CAIRO, with a population of four hundred thousand souls, is about one hundred miles up the river Nile. The desert that stretches away east to Palestine touches it on one side, while the yellow lip of the Great Desert is drawn back to the west fully eight miles. These two deserts are remarkable for their bluffs. They do not melt away into the shore or plain line of the Nile valley, but draw themselves up, as if saying, in conscious majesty, "I am the wild, unconfined Desert that laughs defiance at all the labors and implements of man to change and bring me into subjection." There was a time, doubtless when these two ghastly lips met, and there was nothing but death and sterility over this spot. But God trained the waters from the mountains, and brought them in a winding course until the channel was made, and a valley was formed to support a mighty nation, and, indeed, become the granary of distant peo-

ples. He also did this to show, even in nature, how He can bring life out death, and to reveal to us in figure how, out of earthly Saharas, He will cause a paradise yet to bloom. The valley varies in width. It is so fertile that I think it can grow anything and everything. As some one wrote, "Tickle it with a hoe and it smiles with a harvest."

Some one says that Cairo is one of the most favorable points for studying Oriental life. I suppose this is so, because almost every nationality is here represented. Egyptians, Arabians, Turks, Greeks, Nubians flow together on the streets in one common throng, but easily discerned by their different costumes, as well as strongly-marked faces. "Dwellers from every nation under heaven" are here, we say scripturally, and then cry out in heart for the large upper room and the descending Holy Ghost.

I am duly appreciative of my historic surroundings. This is the land of puzzling dynasties, and a chronology that goes back farther than Adam, according to the wild figuring of some people. Here flourished the Ptolemies, and the fair descendant of their family, Cleopatra. Here Cæsar fought and swam, and like to have drowned. Here Mark Antony made another celebrated speech that he really did not make. Certainly there never was a man whose fame as an orator was as cheaply made as that of Antony. Speakers of

to-day, by revising and revamping printed proof-sheets of their orations; make themselves great orators : but Antony's great speech had not been delivered until he had been dead fifteen hundred years ; and the other speech at death appears nearly two thousand years after in poetical form, beginning, "I am dying, Egypt, dying." Now I call attention to the absurdity of addressing a female after this manner because she happens to live on the Nile. What would be thought of a man saying in death to an English woman whom he loved, "I am dying, Great Britain, dying"? Certainly she would be justified in saying, "Farewell, America." How deeply affecting all this would be !

The Pyramids are eight miles west of Cairo. A beautiful avenue of acacia trees line the road the entire way, with the exception of one or two short spaces. I went out with a dragoman, two donkeys and a donkey-boy. The donkey is the gondola of Cairo and the donkey-boy is the gondolier. The lad carries a rod about four feet in length, by which he steers the living craft, and also generates steam.

It was a sight worth seeing to watch that donkey-boy go in a swinging trot for miles. With his arms slightly bent and his form inclined forward, he moves over the ground like a bird in its skimming flight. I was troubled about him, and offered to relieve him in various ways, but his re-

ply was an additional thwack upon the animal and an increased gait, which spoke louder than words. About sunrise I left Cairo in the distance, with Hassan, my dragoman, and Mustapha, the donkey-boy, while the donkeys may doubtless have flourished under the names of Mohammed and Ali. I never saw such a country for high-sounding names as the East.

As we entered the avenue of acacia trees, and for miles beyond, I beheld a scene equal to any pictured in the "Arabian Nights." At this early hour people were streaming into the city. There were men in white, red, and black turbans; and in white, black, blue, and brown robes. There were women in blue and black, some veiled to the eyes, and some veiled all over, and some few not veiled at all. There were strings of donkeys, and lines of camels, some loaded, some ridden, and some driven. Hundreds of people were scattered along the road under the trees, where they evidently keep house. Turkish soldiers went by rapidly on horses, and donkey-boys, clothed in a long, blue garment and white turban, kept pace with the galloping animals by their sides. It was a scene animated, variegated, and deeply interesting in its Oriental character throughout.

It was along this road that I was more impressed than ever with the grace and dignity of Oriental attitudes. I never saw any but what were striking. A group of men looked like an assembly of

patriarchs; when two met it seemed that Abraham and Melchizedek had come together; when one sat alone by the wayside, it was Eli thinking of the ark of God, or Jacob waiting to bless his sons. When I saw one, with white robe and red turban, sitting on a camel or donkey, it seemed that he ruled Egypt from the mouth of the Nile to the far limits of Nubia. I saw veiled women with water-pots on their heads, and with white or olive-tinted arms revealed in their upward position, and it was the picture of grace. I saw other females clothed and veiled in black, so that only the dark eyes could be seen, sitting alone under a spreading tree by the wayside; and a picture was immediately beheld that had charmed me long before and as vividly painted in the word of God. The meditative, lonely, and even forsaken attitudes, brought most powerfully to my mind four women mentioned in the Bible—three in the Old and one in the New Testament.

There is a repose of manner and a dignity about the men of the East that is rarely seen in the Western Hemisphere. You never see an Oriental tilt back his chair on two legs, or sit on three at once, as does the American. Mr. Dickens says he saw one of our countrymen occupy five chairs at the same time; he sat in one, his feet resting in two others, and the backs of two others under his armpits. We see nothing of this kind in the East. A walk through the ba-

zaars will convince the skeptical here. The very manner of address or salutation, as the hand is raised first to the head and then laid upon the heart, is impressive.

But here we are at the Pyramids. Although I had read much of these monster masses of stone, I was surprised a number of times before I left them. First, at their rough and jagged appearance, produced by the removal of the outer casing. Next, I was surprised at the steepness of the ascent. So sharp is the angle from base to summit, that to look down when half-way up, is anything but pleasant. Still another unexpected experience was that I had to rest five times before reaching the top, although I had two men assisting me.

But the view repays one for all the weariness undergone. The winding Nile ; the fertile valley here and there covered with silver belts and sheets of the overflowing river ; the city of Cairo on the horizon in the east, and the pyramids of Memphis on the horizon in the north ; while westward stretched forth the vast expanse of the Desert of Sahara.

This desert rises suddenly from the valley of the Nile in a bluff forty or fifty feet high, and then spreads out as far as the eye can see as a vast, yellow field full of slopes and hillocks. The Nile valley reaches out its emerald fingers as if timidly to touch it, but the desert refuses to be tamed.

Like a great, tawny monster, it stretches itself up to its full height of fifty feet, looks out of its yellow eyes over the plain, and spying a traveler or caravan, springs with a sudden bound and roar upon them, shakes over them its brown mane, strangles them in its embrace, and then leaves their bones to bleach in the sun as a silent evidence of its power. But aside from this figure into which I have been betrayed, what a benefactor it really is to Europe. Men talk of turning the Mediterranean Sea into it, and making it a great inland ocean. Nothing would be more disastrous, I am confident. The Great African desert is the furnace of the continent that lies to its north. The ripening fruit, the mellowing grain, and comparative mildness of winter in Europe depends on the heat generated or reflected by this desert, and then spread or fanned northward by the winds that blow in that direction. This warm, desert air touches the frozen fields of snow on the mountain side and turns them into brooks and fountains; breathes upon the hard fruits of the land until they blush under its whispers and grow tender under its caresses; and, besides, making the more northern latitudes of Europe tolerable for human habitation; gives to Spain and Italy, in especial, the rich landscapes, the luscious fruits, the beautiful skies, and the soft and delightful climate for which they are famous. Poet and statesman, lover of beauty and political econ-

omist alike say let the Great Desert remain as it is, uncovered by the waves of the Mediterrean.

Looking about me after arriving at the top of the pyramid, I found that I had an Arabian escort to the number of five. I had only bargained for two, but in midsummer travelers are few, and the pyramid vultures swooped down on the unexpected carcass. Before leaving the place I had ten or twelve about me. Consider my situation. Here I was, four hundred and seventy feet high in the air, standing upon a monument over four thousand years old, trying to give myself up to historic and moral reflections, and utterly unable so to do because of a chattering crowd of Moham-medans about me. Each one was intent and bent on doing me some service, giving me some piece of information, holding an umbrella over my head, offering me a drink of water from an earthen jug, in order to reap a *backshish* from my hand. "Yonder," I would say to myself, "is Heliopolis, where Moses was trained in all the wisdom—" when suddenly a swarthy face would be thrust before mine, with some unintelligible jargon, half English and half Arabic. Again I rallied. "Doubtless," I said, "Joseph visited this place—" when a dark hand would thrust before my eyes some battered, ancient coin, with request to buy.

I had fully intended to have some fine moral cogitations on the pyramid, shading off into history—the great battle of Napoleon, etc.—but it

was useless to try. So I finally turned to consider my crowd of attendants, and see what I was to learn from them. One was beseeching me to let him run down the side of the great pyramid and up the other in so many minutes. That he did it for Mark Twain—that all Americans got him to do it. And he was, in a sense, chafing the bit to be off for me. I stood firm for ten minutes, and finally, for the sake of peace, and in order to get rid of the man, whose life is made up indeed of “ups and downs,” I bade him be off, but to go slow. The white-robed figure and dark face is still before me as I saw it outlined on the other pyramid, stealing up the rocks. Another one of my voluntary attendants came near to me and began, in a most discordant voice, to sing the first verse of “Yankee Doodle.” Upon his finishing it I made no remark, whereupon he sung it over, and as I still maintained a strict silence he said that some Americans liked “Yankee Doodle” and some did not. I told him I was among the last named number. That I had for it neither love nor admiration. One gun sent off and another one spiked! A third turned upon me with the request not to fail to give them *backshish*, that the Sheik at the foot of the pyramid got all the money, and they, the guides, did all the work. This third man was a kind of “medicine man,” and called himself the “Doctor.” In coming up and going down he would say to the other guide,

who was younger and stronger, "Don't get ahead of the Doctor." The longer I was with this interesting individual the firmer I was persuaded that "to get ahead of the Doctor" was an impossible thing. He informed me on the pyramid that he had two wives, one old and one young. I asked him which he liked best, and he replied, very promptly, the young one. But he added that he had some trouble with them, that not infrequently they quarreled and fought. "What do you do with them at such times," I asked. "I whip them," he replied. Looking him steadily in the eye, I said, "Who whips you?" Here straightway, on the top of Cheops, the great pyramid, an observer could have noticed a profound Mohammedan silence and a calm Christian triumph.

I descended from my airy perch to hear Hassan, the dragoman, yelling and hallooing, in the shadow of these great stone antiquities and mysteries, for Mustapha, the donkey-boy, as irreverently as a man would call a colored boy in a corn-field.

A hot, fatiguing time was spent in reaching the king's chamber, which occupies the very center of the pyramid, measured up or down or from any side. The sight beheld, after the tramp, was an imposing sarcophagus in which there was *nothing*; a spectacle seen even until this day in America and elsewhere. Moreover, the result of that toil in the steep, dark galleries was strikingly like the reward given by the world to those who toil after

its honors—a rich coffin, and then darkness, emptiness, loneliness, and by and by, forgetfulness. Then there was an echo. The guide shouted, and the distant passages and tomb-chambers caught it up. I could hear the sound reverberating in remote galleries, and after awhile all was still. Yes, there was an echo, and then came silence. So is it still in life.

I looked upon the Sphinx. A woman's head and a lion's body makes a sphinx in Africa, but a lion's head and a woman's body will make a sphinx anywhere. I rode all around it, climbed on one of its huge paws, stood near and far off, and looked into the solemn eyes about which I had read so much. Yes; it is solemnly impressive. How much of this effect is due to the centuries that fall like shadowy veils upon it, or how much is due to the visible embodiment of that idea of repose that pervades all Egyptian sculpture I cannot tell. I had always supposed from letters of travel that the face of the Sphinx was turned toward the great desert, and that its stony eyes ever rested upon that great expanse; but it is just the contrary. The back is toward the desert, while the face fronts the east, and gazes upon the valley of the Nile, and the remoter line of the Desert of Shur, that stretches away to Palestine.

In the temple of the Sphinx near by I had a piece of alabaster chipped off a great column as a paper-weight for one of our bishops. It is an ap-

propriate gift, for if anybody needs to appear solemn and mysterious. and do a great deal of steady looking, and be silent at the same time (I won't say for four thousand years), that person is a Bishop.

I little thought in starting out on my morning trip that I would be instrumental in stopping two Mohammedan fights before I returned to Cairo, but so it proved. The first was in the shadow of the pyramids. The second was on the acacia-lined avenue to Cairo. The cries of a woman under terrific blows from a cudgel by a man made me look up, and demanded prompt action. Calling on my dragoman to do what he could to stop the brutality, we charged on our donkeys right into the crowd. It was "the Charge of the Light Brigade." The dragoman harangued in Arabic, and I protested in Anglo Saxon ; and with one or two natives, stopped the sickening spectacle. It seemed that the woman's offense was that she had not cleaned away the dust sufficiently under the trees where they lived. The normal state of the dust was four inches, and she had left about an inch in depth unremoved, whereupon the man beat her for untidy housekeeping. Here was a nabob indeed, an exquisite of the Nile, whose refined nature and cultivated habits rebelled when dust reached the depth or height of one inch. The male nature could stand no more, so he called on the female nature to suffer. A number of na-

tives witnessed the scene in perfect indifference ; some did not even look up to see what was going on. My own sudden arrival and irruption produced far more curiosity and interest. That surrounding unconcern spoke volumes : it showed that they were accustomed to such scenes. I called the woman to me. O how she sobbed ! Great welks ran over her hands and arms where the brute had struck her. The agony of her face I shall never forget, as she wailed out in language I could not understand. But I pitied her, and she understood that. I took her brown hand in mine, and, looking up, pointed her to heaven. I meant that to God she must look now, and that He, after awhile, would give her deliverance and rest. I then laid some money in her hand and rode off, getting from the man a scowl that was like a storm-cloud at mid-night.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Approach to Joppa—House of Simon, the Tanner—The Plain of Sharon—Timnath—House of Dagon—Lydda—The Threshing-floor—The Mohammedan Posture—The Valley of Bethshemesh—The Valley of Ajalon—Kirjath Jearim—Mizpeh—A Bedouin Encampment—A Sleeping Jacob—Jerusalem.

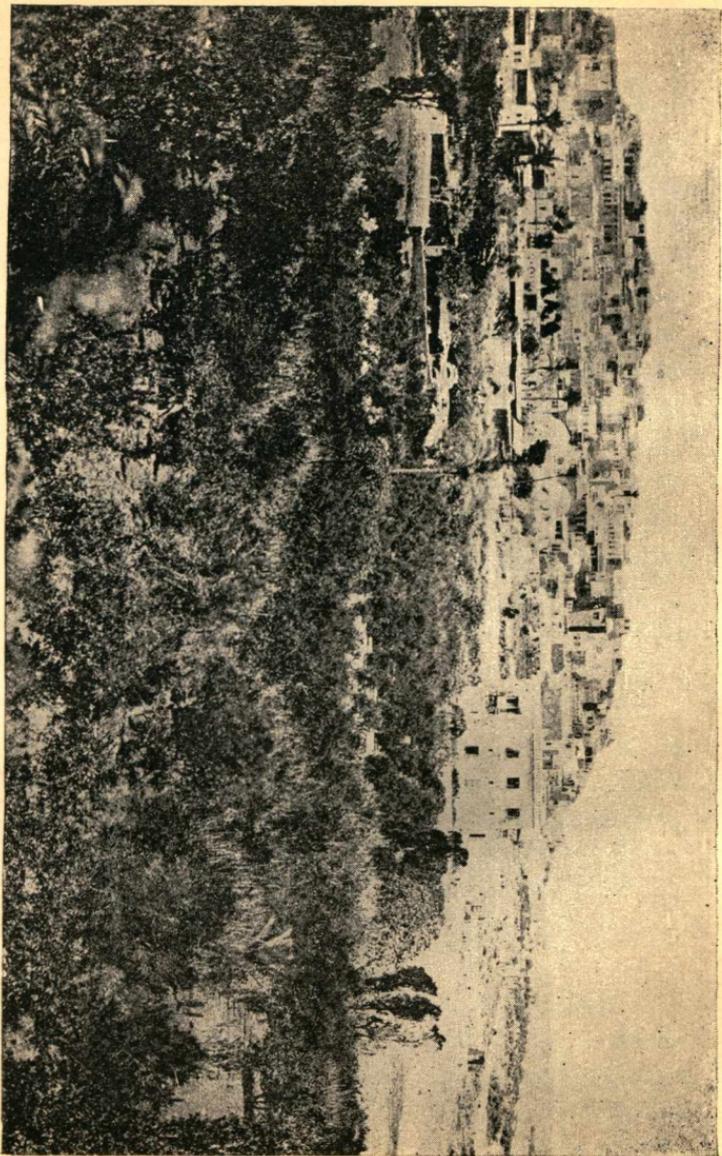
IN all my journeying I have looked forward with a tender, glad feeling in my soul that each day brought me nearer the Holy Land. I would say, "One week more, and I will be in Jerusalem;" and then again, "To-morrow I shall see the land forever made sacred by the presence of the Savior." The experience, as I studied it, was like that of one who urges his way and draws nigh to the place where abides one whom he loves above all others.

On the morning of August 22d I obtained my first view of Palestine as a line of sea-shore; and, in the dim distance beyond, the mountains of Judea. A little later Joppa, on its conical-shaped hill, appeared. Leaning against the side of the vessel, I recalled the four great facts of the city's history. Here ships came, bringing cedar and other wood for the building of the temple of Solomon. At this place, I doubt not, Solomon's

fleets landed, bringing gold and ivory, and apes and peacocks ; to this place Jonah came and took ship when he fled from the presence of the Lord ; at this place Tabitha, or Dorcas, lived and died, and was raised from the dead by the hand of Simon Peter ; and here, on the roof of Simon the Tanner's house, near the sea, Peter saw at mid-day the sheet knit at four corners, and filled with all kinds of creeping things, let down from heaven three times and heard at the same time the explaining voice of God. I had time to think over all these things, and even read of them afresh in the Scripture before we cast anchor. As we swept into position, I noticed a ship unloading her cargo of lumber, as if the King of Tyre was still filling his contract, and Solomon still receiving. Just beyond the lumber vessel was a small two-masted ship, just such as I think Jonah embarked in, in that mad and impossible flight from God. The landing here is always difficult, because Joppa is without natural or artificial harbor, and the heave and swell of the sea has an unimpeded sweep to the shore.

As soon as I landed, and before going to the hotel, I visited Simon the Tanner's house by the sea. Along streets narrow and dirty I walked to the place. This much we have in identification—that *only three* other houses dispute the claim ; that this house is certainly by the sea, and has the flat, retired roof that the sacred narrative

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leads us to expect. As I stood upon the roof I took in the wide-open heaven through which that wonderful sheet was let down. A wide space was a fitting frame for the lesson given the apostle. What a lesson it was! And how hard it was for Peter, even after that, to remember! Of all the instruction that the Spirit strives to impress upon the human heart, there is none that man learns with greater difficulty, and forgets with greater readiness, than that of the "four cornered sheet." The gospel flood of salvation cannot go as it should, because of the walls and barriers that men have built everywhere between each other. The Egyptians would not eat with the Hebrews, for "that would be an abomination to the Egyptians." "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." "God, I thank thee," said the Pharisee, "I am not like this publican." Caste law and hatred are implacable and undying. Let us all take a fresh look into the sheet, and listen to the interpreting voice of the Spirit. After I had descended from the roof I noticed I had been there at the very hour of the day that Peter had the vision, viz: "the sixth hour," which is twelve o'clock.

I left Joppa in the afternoon in a carriage with a dragoman, who proved to be an intelligent man, and blessed with a remarkable knowledge of Scripture. One or two miles from the town we entered upon the plain of Sharon. Its width is twelve

miles, and length over thirty. This historic plain, although bare and brown in the sultry month of August, yet greatly impressed me by its size and natural beauty. In the spring it must be a lovely spectacle. I looked in vain for a rose or any kind of flower; and, stopping the carriage in the search, had to pluck instead a little thorny bush, with which the plain abounds. Think of plucking a thorn from the plain of Sharon as a memento! Nevertheless the Rose of Sharon blooms on fairer plains above. All this may be part of the judgment which is on the land. On the eastern edge rose up the mountains or hills of Judea. As I looked on them I recalled the verse, "And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah."

During the afternoon we passed the site of Timnath, where Samson lost his wife and had his revenge on the standing corn of the Philistines. A wretched mud village now marks the spot. I was also shown the town where the Temple, or House of Dagon stood, and where the wonderful scene of the image falling before the ark of God took place.

Farther on we came to Lydda, called by the Arabians to-day Ludd. Two points of identification are readily seen—one in the similarity of names, and the other in Acts ix. 38: "And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa." I suppose it is seven or eight miles distant. Here it was that

Peter healed Eneas, and a great revival sprang up therefrom. I walked through the streets of the dirty and poverty-stricken town, where "once dwelt the saints." The houses are constructed of mud and the stones of ancient ruins. The streets, which are narrow, winding alleys in reality, are strewn with litter and filth. The floors of many of the houses, mud-colored and windowless, were often four or five feet below the level of the street. The refuse accumulates well. The things noticed by the eye were revolting in many instances to almost every sense. I felt that Lydda was not such a place in the time of Peter. A great crime has been committed in this country. God's Son was killed not thirty miles from this spot, and the face of Jehovah has been turned from the land for two thousand years. And his vengeance is written in barren fields, and naked mountains, and long lines of ruins all over this land. What will not happen to a country when God hides his face!

I am struck, however, with the fact that the Jews constitute a small part of the population that partakes of this desolation. I meet twenty Egyptians, Arabians, Syrian peasants, and people who don't know who they are, to one Israelite. All this, however, is in perfect fulfillment of the prophecies of old. The Jew was to be driven into all nations, and the stranger was to enter in and possess the country, Mr. Rothschild is, how-

ever, still importing them from Russia and elsewhere. He has five or six colonies between Joppa and Damascus. Here he is settling the poor wanderers, and teaching the boys how to be farmers. I saw one of his colonies in the plain of Sharon.

I notice that every village of any size has its threshing-floor. How often I have met the expression in Holy Writ, and concluded that it was a large, airy room like a barn, with a plain floor, and as substantial a covering. Here my preconceived ideas went to the winds, as they have been going about many things since I left home. It is good to leave home occasionally. The "threshing-floor" is a plot of ground two or three hundred feet square, level as a floor, and occupying the top of a hill, or an elevated piece of ground. I used to wonder why David offered Araunah, the Jebusite, such a price for his threshing-floor for the altar; but, after seeing the size and need of such a place, the wonder departed. The threshing-floor at Lydda was an animated scene, although I passed it late in the evening, when the main work was over. Long lines of grain in sheaves were in one part. A number of men were engaged in winnowing the chaff from the wheat in the old-time method of flinging the grain against the wind, while still others were filling sacks.

The cactus hedge abounds. It gets higher and thicker the nearer we approach the Judean moun-

tain. The natives eat the bulby fruit, and I propose trying the same thing in the morning, when the dew is upon it. The camels eat the leaf, thorn and all, and evidently regard the prickly plants of the hedge and the thorns of Sharon as luxuries. The camel that will eat anything, and the donkey that eats almost nothing are certainly the animals for this poverty-stricken country.

The Mohammedan, as you know, possesses the land. In a mosque at Lydda, at the hour of sunset, I saw some of them at their devotions. On a piece of matting he prostrates himself, touching the earth three times with his forehead, while he utters what is called the short prayer. He then arises, and standing erect and motionless, with face to the east, while his eyes are fixed upon a pillar or wall before him, goes through the long prayer, apparently oblivious of the presence of anybody and everybody.

The night we passed in Ramleh. It has no scriptural associations, and the most remarkable thing they can relate in matters of the world is, that Napoleon once slept there.

It was by the roadside at this place I saw my first leper. The lonely, sitting figure, the drooping form, the lower face covered by a portion of the robe, was a sight familiar, though before unseen, and melting to the heart.

A few miles farther on I had pointed out the beautiful valley of Bethshemesh, along the side

which the cart, laden with the ark of God, was drawn so wonderfully; the cows, as the Bible says, lowing as they went. The valley, after a while, turns southward and merges into the valley of Ajalon. Here, again, memory is stirred at that bold prayer and demand of faith upon the part of Joshua: "Sun, stand thou still on Gibeon, and thou moon, in the valley of Ajalon." Great was the victory that day over the five kings! They were pursued from Gibeon to Azekah, across and down the valley of Ajalon. The Bible says, God took a wonderful part in that battle, for he rained down great stones from heaven upon the enemies of Israel. As I passed down the valley and along the hill-sides, I suddenly began to notice myriads of stones on all sides. Strange to say, I had not thought of the Scripture statement until I saw the stones. In no other part of the country did I see rocks like these before me for peculiarity of size and multitude. They were just such as would be used in hurling down upon a great army. I picked up one of the smaller sized ones, two and a half inches in diameter, for the Editor of the New Orleans Christian Advocate.

An encampment of Bedouins near the road attracted my attention. In walking through it a scene of abject poverty presented itself, while naked children stared and ill-natured dogs barked at me. A blanket stretched on a pole was all the

shelter and, indeed, all the home they possess. "Two women were grinding at the mill." It was the same kind of mill used in the time of the Savior. There were two circular stones, the upper one having a small aperture through which to pour a handful of grain at a time. By an iron handle the woman revolved the upper on the nether stone, and the triturated grain gradually worked out at the surface edges and was received in a cloth spread on the ground. It was a slow and wearisome work. One of the women with whom I spoke, said her life was one of misery.

Several miles from this place we began to ascend the mountains of Judea toward Jerusalem. It is true that, no matter how you approach the city, you have to "go up to Jerusalem." At the height of seventeen hundred feet we had a charming view of the plain of Sharon, and the Mediterranean Sea beyond.

I can not, in suitable words, convey to the reader the dreariness of these mountains around Jerusalem. The road runs for twenty miles through and over them, and throughout it is a scene of profound desolation and mournfulness. The mountain sides show unmistakable signs of having once been terraced from summit to base, and cultivated; but the vineyards have vanished, and the terraces are in ruins, and, with the exception of an occasional grove of scattering olives, these noble trees are gone. The mountains them-

selves, denuded of their once beautiful coverings, stand up and roll on to the distant horizon in bold, bare forms of gray limestone and red clay.

Upon the summit and side of one of these hills stands Kirjath Jearim, where the ark of God was carried, and remained so long. Beyond this, and visible for miles, is Mispeh, where Samuel used to assemble the children of Israel, where Saul was elected, and was found "hid in the stuff." Two miles farther on, and northward on the Jaffa road, is Gibeah. It was near this place that Saul, in such sinful haste, sacrificed to the Lord with his own hand. Samuel had gone to Mispeh with promise to return ; but Saul would not await his coming. When the eye takes in the two places, separated only two miles, something of the dark, impatient spirit of the King of Israel at once impresses the mind. Although separated from Samuel two miles, he would not wait for him, or tarry until a message could be sent. Here was light suddenly thrown on the character of Saul. With deep interest did I look upon the places connected with a life of the most brilliant beginning, and dark and fearful ending, that is mentioned in the Word of God. I rode slowly all day, with my Bible frequently in hand, comparing the land with the Book and the Book with the land. God certainly made them both. Among the peculiar, sudden pleasures of the two days' travel from Joppa to Jerusalem was the recognition of Bible

pictures and sayings on all sides. The carob tree brought up one scene, the sight of two women grinding at the mill another ; while near Emmaus I saw an Arabian, a young man, lying near the road, "with a stone for a pillow." Jacob and Bethel came immediately to mind.

