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MEDITERRANEUM

MARE SYRIACUM

TERRA SANCTA
quae in Sacris
Terra Promissionis *olim*
PALESTINA

Amstelodami
ex officina Guilielmi Blaeuw 1629

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EAST AND WEST OF JORDAN

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EAST AND WEST OF JORDAN

By

ALBERT FIELD GILMORE
Litt. D.

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1929





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TO OUR FRIENDS OF THE AMERICAN COLONY,
WHOSE FINE HOSPITALITY AND WISE TUTELAGE
GREATLY ENHANCED BOTH THE JOY AND PROFIT
OF A SEASON IN THE HOLY LAND, THIS VOLUME
IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED

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Foreword

THE chapters of this book for the most part appeared in the columns of *The Christian Science Monitor* and, accordingly, are published through the courteous permission of The Christian Science Publishing Society.

The book purports to relate the experience of the author and to record somewhat of the varied impressions received by him during a visit to Palestine, Syria, and Egypt in the spring of 1927. No effort is made to include a comprehensive review of Biblical history, but rather the author's purpose is to recall by brief reference many of the important events which make that country for a considerable proportion of the earth's inhabitants a veritable Holy Land. Attention is briefly given to the industrial, commercial, and sociological aspects of the country, together with a survey of the Zionist movement.

Life in Palestine is undergoing a great change which, while not rapid, yet is so far-reaching that in the end it will work important improvements among a curiously mixed population. The departure of the Turk following Allenby's victory and the taking over of the government by England under a mandate from the League of Nations are two events which, above all others, may be looked to as forecasting great changes for the better in the lives of the strangely benighted masses of the inhabitants. The Zionist

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EAST AND WEST OF JORDAN

CHAPTER I

Our Approach

THE present-day traveler to the Holy Land has a choice of routes. The approach by sea may be made through Jaffa, ancient Joppa, where passengers are still landed through the surf; or, by way of Haifa, another coast town some fifty miles to the north, snuggled under the seaward shoulder of Mt. Carmel. If he prefer to approach by land, he may come down by rail from the north by way of Aleppo and Damascus through Beisan, ancient Bethshan, a town only a short distance below Lake Galilee; or, he may follow our example by taking the route by railway across the Suez Canal and the Arabian desert, which the English army under Allenby constructed for the invasion of Palestine during the great war.

In its sacred history the Holy Land has a direct relationship with Egypt which is more intimate than the casual traveler recognizes. Not only did the Israelites serve the Pharaohs of Egypt as slaves for a long period, but it was from the fertile Nile Valley that the brothers of Joseph procured the supply of corn which kept the people of Israel from starvation in the long period of famine which followed the seven full years.

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Moreover, it was into this land that another Joseph came with Mary and the infant Jesus, to escape the slaughter of children ordered by the cruel Herod, when he heard of the birth of a child who was to become king. Accordingly, for other reasons than the closely interwoven secular history of Egypt and Palestine, history filled with accounts of wars and strife, it seems highly fitting that this ancient land should be a halting place on a pilgrimage to Palestine.

At the close of our sojourn in Egypt, we left Cairo at six o'clock on the evening of a late March day and rode for two hours through the luxuriant cultivation of the Nile Delta. After skirting the old canals with their freight boats, the typical nuggar, with incredibly tall mast and huge lateen sails, tied up for the night, in huddled groups against the banks, the railway turning eastward, enters the desert stretching away in what seem interminable miles to the East. Through the long twilight until darkness shut it out, we watched the scene, fascinating, no less for its marvelous color than for its strangeness to our western eyes. Darkness had settled when we reached Kantara West, the crossing place of the Suez Canal, and we left the train amid a jumble of baggage and passengers from many lands, Arabs in picturesque costumes, dragomans, runners for hotels and travel bureaus, and the motley throng of nondescript natives of many races and with a Babel of tongues, which always gathers about a station or port in the East.

We had looked forward somewhat eagerly to a

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view of the famous waterway which for more than a half century has played so large a part in the commercial history of the world, and we felt keen disappointment that our crossing was to be by night. But as it turned out we could scarcely have had a better illustration of the valuable service the canal renders to sea-borne traffic than was presented to our curious eyes. As we approached the little ferry which plies across the hundred feet of waterway, a huge liner bound from England to Australia moved majestically by, its cabins and decks aglow with myriad lights. It was a thrilling scene, perfect exemplification, we declared, of the practical usefulness of the "ditch through the desert." The liner gone, we quickly crossed to our waiting train on the east bank, and after passing English customs, were at last on our way to the goal of our great desire.

Kantara, which in the Arabic signifies bridge, stands beside the camel trail which for untold ages has been traversed by caravans to and fro between Egypt, Palestine and the East. By this route, tradition holds, came Abraham and Isaac into Egypt; and it seems equally probable that over this road passed the Holy Family, bent upon escaping Herod's wrath. In a suburb of Cairo, we had visited the cave beneath the ancient Coptic Church, which it is said sheltered the little group during their sojourn in Egypt; and now it seemed we had located the course of their journey from Bethlehem. The route from Kantara to El Arish, a station near the border between Egypt and Palestine,

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has been termed "the way of the Philistines," so often did those troublers of Israel pass over it.

Thrilled as we were with thoughts of the historical significance of the country we were traversing, sleep was light and with the first gleam of day, we were again looking out upon the desert which in the course of an hour after daybreak gave way to the green of Palestine, the plains of Sharon, where of old the Philistines so often contested for supremacy with the Children of Israel.

In the early morning we had passed through Gaza, rendezvous for the camel trains which thread the desert in many directions, leading away into the mysterious East. Gaza is the site of many stirring incidents of Biblical history, and the center of the Samson traditions. It was there that the blinded giant, with strength restored, worked his great revenge by pulling down the temple upon the heads of his tormentors. The train also passes Ashdod where the Philistines for a time held the Ark of the Covenant which they had captured from the Israelites, and whence they sent it away in superstitious fear, inspired by the belief that its presence had brought plagues upon them.

The inhabitants of Ashdod joined Sanballat in opposing Nehemiah in the rebuilding of Jerusalem: and hither Philip journeyed after baptizing the slave of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia. Ashdod was taken by the Assyrians in the seventh century B. C. and later was besieged by the Egyptians for twenty-nine years in what Herodotus calls the longest siege in history.

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Pulling in at Ludd, ancient Lydda, we waited for the train from Jaffa which was to bear us to Jerusalem. There we found ourselves in the midst of green fields, fenced by huge ricks of cactus, with groves of orange and fig trees, and in the distance the roofs of Jaffa showed plainly in the morning light.

And then we turned our faces toward Jerusalem. In a journey of scarcely more than twenty-five miles, the country rises from sea level to the plateau some twenty-five hundred feet in elevation upon which stands the ancient city.

As the train wound its upward course there passed in review in our thoughts the countless thousands who during the long centuries had made their way to the Holy City—the City of the Great King—Philistines upon conquest bent, constant troublers of Israel; Jews, scattered as by the winds of heaven to the four quarters of the earth, returning to their sacred places; Moslems, followers of the Prophet to whom the city of David has become a hallowed shrine, second in importance only to Mecca and Medina; Christian Crusaders in swarming hordes, to rescue the holy places from the unfaithful. Singly and in great multitudes they have come, in caravans and in armies, for pillage or as an act of faith, in the worship of their highest concept of Deity, be it the Jehovah of the Hebrew, the God of the Christian, or Allah of the faithful followers of Mohammed.