It is impossible to see Jerusalem as you approach it from the west. A new town is rapidly growing on that side of the city, hiding the wall and ancient buildings from view. Through droves of camels and donkeys, and through crowds of Arabians and Syrians, I entered the Jaffa Gate and found myself in Jerusalem, and, in a few moments, in the Grand New Hotel. In several minutes more I ascended the terraced roof of the building to look upon the city of our God and His Christ. I went up alone, with my heart in my throat. The lofty lookout wall was near the west wall by the Jaffa Gate, and commanded a widespread view of the city and the "mountains round about Zion." On the left was the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, covering, it is said, the sites of the cross and the tomb. Immediately in front was the unmistakable site of the temple where Infinite Wisdom taught and Infinite Power wrought miracles. Still farther beyond, and lifted high, was Mount Olivet, with its northern and southern slopes, and roads to Bethany, so familiar to the Christian and reader of the Bible. Here was suddenly arrayed before me the sights of the most amazing and im-

portant transactions in the history of the world, and, indeed, of the universe. The incarnation, the life and teaching of the Son of God, His crucifixion and death; His resurrection, and ascension; and the descent of the Holy Ghost, were all, in a sense, before me. It was a sudden materializing of spiritual truths before my eyes. It was a startling presentation to the eye of places thought about, talked about, loved and revered from the far-off days of childhood, and a far-away country, with but little hope of ever seeing them in the flesh. How would the reader have felt under the circumstances? What would any lover of Christ have done? Shall the Crusaders, at the first sight of the distant city, fall upon their faces and knees, with streaming eyes, crying out, "Jerusalem! Jerusalem!"—and the more spiritual follower of the Savior feel no melting of the heart? and shall his cheeks be dry in the city of our God? At first a feeling swept over me that baffled all analysis and description. A pressure, a weight, an awe was upon me as came, I fancy, on Zechariah, when he saw the vision in the temple; or that fell on men of old time when they drew nigh the visible presence of God. And then, let men call it weakness; let them question the propriety of mentioning such things in print; but somehow I feel that I am not writing to critics, but to friends, and so I say that the sight of these places

of the gospel fairly broke my heart, and I bowed my head on the railing before me and wept as I rarely weep in my life.

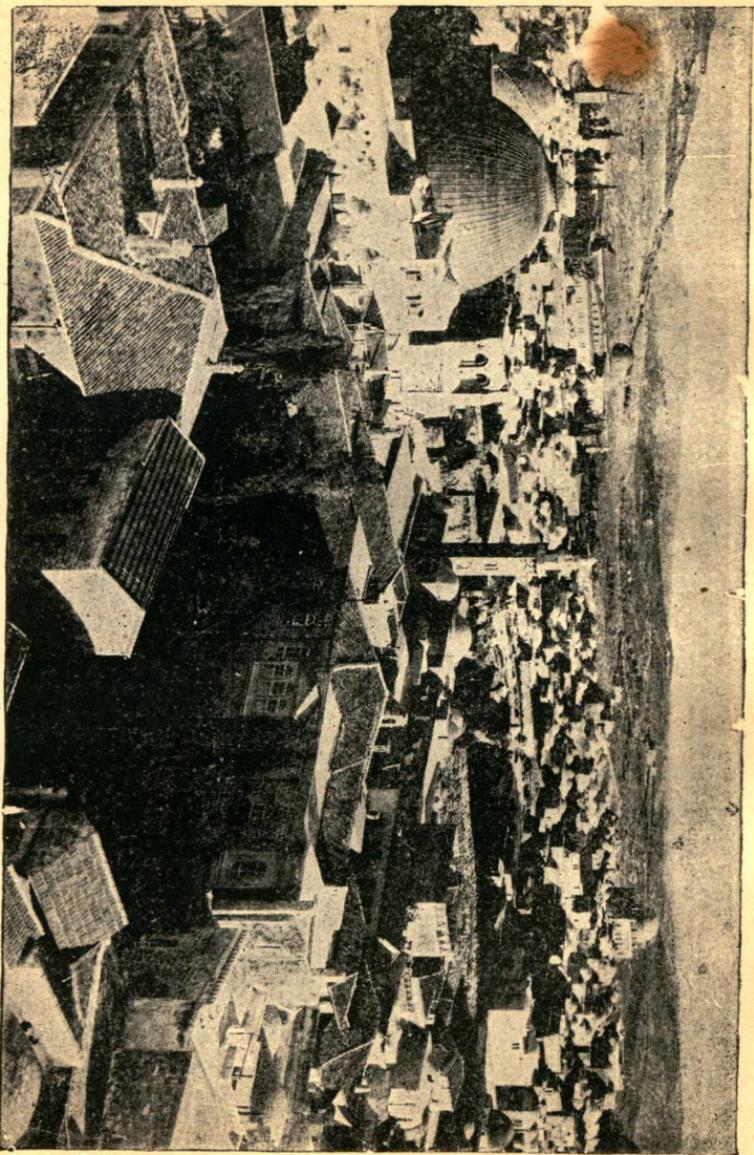
CHAPTER XXIV.

Jerusalem—Its Appearance—The Streets—Increasing Rainfall—
Buildings—Outside interest in the Jew—The Jews Return—
A Remarkable Prophecy.

DAYS in Jerusalem have **not** removed the longings of the eye and heart to look and brood upon the places forever made precious and sacred by the voice, and footsteps, and presence of Jesus, the Son of God.

The emotion felt at the first view of the city is one never forgotten by the Christian. Even Cœur de Lion fell on his knees at the distant spectacle, and the Emperor of Austria, a few years ago, on viewing the city from the northern road, hastily dismounted, and kelt in deep emotion in the dust of the highway. "Princes shall come bending," said the prophets. Whole armies have been moved at the sight of Jerusalem. But there is an experience that remains. There is a holy fascination in the place and the surrounding scenery that never departs. The difficulty is to leave the last spot visited. I allude not to the traditional locality, but to certain places about which there can be no doubt, such as the Temple area, Mount Olivet,

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Bethany, the roads leading to Bethany, and a certain spot located just outside the Damascus gate. It is a hill shaped "like a skull," and is "nigh unto the city." When a traveler ascends a house-top or hill to view Jerusalem, he has to remind himself continually that the Zion of to-day is not the Zion of the time of Solomon, or even of the time of Christ. There is need for this thought.

What must Jerusalem have been in the time of David, when he said it was beautiful for situation, and the joy of the whole earth! How must it have appeared in the days of Solomon, when silver was like stones; and cedar wood, and marble, and alabaster so abounded, that the Queen of Sheba, with all her wealth, had no spirit left in her! Then what magnificence in the time of Christ, wrought out by the hand of Herod! When Christ sat over on the Mount of Olives, looking at the temple, He was looking on the white sheen of marble, and the glitter of a golden-spiked roof. And when he wept over the city it was a city of imposing palaces, and battlemented walls, and noble towers, while the hills and mountains around looked down upon Jerusalem in terraced beauty, or waved from base to summit with vineyards and groves of olive trees. Cottages nestled under vine and fig-tree, numerous villages prospered in the neighborhood, while the stone or marble of palaces gleamed out from

groves of green, from the top of hill, or side of mountain.

But what a change to-day! The skeleton is left, but the rounded form and glow of health and beauty is gone. The frame of the picture is left, but the picture itself that ravished the nations, and that brought them up to admire, or with armies to capture, has disappeared. Christ saw the change long before we did. The disciples thought that He was absorbed in the present glory and beauty of the city, when He was really looking at what we see to-day.

The hills and mountains around Jerusalem, and as far as I can see beyond, are stripped of trees, and stand out in the sunlight with the two prevailing colors of brown clay and gray limestone. They all have a bare and scraped appearance. It is true that here and there your eye rests upon mere spots of occasional green; that in some places we see a few olive trees thrown together in the form of a thin and scanty grove; but the sight actually brings out more clearly and painfully the brown and gray barrenness of the hillsides around. The Mount of Olives obtained its title from the number of trees of that name that crowded and adorned its slopes. A few score only seem to be left straggling up the side toward the summit. The road that led from Bethany, I imagine, was bower-like in the time of Christ. Certainly the trees were in such abund-

ance that the multitude gathered the boughs and spread them along the road for two miles in that famous triumphal procession. Over the same road I passed several afternoons ago, with the sun beating down upon me, and noticed only here and there a tree to relieve the hot whiteness of the road, as it wound along the eastern and southern slope of Olivet toward Jerusalem. The city itself is scarcely less remarkable in appearance. The houses are all built of the limestone rock. They are generally two stories in height, with flat or dome-like roofs. In looking over the city this morning from the roof of the hotel, I saw only one tree, and that a palm, lifting itself above the universal white and gray of the town. When the sun, at almost any angle, beams down on these bare hills and stone-gray city, the reflection is trying to the strongest eye. If we descend to the streets we find them narrow, steep, and oftentimes dark from being roofed over in various ways at the top. Each side of the pavement, or street, for they are both one—the pavement being the street, and the street the pavement—is lined with hundreds, and, I doubt not, thousands of poorly-clad, brown-skinned people, who are selling in baskets or on the ground before them their fruits, vegetables, and other kinds of produce of the land. Back of them are the lines of shop-keepers in their dingy stores, not larger than a small room. Along this line of peo-

ple we see, as punctuation comes in sentences, the blind, the lame, the aged, and the beggar. In the narrow space left comes and goes a stream of pedestrians, together with occasional strings of donkeys, and now and then a company of soft-stepping camels.

A gentleman of high-standing tells me that there are thirty-eight distinct nationalities represented in Jerusalem. You are prepared to believe it when you look at the brown, yellow and black faces that you meet at every step. These colors prevail in the order mentioned, although there are many intermediate shades. You soon are enabled to distinguish between the motley groups by dress, tint of skin and facial expression. The Arabian with his red and white turban, the Bedouin with his head-cloth and cloth rope twisted twice around his head, the Greek with his high black hat and black beard, the olive-faced Syrian, these and others in different ways are soon recognized at a glance. The fair countenances of the Englishman and American are rarely seen.

In Egypt, both in city and country, I was struck with the picturesque groups of the people wherever the eye rested. This picturesque feature does not strike you here. The bright and various colored turbans and dresses seen on the Nile are not seen here. The male attire of the poor classes that predominate here is a dingy-looking robe and head-covering of the same char-

acter, that is felt, by the eye, to be not much of a contrast between the gray of the wall and the brown of the soil. The native females of the middle classes, both Christian and Mohammedan, appear on the street wrapped from head to foot in white, with the face entirely concealed behind a veil or head-cloth resembling brown-figured calico. They present, not a picturesque, but a most ghostly appearance as they loom up in dark streets, or come sweeping suddenly around unexpected corners. I am informed that the population of the city is now 50,000, and that half of these are Jews. It is difficult to tell what are the real figures, for statistics of this character are not allowed to be taken for some reason.

There are several things very remarkable that are now taking place in and around Jerusalem. If one is taken alone it might not be considered a thing of moment, but a number becomes significant, and challenges thought. First, the rainfall is increasing. People are watching it and tell me that in the last few years the increase has become remarkable. Next, vegetation is increasing. Third, more work in the way of house-building and street improvement is going on than has been known before by the oldest resident. On all sides you can see carpenters, stone-masons, and laborers busily engaged. Especially is this so along the western wall outside the city. Seven years ago there were but two houses in that quarter.

To-day there are hundreds. There is a new Jerusalem being built from the Jaffa Gate that is spreading in a northwest direction. These buildings are as dwellings or stores decidedly superior, as a rule, to anything of the kind within the walls.

Again, these new industries and labors find employment for many of the inhabitants, and the gracious result upon the town in that direction alone can easily be recognized. Still again, the railroad from Jaffa to Jerusalem will certainly be completed in three years. As I passed through the country lately from the sea-coast, I marked the work going on, and am told that it will be unquestionably finished in the time mentioned. Let not a sentimental feeling make us cry out at the entrance of the locomotive into this city of sacred and precious memories. What is needed is to present a better type of our religion here than that which now actually curses it. What is wanted is to pour a flood of rich Western gospel and Western Christian civilization upon these sleeping people of the East, who are to-day where they were hundreds of years ago. And I believe God is getting ready to do this very thing.

Still another fact is that the Jew and Jerusalem are both receiving an attention to-day that is most significant. This is seen not only in the gifts of the great Jewish benefactors, Montefiore and Rothschild, but in other directions. Christian

gold has built hospitals for the sick, and schools and work-shops for the young. Consecrated money has opened a hospital for the treatment of the lepers. The Church of England has a minister here to bring the gospel to the people who first gave it to us, but who are now in the shadow and region of death. I hear of a Presbyterian preacher also at work. This is only part of what is being done. Would that we, as a Church, could say that we had at least one man here to tell the sweet story of salvation to this people who first told it to us. Certainly out of thirty-eight nationalities he might find a soul for Christ. Does it not look like God had gathered all the nations again to Jerusalem for a blessed purpose? And what if that purpose be equal to the first out-pouring of the Holy Ghost? Certainly all the dwellers under heaven are here but where is the upper room, and men like Peter and John?

I have left for the last the mention of the kindness of the Sultan of Turkey. A substantial gift of land has come from that quarter, while he is slowly but surely improving the streets of Jerusalem, the roads to Jaffa and Jericho and other places, and lately passed a law forbidding the cutting down of another tree. God is surely touching the hearts of the world in behalf of His people who are being punished, but are not cast away forever.

Another fact is the gathering of religious peo-

ple here from different parts of the world in obedience to a divine impression to come in the interests of Christ to this city.

There is a large German colony that has built a village southwest of Jerusalem. They number several hundred, and the place is the picture of neatness. I have not had time to inquire minutely and satisfactorily into their work, but this much I know, that they feel called of God for the performance of some work at this place. There is a small colony of Americans who reside near the Damascus Gate, who are deeply religious, with several unfortunate errors in their piety. But they are quietly doing a Christ-like work among the people, and the Spirit of God shines in their faces. In some respects they are misunderstood, but who is not? One blessed thought for the Christian worker is that he may be misunderstood all the days of his life, and yet do a grand work for God.

Still another fact is the steady return of the Jews to Jerusalem. A number of people have spoken to me on the subject, among others the American Consul, a most intelligent, observant, and thoughtful Christian gentleman. Not only are there five or six colonies of Jews in different parts of Palestine established by Mr. Rothschild, but the Israelites are coming in irrespective of him from various directions. The late persecutions in Russia may account for the influx from

that quarter, but there are other quarters where there is no persecution. I am told that there is an average daily arrival of fifteen. Recently there have appeared quite a body, who have settled outside the southeastern part of the city wall. They call themselves Gad-ites, and came from a far-away province in the East.

What does all this mean ?

I have gathered up these facts in different quarters and in different ways, and thus present them to the reader with the question, Are they significant or not ? Is God getting ready to save his people ?

The final fact to which I call the reader's attention is found in Jeremiah xxxi. 38-40. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb and shall compass about to Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east shall be holy unto the Lord ; it shall not be plucked up nor thrown down any more forever." When the reader has read the verses carefully, let me say to him that the city is being pushed in the very direction that is therein mentioned. The reader will notice the word "ashes" in the fortieth verse. I stood on this remarkable pile yesterday

afternoon, and then passed eastward into the valley of the "dead bodies," and I notice that the city is coming in that direction. The concluding words of the verse are that the city shall then "be *holy* unto the Lord," and that "it shall not be plucked up nor thrown down any more forever." The last clause shows that the prophecy will not apply to any age in the past, but to one still in the future, and may be now at the door.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Wonderful Horizon of Jerusalem—The Absorbing Thought of Christ—A Sabbath in Jerusalem—What is Being Done to Save the Jew—The Reasons for Failure.

THERE is no horizon like that which encircles Jerusalem. Whether standing on the house-top, looking over at Mount Olivet, or sitting on the side of Olivet, looking down upon Jerusalem, the same wonderful view is before you. It is an horizon marvelous, not so much in the natural features which it encompasses—although distinguished in this regard—but in the amazing transactions which have taken place therein. No other spot on earth has been so much honored as Zion, and no other landscape has beheld as stupendous scenes as that upon which I am, with absorbed interest, daily looking. It has beheld the infancy, the childhood, and manhood of Jesus Christ. It was the great platform for the incarnation. It looked upon His face, echoed to His voice, witnessed His miracles; beheld His wonderful death, shuddering as it did so; and gave him the flowery field and mountain-slope from which He stepped into heaven. This same horizon, a glorious circle of

the promises of God, received through the center of its blue and wavy outline the Holy Ghost. He, the Comforter and Sanctifier, descended here. In a word, in the midst of this horizon redemption was achieved. The salvation of man was accomplished—a work immutable, eternal in its character, that is to fill heaven with saints, souls with happiness and holiness, and crown the Triune God with increasing glory forever.

I find, in moving about the city, that the Savior is the absorbing thought. I supposed, before I started on my trip, that I would dwell much on the life and deeds of David, Solomon, and a host of other scriptural characters. But it has not been so. True, you take note, for a moment, of this arch, that cave, or yonder spot, as connected, in some way, with Bible worthies; but, all the time, the heart's attention is trembling like the polarized needle, and is restless until it is fixed again on Christ. I see Him, in a sense, everywhere. His figure fills the landscape. He has taken up city and surrounding mountain and valley, and stamped His name and image upon them. His life has written itself upon the rocks and roads. His presence descends as gently as the light and abides without any sunset upon this sacredly historic place. No sword of enemy, or speech of Infidelity; no effort of mind can separate the thought of the Son of God from Jerusalem.

My first Sabbath in this city was begun pleasantly, with the waking thought, "I shall spend the Lord's day in the city of our God." The pleasure was commenced by a prolonged look at the Mount of Olives, from the roof of the hotel at an early hour. At eleven o'clock, or somewhat before, I attended service at the Church of England Mission Chapel, near the Jaffa Gate. It was blessed to worship in the same city where Christ himself had preached, and the Holy Ghost had fallen upon the church. At three in the afternoon I worshiped in an "upper room" near the Damascus Gate, with the small band of American people, mentioned in the previous chapter, who have colonized here, they say, in obedience to divine impression. There was no preaching, but mainly singing and prayer, confined to themselves. They evidently have forgotten the Word which says that it pleases God "to save the world by the foolishness of preaching." Nothing, I notice, takes the place of the preached Word. These people are really excellent in heart and life, but are being betrayed, I understand, into several serious errors. Two of which I mention are, the giving up of the Lord's Prayer and the forsaking of one of the Christian sacraments. I noticed in the little assembly, as visitors, two turbaned heads, and three others that wore the red fez cap. This meant the presence of Mohammedanism in the form of Arabians and Syrians.

Five o'clock found me on what I believe to be the true Calvary, and concerning which I will devote a special chapter. It is a spot that is receiving every year an increasing attention. At six o'clock I was walking in the neighborhood of Bethany. Afterward I returned by the upper road over the brow of the Mount of Olives, and, sitting down under an old olive tree on the side of the mountain, spent a good while looking down upon the city of Jerusalem. It was a sacred hour, and so the night found me there; and when I arose to descend the hill, the moon was shining. I remembered, as I passed Gethsemane, and walked across the brook Kedron and up to St. Stephen's Gate, that it was on a moonlight night that Christ was arrested, and that it was along this road, and through this gate, or its predecessor, that he was led bound to the palace of Caiaphas and judgment-hall of Pilate. As I entered the gate and passed into the city, suddenly "two beggars," aged and ragged, rose up before me, hobbling on crutches, and jabbering in shrill voices to each other in the most discordant and unintelligible jargon. Such a spectacle of wretchedness I scarcely ever looked upon before; and the moonlight failed to soften, but actually heightened the appearance of misery, and made them look even less like human beings. Involuntarily, as they brushed near me, I felt a shrinking from them, but instantly had this rebuking thought that if Jesus had been in my

place, he would have gone up to them, laid his hand upon them and said: "What would ye that I should do unto you?"

There are only two Protestant Churches represented in this great missionary field—the Church of England and the Lutheran. Besides them, however, there is a London Missionary Society that has a work going on; with what success I could not learn. A Jew, said to be converted, is also laboring among the natives; but when I understood that he regarded the Savior as the son of Joseph, I doubted his conversion and the results of his work. The Wesleyan Church and the Northern Methodist Church, with all their aggressiveness, are not found in this field. The Church of England has two buildings, or preaching places—one inside the walls of the city, and the other outside where Jerusalem is spreading westward and northward. The first is attended by English-speaking people, and the second by the natives. This church, together with the Lutheran, is trying to reach the children through schools and the teaching of trades; but it is hard to reach the Jewish children. Two stories are told me in regard to the conversion of the Israelites. Some say they are being reached; others say they are not. Those that are called converted have not impressed me very profoundly. They seem to be in fear of each other, and one poor band of the descendants of Jacob gave up receiv-

ing help from Christian people "for fear of the Jews." A Jew, who told me that he was a Christian, I noticed shut up his little shop on Saturday, and when he sold, did so in a secret manner. Doubtless he is a descendant of Nicodemus.

There are several things that to my mind, militate against the salvation of this people. One is the type of Christianity we have reigning here in Jerusalem. I cannot see in what respect the Catholic, Greek, and Armenian Churches are superior to the Moslemism around them. The degrading superstitions, the lying miracles, the senseless mummery, the endless and lifeless ritualistic forms, and the sight of the priests themselves, are sufficient to drive the Hebrew from such a church that professes to be of Christ.

Again, there is no preaching here! As certainly as the Bible is true, men are to be saved through preaching of the Word, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Singing is not the divinely ordained method; chanting does not bring souls to Christ; whining out a ritual through the nose never broke a heart or stirred a sleeping conscience. The whine, like an ecclesiastical lullaby, actually puts to sleep. All these things we have in abundance in Jerusalem, with bowing priest and swinging censer. None of these things can move the Jew. He, thousands of years ago, had better—a greater temple, a more richly clothed priesthood, longer liturgies, more incense, and louder

chanting. It is gospel preaching that is wanted. It was the preaching of the Savior that woke up this people. It was the preaching of Peter and Paul that brought in thousands of converts, and it was the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield that swept England and America as a wind sweeps and bends a wheat field. And it is this kind of preaching that is wanted here, and that we have not.

One Sunday Morning I heard a talk of twenty-five minutes, in which the sermon was full of painful pauses, and the minister perfectly unmoved by his subject. On another Sabbath in this city I listened to a little essay that was complimentary in its character of Nathaniel, which lasted just fifteen minutes. Preaching is what Jerusalem needs. A man full of the Holy Ghost, and who can stand up in the pulpit full of the love of God and man, and can strike out from the shoulder at his audience without a thrill of fear, such a man, I believe, would see a crowded house, and conversions Sabbath after Sabbath.

The movement here upon Islamism and Judaism, while something is being done, is not the aggressive march of apostolic days. The church to-day—and I mean by that the Protestants—are moving down on the heathen nations with spell-books and shoemakers' awls and carpenters' chisels. In this indirect method they propose to capture the world. Think of Paul and Peter

opening day-schools, and teaching the children in Ephesus and Corinth various mechanical excellencies in wood and leather, in the sinuous endeavor to reach the parental heart, and, finally, the population at large. Instead, they flung themselves boldly into the midst of seething multitudes, and held up Christ, while the Holy Ghost fell, and men were pricked to the heart and found salvation. When Christ enters the hearts of these people of the East, that entrance of divine light and life, will put a stop to mendicancy and indolence, and make a real man out of what was before simply the shape of a man. Meantime the Lord stands watching us, as He waited four thousand years on the world in its effort to save itself without Christ. And now he tarries to behold this educational and trade charge down upon the powers of darkness, and the spiritual estrangement of man from God. What has it done? Did not an apostle gather in more in a day than we do now in a year? How long will it take us to capture the world for Christ and to sweep into the Millennium, at the rate we are now going? Take a piece of paper and figure it out.

There may be another reason suggested by the reader why the Jew is not reached and saved here and elsewhere, and that reason is, that the judgment of darkness is still upon him.

In reply to this I would say briefly: That the providence of God seems to be at work in bring-

ing His people back to Jerusalem. Half the population of the city to-day is Jewish, and they are still coming. Again, God is inspiring interest all over the world in behalf of this people. Not only Jewish gold, but Christian money is invested here in their behalf. Not only a merchant in New Orleans, but prominent men elsewhere are seeking in various ways to ameliorate their most deplorable condition in this city. All this is certainly of God. Will He do this, and not more?

Again, let me say that I stood, several evenings ago, in the Jews' Wailing-Place. I saw fully two hundred, with the Old Testament in their hands, poring over its pages with unmistakable devotion. I heard the sobs of men as they repeated the words of God and buried their faces against the temple wall. I saw two long lines of aged women bending, as they sat on the stones, over the Bible, while their tears fell plentifully upon its pages. As I saw this, and more, I felt that here was not hardness of heart. I remembered since that they did not weep in the time of Christ after this manner. And it occurred to me that if the gospel could be properly presented now, if Jesus could be offered to a heart-broken people, they might now accept Him, whom they once rejected. But it must be a living Christ offered, and by a living man full of power and the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre not the Site of Mt. Calvary—
The Reasons Why—The True Site—Outside the Gate—Nigh
the City—A Hillock—By the Highway—Like a Skull—The
Garden—The Tomb—An Old Tablet—Arabian Name.

THE Latin and Greek Churches in Jerusalem claim that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre covers the sites of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord. Their saying this, however satisfying to themselves, has failed to convince great numbers of distant readers and a vast multitude of travelers who come here and look for themselves. Very great is the company who, after patient investigation, rise up from the study with the conviction that Calvary could never have been where the Greeks and Roman Catholics claim that it is. A Catholic Archbishop said several years ago, to a prominent gentleman in Jerusalem that, after looking over the ground and studying the site, he was not at all satisfied in his mind in regard to the present received locality.

There are several facts that, according to my judgment, utterly destroy the claim made by the aforesaid churches, that the Church of the Holy

Sepulchre covers Golgotha and the Tomb of Joseph.