Leaving Ludd the road runs for some distance through the plain, then enters the hill country of the

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Shephelah, the foothills of the mountains which form the backbone of Palestine. Through winding valleys it proceeds, now threading deep gorges, wâdies with high gray hills of limestone on either side, but with an ascent so continuous that the little engine puffs laboriously as it makes the steep grades. About two miles from Ludd the train passes near the town of Ramleh, a word having the significance "sandy," which properly describes its surroundings. Some authorities claim that this is the site of Arimathea, the city of that Joseph who sought and bore away the body of Jesus after the crucifixion. The Crusaders came to Ramleh and there in 1102, Baldwin I was defeated by the Egyptians. In the succeeding years there was frequent conflict between the Crusaders and the Saracens under Saladin, and in 1211, King Richard of England took up quarters in the town. Ramleh continued in the hands of the Crusaders until 1226, when it again fell under the attacks by the followers of Mohammed. It remained under the flag of Islam during the intervening centuries until the English occupancy in 1917.

Akir, thought to be ancient Ekron, is the next village in importance. It was here the Ark was returned to the Israelites by the Philistines. Near this village is a prosperous Jewish colony, established by Baron Rothschild. Near at hand, also, are the ruins of Gezer, a city of the Canaanites, where King Horam was defeated by Joshua's army of Israelites. Some idea of the long and varied history of this old town may

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be gained from the results of recent explorations which have revealed remains of Arab, Christian, Roman, Maccabean, Jewish, Israelitish and Canaanite occupation. Many of the relics, it is said, date as far back as 3000 B. C.

The road runs up the Wâdi es Sarâ, the ancient vale of Sarek. This is the country of Samson and Delilah, and across the wâdi far up on the gray hillside is pointed out a cave where tradition says Samson was shorn of his abundant locks at the hands of the wily Delilah, losing at the same time his superhuman strength. In memory of the incident, the cave is now facetiously termed "Samson's barber shop." The country about is eloquent with Biblical interest. In this vicinity Samson devastated the harvest fields of the Philistines by tying fire brands to the tails of three hundred foxes which, released, fled in all directions, setting many fires as they ran.

Another town along our way is Beth Shemesh, later 'Ain Shems, now a deserted village which also figured in the return of the Ark of the Covenant by the Philistines. It was brought here from Ekron in a wagon drawn by two "milch kine" which passed "along the highway, lowing as they went" (I Sam. 6:7, 12).

Beyond Beth Shemesh the country becomes more mountainous and the ascent steeper. The station at Deir 'Abân lies a short distance from a village of the same name, also connected with the adventures of the Ark. Eusebius states that this was the site of Ebenezer where the Philistines captured that sacred relic.

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Near Jerusalem and well atop the plateau, lies the little town of Bittir, the Baither of Joshua, where occurred a great massacre of Jews after an ill-advised insurrection in the second century A. D. Ascending the Wâdi el-Wêrd (Valley of the Roses), several small towns are passed and as the valley of Rephaim is entered, through the trees is caught the first glimpse of Jerusalem, the new city, made up of large modern buildings on a hill to the north and west of the walled town. In a waiting motor we skirted the walls of the old city by the Jaffa Gate and, proceeding a mile to the north, were presently housed in the hospitable American colony, where were found both friendliness and comfort during all our stay in this most fascinating of all lands.

As the days passed, apart from the historic association of the two countries, we became increasingly grateful that our approach had been by way of Egypt, for during our sojourn there we had become somewhat accustomed to the workings of the oriental mind and to the ways of the East. Had we not in some degree been prepared by this experience, it seems that we might have been both shocked and depressed by the poverty and squalor of the masses in Palestine, especially of the Arabs. The ways of western life are so unlike the customs and habits of the Orient that but for due preparation the contrast might overwhelm to the point of shutting out the inherent beauty of the East, and turn one away in disgust. Western eyes are

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Lower road to Bethany—Garden of Gethsemane on the left

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unaccustomed to many sights, offensive to a degree, which one frequently encounters; and western sense of smell is quite unprepared for many of the odors with which it is frequently assailed, especially in the crowded streets of Jerusalem. So that our days spent in Egypt served the twofold purpose of affording opportunity to become acquainted at first hand, however slightly, with the wonders of that ancient land, and at the same time to prepare for the experiences of Palestine.