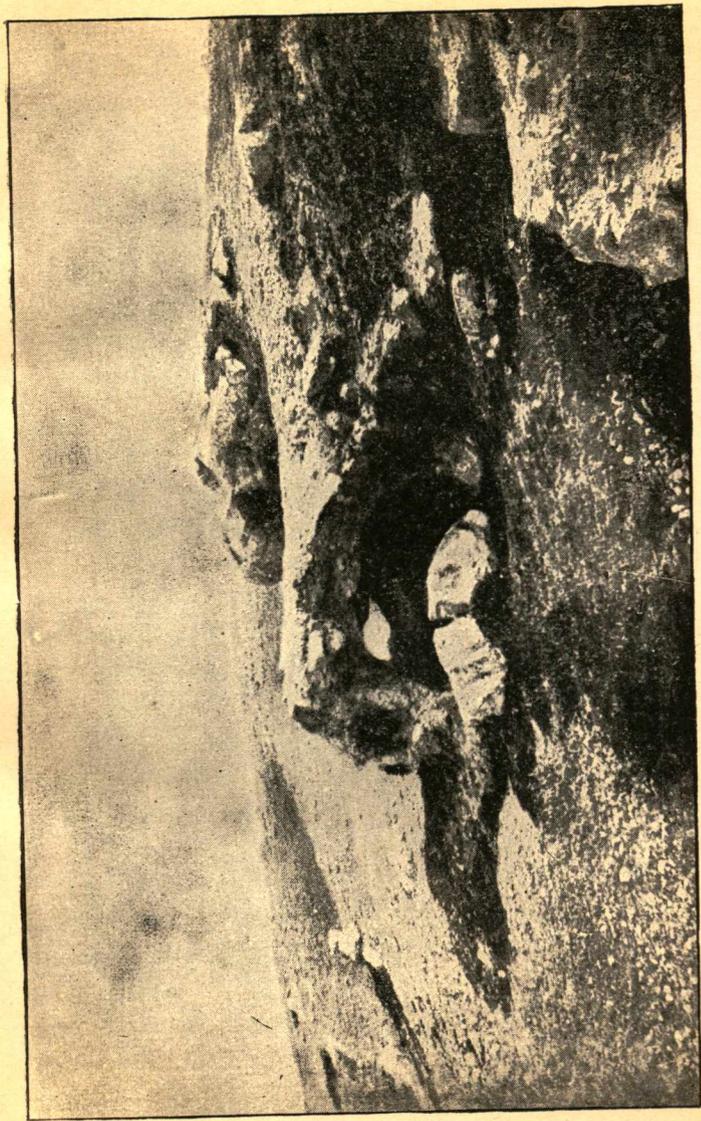
One is, that there was nothing to mark the place for over three hundred years ; the first church at this place being erected in the fourth century by the mother of Constantine.

Next, there seems to have been no tradition in regard to the spot, for the Empress Helena in seeking for the place had to have recourse to a dream. In this vision she says she was directed to the spot where the crosses were buried. In other words, He who had the brazen serpent destroyed for fear of the idolatry it would occasion, placed a more dangerous symbol in the hands of the multitude. The Empress dug and found the three crosses in a marvelous state of preservation. She found them sound and whole after lying in the ground three centuries. They were as fresh as if placed there by designing hands to fool a visionary woman. I need not dwell upon the absurdity of the story, but simply in passing would call attention to the sight-seeing character of this family. The mother was a woman given to visions, and transmitted the nature to her son Constantine. It was this celebrated person who saw the famous cross and the inscription, "*In hoc signo,*" in the sky at one of his battles. I have known certain families among colored people greatly given to seeing ghosts. The family of Helena had a kindred weakness for beholding strange things.

Again, no one can stand on Mt. Olivet and look over the city, and believe for a moment that the wall of Jerusalem made such a sharp, angular, awkward bend that the Catholics say it did, when the only reason for its doing so is to put their Calvary into proper place; that is, "outside the gate."

Again, we see that the traditional site is not the true locality, from the fact that if the Holy Sepulchre covers the place, then was Calvary in a few feet of the city wall, even if it did not touch it. They themselves admit that Calvary was a hillock thirty or forty feet high. Now I put the question, would the inhabitants of a city run their wall so as to have it overlooked by an eminence as high if not higher than itself? Would not any engineer or military captain have insisted that such a hillock should be placed within the wall and not allowed in such dangerous juxtaposition? Let the reader remember that the Bible says that Golgotha was *nigh* the city, not that it touched the walls.

A fifth argument against the present site is the fact that the present city wall runs along the same course that it did in the Roman period or the time of our Savior. The proof of this is that the present Damascus Gate has been found to be resting on the foundations of a far more ancient portal, reaching back doubtless to the time of the Romans. If this be the case, then this fact alone



SUMMIT OF CALVARY

would be the death-knell of the Catholic claims.

A still more remarkable disproof of the present traditional site has only recently come to light. Scarcely more than a year ago, while workmen were laying a sewer under the streets of Jerusalem near the Damascus Gate, they came upon a pavement that was readily recognized as having been laid in the Roman Period. This street pavement led directly toward the Damascus Gate, or its more ancient predecessor. This fact places the Latin Calvary within the walls of old-time Jerusalem, and so demonstrates that it is not the Golgotha of the Bible. The place of crucifixion was "outside the gate."

Now come the interesting facts I desire to present in regard to the true site.

Just outside the city wall a little distance, and on the Damascus road, one hundred and fifty yards from the gate, is a place that meets every requirement made upon it to be the true Calvary. I do not know how many travelers have noticed it before in the present and past centuries. Robinson, the great Palestine explorer, was struck with it, and an American writer named Fields, a number of years ago, drew the attention of the public to its claims.

About seven years since, Gen. Gordon, of England, popularly known as "Chinese Gordon," was stationed in Jerusalem, and gave six or seven months patient and faithful study to the site. He

was not only convinced himself, but in like manner affected many others with the firm belief that the hillock outside the Damascus Gate, which is to-day called Jeremiah's Grotto, is Mount Calvary. It is interesting and thrilling to notice how it meets the Scriptural demands.

First, it is "outside the gate." It is outside the present portal; and, if the wall was once farther in by a couple of hundred yards, it would be still outside the gate.

Second, it is nigh the city. It does not touch the wall of the city, but is *nigh*, being fully one hundred and fifty yards away.

Third, it is a hillock, and thereby agrees with tradition as well as Scriptural symbol. The height is from forty to fifty feet, while the base is not less than two hundred.

Fourth, it is by the side of the high-road that leaves Jerusalem in a northerly direction, so that people passing by could have read the superscription on the cross and railed on the dying victim who hung in full sight.

Fifth, the hillock is shaped like a skull. As I stood on the top and noticed the curve and shape of the eminence as it sloped downward from me in every direction, I was most powerfully struck with the likeness it bore to a skull. Standing off at a distance the peculiar resemblance is still observed.

Sixth, this eminence is not a pile of debris, but

the living rock covered more or less thickly with soil. The rock is plainly visible in a number of places. Here again the Scripture requirement is met, where it says when Christ died "the rocks were rent.

Seventh, the Bible says that in the place where Christ was crucified "there was a garden." This is remarkably met in this case, for on the south side of the eminence, the side toward the city walls, there is a garden to-day, and doubtless there has always been one, the location of the place seeming to favor such an enclosure. Nor is this all, for on the northern side of the hillock there is another garden of still larger size. Both of these gardens have in them a number of olive trees.

Eighth, at the foot of the hillock, or eminence, and in the garden that looks southward toward the city, there is a tomb cut in the living rock. This answers the description of the sepulchre of Joseph of Ari mathea as given by the Evangelists. This tomb was only discovered several years ago, and was found in this wise: Mr. Muller of England, the celebrated man of faith, was in Jerusalem on a visit, and was deeply impressed with Gen. Gordon's views in regard to this place being the true site of Calvary. Feeling that if it was Mt. Calvary, there ought to be a tomb very near, he at his own expense had the rubbish and debris of ages removed from the south side of the hill where the garden lay, and immediately at the

point where it touched the hill ; and was rewarded by the discovery of the tomb I have just mentioned. How long it had been covered up no one can tell.

This tomb is cut in the solid rock. There is no other tomb like it around Jerusalem, so I am informed by responsible parties. The Mohammedan sepulchre is very different. The dimension of the rock chamber which I measured is ten feet deep as you enter, and about fourteen feet in length. The portion on the left is a kind of ante-chamber, while that on the right has two stone niches for the reception of dead bodies. There is no partition between the two, but simply a low division of stone rising about two feet from the floor. Now look at the striking corroborative features.

It is cut out of the rock. Matthew says in chapter 27, verse 60, that Joseph took Christ's body and "laid it in his own new tomb which he had *hewn out of the rock.*" The marks of the *hewing* are plainly visible on the sides and ceiling of the sepulchre. "Hewn out of the rock" would be the first thought that would cross the mind in entering the place.

It is roomy. So much so that a dozen or more persons could stand in it. The reader will doubtless remember that the Evangelists all speak of a number of women going in at once into the sepulchre. I call attention to Luke xxiii. 55 ; and

xxiv. 1-3. There it is said that all the women that followed Christ from Galilee entered into the tomb.

The opening. The proper opening is about four or five feet high and about two or three feet wide. It would have required "a great stone" to have blocked it up.

Again, the opening is so low that a person has to stoop to look in. Here is another confirmatory feature, for John writes these words about it, "And he stooping down and looking in saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in." I visited the place several times, and one evening sent my guide in before me and had to stoop to see him, as he stood within. I hired a Mohammedan woman to clean the tomb, which had in it no little dirt and rubbish. As the reader knows the women of that religion wear white dresses and veils. On one occasion as I saw her standing in the tomb and coming out, I had a vivid realization of the scene described by the gospel writers when they saw a being clothed in white sitting in the sepulchre.

An additional proof came to me by the application of the following scene to the place: One of the Evangelists, and it was the accurate Mark, says that "entering into the sepulchre they saw a young man sitting on the *right side* clothed in a long white garment." The italicised words contain the thought. If the gospel had said the left

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side, that simple expression would have destroyed the claims of the sepulchre of which I am writing to-day. As you enter the tomb, the left side is found to be a kind of ante-chamber without a stone or ledge of rock to sit upon. But is it not a remarkable coincidence that on the *right side* of the tomb where the sepulchre proper is, there is a place at the head and one at the foot where two persons could sit.

Still another corroborative fact is seen in the fact that this sepulchre was evidently "the tomb of a rich man." No poor man could have owned such a sepulchre. The chiseling of the rock, so plain even to-day, and costing time and money, is a sentence reading clearly that a rich man had this done. A final notice I give to the tomb and then I return to the first subject. On the east wall of the tomb, and just the place where the Savior would have been placed, is a cross almost faded out of sight, with the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet on either side.



Although the painted symbol is old-looking, just perceptible, and the stone crumbling away and leaving the letters imperfect, I do not stress it as much as the other features and facts mentioned, for a recent hand might have placed these characters there. But there is a fact about it that deserves some attention, and that is that the paint used is very much like that which has been discovered on the walls of the recently exhumed building of the Pool of Bethesda, a building buried for nearly two thousand years. Again, our American consul, who is quite a scholar and antiquarian, has remarked to me that the letter Omega is written in the old Archaic form peculiar to the beginning of the Christian era.

All these facts being summed up in regard to the tomb, makes the eighth proof that the neighboring eminence is the true Calvary.

Ninth, in the last few months a tombstone tablet was found in some ruins close to this spot, bearing this inscription: "I desire to be buried near the Church of the Resurrection." The inference is, that once a church of that name stood here, near the Garden where our Lord was buried and where he arose from the dead.

Tenth, the present Arabic name for this eminence is, "the place of execution, or casting down." These Arabians have sometime done us great service in the preservation of facts and places by enshrining the fact or place in a kin-

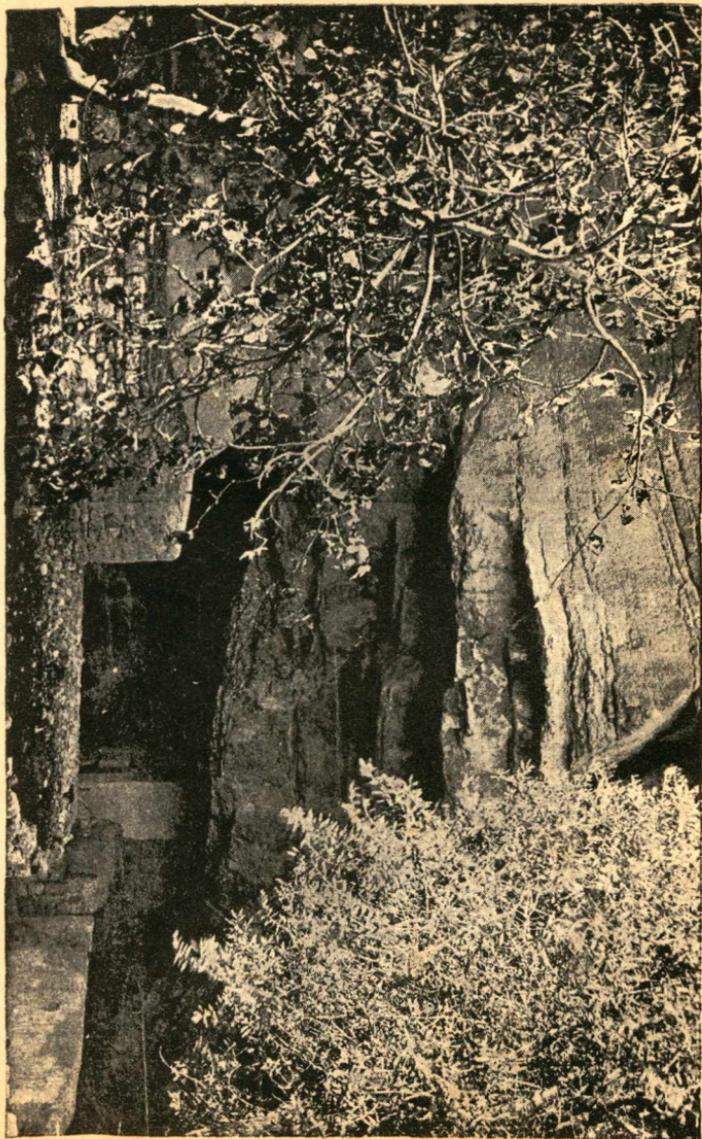
dred name of their own. The Hebrew "place of skulls" and the Arabic "place of execution" go well together.

The question might be asked, What has kept Mt. Calvary from being destroyed all these years? and the answer gives the strange fact that the entire summit is covered by a Mohammedan graveyard, and has been so, doubtless, for centuries. It is still "the place of skulls."

Another question asked me is, Why does not the church purchase the site? The reply is an easy one, and that is, it cannot, because the place is a Moslem burial ground. The Mohammedan is no more desirous of selling the burial place of his kindred for houses to be built thereupon than is the Christian reader.

The garden below, with its "empty sepulchre" has lately been bought from a Moslem by a Swiss banker in Jerusalem, for a large sum. He himself is skeptical in regard to the locality, but he shows a belief in its value by the great price he asks for the tomb and a small plot of ground in its front.

I sometimes think it would have been better if Mr. Muller had not caused the excavation to have been made and the tomb disclosed. For several years it has been foully desecrated. For months I am told, a donkey was stabled in it, while on my visit to the place I was pained unspeakably at the signs of neglect and desecration.



GROTTO OF JEREMIAH

The photograph opposite is the entrance into the grotto of Jeremiah. The grotto is on the eastern side of the "hillock," while the tomb is on the southern quarter. If the reader will, by a mental process, narrow, and at the same heighten the opening before him, so as to make a doorway three feet in width, by four or five in height, he will have an almost perfect representation of the external appearance of the tomb. The tomb being eight or nine feet below the present surface of the ground, I found it impossible to have it photographed satisfactorily.

A final question that may be asked me is: Why is it that the church has not recognized this place before? The answer is: Our churches are not here. Then the intense feeling toward traditional places by the Eastern churches here may account for the lack of investigation. It is their interest to discourage all inquiries that would result in the disparagement and depreciation of their own sacred sites.

But in spite of this many have seen, and felt, and spoken, and been convinced upon this subject. And the number is rapidly increasing who believe this to be the true Calvary. Some one told me in Jerusalem that Dr. Talmage was profoundly impressed with the place when here last winter, and took away a large stone from the spot for his new church. And not only he, but all who come and stand upon this mount, that is by the Damascus

Road, and "nigh the city," and "outside the gate," feel, as they stand with uncovered heads, that here is the place where the Son of God was nailed to the cross, and in the midst of the darkening heavens and shuddering earth bowed His blessed head and died ; and that just beneath us yonder in the neighboring garden He arose again and appeared to Mary Magdalene, saying, "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father and to my God and your God."

"O Calvary ! Dark Calvary !
Where Jesus shed his blood for me ;
O Calvary, Bless'd Calvary,
T'was there my Savior died for me."

CHAPTER XXVII.

Gethsemane—Reputed Site—Proofs of the True Site—The Temple-space or Plateau—Solomon's Stables—Pool of Bethesda.

I NEEDED not to be told that the garden in the valley of Kidron was Gethsemane. So familiar was it by pictures of pencil and pen, that the instant the eye fell upon it the place was recognized. The line of aged olives and tall, tapering cedars, is a sentence clear as the plainest handwriting, spelling out Gethsemane, the place of mysterious agony.

What a wonderful word it has become; the silence, the sorrow, the darkness, the agony of the Divine sufferer, and the awful tragedy of the night, seem to have crept into the word, and weighted it so peculiarly and powerfully that the soul is solemnized at the bare mention of the word.

“Gethsemane, can I forget?
Or there thy conflict see,
Thy agony and bloody sweat,
And not remember thee?”

The reputed garden, owned by the Roman Catholics, is on the east bank of the brook Kidron, at the foot of the Mount of Olives. For a reason to

be explained, I call the reader's attention to the fact that it is near St. Stephen's Gate, and located at a spot where four roads converge.

I visited the place, desiring to believe that the traditional spot was the true site, but I left with strong doubts, and after days of study, observation, walking about, and reading what the Scripture says, I was firmly convinced that while Gethsemane is near, yet it is not in the valley, but is to be found higher up on the slope of Mount Olivet. I was led to this conclusion from a number of reasons, which I will give :

First, the true Gethsemane was a secret, retired place. The priests and multitude had to be guided to the place. It required the information and leadership of Judas to bring them to the garden. But the traditional Gethsemane is a most public place. It is at the convergence of four roads, and by the crossing of the brook where all passed to enter into the city. If this had been the spot an hundred lads could have guided the crowd that sought to arrest the Savior.

Again, the true Gethsemane was selected by Christ evidently for a three-fold purpose. The Gospel says that He "frequently resorted thither," and it was this fact that enabled Judas to lead the band to its quiet, shadowy precincts. Christ came often to this place for rest, doubtless passing many a night stretched under the trees on the ground. This is still an eastern custom, and is not regarded

as an hardship in the summer season. Read in the Gospel how mention is made of the Savior passing in the evening over to the Mount of Olives (not Bethany) and returning to the city in the morning. In John vii. 53 we read the words: "And every man went unto his own house." The next verse commencing the eighth chapter is significant, and always touches me when I read it, "Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives." It meant that while men at the close of the day sought their homes, He who had no house went into a mountain to pass the night. Let me ask the reader if he thinks that the Savior would have selected for Himself and His disciples a place of repose at a spot near a large gate of a populous city.

Evidently, the true Gethsemane was selected by Christ as a place of meditation and prayer for Himself, and of instruction to His disciples. There was a place for all to be together, and there was another remoter spot in the Garden to which He would retire to be alone with His Father. That night of the betrayal was not the first time they had seen Him at a "stone's-throw" distance in that Garden.

The question arises, where would Christ select such a spot? Would He that sought the lonely mountain in prayer elsewhere, seek a public place at the convergence of four public roads? Nor is this all. The garden that is to-day called Gethsemane is not only where the four thoroughfares

meet, but its whole length of an hundred yards rests upon the side of the largest and most travel-frequented of the four roads! Now, as this reputed garden is only about twenty or thirty yards wide, its location and narrowness utterly precludes all idea of retirement and privacy. The thought of the Savior taking such a place to teach and commune uninterruptedly with his disciples is simply absurd. Next to the Jaffa Gate I found no noisier or more frequented place about Jerusalem than the spot where the Catholics have located Gethsemane. On several occasions after night-fall I still discovered a laughing, smoking, rollicking, noisy throng of men and women by the crossing of Kidron and in a few yards of Gethsemane. It is the only attractive and available spot outside the city for such gatherings, and I suppose has always been so. I remember that it was in this very valley at its junction with Hinnom that the young people of the court of David were entertaining themselves at the well of Enrogel. It has always been a noisy valley, and from its situation was and is compelled so to be. Would the Savior have chosen the very center of this confusion as a place of instruction for His followers? Common sense tells us better. With His life hunted and sought after by His enemies, and having with Him a band of spiritually ignorant men to train and teach, these and other considerations called for a place remote from human

voices and presences. Certainly when He would speak to them of holy mysteries, and when He came to that awful wrestle with the powers of darkness, when His voice was to go out and up in mighty pleadings and in groans, the Savior would never have selected as the place of such sacred transactions and experiences a garden that was in a dozen feet of four public roads, and in front of a city gate. He craved fellowship that night, but not such as abounded on a roadside. All of us crave human society in time of trouble; but it is a certain acceptable kind. Nothing grates more on the tortured soul in time of sorrow than the voices and laughter of the careless multitude. The more one thinks of it the more convinced will he be that Gethsemane must have been not in the valley at all, but up on the mountain side, away from the rush of travel and the noise of passers-by, and at such a distance that the voices and sounds of the road would float up softened, and thus, robbed of disturbing power, would fall even agreeably upon the meditative and prayerful soul.

Another point I make is that there were few places open to our Lord when on earth. Two rich men believed in Him, but were afraid publicly to acknowledge and befriend Him until his death. There was one house in Bethany open to Him, and one upper room in Jerusalem, and I doubt not one Garden on the Mount of Olives, and but one. Christ would never have thrust Himself up-

on a stranger's property. He went where He was loved and welcomed. The message to the owner of the "foal" undoubtedly shows acquaintance-ship and even love. The Garden of Gethsemane was owned by a friend and follower.

Still another point, that when Christ and His disciples sat in this place to which the Gospel says they frequently resorted, they could see the Temple and city of Jerusalem. This one fact is absolutely conclusive; for in the Roman Catholic Gethsemane you are in the bottom of the valley, and cannot see anything but the city wall.

The Gospel tells us that in this place, where Jesus and his disciples sat, that they were over against the Temple and the city, and that His disciples pointed out the buildings to Him. The whole of Jerusalem seemed to have been before them. But I found by repeated walks that to obtain such a view of the Temple as the Evangelists speak of, you must ascend fully one-third of the height of Mount Olivet. The objection may be urged that John says that "Jesus went over the brook Cedron, where was a garden," etc. But St. Mark is more definite, and says: "they went out *into* the Mount of Olives." Now look at the facts; the so-called Gethsemane of to-day is not on the Mount of Olives at all, but is in the Valley of Kidron. The true Gethsemane, St. Mark says, is in Mount Olivet.

The question arises: Were there gardens on

the side of the mountain? To which I reply that even to this day the Mount of Olives has gardens to the very summit. I was struck, besides, with the remains of ancient terraces upon which once clustered, I doubt not, in shadowy beauty, groves of olives, with fig-trees and vineyards in abundance. One-third of the distance up, I stood on one of these old terraces, from which I had a wide and commanding view of the Temple grounds and the city. As I marked the retirement of the spot, as well as the splendid prospect it afforded, it was far easier to believe that here, or near by, was Gethsemane, rather than the place which bears the name by the side of the brook Kidron.

But some one will say, What advantage is to come from this denial of the present tradition? This question involves such lengthiness of reply that I would rather not answer. I would simply say that these letters are not transcripts of a guide-book, but a record of impressions made on the eye, and heart, and brain of a solitary traveler.

In looking at the city of Jerusalem from Mount Zion, near the Jaffa Gate, after the first surprise felt at the nearness of the Mount of Olives, the second surprise arises to see the Temple area so much lower than Mount Zion, and so much further north than you had expected.

As the place is now occupied by Mohammedans, the traveler requires a double guard to enter the

sacred precincts. The mosque having been built by Omar, and Mohammed having been supposed to have visited this spot ere he passed into the skies, the Mussulman is as jealous in regard to its sacredness as ever was the Jew.

I was not prepared to see such a large area in the old Temple space. It is five hundred and forty yards long from north to south, by three hundred and fifty yards in breadth from east to west.

These spaces or squares have played an important part in the history of the world. In the first place they were necessities, because of the narrow streets of Eastern cities. Next, they were wonderful assisters in the dissemination of public news. Then they were essential for the coming together of the people in political and religious assemblies. Great public questions were handled there, and in the East no topic more frequently than religion. Hence around the Roman Forum were ranged temples of justice, and also temples for the gods. Paul found on Mars' Hill a time and place for religious discussion.

This Temple space was all this and more in Jerusalem. The courts were for different classes, and so everybody could come. The reader will remember that most of Christ's words and miracles in Jerusalem were spoken and wrought here. The fact was that the people were here. No trouble to get an audience in this place at any

time in the day. From this breezy, spacious, and noble square the Jew is shut out to-day by Mohammedan power. He can stand on a distant hill, and look over from afar as did Moses from Nebo; or once a week he is allowed for three or four hours on Friday afternoon to place his face against the stones of the southwest corner of the wall of the Temple and weep and lament over its desolation, but this is all. What humiliation and suffering to these proud spirits! A worshiper of a false prophet keeps away the chosen people of God from the Temple of His and their glory. Even a Christian is only allowed to enter under restrictions, and, as I said, requires a guard furnished by his consul and another by the Turkish government.

The shutting up of such a square would be a discomfort even if there were others for the people to assemble in, but when we remember that it is the only square or large open space in Jerusalem, and bear in mind the narrow streets of the city and the absence of attractive resorts outside the city walls, the sealing of the Temple gates to all but Mussulmen is a public affliction and calamity.

When the visitor enters the place he can truthfully say that he is standing upon the most remarkable spot in the world—remarkable because here the visible glory of God was beheld for centuries in the Shekinah. Over this place stood an angel with drawn sword. Here Abraham offered

up Isaac. Here David and Solomon and the prophets walked, spoke and achieved. From the surrounding hills armies of every nation, led by the greatest conquerors, have looked down upon this spot. Here Peter preached all day long after Pentecost, and here Paul was arrested and hurried to yonder northwest corner where stood the castle, and made his speech of defense standing on the stairway. But above all, here the Savior preached and wrought miracles, and daily withstood the high-priests and Pharisees.

Somehow you can better appreciate that daily battle of Christ after standing in the midst of the temple inclosure. One against many, one faithful, perfect life representing and advocating the cause of heaven and God, and doing it day after day in the face of the most rigid formalism and bitter opposition and deadly hate ever brought to bear upon any teacher before or since. Who wonders that He sought at night a quiet retreat on the Mount of Olives? Who is surprised that He turned from the scowls, mutterings, plottings, and attempted stonings of the Jews, to the village of Bethany, where He knew there were two or three people who loved Him?

The whole place speaks of Christ. You think of Him as an infant brought here, as the serious-faced child coming up annually with His mother to the Temple. You see Him sitting over yonder against the Treasury watching the gifts of the

people. It was somewhere near here that He stooped, and with His finger wrote upon the ground. And through the gate upon the east I see Him entering seated upon an ass, and surrounded with a rejoicing multitude of men, women and children. Lifting the eyes to Mount Olivet, over against us, there we see Him seated upon its side, looking down upon this very spot, and telling His disciples of its coming ruin.

The place has a desolate air. Few persons are seen coming or going. The only voice that broke the stillness was that of a Mussulman droning out the Koran to himself in a corner of the Mosque. The heart fairly sickens to look around and remember who used to be here, and then see who are here to-day.

The Mosque of Omar is said to occupy the site of the Temple. Perhaps it does ; but one thing that, when beheld under the dome, causes a grave doubt to arise in the mind—this thing is the "Sacred Rock," as it is called. Its size, shape and gradual ascent, with the circular aperture on the top, made evidently for the passage of the blood of sacrificed animals, and communicating with a great cistern and channels below leading to the foot of the mountain, all show the ancient altar, and if it be the altar that stood before the Temple, then the Mosque does not cover the Temple site.

I passed over to the southeast corner of the

Temple wall, where, tradition says, is the pinnacle from which Satan would have Christ cast Himself. To fall here would be certain death, and yet deep and precipitous as it still is, two thousand years ago the valley beneath was over fifty feet deeper. This has been proved by excavations. Such accumulations are not to be wondered at when we remember that Jerusalem has been destroyed to the very ground by every powerful nation of the East.

I next descended below the Temple platform to the second tier of pillars that uphold the great stone-covered plain above. Such pillars and such arches! Surely they were giants in those days. Here Solomon kept his horses. Through the edge of each pillar is a hole bored through the stones for the reception of the halter. But the horses are gone, and the rider is dead; and the lofty, arched abode of the royal steeds is consigned to silence and darkness.

It is supposed by many that the Temple plateau was once terraced, and that upon the third and highest sat the Temple itself, in its golden and marble beauty. There is a large space near the eastern gate that is fully twenty feet lower than the ground upon which the Mosque is built, that seems a confirmation of this supposition. If in addition to these terraces we recall the double row of pillars on the south, and the stone colonnades that separated the courts, and all this rising above

the battlemented and turreted walls of the city, we can see why the disciples spoke to Christ of the beauty of the sight before them as they sat upon the Mount of Olives. "Verily, I say unto you, not one stone shall be left upon another." The word has been literally fulfilled.

Many of my readers will remember engravings or pictures of what has been called the pool of Bethesda. The fifth chapter of St. John gives a brief description of it by saying that it had five porches, and was near the Sheep Gate. For a great while many have believed that the large pool located by the northeast corner of the temple wall, near St. Stephen's Gate, is the place mentioned by St. John. There were no porches to be found, but there were two arches; and they were supposed to indicate the fact of porches and the existence of the other three. Nevertheless, there were many who were not satisfied in regard to this site, and their doubts were confirmed less than two years ago by the result of certain excavations made under the old church of St. Anne, that lies north of the pool about one hundred yards or more.

These excavations still going on have revealed the existence of a structure fifty feet under ground, having five porches, with two tiers of arches, and at the farther end a pool that is filled with water. The last corroborating proof was made one year ago in the discovery of a fresco or painting on the

wall of the upper tier in the last porch that is nearest the pool. The fresco represents an angel descending into a pool of water.

Mr. Gillman, our American consul, in a fine paper on the subject, gives a minute description of this fresco, and laments that after exposure to the air the colors have begun to fade. I saw the picture in its faded state, and could only see the representation of the water and what I supposed was the halo, or nimbus, above the angel's head.

Another confirmation is the nearness of the place to St. Stephen's Gate, which is believed by nearly all to be the Sheep Gate mentioned in the Scripture.

Another curious corroboration of the locality I noticed in the difficulty in getting down to the pool. The steps in descending from the upper tier are narrow, and have a sharp, angular turn in the descent. Now read the impotent man's complaint: "While I am coming another steppeth down before me."

The value of this discovery is evident to the thoughtful. It is a voice from the dust, saying to the skeptical, scoffing world that the slightest statements of the word of God are true. If the Bible says a house has five porches, when we find the building we discover that it has not four or six porches, but five. One by one the statements of God's book are being proved in various ways to be facts. The result is bound to come, a child

can foresee it, that the day is approaching when the world will rise up convinced, overwhelmed, and say the whole book is true.

I begin to see the divine use of the rubbish of ages; that by it God covers up objects of value for future use or reference. The debris of the centuries is one of God's secretaries, with a multitude of secret drawers therein, which we are slowly finding and opening just, I think, at the right time. What gems they contain with which to stud the crown of Truth?

“Light is *sown* for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.” God plants stones in the dust that are full of light, and that will, in coming centuries, bear a harvest of gladness for His people.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Debris of Jerusalem—A Street Found Fifty Feet Under the City—Piles of Rubbish Higher than the Walls—The Strife Between the Latin and Greek Churches—Church Frauds and Deceptions—Native Church Members—The Custom of Supporting the Native Church Membership—The Way Mothers Carry Their Children—A Touching Spectacle.

I HAD often heard of the piles of rubbish in or rather on the old Jerusalem ; but not until I came and saw for myself could I realize the truth of what I had read on the subject. So deep are these accumulations in some places that it is impossible to tell how far beneath is the ancient city level. Not long since rubbish, to the depth of twenty feet was removed by workmen for the purpose of securing a foundation for a hospital, when suddenly they came upon an arched opening. It proved to be a sky-light in the vaulted ceiling of a street that lay thirty or forty feet below. I went to view it, and stood wondering and solemnized as I looked down upon a city thoroughfare along which people walked in the time of the Savior. It was a kind of Pompeii spectacle. Another case, equally remarkable, occurred in the excavations made under a monastery. The ancient

floor, made bare in that place, is fully fifty feet below the first rubbish that was removed.

One evening, in a walk on Mt. Zion, and inside the walls, I was amazed to see that the rubbish of ages had so accumulated that there were piles which now overtopped, by several feet, the walls of the city, which, at that point, are fully thirty feet high. The words of the prophecy, uttered six centuries before Christ, rush upon the recollection, "Jerusalem shall become heaps!" Let the skeptic come and see for himself, and be convinced.

God has various ways of burying cities out of sight. The sluggish waves of the Dead Sea tell of one way; the black lava of Vesuvius, twisted in grim handwriting on the plain, declare another; and the debris and ruins of the centuries speak of another.

This rubbish, or debris, of Jerusalem has a curious effect upon the traditions manufactured by the Greek and Latin Churches in regard to sacred localities. For instance, you are pointed to the house of Veronica and the lowly home of the Wandering Jew, when, according to the resistless testimony of the rubbish, these houses, if they ever existed at all, are to be found forty or fifty feet below, and must necessarily be out of sight. At another place on the Via Dolorosa they show you a deep impression on a rock in the wall made, these churches affirm, by the hand

of Christ as He rested for a moment under the burden of the cross. But the voice of the rubbish of Jerusalem says this is impossible, the Savior was not of gigantic stature, and if He rested at all, it was on a spot forty feet below the traditional site. Sometimes "a voice that whispers from the dust" does good.

One of the sad spectacles in Palestine, and that hurts Christianity to the heart, is the hatred and strife between the Latin and Greek Churches. This bitterness is seen in various respects. One way is in their dispute and struggle over sacred places. If there is a holy site in a village or town, immediately these two churches contend for its possession, or set up rival churches in different quarters of the town, both affirming that the true site is under their church roof. So in Jerusalem there are two places of the Ascension of Christ—one Greek and one Latin; in Bethany, two places where Christ met Martha and Mary ere He proceeded to the grave of Lazarus—one on the left of the road, believed in by the Latins; and another on the right, believed in by the Greeks. In Nazareth they have two places where the angel Gabriel made the announcement to Mary of her coming motherhood—one in the north quarter, held by the Greek Church; and the other in the southern quarter, owned by the Romanists. Besides this, there are two Mounts of Transfiguration and two Gethsemanes—one

Greek and the other Roman. And thus it is all over the land. When all of the evidence goes to show that one of these churches is correct, then the discomfited one makes up for its loss by an abundance of sacred relics, traditions, and sites of other Scriptural occurrences. It is amazing to see how many important things have occurred on one little spot of ground after it gets a church roof over it. The effort to outdo each other in traditions, and in the exhibition of sacred relics is painfully evident. If the Roman Catholics show the impression of Peter's foot on a paving-stone, the Greeks promptly exhibit the impress of Elijah's whole form on a bed of rock near Bethlehem. If the Greeks show a footprint in stone on Mt. Olivet, the Roman Catholics point you to a handprint on the rock in the Via Dolorosa.

The strife between the two has been evinced in a far more serious way than I have yet mentioned. That way, sorrowful to relate, has been bloodshed. To-day a Turkish soldier stands in the Chapel of the Nativity, in Bethlehem, and a Turkish guard is posted in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in Jerusalem, for the purpose of keeping peace between two churches that call themselves Christians.

Can not the reader see what harm is wrought to Christ and His cause by such a state of things? Of course, we know this is only a nominal Chris-

tianity; but the sad thing is that the Turk and the Syrian can not distinguish between the nominal and the real, the formal and the spiritual. They look at this spectacle and say: "If this is Christianity, then we prefer our own religion."

The Greek and Roman Catholic Churches certainly outstrip and outdo the statements of the Bible. They evidently feel that they can help the Scriptures out of certain difficulties; that they are imperfect, and need supplementing. So they fill out the unwritten sentence, and speak where God was silent. In the Gospel the only allusion made to the exhaustion of Christ on His way to Calvary, is where it is said that the cross was laid upon Simon the Cyrenian; but these two enterprising churches declare that the Savior fainted three times on the road. The only time He spoke was when He addressed the weeping women of Jerusalem; but the Greek and Latin Churches have Him pause and speak at the door of the Wandering Jew, at the house of Veronica, and I know not how many other places besides. They have in all fourteen stations or stopping-places of the Savior in the Via Dolorosa.

I was shown the chapel of St. Longinus. And who was St. Longinus? These two veracious churches say that he was a soldier, blind in one eye, and that a drop of blood from the cross fell on the injured organ of vision and he saw at once, whereupon he became a Christian, and afterward a saint.

These same churches show the place where the Virgin Mother held the dead Christ on her knees, and also the place where the Savior met His mother after His resurrection.

All of this is being wise above that which is written, and fills the heart of the Christian with unaffected pain.

Like all additions to the Gospel, they fail to contribute beauty or force to the scriptural narrative. The human part has a wretched and unmistakable limp, and is to the truth what the clay was to the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar.

Both of these churches are very fond of darkness. Not only spiritual, but real shadows of a visible, and we might say, material kind. The clear light of the sun is never allowed to fall upon their relics. While the more uncertain the tradition about place or thing, the more deeply is the church-room or cave darkened. The few lamps that burn are turned so low that they serve only to reveal the gloom, while the thin falsehood, the poor priestly cheat, and the ecclesiastical lie are in the heaven of such things—even a room full of shadows and darkness.

I was pointed to an upright cylindrical box that contained, they said, the marble pillar to which Christ was bound and scourged. The pillar is hidden from sight in the darkness of the box. Why hide it? Certainly marble will not melt. Midway the box there is a large auger hole, and

through this the tourist is allowed to thrust a stick and feel the marble post inside. Of course this is thrilling proof that here is the veritable shaft of stone to which our Lord was bound and whipped. Did we not feel it with a stick through an auger hole!

There has been evidently so many American explosions of amused and shocked unbelief, that the guides and church custodians show traces of traditional anxiety as they declare the name and reveal the hoary site and relic. You feel their eyes steadily watching your face to see how much or how little of the statement you believe.

Perhaps travelers themselves have something to do with the existence of these lying wonders. Coming from long distances they expect and demand marvelous things to be told and shown to them. And the Eastern man gifted with remarkable lingual powers, and possessed of any amount of very vivid coloring matter in his mind, responds most cheerfully to the demand, and offers to the wondering traveler a measure of marvelous statements, that is not only pressed down, but shaken together and running over. I have no doubt that oftentimes the guide astonishes himself.

It was with very peculiar feelings that I was shown by a friendly individual the subterranean channel through which the fire is conducted that is afterward to burst forth *miraculously* from the

Holy Sepulchre. I looked upon the hidden cheat and groaned in spirit. I was told subsequently that the Roman Catholics had drawn off from the Greeks in this annual deception *and now make their own miraculous fire* in another part of the city.

A curious thing that prevails here is the church's support of its membership. A vast majority of the native members, if not all, are substantially helped by the ecclesiastical organizations to which they belong. A Syrian told me that his house cost him nothing, inasmuch as his wife, being a Catholic, received it from that church free of rent, and that all the other churches did the same. On making inquiry of the American consul, he confirmed what the man had said, saying that it was the custom of the Latin, Greek, and Armenian Churches alike. I learned that it was quite common for the native members to change their church relationships from the Latin to the Greek, and *vice versa*, the only reason for the change being the offering of some superior material advantage by one over the other. One man left the Greek Church because he was offered, free of rent, a better tenement by the Church of Rome. I leave you to imagine the effect of all this upon the religious character of the people. Truly they are the descendants in spirit, if not in flesh, of the multitude that followed Christ for the sake of the loaves and fishes.

I can conceive of two causes that bring this state of things about. One is the poverty of Jerusalem. Once silver abounded here like the stones in her streets ; but to-day she is the poorest of all cities. Mendicancy abounds, and her inhabitants are supported as in no other city in the world. The Greeks, Latins, and Armenians all support their members, while Jewish philanthropists abroad send help to multitudes of Israelites here, who are barely able, with all the help they receive, to keep soul and body together. The other cause is church pride. Each one of these rival organizations desires a large following—large religious retinues, so to speak—in their chapels and churches ; and to obtain this following in Palestine, requires, it seems, the “ loaf-and-fish ” policy.

As for the genuinely converted natives, I sought for them in vain. One man who is called a Christian in Jerusalem I detected playing cards on the Sabbath ; and a female member of a Protestant church I found to be utterly ignorant of experimental religion. However, this argument might be turned with fatal power upon Christian America. As for Christian Jews I was shown several ; but if they possessed Christianity then have I not so learned Christ.

Everything I saw convinced me that what is needed in Palestine is an apostolic ministry and a church on fire with the Holy Ghost. Then, and not till then, will we see here a pure religion, with

conversions clear as a sunbeam and as lasting as the mountains.

I have been much interested in the way that mothers carry their children in this country. I mentioned how they were bundled in shawls in Scotland, and peeped out on the world like a bird from its nest. When I reached Egypt, and studied the phenomenon of baby-carrying there, my surprise was enhanced. I saw there a mother walking on the high-road, with her child of fifteen or eighteen months sitting astride her left shoulder, while, with its little hands, he clasped the maternal head. Next day this scene was outstripped near the pyramids, where I saw a mother carrying one child on her right arm, while a second child was astride of her left shoulder—a kind of second story. This was a pyramid of a different sort from the one I was visiting, and filled me with a profound pity. But it remained for my surprise to reach its climax in Palestine. One day, while riding around the walls of Jerusalem, I passed a woman who had just come out of St. Stephen's Gate, and was walking toward the country. She was carrying a coarse white sack, or bag, on her back, the ends of which passed over her head something like a halter. As she passed me, I heard the cry of a child, and, seeing nothing of the baby-kind in her arms, had my attention directed to the fact that the child was in the bottom of the sack, midway between the mother's

head and heels. On closer investigation I discovered that the bag was simply a large white cloth, with the four ends gathered together and passed around the mother's forehead. But this is not all. The next day, as I passed out of the Jaffa Gate, I saw a woman standing in front of a street-stall, buying something. She had a large burden on her head, and, in addition, from that same loaded head was suspended the cloth sack which I now recognized as a baby receptacle, and from which issued the stentorian yells of a youngster upon whom the sun was shining too fervently for his comfort. The woman was doing four or five things at the same time. She was bearing a load of something—I could not tell what—upon her head, and balancing it as well. She was, beside this, carrying a good-sized baby in the head-suspended sack, and she was buying something at the little shop, and, as she did all these things, she swayed her body back and forth to quiet the child! The crowning wonder was, that the woman did not seem to realize that her lot was a hard one; nor was there a sign of impatience in one of her movements. The heart was all the more melted at the spectacle of silent, patient suffering.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The Jaffa Gate—The Jews' Wailing-Place—Mt. Olivet—The Missing Figure—The Roads to Bethany—Bethany—The Place of Ascension—A View from Mt. Olivet.

THE Jaffa Gate in the western wall is to me more of an experience than a locality, and I believe it is so to most Christian travelers. We speak of the Bridge of Sighs, but I question not that there is more sighing of heart in one year under this west gate of Jerusalem than was ever heard in a century in the famous prison and on the still more famous bridge of Venice.

There is the grief of the returning Jews; and the painful experience of Christian travelers. There are sighs of memory, and of anticipation; there is a grief at the ruin of the land. There is a pained feeling as you pass through the droves of overworked camels and donkeys; and sorrow at the sight of groups of swarthy Arabians and Syrians, who swarm about and seem to be the keepers of God's ancient city. So, with a heavy feeling, you pass through dirt and dinginess, poverty and degradation into the narrow, confined streets of Jerusalem.

So the Jaffa Gate is an experience. There is bound to be a sigh over such an entrance into the City of David.

This Jaffa Gate is the same old portal, or rather the successor of the city portal that gave Nehemiah such trouble in the way of Sabbath breaking some two thousand five hundred years ago. The merchants and venders brought in their fresh fruits and vegetables for sale on the Holy Sabbath; but when the man of God threatened them, they lodged without on the sacred day until Nehemiah said, "I will lay my hands upon you" if you do not remove. I was awakened early on Sunday morning with the sound of traffic, and looking out, saw coming in through the gate of Jaffa on the backs of men and beasts, meat and fruit and vegetables, as of yore. Some households retain family sins, and some localities keep up bad reputations. Certain walls held leprosy, and certain gates and houses are hoary with ages of disobedience to God. It is all the same with this old gray gateway what Sabbath Day is blessing the earth. The arches of this queer right angle entrance resound with the tinkling bell of loaded camel, and tread of busy vendors alike on the Friday Sabbath of the Mohammedan, the Saturday Sabbath of the Jew, and the Sunday of the Christian. It has a contempt for them all, has this old Jaffa Gate.

What shall be done with it, and where is the race of Nehemiah?

The Jew is not allowed to enter the holy place of his fathers. He who would not enter Pilate's Judgment Hall lest he be defiled, is regarded as so defiled by his publican masters to-day that he is not permitted to stand on what he considers holy ground. What a retributive judgment! Latterly the Turk has so far relented that he allows the Jews to come once a week, for three or four hours, to a small spot at the southwestern corner of the temple and there pour forth their grief and lamentation over the fall of their nations and the destruction of their sanctuary.

The place is not more than forty yards in length, by five in breadth. Above towers the temple wall, fully thirty or forty feet. They cannot see over, nor can they pass into the sacred enclosure; but they can lay their hands upon the wall, press their lips upon its stones, wet it with their tears, and hide their faces against its hard surface.

You have to pass through the Jewish quarter of the city to reach the Place of Wailing; and your own sorrow is fully aroused by the time you arrive, by what you see of the poverty and wretchedness of the Jews all about you. The streets are narrow, and many of them filthy; the houses are small, and a number look more like ruined foundations of houses than dwellings. You take in the fact that these abodes are on the slope of Mt. Zion! You think of the past glory of Mt. Zion, and cannot keep back a feeling of sadness at the contrast.

The last street, or rather alley, into which I turned was lined with beggars whose importunacy transcended anything I had ever seen elsewhere. From this final scene of want I entered suddenly upon the Wailing Place.

From one to two hundred men and women were gathered in what is really an inclosure. The great majority of the people had Bibles in their hands and were reading audibly therefrom. Many were crying as they read, some were swaying their forms backward and forward while they read aloud from the Holy Book. Still others were standing close to the wall, with their faces hidden against it. I observed with especial movement of heart a long line of gray-haired women, clothed in threadbare raiment, but spotlessly clean, who were sitting down reading from the Old Testament, while from the eyes of a number I saw the tears dropping on the open page.

It would have required a heart of stone to have remained unmoved at such an hour.

The words of Him whom they rejected stood out over against the scene.

“Yet a little while is the light with you.”

“Behold your house is left unto you desolate.”

Their house!—Yes; it *is* left desolate.

“Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me—but weep for yourselves.”

“Ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and shall not be able.”

How I longed to offer them the Gospel—and tell them that Christ would save them and their people if they would turn to Him.

I felt my indignation stirred on seeing a group of Mohammedan men and women present gazing on the scene in a derisive spirit. They were much amused and openly laughed. And even this—the presence of a mocking enemy, and in this little spot allotted them—the Jew has to bear.

I inquired what passages they were reading from, and found that they were taken, with a single exception, from Jeremiah.

Let the reader remember how earnestly and vainly Jeremiah had lifted up his voice against this city. How they had refused to believe in or listen to his warnings, regarding him as a bird of ill omen, as a man of gloomy mind, and so not to be regarded. Recall how they treated him, and then, as we turn back again to the scene before us, where of all the writers he is the one selected for quotation, his words uttered and his lamentations caught up and repeated—you are ready for one or two conclusions.

One is that honor will come at last to whom it is due. It may be slow coming, but it will come.

Another is that change of circumstances throws wonderfully new light over a man. The prosperous Jerusalem could not endure the voice of the weeping prophet, but Jerusalem wailing itself, turns to the books of the once despised man of

God, and finds in his words the happiest expression of its own sorrow.

But what is this grief? Is it for their sins—is it for the Temple really, or is it for what the Temple once stood for them. Is it sorrow that they crucified “the Man, Christ Jesus”—or distress that God is no more with them—or is it that this lamentation is simply a great grief over the fall from that political and national greatness, when Judah and Israel were feared among the nations, and the splendor of Jerusalem made it the wonder of the world.

There are two kinds of sorrow, says the Bible, and He who reads the heart understands better than we do this scene at the Jews' Wailing Place.

I was never wearied of looking at the Mount of Olives. I saw it at sunrise, and with the midday sun beating upon it, and with the evening shadows stealing over it, and with the moonlight falling like a silver glory upon its rocky slopes. I looked on it many times. It held me with a tender, solemn, and holy fascination. Night after night would find me on the roof-top of the hotel glancing over the dark city to where it lay sleeping with its bold and beautiful outline under the stars. Even at night the white lines of the four roads are visible as they spread like the diverging sticks of a fan over the mountain side. All these roads converge at a point opposite St. Stephen's Gate, and all pass over or around the hill to Bethany.

The Mount of Olives rises five hundred feet above the valley of Kidron. Its northern and southern ends slope off at the same angle. The summit from a distance appears perfectly level, and has a length equal to that of the city. A straggling line of olive trees runs up the center and spreads out in the form of a grove at the summit. A little north of the grove is a lofty spire built by the Russian Church as marking the place of the Ascension. The greater part of the mountain-side to-day is bare, though I doubt not in the time of Christ it was robed and crowned with olive groves, vineyards, and gardens. The part opposite the Temple is covered with tombstones that begin at the brook Kidron, and run up the mountain-side more than half the distance. "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of Jehosaphat!"

The secret of the charm of Mt. Olivet to the Christian world is not its natural beauty, but the remembrance that Christ glorified and sanctified it with His presence.

Along these roads He walked; on this mountain slope He sat looking down upon the city of Jerusalem and talking to His disciples; under its old-time olive trees He often slept; up yonder on the brow of the hill He wept over the city; lower down He agonized in the garden; on this mountain He was arrested, and from it He ascended into heaven. It is the last spot on earth that He

honored with His presence. From this mountain footstool He stepped upward to the Throne of the Universe. Truly the heart is moved as the eye falls upon this sacred mountain. Its every curve, and slope, and tree, and road brings up the thought and even person of the Son of God. There comes to the heart in viewing the mount not only a rush of tenderness, but a peculiar experience of pain. *You miss Christ.* You scan the mountain-side where He sat and He is not there; you look on the roads that wind over the hill to Bethany, along which He so often walked, and His figure with the group of followers is not to be seen. Something is gone from the mountain and road that was a light and glory. You go over the places with a wistful, aching feeling in the heart like we go into rooms made vacant by death or sorrowful departure. You reason with yourself and say: I know Christ is reigning in heaven; and even now my soul rejoices in the consciousness of His presence. But in spite of this knowledge and the spiritual presence, it is impossible to look upon this mountain-side and these roads forever forsaken by the Savior, without experiencing a pain and bereaved feeling that is simply indescribable. You cannot but think of the missing figure all the while.

Bethany is two miles or more from Jerusalem by the road, but nearer in a direct line. The inhabitants say it is distant one-half hour or three-

quarters. Time is the measure here for distance, and not miles. A place is said to be one, three, or six hours away. This translated means three, nine, or eighteen miles. Three miles an hour is the schedule time of travel.

There are several roads that lead to Bethany. The upper one ascends the steep side and goes directly over the lofty brow of the Mount of Olives, and then descends upon Bethany. The lower road skirts the southern base of the hill and comes with gentler approach to the side of the village of the sisters. On one of these ways the triumphant procession, or entry, took place. Here, as in the case of almost every sacred spot, one stands bewildered and hesitating. At a certain spot on the lower road you are pointed to a place where Jesus wept over the city; but on the upper road I saw several spots that commanded a much more impressive view, and where it seems far more likely He stood when he beheld the city in its outspread beauty before and beneath him. The main objection to the claim of the lower road is that there is no place on it sufficiently lofty and commanding to justify the expression: "He wept over the city." From the verse one would naturally suppose that the whole city lay at His feet. The main objection to the claim of the upper road is its steepness. As I toiled up a part of the most difficult slopes I recalled the day of the triumphant entry, and remembered the ani-

mal that was ridden, and the children that accompanied and preceded the blessed Savior. This place, I said, was too steep for them.

But on another evening I was sitting by the side of the steep highway just beneath the brow of Mt. Olivet, and where a most glorious view of Jerusalem was presented, and was mentally saying, this I could easily believe to be the place where the Savior stood and wept over the city, but for the thought of the steepness of the road for the multitude that went with him, when suddenly I heard the sound of voices, and, looking around, saw two ladies on donkeys descending the very road, while six or seven children were walking or running ahead of them in great glee. This sight settled the matter, and I then and there decided in favor of the upper road.

I passed along both roads several times on foot and horseback, filled with thoughts of Him who walked along them so frequently. They are sadly changed since the Savior's time. Doubtless they were once bower-like, with vineyards by the side and palm-trees and groves of olive-trees and orchards of the fig. Certainly the trees must have abounded, for the Gospel says the people broke off branches of the trees and strewed them in the way. But to-day the vineyards are gone and the trees are few and far between. The lower road stretches its hot, white, winding way along the base of the mountain, relieved only by two small clumps of olive-trees.

Not far from the village of Bethany I saw a solitary fig-tree by the roadside. The sight of it deeply moved me, summing up instantly and powerfully the scene in the Gospel beginning: "Now in the morning as He returned into the city He hungered. And when He saw a fig-tree in the way He came to it." How little we realize the hardships that Christ endured for us. Often his meals were a crust of bread, with a cup of wine, divided among twelve men. At another time it is bread and fish; at another a piece of honey-comb. He seems never to have had more than two articles of food. His nights were often spent on the ground, while here He approaches a fig-tree for His breakfast.

I plucked two or three leaves from the fig-tree that grew by the side of the road, while my heart melted at the thought of Him who had walked here so often tired, hungry, unknown, and rejected of men.

Bethany is on the eastern side of the Mount of Olives, hidden away in a small valley shaped like the letter U; the open part of the valley facing toward Jericho. The village cannot be seen from the summit of Mt. Olivet because of a swell in the ground just above the head of the valley. The houses, flat-roofed and one-storied, are built of rough limestone. It is difficult to realize that this wretched place, filled with poor brown-skinned natives, was the spot once so attractive to the

Savior. And yet, I doubt not, judging from the natural surroundings, that it was *once* a beautiful hamlet.