In Egypt we had also become somewhat accustomed to the beggars who at times swarmed about in distressing numbers, with a veritable babble of shouts for *baksheesh*. Most trying experience of all was when the children, some of them little tots scarcely able to walk, followed persistently, crying for alms. However generously disposed one may be, the constant begging is bound to become offensive; and, moreover, it interferes not a little with one's examination of the ancient shrines and places of compelling interest, where above all else one desires the opportunity for quiet contemplation. Conditions in Palestine have improved greatly under the English régime, but in some of the remote places about Jerusalem, especially in Bethany and in the vale of Siloam, the beggars still present a problem with which the traveler has to deal.

And so after a long journey and a visit to the hoary places of Egypt, we were settled at last in the heart of the Holy Land, eager to learn more of the most mo-

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mentous events in the world's history, to imbibe more of the spirit of the scenes where they had occurred. For all Christians are agreed that the life of Jesus Christ, sprung out of centuries of Judaism, is the most significant of all time.

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CHAPTER II

The Country and Its People

THE visitor to Palestine for the first time is likely to be surprised at the smallness of the country. Compared with the length, variety and importance of its history, which, it must be admitted, includes incidents of the most signal moment to mankind, it seems geographically insignificant. From "Dan to Beersheba," that is, from Hermon and the mountains of Lebanon which form its northern boundary, to the sandy plain, the Negeb, on the south, is scarcely more than one hundred and forty miles. The breadth of the country is no more impressive, for it can be covered by the eye at a glance. Standing on the high places of Judea or Samaria, in one turn of the head the vision sweeps from the Mediterranean, its western boundary, to the valley of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, which mark its eastern limit.

In area, Palestine, that is, the territory west of the Jordan, is slightly more than seven thousand square miles, approximately that of the state of New Hampshire. While its area is so inconsiderable, yet there is encompassed within its borders a diversity of topography and a consequent variety of climate probably not found in any other similar area in all the world. A low plain borders the Mediterranean for the entire length of the country, except where rugged Carmel

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reaches down to the shore. This plain varies in width from a few hundred yards to several miles. North of Jaffa it is the plain of Sharon, south, the plain of the Philistines. From this plain, traveling eastward, one passes into the Shephelah—rolling foothills interspersed with fertile valleys where stood many towns of importance. Above these rise the mountains of Judea, the southward extension of the Lebanon range which forms the backbone of the country. From an altitude of more than three thousand feet in the highlands of Judea, the country rapidly falls away to the east, in twenty miles descending more than four thousand feet to the Jordan and the Dead Sea. This strange "Sea of Salt" lies some thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean.

The mountain range to the north, in Samaria and Galilee, is even higher, Ebal, in Samaria, being three thousand and seventy-seven feet high, and Jermuk in Galilee, near Safed, rises to a height of nearly four thousand feet. To the south of Jerusalem, the range declines until below Hebron, the ancient capital, it runs out into the sandy desert of Edom, or Idumea. The main range which has many spurs running out to the east and west is broken in the north by the level plain of Esdraelon and the valley of Jezreel, extending entirely across Palestine from Haifa on the sea eastward to the Jordan River. This stretch of level plain has furnished a highway between Egypt and the sea, and Damascus and the East for untold centuries. If the pageantry which has come and gone over this sprawl-

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ing plain could pass in review what a marvelous cross-section of the world's history it would present!

The low-lying plains, foothills, mountains, and the unique Jordan Valley afford a wide range of climate and, in consequence, a most unusual diversity of plant and animal life. The climate of Jerusalem and the highlands is temperate, hot in summer, cold in winter, with an occasional fall of snow. The plain of Sharon and the vicinity of Galilee may well be classed as semi-tropical, a country of cactus and orange groves; while the Jordan Valley and the shores of the Dead Sea are definitely tropical. Tropical plants and trees thrive there, and in the thick jungle along the Jordan live animals like wild boars, leopards, hyenas and jackals, which are usually found in heated regions. The long hot summers are rainless, but during the winter, there are frequent rains with a generous fall in the aggregate, especially in the highlands and in the fertile plains where agriculture is successfully carried on. The sandy desert to the south, in the neighborhood of Beersheba, however, frequently suffers from severe drought.