The home of Mary and Martha is pointed out; and also the grave of Lazarus, in the center of the village. That this tradition is widely at fault in regard to the location of the sepulchre, I saw by a single glance at the Scripture narrative, and another at the place. The road to Jericho, up which Christ came the morning of the miracle, sweeps eastward in front of Bethany. The reputed grave of Lazarus is in the center of the village, and the reputed home of Mary and Martha is between the sepulchre and the Jericho road. Now the Gospel says that some one came to Mary, as she sat in the house, and said: "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." That immediately she arose and went out to meet Jesus, while the Jews who saw her departing said: "She goeth to the grave to weep there." This simple verse utterly destroys the claim of the Latin Church to the present traditional site of Lazarus' grave. When Mary went forth to meet the Lord she walked, of course, toward the Jericho road, where Jesus had stopped, and turned her back on the place now pointed out as the sepulchre. As she went in this direction the Jews followed her saying, she goeth to the grave to weep there! Proving incontrovertibly that the grave was to the east of the town, and not where it is affirmed to be to-day.

Just above the brow of the Bethany Valley, and somewhat up the slope of Mt. Olivet took place the ascension of our Lord. It did not occur on the summit of the mountain as the Latin and Greek Churches teach, but lower down, and nigh to Bethany. One of the Evangelists says: "He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them He was parted from them and carried up into heaven." In another book the same writer says: "A cloud received Him out of their sight." And that "they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up."

What an unutterable scene was this—the ascending form of the Savior, the face beaming with love and compassion, fading away in the distance; the disciples in different attitudes looking up, with their hearts in their throats and their souls in their eyes. They almost forgot to breathe. They reached out their hands to Him as He went higher and higher, and finally disappeared in a cloud that was the glory of a waiting multitude of angels. He was gone from them again. Their hearts had hardly recovered from the soreness of His loss by death, when they are all wrung again by this more solemn departure. Two angelic visitants in white apparel had to be dispatched to comfort them. "Ye men of Galilee why stand ye here gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you in-

to heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." This visit and message kept their hearts from breaking.

The place of the Ascension is a quiet and remote spot. Bethany is hidden in the valley below. Jerusalem is out of sight behind the lofty summit of Olivet. A sighing grove of olive-trees is thinly scattered about; a sunny hillside, without the sign of a human being, is around you. Not a sound is to be heard but the flutter of a bird amid the tree branches. Indeed, so sheltered is the spot by the bold uplift of the crest of Mt. Olivet, that the strong winds of the country are transformed here into soft and gentle breezes.

On two occasions I visited the place alone. I am confident that I stood in one or two hundred yards of the spot where the wonderful scene took place. What profound experience comes to one in standing near where the Savior last stood, and looking up into the very sky where He disappeared. A great awe came upon my soul as I looked up. He vanished with His hands outstretched in blessing. This was His last act. Surely the world shall be blessed. So disappeared the high priest behind the veil of the temple after the sacrifice, and so disappears our High Priest, in fulfillment of this symbolic prophecy, after the sacrifice of Himself, through the veil of blue into the everlasting Temple of Heaven.

I climbed one evening to the top of the minaret

erected by the Russian Church on the summit of Mt. Olivet. The view takes in a vast scope of country—the Wilderness of Judea; the Dead Sea, and the Mountains of Moab, beyond the Jordan and the Dead Sea. From this lofty position you can see Jerusalem spread out like a map beneath you on one side, and Bethany on the other side of Mt. Olivet in the little valley. The lofty perch brings the village out from its hiding-place. It was in looking at the two places, Jerusalem and Bethany, now and always so full of contrast, that I had a flash-light revelation of the character of the Savior. Some people prefer the large city, with its palaces, crowded streets, rush of men, and all the glitter and show of a great municipality. But Jesus turned with evident relief to the quiet hamlet, and to the simplicity and natural life of poor and obscure people. He said of Himself that He was meek and lowly, and the constant turning of His steps from the rich and populous city to the quiet village was a confirmation of His words.

CHAPTER XXX.

A Start for the Dead Sea—A Bible Scene—Wilderness of Judea
—Watering Flocks—Strife of Herdsmen—Mt. Nebo—The
Dead Sea—The River Jordan.

AT an early hour in the morning I started on horseback for the Dead Sea and the River Jordan, attended by a Syrian dragoman and a Bedouin guard. We had not proceeded far when my attention was directed to a man standing on a mountain side loudly vociferating or cursing, I could not tell which, and throwing stones at someone below him whom I could not see. In a few moments, coming round the shoulder of the hill, appeared a boy who was the object of the man's wrath and the target of his rocks. At once I thought of Shimei casting stones at David and cursing him from the mountain-side as the fugitive king walked at some distance beneath him. When I inform the reader that the scene which I beheld took place very near the spot where David was cursed and stoned, the coincidence will appear all the more striking. One would suppose that something is in the atmosphere of this locality

favorable to paroxysms of anger and stone throwing.

One or two miles from Bethany we left the Jericho road and entered what is called the Valley of Pomegranates, and plunged at once into the depths of the wilderness of Judea. According to the name, the above-mentioned valley must have once been beautiful and fruitful ; but to-day not a tree or flower or blade of grass is to be seen ; nothing but countless myriads of stone. The pomegranates have given way to granites of a different kind. We were fully five hours in crossing the wilderness of Judea. The route led up and down and over and around the mountains ; but no ups or downs, no changes of view could relieve the monotony and desolateness of this rocky waste. Conceive of an ocean heaved by a tremendous wind into gigantic waves of gray and brown, with yawning-like depths running between as deep as the waves were high ; and that suddenly this ocean should be arrested, fixed and petrified. Over the adamant surface scatter stones of every size as thick as hail ; and let them cling to the sides of the valley, and lie in the bottom of the ravine, and cover the mountains to the very summit. Now let the sun pour down from a cloudless sky, not only a blinding light, but a blistering heat, and you have before you the wilderness of Judea.

The remembrance that it was in a part of this

desert that the Savior was alone with the wild beasts and evil spirits for forty days and nights, gave a peculiar interest to the scene, while the sight of the desert itself helped me to a conception of the painfulness of the wilderness temptation never had before. I could not but be struck with the fact that myriads of the stones that covered the ground are exactly the size and shape of loaves of bread. How easily and naturally from beholding them did Satan insinuate the tempting thought, "Command that these stones be made bread."

The wilderness of Judea, from the point we entered it to the Dead Sea, is without a house or abode of any kind save the mosque of the tomb of Moses, and without a single tree, and without any kind of vegetation except a brown, thorny shrub growing about a foot high upon which the goats feed. Nothing but somber-looking mountains and somber-looking valleys meet the sight. It was in the midst of this very wilderness, however, that I obtained my first view of that peculiarly Oriental scene, the watering of flocks. We had reached the summit of a mountain and were glancing down a gray-looking valley at our feet when we noticed, fully a mile away, objects in motion, which, on drawing nearer, we discovered to be a dozen flocks of sheep and goats. The fountain or well was at the side of the valley, and gathered around it were several flocks being

watered, while the other herds were lying down at a little distance awaiting their turn. The sun was beating down with midday force, there was no shade, and the bleating of the flocks filled the valley. To crown the scene, two of the herdsmen got into a difficulty about the watering of their respective flocks, and I had to get my dragoman to separate them. This gave the finishing touch to the Eastern picture. I could read with better understanding the words of Abraham to Lot, "Let there be no strife between thy herdsmen and my herdsmen;" and also what is said about Isaac, that he dug a well, and there was a contest of herdsmen over it, and so with another, and still another, and then he had rest.

The well or fountain in this place is one of extraordinary size, being fully twenty feet square, and thirty feet deep from the brink. It was overshadowed by "a great rock in a weary land," and I certainly would have drunk of its clear waters, had I not seen a naked Arab boy evidently coming out from a bath in its cool depths. Another Arab lad caught my attention standing on a high jutting rock across the valley. As he had not a vestige of clothing upon him he bore a striking resemblance to a piece of bronze statuary.

The tomb of Moses, referred to a few sentences back, was built here by the Mohammedans under the delusion that Mt. Pisgah was on the west side of Jordan. This piece of geographical ignorance

gives us a fair idea of the value or importance to be attached to traditional sites. I saw numerous graves of pilgrims who died on this dreary roadside on their way to this false shrine.

A mile beyond this I saw two gazelles bounding down a ravine before us. My Bedouin guard gave a shout, and, forgetting that he was paid to protect me and not hunt antelopes, started in swift pursuit of the flying, graceful creatures; but he might as well have pursued the wind.

From the brow of the last mountain, and while we were descending to the plain, I had a fine view of the Dead Sea, and the mountains of Moab beyond. Mt. Nebo is pointed out, from whose summit Moses looked over at the Promised Land.

What a book the Bible is for drawing wonderful scenes in a single sentence! Is there any picture to-day hanging in galleries of art that can compare for a moment in pathos and sublimity to the sky and mountain-framed scene of the solitary leader of Israel looking silently over at the beautiful land into which he was not allowed to enter!

At 1 o'clock I stood on the northern shore of the Dead Sea. As it lies a thousand feet below the level of the sea, and is walled in by the mountains, you can imagine that the heat of this place at midday and in the time of midsummer is something deserving the name. With the profoundest interest I looked out over the waves of this inland sea, remarkable every way in which it is considered.

DEAD SEA



Here is a sheet of water, forty miles in length, ten in width, as beautiful as Lake Geneva, in Switzerland, and yet utterly shunned as a place of habitation by man. Not a house is on its shore, not a boat on its banks, and not a sail is on its horizon. As I looked over the sea, as it stretched in the distance, I noticed a thin, white mist that overhung it, as though the stones of Sodom and Gomorrah had not yet cooled, and the steam was still escaping from the sea-depths and hanging like smoke in the air.

Far away, on the dim western shore, my eye fell on the mountains that rise up from that quarter, on one of which took place one of the most solemn scenes, in my judgment, mentioned in the Bible. I refer to the standing of Jehovah upon the brow of the mountain and silently and fixedly looking down upon Sodom as it lay in the distant plain. A holy God observing unholy men; the Creator looking at a doomed city. What if they had known that at that moment the God of the Universe was resting His eye upon them, not from heaven, but from a neighboring mountain!

What a scene was that which Abraham beheld next morning! The land, says the Bible, was like a furnace. It has never been the same since that day. The Lord's handwriting does not wear out with the ages.

As I turned away I said, verily as this sea is the winding-sheet of Sodom and Gomorrah, and

just so certainly as God has covered up the wickedness of this place by these billows of salt, so will He as surely cover up all wickedness in another lake that the Bible says burneth forever and ever.

From this place we turned up the valley of the Jordan to the spot or ford which is called Bethabara.

The river at this point makes a bow-like sweep, with shores wooded with cedar and acacia, whose branches dip in the rapidly-flowing stream. The western bank is low and shelving, while the eastern shore is a bold bluff fully forty feet in height. At this point is the celebrated ford of Jordan, and here tradition says that John preached and baptized. This is claimed to be the Bethabara of the Bible. Aside from the fact that the next crossing place is a bridge, and several miles north, we have a second proof that this is Bethabara, from the fact that the present Arabic name has almost the identical meaning of the scripture title. The Bible name means "house of passage;" the present Arabic name means "place of passage." As I studied the locality I saw at once its natural advantages for the purposes mentioned in scripture, and saw in that fact presumptive proof that tradition, in regard to this spot, was doubtless correct. The western tongue of land, arched around by the river, is level, pleasantly shaded, and could afford standing and camping room for

a vast multitude. John, standing on the shore, could have been seen by all, while the bluff, on the opposite bank, made a sounding-board for his voice of superexcellence. That he could immerse all the multitudes of Judea and other provinces in this rushing stream, I doubt most profoundly; while to stand on this gentle, shelving bank, and sprinkle or pour water upon the heads of many thousands a day, would have been a simple and easy task. At this place it is said that the Savior received baptism at the hands of His servant. As He came up the bank from the margin of the water the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove fluttered through the space overhead and alighted upon the head of the Lamb. Heavenly confirmation! and amazing alliance! The Dove and Lamb are to conquer the world! As I stood looking at the place I remembered that here is one of the few places on earth in which the voice of the Father has been heard. Here Elijah struck the waves with his mantle and walked over dry-shod; and here Elisha did the same, saying, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" At this point the children of Israel, preceded by the ark, saw these waves divide, and the river cease to flow until all of the great host had crossed.

At this point the manna ceased, and here the pillar of cloud that for forty years had gone ahead of them,

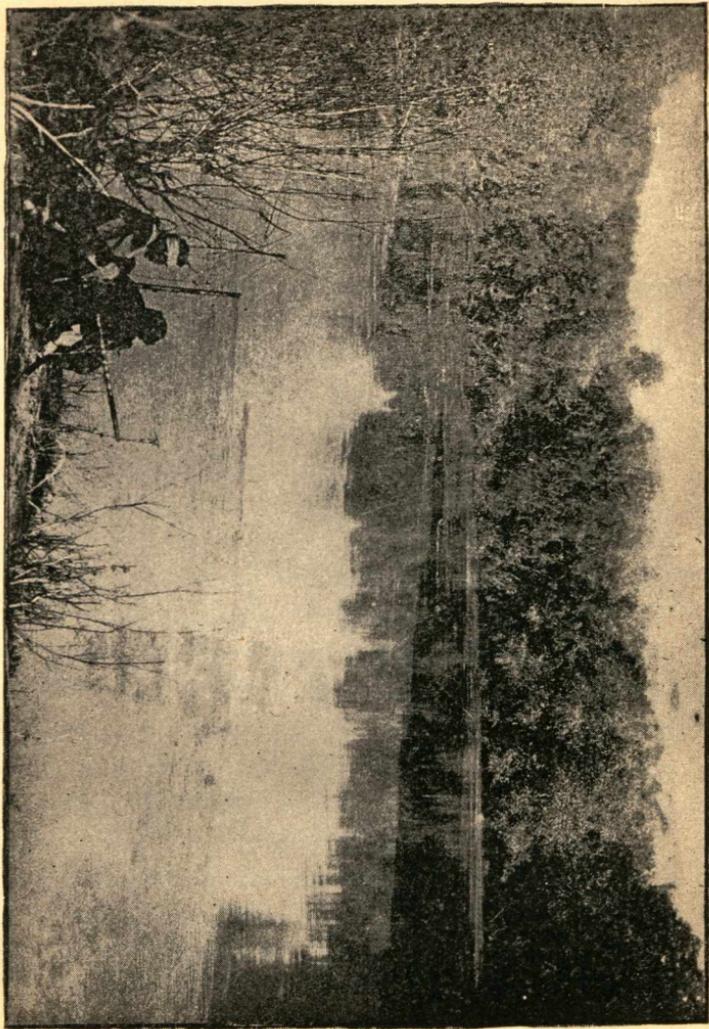
"Moving along through astonished lands,"

here it went not over with them. There seems to have been no expression of sorrow on the part of the Jewish people at its loss ; but just as children resign the parental hand that has protected, guided and blessed them for years, and rush away into the untrod fields of life, so did the Israelites that day.

The bed of the River Jordan is quite remarkable. It consists really of two beds, the first being four or five hundred yards wide, and long ago forsaken by the river, and the second channel, thirty yards only in width, is lower than the old channel by at least twenty-five feet. One curious result of this is that as you approach the Jordan over the plain, instead of seeing a gleaming river fringed by trees of full height, you see simply their tops, like a narrow line of green shrubs, appearing over the edge of the banks of the old and upper channel.

That the Jordan ever filled this wider channel, and, for some great natural cause, has contracted into its present narrow bed, there can be no doubt. But what kind of body of water was it at that time ? The reply, I think, is given in the shore itself. These banks have assumed rounded, conical, turret-like, and other curious and beautiful shapes. Such forms could never be produced by simply a river rushing past, but is done by the long action of tidal water or water driven by the wind in rolling waves.

RIVER JORDAN



All Bible students know how rapid is the fall of the land from Lake Galilee to this point, and how much lower the Dead Sea is than any sheet of water north of it in Palestine. Therefore, I doubt not, that if someone with the lever of an Archimedes, could pry up this portion of the country a few hundred feet, the waters of Jordan would forsake the present narrow bed and fill once more the broader channel, and we would have not only a rushing river, but a narrow inland sea, whose constant chafing would bring out upon its banks the curious and beautiful shapes that we see here to-day.

The Jordan, filling this upper and broader channel in early times, would undoubtedly make certain statements of the Bible far more forcible. The "stormy banks" sung of in the hymn would reappear in tide-washed shores, separated by a distance of one-third of a mile. The miracle of the crossing of Elijah and Elisha would stand forth in lines of additional grandeur. And the necessity for the halt of the Israelites on the east bank would be at once seen.

The Jordan of the present low channel and narrow width is not an alarming crossing, except in the time of a freshet or spring-rise; but the Jordan of the upper banks would be such a flood, that the division of its waves for the prophets, and the piling up of its waters to allow the pas-

sage of God's people into the Promised Land, would be a miracle in keeping with a rocking Sinai and a yawning Red Sea.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Valley of Jordan—Gilgal—A Night in Jericho—Ancient Jericho—Elisha's Spring—The Valley of Cherith—and Cave of Elijah—The Road from Jericho to Jerusalem.

THE Valley of Jordan, through which the river flows, is eight or ten miles in width. On the south it ends at the margin of the Dead Sea, while to the north it stretches away as far as the eye can reach, skirted on the right and left with mountains, and with an Indian-summer like haze resting upon it. Of the character of the east bank I cannot speak ; but the plain on the west shore, reaching to the mountains of Judea, is as level almost as a table, and could with little attention, be made as beautiful with varied vegetation as when the Israelitish spies, sent to reconnoiter the country, looked with delighted eyes upon the scene of living green. It is now a hard, dry expanse, covered with coarse, sedge-like grass ; but the spots cultivated in the neighborhood of Jericho show unmistakably what it can be made to do, and what is really to-day under the surface.

Gilgal is about two miles from the Jordan.

Nothing is left but a heap of stones of the place that figured so prominently in Jewish history. Here, after crossing the Jordan, the Israelites made themselves holy unto the Lord: and it is remarkable to notice how often, in after days, they would return to this spot. After battles and campaigns and great national experiences; after victories and defeats, Gilgal would be fallen back upon or sought after. Very much like Jacob was led back to Bethel for a renewal of spiritual life, so to the place where, as a nation, they had given themselves to God in solemn covenant, the Israelites would return again and again. Well for all believers to turn the face and heart—not frequently, but continually—to Gilgal. I can see why Samuel retained it as one of his judging-places. It is remarkable that to this day the idea of holiness is connected with the spot by even the Arabs. I was informed that when they wish to get the whole truth from a man, they ask him if he is willing to swear by the tree that grows at Gilgal.

Jericho is a small mud village, with two or three modern houses for the comfort of travelers. Here I passed the night. Wearied with the long trip, and parched with thirst, I sat under a grape harbor thinking of the history of the place, when my dragoman approached with several bunches of grapes of such huge size and such rich color, that I instantly thought of the circumstances of

the spies, and the grapes of Eschol, that so amazed the Jews by their size.

The night at Jericho will not be soon forgotten. It was a night of almost breathless calm in August; the whole valley of Jordan was a bed, upon which the day had lain for hours, and left all heated. The very moonlight, which flooded the country, fell like the weight of additional covering. How we panted, like David, for water from the deep well of Bethlehem! But that was too far, and so was Elisha's Spring, which is over a mile from modern Jericho. Some Bedouins were beating a drum a half mile away, which performance they kept up until nearly midnight; every monotonous stroke coming through the still night air, and falling with undiminished force upon the suffering ear. In the midst of this night of discomfort and wakefulness there was a sight that I obtained while walking amid the fruit trees of the orchard that served to steady me and keep me patient. It was a view of the Mountains of Temptation, lying in the moonlight, one or two miles away, toward Jerusalem! How it all rushed over me that Christ, the Holy One, dwelt in that desolate region without food, or drink, or companionship, for forty days and nights, and did it uncomplainingly. Is it not wonderful that we should ever count our lot or surroundings hard in the face of the suffering life lived by the Son of God!

Nothing seems to be left of the town in which Zaccheus resided as a rich and despised publican. The sycamore tree, as well as the man who climbed into its branches to see Jesus, is gone. Bartimæus, the blind beggar at the gate, has become dust, and so has the gate by which he sat. The road itself, along which the multitude poured that day, is today a faint pathway, and frequently lost sight of amid the stones of the field and the rubbish of the village. However, it matters but little, seeing that the truths of that day are preserved. We can stand the pulpit being knocked to pieces if the great saving sermon has been preached; and you can take the framing of the picture if you leave me the picture itself. The great lesson of that day—Christ's love for, and kindly attitude to the poor and rich alike—remains with us, if Jericho does not. Time has destroyed the poor Jericho pulpit, but heaven holds the preacher, and immortal souls and eternity have the sermon.

Ancient Jericho is nearer the mountains than the modern town of that name. The ruins have the magnitude of little hills. I noticed, however, that they touched the mountain, and at once filed an objection to this being the exact site, for the reason that the Bible says the children of Israel marched around Jericho a number of times, and evidently at some distance from the walls. According to these ruins, there would be no room for them to pass between the city and the moun-

tain. There can be no doubt, however, that the site is near by, if not a part of the ruins we see. What a resounding crash went along the side of these mountains, and up these gorges, when the walls, on the last day of circular marching, fell down flat! In the victory was found the element of future defeat. One man carefully brought it forth. Is it not strange that the two articles secretly taken from Jericho represent the especial weaknesses of the two sexes, a piece of gold and a garment? The guide points out to you, with great confidence, the ruins of the house of Rahab, because, as he said, the promise to her was that the stones of her house should remain standing; "and here," says the guide, "is the only ruin on which one stone is piled upon the other; therefore, this is the house of Rahab." His logic was equal to his scriptural accuracy, and correspondingly convincing.

Elisha's Spring is close by, and gushes out at the foot of the mountain, and is overshadowed partly by a small palm of Gilead. The flow is so abundant that it could easily be made to irrigate the plain between the River Jordan and the mountains. Already below the mouth it has been divided into a number of channels, several of which I crossed, and found them all rushing along with the accent of rapidity and abundance. To day the fountain is shallow; but if the stones and debris of former walls around it were removed, it

could be made a pool fifteen or twenty feet square, and six or eight deep. Then, indeed, if an ax flew off the helve into the spring, the owner might well cry out, as did one of the young men to Elisha: "Alas, master! for it was borrowed." I noticed the remains of an ancient wall that once encircled it, possessing about the same dimensions I have named. Truly, all Scripture statements of places and things can bear examination. The water of this spring is sweet, cool, and refreshing. When Elisha healed this fountain, he did it effectually.

The valley of Achor, where Achan was stoned, is in this neighborhood. What trouble one man can bring upon a large body of people! What far-reaching results attend a sinful act! One man sins—then what? Israel defeated, a number slain, Joshua on his face, and twelve tribes mourning. How truly could the solemn words of Joshua, uttered here, be spoken now in many places to certain individuals: "You have troubled Israel this day!"

The valley of Cherith enters the plain near the Jericho road. One or two miles up the valley is shown the cave of Elijah, where he was fed by the ravens, while hiding from Ahab. The cavern is situated high up on the precipitous side of a mountain. It is a good hiding place, even among the bare rocks; but if in former times these heights and slopes were covered with forests, it would have been next to impossible to have discovered the

prophet. The brook of which he drank winds along the valley several hundred feet beneath the cave. Its course can be easily traced by a narrow line of green shrubs that overarch it in its progress to the plain. As I viewed the place I could not but recall the life of hardship through which this man of God was called to pass. Elisha was of a softer make, and kept a servant. Both, I notice, were accepted of God. Nevertheless, when the time came for the transfiguration of Him who came to minister and not to be ministered unto, it was the toil-worn Moses, and the toil-worn Elijah, and not Elisha, that stood in the company of the Father and the Son, talking about the coming death at Jerusalem, and the completion of the plan of salvation.

The Jericho road truly, as the Gospel says, ascends to Jerusalem. For the greater part of the way it is a steady ascent. The expression, "go up to Jerusalem," so often recurring in the Gospel, is not carelessly nor meaninglessly used. The traveler, approaching the capital of Judah from any direction, "ascends," because of this superior elevation of Jerusalem, being nearly three thousand feet above the level of the sea. Jericho and Jerusalem, in a straight line, are not more than ten miles apart; but following the windings of the road, the distance is considerably greater. So it is a long road, and a steep road, and a toilsome road, and in summer a hot road. Many must

have been the resting places of the Savior and His disciples when they ascended to Jerusalem by this highway. The road possesses to the Christian a most tender and sacred interest, because Christ walked along it; and, in addition, His last journey on earth was here made. Although millions have trod the stony highway, yet will it stand forever and inseparably connected with the Savior. I could not but regret to see that the Turkish government is building a highway, which leaves the old Jericho road at many points. This new road was commenced last year, and is now nearly completed. A great part of it pursues the same ancient course, and when it deflects, there on the right or left, is seen the old Jericho road, a solemn, heart-moving relic of the sacred past. His feet, you say, walked there! All along this way the figure of Christ would rise up before my mind. The "face steadfastly set to go to Jerusalem" was before me. I could see the group of disciples and the faithful women of Galilee around Him, and following Him. What a mystery He was to some of them as they saw Him toiling along the road on foot, when only the day before they saw Him heal the blind Bartimæus! What conversations and teachings fell from the gracious lips on this last journey! The Light of the world was nearing the hour of sunset, if they had known it. They thought He was going up to raise Lazarus from

the dead, and so He was ; but He was also going up the toilsome, exhausting road of Jericho to die at Jerusalem. And yet who so patient, and gentle, and uncomplaining as He on this journey to the most dreadful death known to man !

We passed the inn, or rather the building, that stands on the site of the inn made immortal by the parable or history of the Good Samaritan. Passing into the court-yard, we found it well filled with recumbent camels and resting Arabs. I seated myself on a rock near the gate, and read, while our animals rested awhile from the intense heat of the day, that beat down with the force of a furnace upon the treeless road and rocky hill-sides of this country. That part of the Scripture was doubly enjoyed here which commences : “ A certain man went down to Jericho.” How thankful I am for the picture the Lord draws of a man who, when he started to do a benevolent or kind thing, went to the end of it, leaving nothing undone, because believing not in half measures ! “ Take care of him ; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.” Most of us think our duty done when we put the traveler in the inn. Let the landlord do the rest. Some of us go two pence farther in kindness, and say : “ Let the next traveler contribute something ; let the landlord tell each passer-by, and raise a purse.” All hail to the man that stops not and turns not back in a good work, but says, in sub-

stance: "If anything more is needed, let him have it. Behold, I will pay for all!" Such a man was Paul. Hear him writing to Philemon about Onesimus: "If he oweth thee aught, put that on mine account; I, Paul, have written it with my own hand, I will repay it!"

Two hours after, we ascended Mt. Olivet by the upper road so often trod by the Master, and descended, looking with the soul in the eyes, at the city outspread beneath us, which had received His tears and, later on, drank up His blood.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A Trip to Bethlehem—Pool of Gihon—Elijah's Impress—Rachel's Tomb—The Wise Men of the East—Bethlehem—The Church of the Nativity—The Turkish Soldier—Woman's Place in the Church—Well of Bethlehem—Field in which Ruth Gleaned—The Field of the Shepherds.

I SELECTED an afternoon for a trip on horseback to Bethlehem. Leaving the Jaffa Gate, the road turns south, and passes by the edge of the lower pool of Gihon. Here Nathan crowned Solomon king, and the people gave such a confirming shout that the noise rolled like a tidal wave down the valley of Hinnom, and struck with awful distinctness upon the ears of Adonijah, who, with his companions and followers, gathered at the well of Enrogel, was plotting to overthrow the government of David, his father.

The pool to-day has nothing but its size left to hint of its former glory. It is dry and empty, and a solitary donkey was cropping the thistles that are now growing in the bottom. How hard it was for the fancy to make this desolate place appear as it did that morning when the wisest of kings, and one of the most faithful of prophets,

and a vast multitude, with the Cherethites and Pelethites, stood on its margin, with cultivated gardens around them and battlemented walls crowded with people and fluttering with pennons above them! Surely God allows these wonderful contrasts in the same place to teach us how pitiful and short-lived is this world's glory!

Upon the summit of a hill, near a Greek monastery, I was shown the imprint of Elijah's form on a rock, upon which he stretched himself as he fled from Jezebel. When a large church perpetrates such a preposterous lie as this, who wonders at the godlessness of the people at large? Truly, the native worshiper is fed on falsehood, and falsehoods from a thousand to fifteen hundred years old. Think of a lie a thousand years old, and still being told! They call them traditions, out of politeness, but it takes a good deal of politeness or self-restraint, or unilluminated ignorance, to swallow the statements made to you here on all sides, on the authority of the Greek and Roman Catholic Churches.

The tomb of Rachel is on the roadside, near to Bethlehem. The general opinion is that this is the true site. I notice that Samuel mentions the place to Saul in 1 Samuel x. 2. The place called Zelzah is hard by the sepulchre, and can be seen from the Bethlehem road. The scriptural account of the death of the comely young wife of Jacob is simply and touchingly given in Genesis xxxv.

16-20. "And it came to pass," says the eighteenth verse, that "as her soul was in departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin." Whose heart has not been melted at the untimely end of the beautiful Rachel? The name Ben-oni meant "the son of my sorrow;" but falling from her dying lips, it meant much more. She was one of that class of women who never had the man she loved altogether to herself. A less comely sister obtains him before she does by a trick of the cunning Laban. Then came the domestic plots to wean Jacob from her. After that the sorrow of barrenness, and then the sore experience of angry words from the husband. Then came the early death, the giving up of husband and children and life in the very bloom of her young womanhood. "Call him Ben-oni," she said, and died. And the word sounds like the sigh of a disappointed, heart-broken woman. Nor is this all, for the life denied at so many points is still seen in death, for Leah sleeps by the side of Jacob at Machpelah, while Rachel lies alone in her grave in the fields near to Bethlehem. Who that remembers her, as she first appeared, as the lovely young shepherdess of her father's flock, blushing under Jacob's kiss and admiration, could have foretold so brief and sad a life? I never think of Rachel without associating her with another young woman, who died in similar circumstances at Shiloh, over the news of her husband's

death, and the taking of the ark of God. "Cheer up, they said to her, for thou hast borne a son; but she answered not," says the word of God. "And she named the child Ichabod, saying, the glory is departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken."

As I entered the tomb of Rachel, I found it filled with women from the neighborhood, who had come to observe the day in her honor. Certainly there must be a subtle, sympathetic drawing felt by the female heart toward this young mother in Israel, whose dust lies at our feet.

Along this road, over which we are traveling, the wise men from the East came; and over the hills in front of us shone the star guiding them to the young Child. Then were the wise men glad when they saw the star. How sweet are the restored blessings of God! They had lost the star in formal Jerusalem. Along this road came rushing once the servants of Herod, with the cruelest mission ever known on earth. Think of it!—a commission to kill all the children under two years of age in a town. Then was there heard the voice of weeping! What a scene, above all conception and description, of shrieking mothers and dying children! He that has seen a mother's grief at the death of a child must multiply this by the mothers of Bethlehem, and by the suddenness and horribleness of the wholesale murder. "They would not be comforted," says the Bible

about these mothers. Can't you hear the cry breaking out afresh from the different homes?

Bethlehem is at last reached, after having been seen on its hill-side several miles away. The houses are ordinary, the streets narrow, the children dirty, and the inhabitants poor. Little shops with wide-open doors, revealed numbers of men sitting on the ground, hard at work at their trades, the principal of which is the manufacture of mother-of-pearl trinkets, to be bought by travelers as souvenirs of the Holy Land. Bethlehem looks little like the city of David, much less like a place where the Son of God was born. But the Bible explains it in a sentence, "He humbled himself."

We entered the Church of the Nativity, built over the reputed place or cave of our Lord's birth, although the Scripture says nothing about a cave. Like all the rest of the churches of the East, this one of the Nativity looked dingy and unattractive, and was, as usual, lined with beggars at the door, lying on the floor, or seated against the wall. There are two holy places to which you are pointed. One the place of the birth, and the other the spot where the manger stood. They also show you a marble fountain in the corner, out of which, they tell you, the Virgin drank, while she was here; as if Mary had stayed some months and years in a stable! As the eye glances at the strikingly modern marble fount, or reservoir, the sickening feeling that arises from a palpable lie seizes upon

you, and you turn away disgusted. The room has a number of dimly burning tapers, and lamps turned low down, so that you can scarcely see two yards before you. Until the eye gets accustomed somewhat to the darkness, you are almost afraid to take a step. The Greek and Roman Catholic Churches are peculiariy fond of darkness when they show their sacred relics and holy places. Aside from the desire to impress a certain class of people, are not these churches really afraid to turn on the daylight upon these places? What revelations the sunlight would make! what hoary falsehoods would have to take instantaneous flight!

As I stood by noticing the people coming in and kissing the reputed spot of the nativity, my eye, growing more accustomed to the dimness of the place, took in the outline of a Turkish soldier standing, with gun by his side, close by. My question as to why he was there, brought out the reply that he was stationed in the place to keep peace between the Greeks and Roman Catholics; that a bitter strife and enmity existed between the churches, and that only a few years before a dispute arose about the hanging of a curtain in this very room, when a fight began, and sixteen lives were lost. Hence the Turkish guard. This is the type of Christianity that the Turks and Arabians see in this country. Can anyone wonder that they are willing to remain Mohammedans? While standing thinking upon these things, a

Greek priest came in suddenly with a censer, and began to throw the perfumed smoke most vigorously into the niche where they say our Lord was born. Having finished this, he went next to the recess of the manger, and filled that with incense; after which performance he departed with the air of a man who had saved a world.

My next visit was to the church up-stairs, where the Greeks were holding religious service. Priests, men, and boys were in one end of the room, chanting in the most discordant and monotonous manner. The females stood at the other end of the room, and were not allowed to approach nearer for fear of their defiling the altar. With a burning pity I looked upon the faces of these mothers, who, with their daughters, young and old, were thus banished, while strapping boys and hard-looking men went carelessly in and out of the sacred place. These women were far better-looking and nicer-looking than the men, and seemed much more interested in the service. So the wonder grew, over the custom that shut the woman out and shut the man in the holy place of this church. But let me not forget to mention that after a while one of the priests went out with a censer, and, passing in front of the women, waved smoke in their faces. I suppose it was partly to fumigate them. Anyhow, it was something; their existence was thus recognized, and they were, doubtless, made happy and grateful for

small favors in absence of larger ones. A little perfumed smoke, the rattle of a censer, is good enough, the Greek Church thinks, for a woman. The error up-stairs locks hands with the error down-stairs. And God, in His amazing mercy, allows this monstrosity, that covers the reputed site, to stand untouched by the thunderbolts of His power. The heart stands in the midst of all the senseless mummery of this place, and says, with Mary of old : " They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him."

Of course, I visited the well of Bethlehem, or David's Well, as it is called, situated on the edge of the town. Here he drank often as a barefooted shepherd-lad, and in remembrance of its cooling draughts, said on the hard-fought field of battle : " Oh, that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem that is at the gate." What devotion to David and courage is seen in the consequent act of the three mighty men, and what loftiness of spirit in the king as he poured the water upon the ground ! God forbid that he should drink water that cost blood, and the blood of such men ! The mouth of this well is to-day almost even with the surface of the ground, and, looking in, I found that it was dry ! Alas ! for the fountains of this world, for which we so ardently sigh, and over which such struggles take place. They all run dry. There is but one fountain—satisfying, unchanging, eternal. It is spoken of in John vii : 37, and again in John iv : 14.

In the distance I looked at the fields where David kept his father's sheep, and, as he watched them, studied also, night after night, the flock of stars that wandered over the heavenly fields, guided by a heavenly Shepherd. Over these hills he patiently followed the call of simple duties, until the great call of God to a broader sphere came to him. No thrusting himself forward, no wire-working for position; but a calm waiting on the will and providence of God.

Two other interesting places are pointed out in the same quarter. One, the field of Boaz, where gleaned the beautiful Ruth. One line came to me written by Keats, which I read when a boy, and which has ever since clung to me in connection with the fair young exile from the land of Moab—

“ She stood in tears amid the alien corn.”

She had given up home, kindred, and country for the sake of another. The blue mountains of her native land she could see in the distance beyond the Dead Sea, from the fields in which she gleaned. Who wonders at the attitude, the look, and the sorrow depicted in that eloquent line?

The other attractive point is the field where the shepherds were watching their flocks by night when the angels descended and proclaimed the glad tidings of the Savior's birth. As I looked at the grassy slope, now brown under the burning sun of summer, there was nothing to show that it had once been dyed with the rich colors of heaven,

stirred with angel wings, and full of echoes of the eternal world. It looks like any other field, with its gentle declivity, quiet surroundings, and absence of life ; but, nevertheless, no other field ever had a more glorious announcement made over it than the shepherds' field near Bethlehem. I have often thought of the feelings of the shepherds after, as the Bible says, "the angels had gone away into heaven." The praising, the singing, the angels themselves—gone away into heaven ! Can't you see the shepherds gazing after them into the empty blue vault as the disciples gazed after Christ ? The starry sky was the shut door to the shepherds, the cloud to the disciples.

"Gone away into heaven !" Has the reader sounded the depths of these words ? The light gone, the beauty and glory gone, the loved one gone into heaven—and you left in the field.

"Gone away into heaven !" But, thank God ! they left the Savior. He was at Bethlehem that night, He is by the side of the reader now, and, having Him as a present helper and comforter, we can stand the loss of all things until we, too, shall go away into heaven.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

My Cavalcade—The Damascus Road—Beeroth, Where the Virgin Missed the Savior—A Night at Bethel—A Visit to Shiloh—A Rest at Jacob's Well—Mts. Gerizim and Ebal—The Scripture Account True—The Pulpit of Jotham—The Summit of Mt. Gerizim.

I FOUND, on leaving for Lake Galilee, that I had unwittingly "tarried ten days in Jerusalem." It was to me a pleasing coincidence. I departed on my northward journey on horseback, attended by a dragoman, a cook, two muleteers, four horses, a mule and a donkey. In addition, there are two tents and luggage to correspond, making for one solitary traveler a retinue of imposing array. The luggage and tents go forward in the morning with the cook and muleteers, while the dragoman and myself follow more leisurely, viewing the country and visiting the sacred sites on the road. Late in the afternoon we overtake them, and see from afar the white tents gleaming in a clump of trees, or on the edge of some town or village, or nestling in some sheltered valley, while the blue smoke, curling up in front, proclaims the approach of the evening meal.

I left by the Damascus road. Much has been said and written about this historic thoroughfare, over which kings and generals have swept with armies ; along which the Savior and his disciples walked on their way to and from Galilee ; and upon which, still later, the fiery Saul was met by the Savior, and cast to the ground by a blinding light from heaven. It was once, doubtless, a magnificent highway. Here and there, remains of the old Roman road are still seen ; but only here and there, as the centuries have buried it out of sight, and caving hillsides have eaten it away, and the tread of myriads of feet of men and beasts of burden have had their sure destroying effect. The Damascus road, all through Judea and much of Samaria, is nothing but a pathway of stones ! Stones of all sizes cover or constitute the road, and through which horse, camel and donkey pick their painful way. Sometimes the only sign of the highway is in a certain smoothness and polish given to the rocky boulders in the center by the friction of the feet of passing animals. A carriage or wagon could not survive a total wreck within a few hundred yards. On either side of the road, and as far as the eye can see, stretch away the gray and brown-looking hills. No trees are upon them ; no beautiful farms on their sides ; no fences by the way ; no homes, with orchard and flower garden, smiling upon you and brightening the journey—only stones to be seen. Stones on

the road, stones by the side of the road ; and on the hillsides countless millions of brown rocks and gray rocks, and gray rocks and brown rocks. And this is the land that once flowed with milk and honey. Here was the country where every man sat under his own vine and fig tree.

The land has sinned grievously. It rejected and killed God's only Son, and he has written his displeasure and judgment in lines of brown and gray all over the landscape. The blessings that produce the harvest have been withheld, the elements have washed away the soil, and the projecting rocky ribs of the mountains are yellowing or whitening in the sun.

In Samaria I observ'd a difference. There is more green on the hillside, more fig trees and olives in the valley, although a kindred desolation is manifest. I remember as I note the difference that Samaria was not as guilty as Judea. It was the Samaritan leper that returned to give Christ thanks ; it was a Samaritan woman who gave Him water and believed on Him ; and it was a Samaritan town that begged Him to remain with them, and believed on Him as He preached ; while Judea was plotting His ruin. So the lines of judgment here are shaded and softened in temporal mercies in a manner worthy of a just, discriminating God.

Along this road to Damascus, Saul sped on his angry way. He was going to annihilate Chris-

tianity; so he thought, and so many others thought. Poor Saul; so little was he dreaded in heaven that nothing was done to arrest his progress until he stood almost on the threshold of Damascus; and then, and not till then, an angel quietly twisted a trembling beam of light into a lasso, and flung it about his neck and landed him in the dust.

At Beeroth, nine miles from Jerusalem, I was shown the place where the Virgin Mary first missed the child Jesus on her way to Nazareth. The Scripture says she had gone a day's journey. But Beeroth is only nine miles from Jerusalem. Is nine miles a day's journey? This is easily understood in Palestine. Nearly all travelers who journey from the city start in the afternoon, and camp some nine or twelve miles away. This is invariably called a day's journey. Fractions of days are still called days in this part of the world. It was so in regard to the Savior's lying in the grave, and it is so in regard to travel. I paid my dragoman for the first march of twelve miles the same amount that I gave him for the second day's journey of twenty-four—the first being a day's journey.

As I thought of the long, wearisome road that intervened between the two places, I marvelled how it was possible that Mary should have been ignorant of the absence of Jesus. The child had been given to her in a supernatural manner, His

birth being amazingly announced ; His entrance, as an infant, into the temple, calling forth bursts of inspired prophecy from Simeon and Anna. How could she, with such memories, 'ever take her eyes from such a child, much less travel four hours in utter ignorance of His whereabouts ? What was she doing all this time ? Was she absorbed in conversation with other women in the caravan in regard to the sights and occurrences of the city just left ? She seems to have been an absent-minded kind of woman ; a woman of a placid, tranquil temperament, not given to being much disturbed about anything. It is remarkable to my mind how this fact about her crops out here and there in the gospel narrative. The Catholic Church represents her in a picture holding the dead body of the Savior in her arms ; but the gospel intimates nothing of the kind, but quietly gives the names of those who sought the sepulchre at day-dawn, and the name of the Virgin Mother is not among them. I know many mothers who would not have traveled one hundred yards without the sight or touch of their child ; and yet Mary journeyed twelve miles in ignorance of the whereabouts of the solemn-eyed, holy-faced, heaven-announced boy, about whom the angels had been sent to her four distinct times previous to this occasion. And yet this woman who could not take care of her own child, the Catholic Church has entrusted with the charge of countless millions of souls !

I spent the night at Bethel. As I mounted an eminence I saw in the valley beneath me our two tents pitched on a little plateau near some fruit trees, while a blue line of smoke, ascending in front of one of them, announced the preparation of the evening meal. As I dismounted and entered my tent and saw its roominess, noticed the bed on one side, the table and stool in the center, the bright carpet on the ground, not only a spirit of thankfulness came over me, but a home-like feeling. After this came a dinner of several courses, then reading, and writing by a clear lamp until 9 o'clock, and then a walk and meditation under the stars of Bethel.

The place where Jacob slept is upon a swelling ground or eminence. A poor Syrian mud and stone village now covers the site. A few clumps of fruit trees relieve the prevailing tint of brown and gray that still pursues us in this stony country. It was at this place that Abraham built an altar to God. It was here that the young prophet delivered his courageous message against idolatry, and then afterward fell into disobedience through an old lying prophet. It was here that Jacob fleeing from his brother Esau, "lighted on a certain place, and took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep." Then came the vision of that wonderful stairway, the voice of the covenanting God, the morning awakening with the

cry ; "The Lord is in this place ; this is the gate of heaven !" How little Jacob thought that night, as he gathered the stones for his pillow, that this act would be known to all the world ! How little we realize that certain acts of ours, gone through quietly, even secretly, will have a publicity fairly amazing ! Nor can we tell what act it will be. Thus we read that Sarah laughed behind the tent door. Surely no one ever would know that. She was hidden ; her breath scarcely stirred the curtain ; no one was in the tent when she laughed, and yet that laugh has resounded through the world ! Guard your laughs, my reader ; and when you pick up a stone in a lonely spot, say to yourself : "This act, so simple and trifling, may yet be known to the world." What a value this places on daily transactions, and what watchfulness it demands of human life !

Shiloh is seven or eight miles from Bethel, and fully two miles from the main road, and on the right hand as you journey north. It is located on a hilly slope, and surrounded by loftier hills. It is thus, in a manner, shut in ; but has several wide valleys leading out in different directions. Not a house is seen there to-day ; not a living creature abides there. Only ruins, and but little even of those. I fancied that I could distinguish several narrow streets outlined by stones for a short distance ; but the ruin is so complete that it was impossible to be certain. The ancient Shiloh

is utterly wiped out. The gate where Eli sat trembling for the ark is gone. I recall the Word of God at this point: "I will make you like unto Shiloh." And yet this desolate hill-side, now partially covered with a poorly cultivated field was the place where the land of Canaan was divided by Joshua among the tribes, and was besides, for a long time, the abiding-place of the ark of God. One of the most deeply interesting chapters in the Old Testament tells how the ark was removed from this place and fell into the hands of the Philistines. Here Samuel's mother knelt in bitterness of spirit; here Eli was priest, while the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord. Again I recalled the fate of the young woman whom I always associate with Rachel. It was in this place that she died; for when the news came that the ark was taken and her husband was dead, the death-blow was given her gentle, beautiful life. "Fear not," said the women around her, "for thou hast borne a son," and her dying reply was: "Call him Ichabod, for the glory is departed from Israel."

In the afternoon we entered the valley in which Shechem, now called Nablous, is situated. At the eastern end of the valley, where it joins at right angles a broad plain that runs south, is Jacob's Well. Christian, Jew, and Mohammedan all agree in regard to the identity of this place. The gospel narrative says it is not far from the parcel

of ground that Jacob gave to Joseph. Close by is the reputed tomb of Joseph. The well, however, possesses its great interest not from Jacob's digging it, or from its antiquity, but from the fact that here the Savior rested, sitting on its side, and that here He held that wonderful conversation with the woman of Samaria. "Jesus, therefore, being wearied, sat thus on the well."

He that journeys on the rocky and rough roads of Judea, and along the hot road that stretches through the plain for miles south of Shechem, will understand why Christ was wearied. The well, as the woman said, was deep. Even now, although much rubbish is at the bottom, yet it is still seventy-five feet in depth. A number of years ago some church had it arched over for its protection; but the arches are to-day in ruins, while the well still remains. I descended through the broken covering to the original level or top curbing of the well, and, seating myself on the stone mouth, read, with a sweet realization of the presence of Christ, the fourth chapter of John. How vividly the scene arose before me—the wondering woman;* the wearied, patient, teaching

*The following is the substance of a note received by the author from Dr. C. K. Marshall, of Vicksburg, about a fortnight previous to his death: "If you publish your letters of travel in book-form, do not fail to mention that the first person to whom the Savior communicated the fact of His Messiahship was the woman of Samaria. I have been quite ill. I went down to the banks of the Jordan, wet my feet, looked over into the blessed land beyond, and came back." Two weeks after that he went down again; the waves parted, and this prophet of God, with the storm-like eloquence of Elijah, and the tenderness of Elisha, passed through and over into the Land of Promise.

Christ. What a sermon he preached to that solitary woman! What beautiful self-forgetfulness! He is so absorbed in doing good that the brain has forgotten to deliver the nerve telegram that the physical man was hungry.

I am impressed here with an additional proof of the consistency of our Lord's course in life. He that refused to turn the stones into bread, when hungry, refused to make the water leap from the bottom of the well to satisfy his thirst. Patient, long-suffering, "He pleased not Himself," and never worked a miracle to benefit Himself.

This is said to be one of the two places where we are absolutely certain that Christ stood on the actual spot. The other place is where He paused on the southern slope of Mt. Olivet and wept over Jerusalem. To these two might be added the synagogue site in Capernaum.

A little distance up the valley we stand, with Mt. Gerizim on the left and Mt. Ebal on the right. I stood, I am confident, at or near the spot where took place that remarkable scene of the blessing and cursing. What is the reader's idea of this transaction? Does he think that six men went up to the top of one mount, and six to the summit of the other, while the vast multitude stood in the center of the valley? Or does he think that six tribes stood on the side of one mountain, and six tribes on the slope of the other, while Joshua was posted in the center of the valley, reading

the words of the Law, and the people, thus divided, gave forth the loud response that must have rolled down the vale like distant thunder? It is remarkable that just at the spot where the occurrence is said to have taken place, that there are two recesses, or natural amphitheatres, in the sides of the two mountains and directly facing each other. Whether six tribes stood ranged on and up one of these places, and the other six at the opposite one, with Joshua in the plain; or whether six men went up to the summit of Mt. Gerizim, and six to the top of Mt. Ebal, while the people stood in the plain below, remains for the reader to decide. The thrilling thought with me is, that in either case the Scripture account would be true. I was perfectly satisfied with that fact before leaving the place, for after measuring the distance with the eye, and walking over much of it; after viewing the mountain summits from the valley beneath, and then climbing to the top of Mt. Gerizim and viewing Mt. Ebal over against me and the valley from above, I left, firmly convinced of the truth of the scriptural account.

This is a great country for loud and distant calling. The natives are greatly given to hallooing to each other. The hill and mountain-sides make splendid sounding-boards, the valleys are fine conductors, the atmosphere is favorable, and the lungs of the natives are excellent. I have seen a man call from a valley up to his house, far dis-

tant on the mountain-side, and "get the message through," to my wonder. Several miles east of Jerusalem I heard a Bedouin calling to a village that was twice the distance from him that Mt. Ebal is from Mt. Gerizim, and yet he made himself understood. More than once at night, while tenting through the land, I would hear the people calling to each other at great distances from one another, and at a great distance from myself, and yet the tones were as distinct as the sound at night was solemn and impressive. From all these things I was prepared to believe in the solemn colloquy and response between the tribes that long ago took place in the valley of Shechem; but when, in addition, I saw the place, my faith was confirmed an hundredfold by all that the eye observed.

A little farther up the valley, and jutting out of the craggy mountain-side directly over the town of Shechem, and at the height of four or five hundred feet, appears what I would call Jotham's pulpit. It is a ledge of rock about ten feet in length and breadth, and is said to be the place where Jotham, the son of Gideon, stood and shouted aloud his opinion on certain governmental matters to the inhabitants of Shechem, who were ruled over by his brother Abimelech. The remarkable scene is described in Judges ix. 7-21, and is well worth reading. As soon as Jotham finished his Philippic or, rather, Abimelic

he sprang from the rock and fled, as many a preacher had done before, and has done since. Jonah ran before he delivered his sermon; Cranmer preached his and then took it back; but Jotham, having delivered himself, girded up his loins, took to his heels, and left the land. Under the circumstances, it was a good speech or sermon. The parable he used was striking and faithfully applied, when we consider the fact that he knew that presently hundreds of people would be climbing the mountain-side in hot chase after him. He and Mark Antony became famous by making one speech; and, although we hear of him no more after this, yet he can claim that one address of his goes down to posterity, which is certainly more than many of us can say.

Mt. Gerizim is twenty-nine hundred feet above the sea-level, and about one thousand above the plain upon which Shechem is situated. I ascended it for the view it commands, and to look upon the ruins that crown the summit. There is scarcely any spot in nature that is lonelier than the top of a mountain. The uninhabited place, the remoteness from human dwellings, the dizzy elevation, and the proximity to the fathomless sky all seem to produce a sense of loneliness that once felt will never be forgotten. Mt. Gerizim is no exception. I found the summit left to the mountain grouse, that flew up at the sound of my horse's hoofs, and to the countless gray rocks

that lie bleaching under the sun. The loftiest part is covered with the ruins of walls and buildings. Not a habitable dwelling is left, and not a human being was in sight.

The Samaritan Church seems to have been evolved by the refusal of the Jew to have aught to do with them, regarding them as a mongrelized people. So the Samaritans selected this mountain, built a temple, and held service for themselves. Only a handful of them are left today, and the temple is gone, but they still make pilgrimages to this mountain-top of ruins, sacrifice annually, and believe that the Messiah is yet to come. The sight of the stones, where they still slaughter the lamb in prospective belief in Christ, affects one peculiarly and painfully. You have a feeling akin to the experience born of seeing a person who had been taught the alphabet in childhood still poring over it in manhood as an unmastered problem.

Very wide and beautiful is the prospect from this point. The mountains of Samaria sweep away to the southern horizon, and a purple range looms up beyond the Jordan in the east, while close to the western verge lies outstretched in its calm beauty the blue Mediterranean. The road to Jerusalem is seen winding over the southern plain. Several villages, near and remote, dot the landscape, while the historic valley of the blessing and cursing, with the town of Shechem in its cen-

ter, lies at your feet. Near the base of Mt. Gerizim can be seen the Well of Jacob. As one views the sacred site from this desolate and forsaken mountain-top, the words of the Savior to the woman of Samaria are seen to have a most striking fulfillment: "Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither *in this mountain* nor yet in Jerusalem worship the Father."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Samaria—The Plain of Esdraelon—Jezreel—Naboth's Vineyard—
Saul's Last Night—Shunem—The Child's Death—The Syrian Natives—Scene Under a Fig-Tree—Nain—Endor.

THIS is not the season for travelers, and my being alone makes the expense of a tent trip correspondingly heavy. With a party of four or five the expense would be five dollars a day for each individual; to travel alone costs more. The advantage of the tent is that you are delivered from rooms where anybody and everybody have slept, and that may be objectionable for other reasons. You likewise get to see the places where you stop; not through a hotel medium, but in a face-to-face way. Camping in a valley in the country, or in a grove in the edge of a town or village, you see what you came to see—the people and the land.

At noon I rest, and lunch, and write under a tree by the wayside, and in the afternoon at five or six o'clock, find our tents pitched in some sacred and historic spot and dinner almost ready. Then comes the meditative hour, Bible in hand, sitting Abraham-like in the tent door.