In the year 1927, about the middle of April came the "latter rains" and the whole countryside about Jerusalem rejoiced, for this seasonable downpour insured the success of the year's crops of wheat and sesame. But we heard from the south that even the early rains had failed, that consequently the grain had not sprouted and forage for the herds was cut off. The government in a fine spirit of benevolence, transported

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flocks and people to the north where temporary pasture could be had until the rains of autumn and winter should again restore the grazing.

The rivers of Palestine are few, and most of these are dry in summer. The contour of the country makes long rivers impossible, except in the case of the Jordan, the course of which is most erratic. Its bed, below sea level throughout most of its course, is a fissure caused by a shift of strata of the earth in distant geologic time, resulting in a depressed valley extending from a short distance below Lake Huleh in the north, to the Dead Sea in the south, the lowest body of water on earth. The Jordan takes its rise amid the snows of Hermon. The streams from its three sources uniting, flow southward into Lake Huleh (waters of Merom), a shallow lake bordered by an extensive morass, covered with Egyptian papyrus growing in great luxuriance. This is the scene of Joshua's signal victory over the northern kings.

Leaving Huleh at approximately sea level, the Jordan, a rushing stream (Jordan signifies the downcomer), flows almost directly south into Lake Galilee, descending nearly seven hundred feet in the course of ten and a half miles. From the lower end of Galilee it emerges on its final course, still in haste because of the rapid descent of its bed. In the distance of sixty-five miles between Lake Galilee and the Dead Sea, it is so crooked that its actual length is more than two hundred miles before it empties its turgid tide into the "Sea of Salt."

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Apart from its historic and legendary importance, which is rivaled by few if any other rivers of the world, the Jordan because of its natural surroundings is always a center of interest. We crossed it in three places, by the Jisr Benât Y'-aqub, the "Bridge of the Daughter of Jacob," just below Lake Huleh where it is scarcely more than sixty feet wide, but rapid and brawling; at the outlet of Lake Galilee, where its rapid tide, more than one hundred feet wide, is clear and strong; and again at the Allenby bridge, opposite Jericho, where its waters are muddy because of contact with high banks of clay which border its flood plain. This crossing is near Gilgal, the traditional site of the passage of the Children of Israel, under the intrepid Joshua. Nearby is the place where pilgrims commonly bathe in the expectation of marvelous benefits. The ancient prophets make frequent mention of the "swelling of the Jordan," probably referring to the great strength of its tide, especially in time of flood.

Several streams make into the Jordan through its course. The chief of these are the Yarmuk and the Jabbok. The former, having its rise in the plains of Hauran, joins the Jordan a few miles below the Sea of Galilee; the Jabbok drains the mountains of Gilead, one branch of which supplies the distant town of Ammân with fresh water. As the Jordan in its course of a little more than sixty miles descends more than six hundred feet, its possibilities of development for hydro-electric power are great, and already a project for harnessing its waters is under way.

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The flood plain of the Jordan varies in width from three miles in the north to twelve in the south. It is for the most part fertile, except in the south where the saline character of the valley bottom lessens its fertility. Irrigation, however, will transform this plain into a fertile garden for the raising of a great variety of tropical products. Already in the vicinity of Jericho oranges of unusual delicacy of flavor, bananas, and tropical vegetables are grown in considerable quantity. Because of its warm climate, the lower valley of the Jordan is also becoming a favorite winter resort, and no doubt with the development of the country in prospect for the near future, it will have a considerable winter population. It seems, however, that the excessive heat of summer will preclude its becoming populous except during the winter season.