This is the third day out from Jerusalem, and

we are now looking upon Samaria, the capital of the kingdom of Israel. It was once a city of great glory and power, but to-day has only ruins to speak of its former majesty. A wretched village covers a part; a threshing-floor is now where Ahab dwelt, and a poor Bedouin tent, made of sticks and branches, I saw perched on a massive ruin, that in its day was a structure of massive grandeur. History tells us that Herod built extensively and magnificently at this place, but all that is left of the ancient palatial and colonade splendor are some rows of stone pillars, twenty feet in height, three feet in diameter, and still retaining some of the polished surface which glistened in beauty two thousand years ago. The situation of Samaria is remarkable. It is on a lofty hill, with a ring of still loftier hills surrounding it. A valley ring and a mountain ring are its double engirdling of beauty and strength. The sides of the central hill, upon which sat the capital of Israel, slope down to the valley, and bear remains of buildings and terraces. On the northern side, and near the base of the hill, are several rows of massive stone pillars. The situation alone gives us a fair idea of what it used to be in attractiveness and natural strength. After looking at it I did not marvel that it took the Assyrians three years to secure its capture.

It was in this city that was begun the idolatry that proved the ruin of Israel. Here Elijah came

and preached to Ahab and Jezebel. Naaman, with his chariots of gold and his leprosy, visited this city seeking relief. Elisha lived in the neighborhood, and, afterward, in the city itself; for the Scripture tells us that he was there during a certain siege. It was here that occurred several scenes that have always peculiarly and powerfully impressed me. It was on one of these mountains before us that Elisha's servant saw the horsemen and chariots of the heavenly army. On the walls here walked the king in hitherto concealed suffering of mind, until the wind blew aside his cloak and the tortured body was revealed. Across that valley yonder sped the lepers in the moonlight to the vacant camp of the besiegers. Over those hills in the distance swept the strange sound that affrighted a whole army and put them to flight; and underneath the walls of this place Elisha led an army blinded by the power of God, and then transformed them all into the lasting friends of Israel by kind treatment—a good piece of gospel let down into Old Testament times. Here Philip preached the gospel with great success, and here Peter withstood Simon the Sorcerer.

Some miles north of this place we came to the summit, as well as the edge, of the mountains of Samaria, as they skirt the southern border of the plain of Esdraelon. The view was obtained suddenly, and made a profound impression from its

extensiveness, its beauty, and its sacred associations. Checking my horse on the brow of the hill, I looked with fascinated eye upon a plain twenty-five miles long and ten wide. Immediately in front and on the northern side was Mt. Gilboa, upon which Saul and Jonathan fell. A deep cloud-shadow was resting upon it. Farther to the left and west was Nazareth, the buildings highest on the hill-side gleaming white in the distance. Far away to the west was Mt. Carmel, with its peculiar angular approach to the Mediterranean, and just at our feet to the left was the plain of Dothan, shut in on the east and west by lofty hills, and opening like a bay toward the north.

The plain of Esdraelon or Jezreel is historic from one end to the other. What battles of ancient and modern time have been fought here, and what kings and queens and prophets and warriors have crossed this wide and beautiful expanse! It once possessed large and powerful cities, but to-day it has ruins instead, and a few poor villages built of rough stone and daubed with mud.

The old-time city of Jezreel was formerly in the midst of this plain. A Syrian village covers a part of the site. So great is the destruction that I could not see even the ruins of former splendor. It was here that Ahab and Jezebel had a palace, and here that the idolatrous queen met her death.

“Fling her down!” said Jehu, as she appeared at the window, with painted face and attired head. Some men are proof against female arts and unmoved by female beauty. It may spring from natural callousness or from complete absorption in some life-work. One or both may have been the case with Jehu, and so Jezebel was hurled down to be devoured by the dogs. She that showed no pity to Naboth, found no pity.

I was pointed to the hill-side where Naboth's vineyard once nestled—a heritage that he would not part with, and that Ahab was miserable about. If the grasping king could have beheld it prophetically in its stoniness and desolation, as I saw it this morning in reality, the murder of a good man would not have been committed. And yet so is it that men wrangle, and imbue their hands in redness and their hearts with blackness for things as transitory and perishing as the vineyard of Naboth.

In front of Jezreel Saul fought his last battle with the Philistines. The Israelites fled eastward and then southward over Mt. Gilboa, on which place the unfortunate and sinful king fell upon his sword and died. I have in my journeyings through Palestine passed along a line of travel that began with his rise and ends with his fall. Never was there a more promising life with a sadder termination, and yet we see frequently about us the same thing taking place. I could never

read concerning the last night of Saul without deep and melancholy interest. It is like the last culminating chapter of a deeply exciting book, or like the last scene in the last act of a dark tragedy. The Philistines were between him and the village of Endor, where he desired to consult the witch. In a straight line north he was not more than four or five miles from Endor, but in the circuitous route he had to take to avoid the Philistines the distance was much increased. He spent most of the night in walking through the plain. I see him and his armor-bearer in the lonely midnight tramp under the quiet stars. What a contrast their calmness was to his stormy heart! He is going to consult a witch. What labor sin entails upon us, and what will not a man do when he has lost God! Moreover, most remarkably changed is the help one seeks, and the beings one communes with when God is given up and sin followed! Contrast the day in its brightness when Saul spoke with God, and the darkness of the night he seeks counsel from a village sorceress. Measure the infinite difference between the Holy One of Israel and the witch of Endor. I see Saul standing in the hut; I behold Samuel coming up, with face not whiter than the man's he looked upon; I hear the words of doom, and then the heavy thud of Saul's form, as he fell full-length upon the floor. They lift him up; the woman beseeches him to eat a morsel to obtain

strength. But how can a man partake of food when he knows that he will be dead on the morrow? Then came the return walk through the plain. What a walk—and what a night! He thinks of it still in eternity. With an exhausted body, a frozen heart, a despairing, doomed feeling, he began next morning, the battle with the Philistines.

Shunem is on the northern edge of the plain of Jezreel. It is to be remembered by Elisha's visits, and on account of its being the first place mentioned in the Scripture, and I believe in history, where a preacher had a room especially built for him. They have marvelously increased since that day. Our parsonage societies would do well to call themselves Shunemites.

As I passed through the fields surrounding the town, I thought of the pathetic cry that once fell from the lips of a little boy in this immediate neighborhood: "My head, my head!" "Carry him to his mother," said the father. Was not that like a man? But here is seen the woman: "It came to pass that he sat on her knees until noon, and then died." God bless these tender, faithful mothers, with a love in them like unto the love of God. I knew a mother once whose child was dying, and to soothe it she rocked and sung to him until he died. Think of a mother singing to her dying child, observing the shadows deepen on the face as she sings, and expecting the

soul will flit away before the song or hymn is ended. O these mothers all over the world who are watching with breaking hearts the children dying in their laps! We never see them commit the sick or dying child to another; but martyr-like they bend over them or hold them in their arms till they die. The only one they will resign them to is the Savior.

Fifteen to twenty miles in the distance can be plainly seen from this point the broad, blue slope of Mt. Carmel. Here was Elisha at the time, and to this place the bereaved mother fairly rushed her way. How the set face, and the troubled heart, and the one wild hope comes up before us in the single word she uttered to her servant—“Drive!”

Under a fig-tree near Shunem we rested at noon and took lunch. As usual, we were soon surrounded by a group of Syrians, male and female, adults and children. One is made to marvel at the suddenness with which they appear—it almost seems as if they had come up out of the earth. The traveler immediately becomes the cynosure of a score of eyes. At these resting-places I do much of my writing, but, as one can see, under peculiar and rather trying circumstances. Every motion of the stranger is watched; comments in an unknown tongue are made upon his dress, manner of eating, with as much interest and surprise as if a being from another planet had fallen in their

midst. Whenever I look up from my writing I find the curious gaze is still fastened upon me. As a people, these Syrians greatly interest me. In religion they are Mohammedan, in blood Arabian, though doubtless mixed. The complexion is olive, burned to a darker tint with many of them by the sun. Frequently, however, you notice a fair skin, while the faces of the women are generally of fairer tint by a shade or two. The dignity and grace of this people is something phenomenal. I have never seen yet among them an attitude or position that was ungainly, awkward, or ill at ease. They are not troubled with their hands and feet as Western people are. To see them sitting, you desire at once to sketch them ; while to behold them standing before you, with robe wrapped about their forms, is to see a model for a sculptor. I gave a pomegranate to a girl of twelve years, one day, on the road. She looked up with her dark eyes into my face a moment, and then taking my hand pressed it first to her lips and then to her forehead, with a grace that would have done honor to any drawing-room. I often passed young girls and maidens going from their villages to the fountain, located on the edge of the town or farther away. They wear a coarse, blue garment for a dress, with a white covering for the head, equally coarse ; or the dress and head-cloth are made of a material with alternate longitudinal stripes of red and green. As these

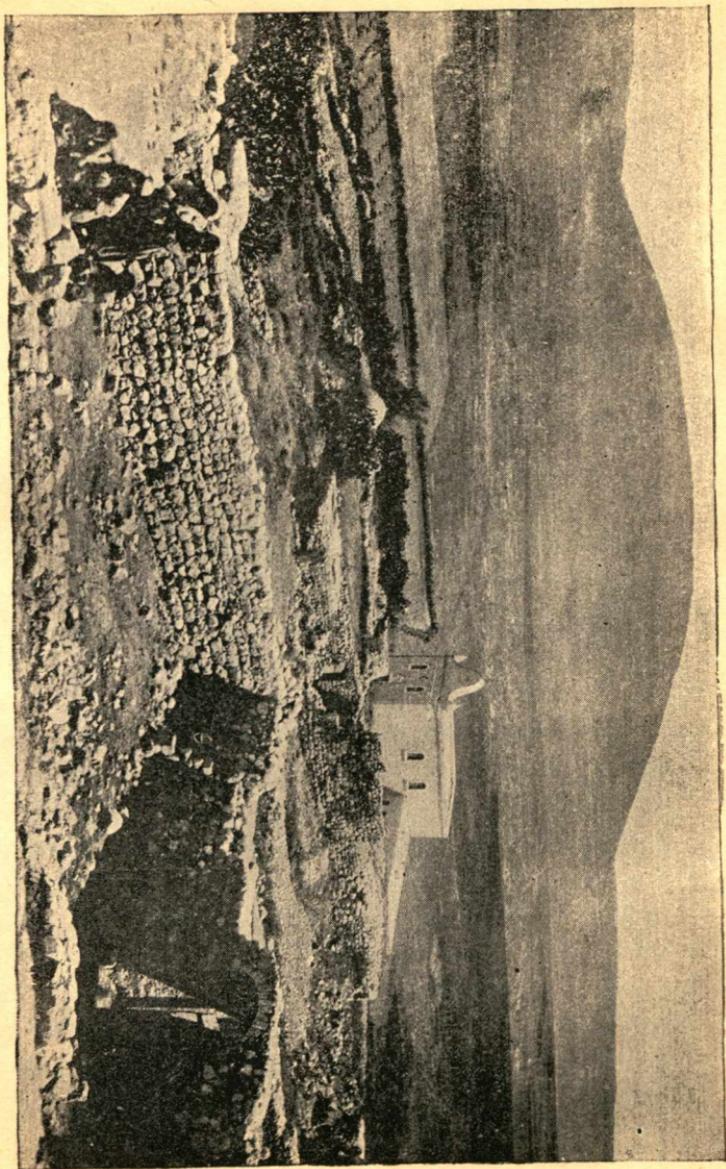
girls pass to the spring, with large earthen jugs poised on the head, or steadied there with one gracefully raised arm, I have been struck with the carriage of the body, the regular features of the face, the straight nose, the dark eye, the lock of black hair falling over the forehead, and wondered if Rachel and Rebecca looked thus in the olden times. That the damsels of the Old Testament age labored as hard as these girls do to-day the Scripture plainly teaches. Rachel is introduced as a shepherdess—no light toil, you may be assured. Rebecca brought the water needed for family use, on her head, from the fountain in the borders of the town. Zipporah was hard at work when Moses first saw her. Ruth was gleaning in the fields. It was a beautiful scene in the distance, and an English poet has written charmingly about it in melodious verse—but as I see the women out here in their gleaning in the fields of the same country, under a cloudless sky and burning sun, I discover there is little poetry about the fact, but genuine hard work. I doubt not but that Ruth slept most soundly at night.

Nothing has distressed me more than the sight of the labor imposed upon these Syrian women. I have seen girls of sixteen or eighteen staggering home from a thicket two or three miles away from home, with a load of poles on their head that a strong man could hardly carry. Besides their

toil in the field, I have seen them performing the most revolting tasks on the public highway, and to my question, Why do you allow your women to do such things, received the reply: "O, that is woman's work." One evening near Shechem I passed a great, fat Syrian sheik on horseback, while ten feet in the rear walked his wife under a blistering sun, and covered with the dust that arose from the heels of her husband's horse.

Under the Shunem fig-tree I determined to give to my Syrian audience a pictorial illustration of a better way of treating a woman, and so telling my dragoman to say to the group about me that in America we venerated women, and tried to deliver them from hard work; that we loved to have them safe from the sun and the storm, in the house, and, in addition, waited on them, instead of making them our servants. Did I speak correctly and truthfully for the men of America? After this brief introduction I made a cup of lemonade, and taking a slice of bread, stepped over to a young Syrian woman and handed them to her. She was evidently at first embarrassed, but quickly recovered herself and received and ate what I gave her. But alas! it was all lost on her, for, in company with the men, she said the women were used to the hard toil they performed. My quick reply was, "Does that make it right?" and there was silence under the fig-tree.

The plain of Esdraelon which runs from west to



east, has a projection on its northern side in the form of a smaller plain about three or four miles in width and perhaps six miles or more in depth. This plain is shut in or skirted by ranges of mountains on both sides. At the farther end is Mt. Tabor ; and on its east side and at the base of the mountains are the humble villages of Nain and Endor. From a treeless mountain range they look out on a treeless but beautiful plain before them. Just outside the village of Nain are old rock-tombs cut in the face of the mountain. The road from the village to the burial-place is not over two hundred yards in length.

There is less trouble here than at other places in the matter of locality identification. The Gospel says that the funeral procession was coming out of Nain when it was met by Christ. Yonder is the old burial-place, and coming this way is the curving road ; here is the entrance to the village and must always have been ; and close to the spot on which we stand, must have occurred the gracious miracle of life restoration preceded by the words : " Young man I say unto thee arise." What a scene must have once transpired here of delight and amazement, what running to and fro of people, what magnifying of the grace of God !

With a kind of shock the mind comes back from this scene of the past to take in the present desolate mountain-side, the poor village of a dozen hovels, the forsaken road leading to the tombs,

and the lonely plain lying outstretched before us.

There is scarcely a sadder experience than that of visiting and viewing a place where once life and love abounded, or where great and grand deeds were achieved, and seeing it forgotten and forsaken and with naught of its former charm or glory left. Fenimore Cooper has in one of his works a scene after this character. Scott in one of his best books has a similar picture. His hero returns after an absence of several years to the castle and court of a relative whom he had visited under happy circumstances. Meantime war had swept with desolating power over the land, and its conclusion left the people scattered and the country changed. The greatest change was in the homestead before the solitary horseman. The courtyard that had been a scene of life and gladness; that had rung with blast of horn and ring of hoof and peals of happy laughter was silent and desolate. Weeds were waving on the wall and house-top. A great heart-depressing loneliness and dreariness was upon the whole place.

To visit Palestine and behold it without Christ and His disciples, is this experience multiplied a thousand-fold in intensity and sadness. And to see this country in the possession of people who do not know nor care for Christ and His blessed life and achievements adds immeasurably to the pain.

Farther on a few miles is the village of Endor. Here again we see only about a dozen humble dwellings at the foot of the mountain. It stands forever identified with the unhappy king of Israel, and his last night on earth. Over yonder mountain crest he came at midnight and descended the steep slope to the place.

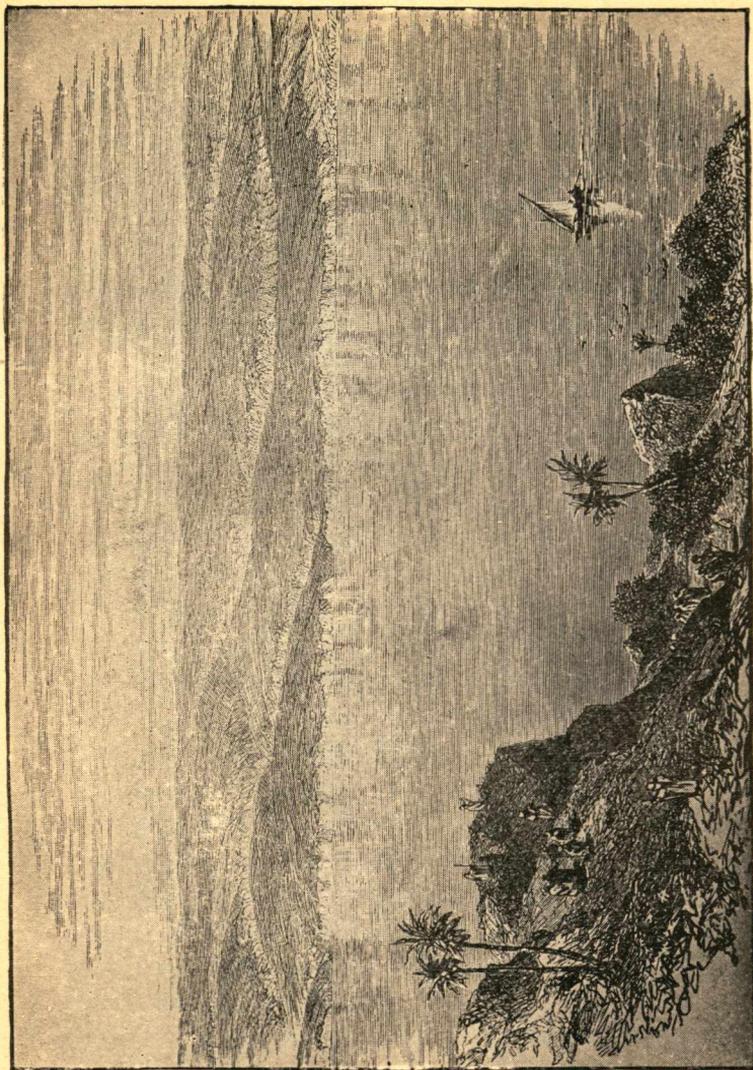
In both of these villages the dead were raised ; the one by necromancy and the other by the power of the Son of God. But how different were the actors, the scenes and the results. Great was the consternation of the Witch and Saul when Samuel came up from the ground at midnight. Awful and blood-curdling were the words of doom that the departed prophet uttered. But at Nain it was a scene of sunlight and restored life, and rejoicing hearts, and a happy multitude full of praises to Him who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Certainly the two places stand out in remarkable contrast.

From this point I pushed on over the country toward Lake Galilee. For miles we rode in a northeasterly direction over fields brown and bare and forsaken. The corn or grain had been gathered, the gleaners had disappeared, and the yellow stalks were left rustling in the wind.

The whole scene spoke powerfully of Christ. Beyond all question He had passed over these very fields many times in his journeys to and fro between Nazareth and Galilee, or while preach-

ing in the synagogues of all the towns and villages in the land.

But the land knew not the time of its visitation, and is now left desolate. The voice that spoke the word of eternal life over this country is heard no more ; the gracious presence is not here ; the glory is departed. The very cracks and fissures that seam these summer-baked fields, spell out the word "Ichabod !"



LAKE GALILEE

CHAPTER XXXV.

First View of Lake Galilee—Its Beauty and Loneliness—A Sail to Capernaum—The Ruined Synagogue—The Plain of Gennesareth—The Land of the East.

FROM the heights back of Tiberias I obtained my first view of Lake Galilee. The sudden vision was that of a blue sheet of water surrounded by yellow mountains, and with two snowy-white sails resting tranquilly on its bosom. The lake was hundreds of feet beneath me; and as the descent was slowly made down the mountain-side I was enabled to take in the whole familiar outline of this inland sea, so dear to every Christian heart, and so well-known to all in Christendom. There it lay before me and beneath me, thirteen miles in length, from five to seven in width, oval in shape, a protuberance of coast line on the upper western side; Mt. Hermon lifting up its head, thirty or forty miles away, over its northern edge; while, to the south, the two lines of the eastern and western shore contracted to form the banks of the Jordan. The yellow surrounding mountains have no forests upon them; only an occasional cedar or acacia here and there, looking

like black specks in the distance. The eye eagerly searches for and finds the site of Capernaum on the far-away northern shore, the plain of Genesareth on the west, and the "steep place" on the east bank, down which the swine rushed into the sea. Then the glance is directed toward the northeastern part of the shore, where Christ fed the multitudes, and last the mountains looked for in that neighborhood, where the Savior, from his place of prayer, observed the disciples in the storm, and came walking to them on the waves of the sea.

Many are the precious and holy memories that cluster about these sacred and now silent shores. Next to Jerusalem, I suppose, this place ranks highest in the spiritual heart.

I noticed but two boats on a lake that was once dotted with shipping. And of all the cities that once shone by day and twinkled by night around these banks, but one small town is left to-day. This one exception is Tiberias. It was a Gentile community in the time of the Savior, and He seems never to have entered it. Consequently they never rejected Him, and were thus saved from the doom or judgment that has fallen upon all other cities of this lake shore, and that seems, in its awfulness, to have settled upon the entire coast itself. It is true that Magdala, the reputed home of Mary Magdalene, is pointed out; but, on approaching it, such is the wretchedness of its

stone hovels that you feel it scarcely deserves the name even of village.

No homes are seen on the shores of Galilee ; no farms or vineyards are beheld on the mountain-sides ; no home-loving and land-improving inhabitants dwell on the banks. Only a few tribes of Bedouins, living in black-skin tents, and wandering from place to place, appear at wide distances on the shore, or camp some miles back in the interior.

Everything seems to go by Lake Galilee. The caravans of camels come and go in long lines, journeying north or south ; but they do not stop on these lonely shores. The traveler makes a flying visit ; capital goes by ; individuals seeking homes pass on to less solitary places. The Jordan itself rushes through the center of the lake without touching the shore, and hurries on southward as if escaping from the heart-moving associations and memories of the place.

Last night, in looking from my tent over the lake at the distant eastern shore, it was a scene of almost unrelieved blackness. I thought that if I had been thus gazing at the farther shore of Lake Geneva, or other bodies of water in Europe or America, I would have seen myriads of lights betokening comfortable homes and prosperous cities. But, as I looked across through the night toward the land of Gadara and the Gergesenes, I saw but two lights, that would gleam a moment and then

die out. Both of them may have come from the two boats of Tiberias engaged in night-fishing, or may have been the twinkling camp-fires of a Bedouin tent on the side of the rocks.

No one can contemplate these silent, forsaken shores, and take in the spirit of the surroundings, without feeling that some remarkable dealing has been and is still visited on this land. It was once exalted to heaven ; it has been cast down to hell. It knew not the time of its visitation ; its house is now left desolate. It refused to receive the Son of God, and the hand of judgment has fallen heavily and unmistakably upon it.

And yet Lake Galilee is beautiful in spite of its loneliness and desolation. It is still lovely in its forsakenness, and beautiful still in this death-like trance into which it has fallen. Galilee and Bethany seem to have been best beloved by the Savior. His feet turned oftenest to the village near Olivet, and to the shores of this lake. This was done partly because of the loving hearts He found in both places, but also because He loved the peaceful, tranquil beauty of this blue inland sea.

All the evening and night the strain and words of a Sunday-school song have been floating through my mind—a hymn familiar to countless thousands in far-away America :

“ O Galilee, sweet Galilee,
Where Jesus loved so much to be.”

My tent is pitched outside the north wall of Tiberias, on the banks of the lake. I am fully one hundred feet above the lake surface, and could cast from my tent-door, a rock into the waves. Standing at this same tent-door, or sitting before it, I have the whole outline and face of this beautiful inland sea before me.

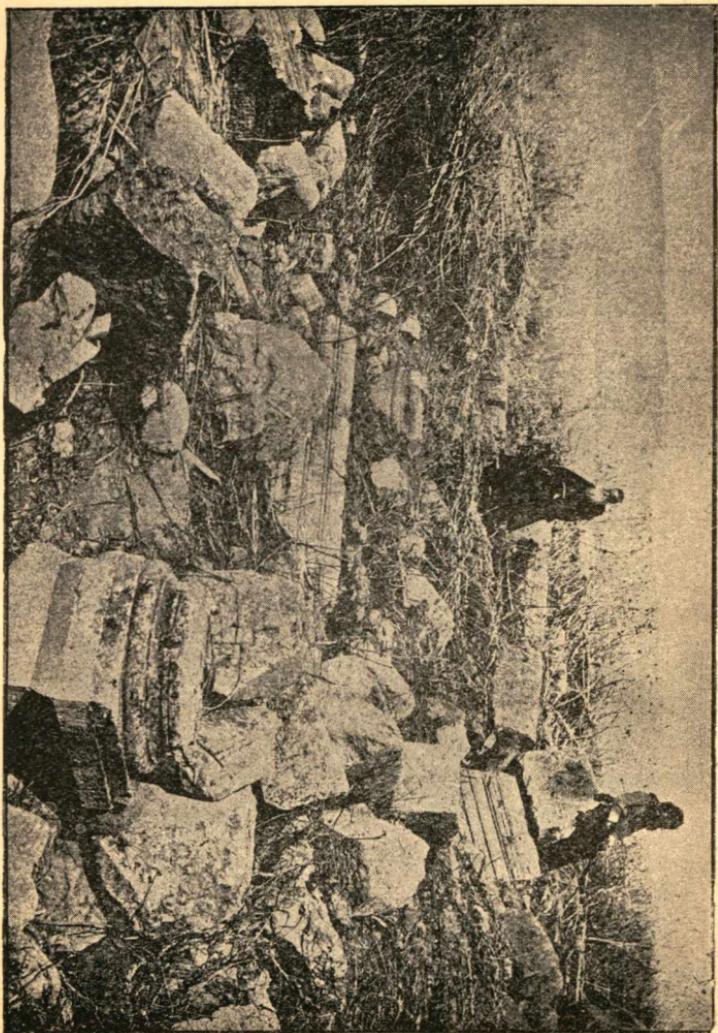
Last night I watched it as it slept under the stars, and at 10 o'clock I saw the moon arise over the distant mountains, and turn a lake of purple into a lake of silver. This morning I beheld the sun rise upon it, and in this new spectacle saw fresh charms spring up to greet the sight and gratify the love of the beautiful. But better and higher than all was the thought of Him whose voice was once heard amid its storms, whose feet pressed its waves as a pavement, and whose tired head and body were lulled into repose by its billows. He, the loving, wonderful Christ, has given it a beauty diviner far than all its natural loveliness, and that will remain an imperishable treasure in memory when the lake itself is dried up forever by the fires of the last day.

Hiring a sail-boat, I left Tiberias for the ruins of Capernaum at seven in the morning. Passing Magdala and the plain of Gennesareth on the left, we reached Capernaum at ten o'clock, after three hours' rowing and sailing together. There were six boatmen forming the crew of the little vessel. After careful scrutiny, I could not dis-

cover among these native Syrians a single one whom I thought would answer for a Peter or John, or, indeed, any of the disciples. But when, on our return trip, one of the men fell asleep from weariness and lay on the floor of the vessel, I thought then of One whom the reader needs not for me to name. That must have been a profound exhaustion that enabled the Savior to sleep on undisturbed by a storm. Either the day had been one of great toil, or the night previous had been spent in unintermitting prayer, as was often His custom. The sleep on the hard deck was the consequence. This picture of the sleeping Christ, and another of His sitting wearied on the side of the well in Samaria, have always touched my heart with tender power.

And what shall I say of Capernaum? As I stood in the midst of the ruins of a city that evidently once possessed a population of ten thousand people, we saw that the words of the Master had been fulfilled. It has been brought down to the grave. I never saw completer desolation. In various places of antiquity that I have visited, I would see portions of walls left, or here and there a standing pillar or arch; but in Capernaum every stone seems to be on the ground and scattered in the wildest confusion. The material out of which the houses were built are stones of volcanic origin, and of a color bordering on black, and so adds to the somberness of the scene. Standing on a hil-

RUINS OF CAPERNAVUM



lock of rocks made by Bedouins, I surveyed the ruined town whose streets Christ walked, and in whose synagogue he preached, and where the sick and afflicted were healed by Him in great multitudes. A city that could withstand such grace and privilege and heavenly power deserved to be swept away, and—was. The ruins extend several hundred yards along the seashore and back for the same distance, and even up the slope of the mountain in one place.

Fifty yards from the seashore, on a swell of the land, are the ruins of a synagogue or church, that has interested all travelers and readers of travels. Here are pedestals, and heavy-carved cornices, and Corinthian capitals of marble, and portions of pillars all scattered about over a space, and with a certain outline that betokens a place of worship. Was it the synagogue that the centurion built for the Jews, and in which Christ preached, or is it a church of a later day, built on the ruins, and with the ruins of the synagogue of Christ's time? Arguments which I read some time ago predispose me to believe that these white, crumbling remains are what is left of the gift of the centurion, the wealthy friend of the Jews. I sat down on one of the pedestals and read the sixth chapter of John, which contains the sermon preached by our Lord on this spot or somewhere very near. Finishing the discourse, I turned to the eleventh chapter of Matthew, and twenty-

third verse, and read the prophetic words of the Savior, spoken when the city was at the height of its prosperity: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell." O, would not infidelity rejoice if Capernaum was flourishing to-day! The skeptic would point to it and say: "Where is the boasted prophecy, where is the foreknowledge of the Savior?" As it is, the rocks are witnesses. The ruins confirm the Word. The very stones cry out in honor of the saying of the Son of God.

In rowing and sailing back to Tiberias, the boat stood in nearer the shore, so as to skirt the edge of the plain of Gennesareth. Once beautiful and fertile and populous, and witnessing the presence of Christ and His disciples, it has been favored above all other plains. It is still naturally beautiful, and the fertility is left, but the population is gone; and He who was the chiefest charm and glory, has been gone for nearly two thousand years. As the boat went slowly by the sacred place, I had a vision of the time it was covered with waving corn, breast-high in height, with the Master and His followers walking over its quiet fields; or treading the grain-fringed paths, visiting distant villages; or speaking to the multitudes that accompanied Him on the way. The whole plain—as, indeed, the entire land of Galilee—speaks most eloquently of the Savior. I failed to see a single soul anywhere on the plain. It is at

present cultivated in spots, and that cultivation is of a poor and superficial order. A green shrub, growing from five feet upward, dots the baked ground in every direction, and adds to the forsaken air of the place.

As we approached Magdala, a solitary shepherd, attended by a large flock of sheep and goats, descended the steep mountain-side back of it, and entered some distance into the clear waves of the lake. Even this spectacle of life somehow did not take away the loneliness of the shore.

I was informed that a Christian gentleman, the same who has purchased much of the plain of Esdraelon, has bought the site of Capernaum, and, I think, a part of the plain of Gennesareth. For the first time, it seems that the Bedouin sheiks, who are getting poorer, show a disposition to part with the land. If this continues, it may result in a marked change in this country in the near future.

Sitting in front of my tent in the evening, near the hour of sunset, I was looking over toward the mountains on the opposite shore, when I remembered that I was looking in the direction of "the land of the people of the East." This is what the Bible called them. This is where Jacob went when his mother caused him to flee from Esau. "And when he came to the land of the people of the East," he came upon scenes and flocks and herds, shepherds and fair women, dripping wells,

spreading fields, and beautiful landscapes. Then I remembered still further beyond there is another Eastern land, filled with roving Bedouins, and shepherds with flocks, and turbaned millions who believe in the false prophet and know not the Lord. And the glance and thought swept on to those old Eastern countries of shadowy palms and dome-like mosques and slender minarets. I saw the turbaned men on the road, the veiled women at the well, the silent caravan threading the desert. Farther back still I saw the Eastern countries where Abraham lived, the ark rested, and Eden smiled. Still further on I saw, from my tent, the slopes of Persia, the steppes of Asia, the wild wastes of Siberia, and on through the heart of that vast land of the East, until we reached the Chinese Wall and came in sight of the Pacific, and, behold! the whole land was filled with people of the East.

What is to become of them? I mentally asked. What can we do for them? What is being done for them? I wondered if the people in America realized how much we are indebted to these people. Out of this land of the East came such a grand character as Abraham, and such lovely women as Sarah and Rachel. Out of this country came the four great religions of the world. Certainly they are not to be despised.

I cannot explain, but as I looked over the eastern mountains that evening I had such a mental

view of that far-away land, or lands, filled with teeming life, crowded with immortal souls unreached and unsaved, that my heart fairly sickened, and sunk under the sight. The Lord save the people of the land of the East! May all the people say amen! and may ten thousand thousand men and women of the church cry out: "Here am I, Lord, send me with the news of salvation to that goodly distant land."

I camped two nights and a day by Lake Galilee, and then one morning at sunrise struck tent, and departed in a southwesterly direction, turning many a longing, lingering look behind.

"O, Galilee, blest Galilee,
Come sing thy song again to me."*

*I herewith attach to this chapter the words of the beautiful hymn quoted above. Most of my readers are familiar with the melody in the *New Life*; but there is another air to the same words that is far lovelier. I first heard it sung by a band of men and women one night on the streets of Liverpool, and many times since in Centenary Church in St. Louis. For plain-tiveness and tender power I have never heard it surpassed. It is to be found in *Temple Themes*, page 75.

MEMORIES OF GALILEE.

Each cooing dove and sighing bough,
That makes the eve so blest to me,
Has something far diviner now,
It bears me back to Galilee.

Each flowery glen and mossy dell,
Where happy birds in song agree,
Thro' sunny morn the praises tell
Of sights and sounds in Galilee.

And when I read the thrilling lore
Of Him who walked upon the sea,
I long, oh, how I long once more
To follow Him in Galilee.

CHORUS.

O, Galilee ! sweet Galilee !
Where Jesus loved so much to be ;
O Galilee ! blue Galilee !
Come sing thy song again to me .

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Mount of Beatitudes—A Natural Auditorium on the Summit--
A Sparrow's Reply—Mt. Tabor—Greek Monastery—Cana of
Galilee—The Miracle of the Water made Wine—The Fountain.

THE Mount of Beatitudes is two or three miles northwest of Tiberias. On reaching the foot of the sacred eminence, I dismounted, left my dragoman, and ascended alone. I found a plateau at the summit, and, rising from either end, a peak. These peaks are separated from each other about three hundred yards. Because of the jutting points the mount has received the name of Horns of Hattin. The southern peak is the loftiest by thirty or forty feet. From the northern edge of the plateau summit, and from the east and west sides as well, there is a gentle fall or slope in the ground to a point at the base of the southern peak, making a most remarkable auditorium on the top of the mountain. Some ten or fifteen feet up the side of the southern eminence, and facing the natural auditorium just described, is a ledge of rock on which the Savior could have sat with His disciples about Him and addressed with ease far

more than four thousand men besides women and children.

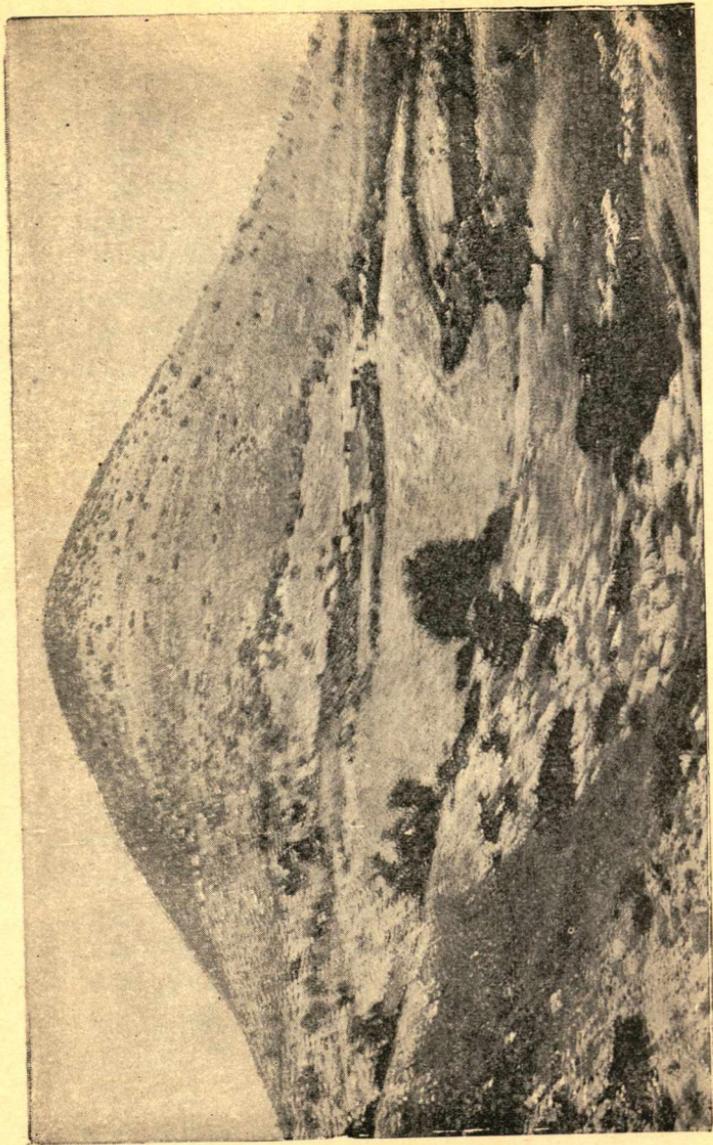
I was deeply impressed with the natural advantages of the place, that fitted it for just **such** a purpose as is mentioned in the Gospel.

The mount is not lofty ; it could easily be ascended by young and old ; it was in the time of the Savior in the midst of a populous region ; it was not far from the lake-shore with its cities, and yet it was retired, and, as I have mentioned, afforded sitting-room for thousands, and where all in the audience could see the face of the Divine Speaker.

Such a location in America would instantly be seized upon as a place for public gatherings ; and happy would be that camp-ground association that could possess such a spot.

Here was delivered the grandest sermon that was ever uttered. A sermon from which all other sermons are taken. One that grows on the world more and more as it is read and pondered over. A sermon that has within it the solution of every earthly problem and difficulty, and is destined to straighten out the world's crookedness, and is the new law that is to make this earth a paradise.

And yet how quietly this wondrous discourse was spoken. No platform walking around, no display of rhetoric, no forensic fury, but, as the Bible says, "And when He was set He opened His mouth and taught them."



MT. TABOR

May either common sense or a kind providence save us, who are the ministers of Christ, from all cant and rant and everything like snort and cavort in the pulpit.

I repeated aloud some precious passages from the fifth chapter of Matthew in this lonely secluded spot, and was answered by the chirp of a sparrow in a neighboring bush. Its little song interpreted was: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and yet not one falleth to the ground without your Father."

Thus it is impossible to get away from the thought of Christ in Galilee. The mountains are granite sentences of the past that keep on telling about Him, and the sparrows twittering at their base and by the highway, will not let you forget the Divine Teacher who mentioned them in His sermons.

The Preacher of that day on whose lips the multitude hung has gone, and is now King of the Universe; and the multitude is likewise gone. God grant that they did not hear His words in vain, and are now with Him forever.

Mt. Tabor is seven miles southwest of the Mount of Beatitudes. Its imposing form can be seen all over the country. It is, indeed, an "high mountain." We rode toward it over the fields and hillsides without regard to the road, save where it ran according to our pleasure in a straight direction. The mountain is two thousand feet high.

and has the form almost of a truncated cone. It is situated rather on the side of a plain four miles wide. The ascent was steep and required almost an hour, though the trip was performed on horse-back. From the summit I obtained an extensive and beautiful view. The plain of Esdraelon in the south, and spreading out east and west, is a spectacle of loveliness. Mt. Hermon is seen in the north, Mt. Carmel in the west, and ranges of mountains on all sides. The north and west sides of Mt. Tabor are covered with oak-trees, and for miles in a like direction the same strange spectacle of sylvan beauty is beheld. It seems as if a remnant of the old wooded loveliness of Canaan, as God had given it to His people, was left as a sample or expression of the past. I trust it may be the blossom of what is to come again in the Restoration when Israel shall turn unto the Lord.

A Greek monastery with twenty men as inmates crowns the summit of the mountain. To the question, Why do you have so many men in this lonely place, the reply was: "To keep the holy place!"

The men, or "Brothers," whom I saw were neither intellectual nor spiritual-looking. I scarcely ever met on the back streets of a city, or in the swamps of the Mississippi a rougher looking set of men. Cut off from the softening, enlightening, and up-lifting influence that comes from mingling with the human kind in domestic,

social, and religious lines, their appearance shows the result of their mistaken and unblessed isolation.

Whether Mt. Tabor is the scene of the Transfiguration is still an open question. Two other places contend for the sacred honor: Mt. Hermon in the north, and Little Hermon near by. The last is easily disposed of by the words, "He went up into an *high* mountain." Little Hermon is not lofty. While Great Hermon's long distance, exceeding height, and snow-covered top seem to exclude it from the list. Mt. Tabor, according to this, would be left with the victorious claim.

The point, however, has been made, that buildings were on the summit in the time of Christ, and that this fact would have prevented its selection as the place of Transfiguration. So the battle rages over this site as it does over every holy place in Palestine.

It is well, however, to remember that the statement in regard to the top of Mt. Tabor being covered with buildings comes from Josephus. The reader is aware, that there is that about the writings of that remarkable Jew that inclines one to think that he had either associated with or was distantly related to Ananias and Sapphira.

From the central position, noble form, and secluded and lofty summit of Mt. Tabor, one is inclined to regard this as the scene of Christ's glo-

rification, but on the other hand there are mountains in the neighborhood of Lake Galilee that could be called high, and where the occurrence could undoubtedly have taken place.

Cana of Galilee is situated upon the slope of a gentle eminence in a plain-like valley. It is three or four miles north of Nazareth. Here Christ first showed forth His divine power. This miracle created much remark at the time, and has inspired a great deal more since then. Perhaps no other work of the Savior has occasioned as much controversy of tongue and pen as this miracle of turning the water into wine. The intemperate man and saloon-keeper beholding it with perverted vision, quote the passage with glee, while the Christian, recognizing the deeper meaning of the transaction, explains, interprets, and defends. I am struck with the fact, however, that our Lord did not voluntarily do the work. It was done after repeated urging. There may have been more in His evident rebuke of His mother than at first sight appears, and when He finally gave the wine, it may have been on the same principle observed in the wilderness with the Israelites, when, as the Word says, "He gave them the request of their lips, but sent leanness unto their souls." It is really worthy of remark that we hear nothing more of Cana after this time. It was left to its wine-drinking, and marrying, and giving in marriage. I felt little interest in the

church built over the place where the inventive and imaginative Latin Church says the wedding took place ; hence I did not enter. Asking my dragoman how the Catholics knew this was the site, he replied that they had found one of the water-jars near by that was used on that occasion!!!

Somebody did some smiling just about that time of day.

With greater faith I drank of the fountain at the edge of the village. Quite a number of females were filling their water-jars at its stone mouth. A young woman somewhat brusquely refused to grant my dragoman and myself a drink from her vessel. An old woman was kinder, and lowering the jar, quenched my thirst after the manner that Rebecca watered Eliezer. For the courtesy, I laid in her hand a broad piece of silver, and at once saw that the young woman had received a practical lesson on the profitableness of politeness that she will not soon forget.

I found that the water from the famous fountain was neither remarkable for coolness nor excellence. The ordinary becomes extraordinary only under the touch of Christ, and when His hand is removed, it goes back into insignificance. When will we ever learn that truth ?

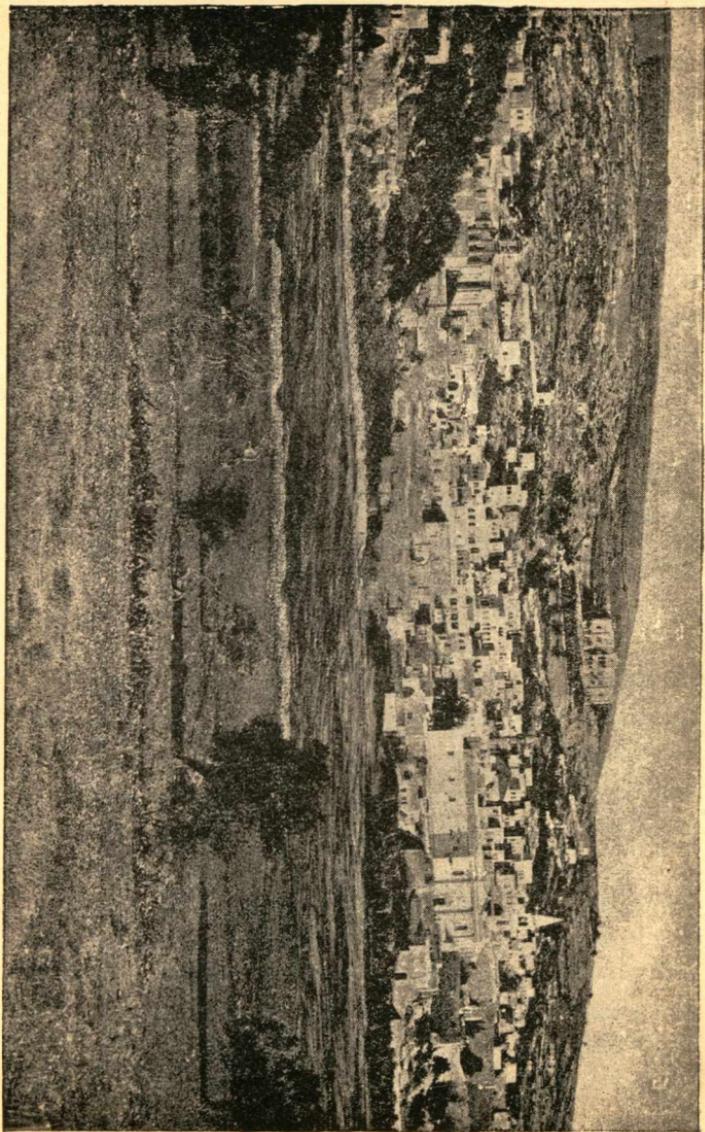
CHAPTER XXXVII.

Nazareth—The Abode of Divinity—View From the Hill—A Place the Savior Often Visited—The Steep Place—The Fountain of the Virgin—The Church of the Annunciation—Ecclesiastical Whining—Service at the English Church.

Most travelers come to Nazareth along the southern road, but I approached it on the northwest, and had my first view of it from the hills in the rear. I found my tent pitched on a little green, back of the church of Annunciation where they say Gabriel announced to Mary her coming high honor, and near the fountain called Mary's Well. Here we spent Saturday afternoon, and rested the Sabbath-day.

Nazareth is in a valley and is entirely surrounded by lofty hills, or mountains as they are called here. The town is built well on the slope of the hill, and faces south, but as new buildings are going up, the place is gradually assuming the form of a crescent. The population is now five or six thousand, but in Christ's time it was a small and insignificant village. The thought that the Son of God spent thirty years of His life in this quiet, secluded spot is simply overpowering to the mind.

NAZARETH



“Is not this the carpenter’s son?” they said. So He labored here as well as lived in this place.

As I walk these streets, look down on the town from the hills, and pore over the natural features of the landscape, I can with difficulty grasp the wonderful truth that one of the persons of the Trinity abided here in the flesh for over a quarter of a century. Here the everlasting Son, equal to the Father, submitted to the surroundings and personal discomforts of bitter poverty. Here He dwelt in an humble house, toiling hard all day and eating the simplest of fare. Here the High and Holy One lived amid lowing cattle, barking dogs, toiling camels and donkeys, and crying children. Here He beheld the daily petty strifes of the village, and heard the Babel of their empty disputes and shallow conversation.

I found that reason fairly staggered under the thought of these things ; but faith like a Samson in the heart held up the amazing structure of the Incarnation, while the heart cried out again and again : O my God ! my God ! what love and condescension is this !

Early Sabbath morning, before divine service, I walked up the steep hill back of the town and from the summit overlooked Nazareth and the vast sweep of country that stretches out in every direction. The blue line of the Mediterranean Sea is seen in the west. In the same quarter the long, ponderous form of Mt. Carmel projects far

into the sea, as if it meditated a plunge into the waves and a departure from Palestine. You remember, as you gaze upon the noble form and broad slope of the mountain, that upon its summit fell the fire in answer to Elijah's prayer and faith, and that at its base hundreds of the false prophets were slain. It was from the top of this same mountain that the cloud no larger than a man's hand was seen far out over yonder sea. On this mountain also Elisha dwelt; and from its lofty side he saw the Shunemite woman coming over the plain of Jezreel toward him, so that he said to his servant: "Run and meet her, and say: 'Is it well with thee?'"

In the south is the Plain of Esdraelon, and the mountains of Samaria. In the east is Mt. Tabor, and far in the distance, beyond the River Jordan, ranges of mountains. In the north, beyond Lake Galilee, Mt. Hermon lifts its head high into the clouds to keep watch over half of the Holy Land.

Look where you will from this lofty hill back of Nazareth and the eye is charmed, the memory refreshed, and the soul stirred by the beautiful and noble prospect.

That the Savior often visited this spot, I have no doubt. Any meditative and spiritual mind, or even lover of nature would be drawn here, and that frequently. Much more would he seek this retired and lonely place, who so often sought the midnight mountain during His active ministry

for meditation and prayer. In the days of His thoughtful childhood, and youth, and when the full-orbed powers of manhood came, I doubt not that this very spot beheld his form countless numbers of times. Often He stood here and looked upon this very scene, and brooded over the land and His coming life-work. Often after the day's work was ended, I question not, He ascended to this place and held communion with His Father, and then from the converse of heaven would descend again to the lispings and limitations of human language in the town below.

There is confusion and dispute about the hill and steep place down which the citizens of Nazareth tried to hurl the Savior after His sermon in the synagogue. The spot that tradition points out is a mile or more south of the town. I walked to it, and, as I looked down the craggy precipice to the rocks below, felt that this would certainly be the place if Nazareth was only nearer. The question arises, would the inhabitants have led Him thus far. Men in blind rage, as they were, would hardly tarry so long to wreak their vengeance upon a victim.

The Gospel says, "They thrust Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong." The middle sentence of the verse caused me to walk for a couple of hours on the lofty summit of the hill back of Nazareth. I

saw two places which could have answered the dark purpose of the Nazarenes. Doubtless two thousand years ago there were much sharper declivities than we see to-day; but the building and grading and cultivation going on to the very hill-top for many centuries have had a marked effect on the topography of the mountain, and, perhaps, designedly so by Providence.

It is remarkable that the verse quoted can be made to agree with either one of the places in dispute. For even the precipice so distant from the present town is a part of the range of mountains on which Nazareth is built.

What a scene that attempted murder was to the Virgin Mother. Prophecy uttered thirty years before began to be fulfilled: "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul." The first stab was given that day.

They thrust Him out of the city. It seemed settled from the first that He should suffer and die "without the gate."

The fountain is a place of great interest. It is the only one in the corporate limits of Nazareth. Whither the women of the poorer classes come with their water-jars. The rich have their cisterns, but the poor are dependent for all the water they use upon this fountain. The little stone square in front is crowded with females all day, and, I am told, all through the night as well. The water issues in two small streams the size of

the finger, and so the pitcher filling is a slow process and the crowd accumulates. Two men, the one a Christian and the other a Mohammedan, are stationed at the place and issue numbered tickets to the women as they arrive. This is to prevent confusion and strife ; and yet even with this precaution there is considerable clash and clamor of feminine tongues.

As I looked at the large group of maidens and married women standing or sitting by their water-jars awaiting their turn, my first thought was that any man who would drive an artesian well at this place would be a benefactor. On second thought I came to a different conclusion. I soon saw that the enforced waiting gave an half hour for friends and acquaintances to exchange salutations, courtesies, and tidings. Besides this it gives the hard-worked Syrian girl or matron a little time for rest. He who has beheld their toiling lives will say, let no artesian well be bored, let them continue to wait at the fountain, and, as they wait, to rest.

To the traveler the scene is both animated and attractive. And as he watches the dark-eyed, sunburnt belles of the village walk off chatting and laughing, with an immense water-jar poised gracefully upon the head, a scriptural painting over three thousand years old is hung up suddenly before his eyes, and he adds another to his collection of oriental pictures.

Here, I doubt not, the Virgin Mother came daily, and with her the wondrous Child whose thoughtful face and deep, far-away eyes caused many a remark around the fountain by which we stand to-day.

I stepped a moment into the Church of the Annunciation Sunday morning to notice the worship, and to see upon what spiritual diet the people were fed. There was the usual row of candles, and the usual small, ragged, and unclean looking crowd. Two men were doing all the work ecclesiastical, separated from each other by a thin partition. They were reading alternately some unintelligible liturgy, and sending the words through their noses with the rapidity of a kettle-drum and the force of a catapult. Such nasality I never heard equalled before. It reminded me of two immense blue-bottle flies caught in a gigantic window-pane, and alternately trying to escape.

All this was done where tradition says the angel Gabriel announced to Mary, that she was to become the mother of the Savior of the world.

The contrast instituted by the mind between the natural tones and beautiful simplicity of language of the angel and the virgin, and the perfect verbal tomfoolery of the scene before me was simply tremendous.

I attended service at the English Church. It was held in Arabic, but, nevertheless, did me good. The very sound of the Gospel helps the

soul. The minister had a tired look that greatly touched me. He had a cord or wrinkle of nervousness that ran up the center of his forehead while he preached. Such a cord is equal in effect to a range of mountains in keeping people out of the Rest of Christ. If a man would win a congregation from the toil, bondage and sadness of the worldly life to the spiritual life, he must have a smooth brow, and something in the face and voice that speaks of twelve wells and seventy palm-trees, or better still, of a land flowing with milk and honey, and white-robed people resting under trees of life by the side of a calmly flowing river of life. One hymn sung was, "Just as I am." The natives around me sung in Arabic, while I sang in English the beautiful words. Surely there could be no sweeter nor more appropriate piece sung in this place, where lived the Lamb of God, than the hymn I have just mentioned.

It is a gracious experience, and one never to be forgotten, to worship in Nazareth where dwelt the Lord and Savior for thirty years. Whether you sit in the church, or walk the streets, or look down on Nazareth from the hills, the one uppermost and amazed thought all the time is, that the Son of God lived in this place for thirty years! The words "for thirty years" follow you wherever you go.

We sometimes wish for a sentence to express an act of astonishing condescension. And often

we have desired a phrase in which could be crowded the fact and spirit of an infinite patience. I herewith offer the long desired sentence to the reader: "The Son of God dwelt in the village of Nazareth for thirty years!"