Of the many Biblical references to the Jordan, two stand out most prominently. One relates to the crossing of the Children of Israel under the leadership of Joshua, an outstanding event in the experience of those wilderness wanderers. It was their entrance into the Promised Land toward which, under the inspired leadership of Moses, they had struggled in the wilderness for forty years; the other, the baptism of the Master by John the Baptist, the occasion on which the "voice of the Lord" was heard to declare, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Palestine is a country of limestone. The mountains are largely calcareous, and, in consequence, caves abound. Traveling about the hills, one constantly

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River Jordan above the Allenby Bridge near Jericho

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comes upon caves varying from the size of a small room to spacious halls, large enough to house many people. Just back of the American colony, on the steep bank bordering the Kedron Valley is a large cave into which nightly we watched a shepherd lead his flock to the number of fifty or more, thus sheltering them from prowling jackals or sneaking hyenas which still infest the wilderness and come by night about the walls of the city. The shepherd had gathered enough of the tins of a well known oil company to form a barricade to keep the sheep inside, once they were folded.

Lot, we read, leaving Zoar in great fear, dwelt in a cave with his two daughters. Abraham buried Sarah in the cave of Machpelah, over which in ancient Hebron now stands a celebrated mosque. The Children of Israel, hard pressed by the Midianites, "made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds." When pursued by Saul, David retreated to a cave. When the Philistines were gathering on the plains of Rephaim, to David in the cave of Adullam came thirty of the chief men. In a cave in Bethany the body of Lazarus was laid, in the belief that it would be his final sepulchre.

One readily understands why from the geologic structure of the country, it was possible so often to utilize caves for shelter. But as commonly occurs in a limestone country, the water supply is a serious question. In the towns and throughout rural Palestine and Syria, the well or spring is still the center of

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interest for the community, the gathering place for the exchange of gossip and the friendly intercourse, which characterizes village life. Often a single fountain or well furnishes the water for the whole community, and to this well or spring come the women and children with water jars for the daily supply.

It is a scene of much animation when a score of Arab women gather by a well, sometimes very deep, and filling their picturesque water pots bear them homeward, majestically balanced on their heads. Women and children of the East thus carry all heavy burdens, and the weight they are able to bear is quite surprising. One day as we were lunching in a little tea house beside the road between Tyre and Sidon, our attention was attracted to a young girl not more than fifteen years of age, we judged, carrying on her head blocks of cement used in the construction of a wall. As they were too heavy for her to lift, a strong man placed upon her head the blocks, which she bore away, apparently with ease.

In only a few sections of Palestine, as in the plain of Gennesaret, do streams abound. Ample water supply is an urgent need, and with the utilization of the Jordan and other streams, as now planned, for purposes of irrigation, the agricultural output will be greatly increased.

The population of Palestine is more than eight hundred thousand, and includes representatives of many races and religions. The most numerous race are the Arabs, who including Syrians, number nearly

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six hundred thousand. The Jews have rapidly increased with the promotion of the Zionist movement, and now number more than one hundred thousand. There are several thousand Druses, and probably eighty thousand Christians of many races. Least of all in numbers are the Samaritans, less than two hundred, who still live in Nablous, and annually on Mt. Gerizim perform their ancient rites in the celebration of the Passover. The Arabs compose two groups, Bedouins, nomads who still live in tents of black goats' hair ("the tents of Kedar"), and the settled Arabs, mostly village dwellers, who live in houses of sun baked clay. Many farmers live in caves, preferring these natural habitations for their greater security. For the most part the Arabs are Moslems, although some of them are Christians,—descendants of those who embraced Christianity in the early centuries. On the eastern border, the line of transition between settled Arab and Bedouin is not clear, being frequently crossed by changes of habit.

The history of Palestine is scarcely less unique than its topography. Its beginnings are lost in the darkness of antiquity, and without doubt it was one of the earliest inhabited parts of the earth. Wheat was indigenous there; and it is even claimed by some authorities that it was native nowhere else. Beyond question, Palestine was one of the early homes of mankind,—perhaps the "Garden of Eden" itself. As an evidence of its antiquity the vast caves in the southwest, near the vale of Elah, are believed to have been the habita-

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tion of prehistoric races, which in time gave way before the Philistines, a sturdy and warlike people.

Through many centuries, Palestine was the highway between Egypt and the East, a sort of bridge, as it were, connecting the ancient civilizations which sprang up in the valleys of the Nile and the Euphrates. Over its roads passed Egyptian, Syrian, Babylonian, Macedonian, Greek, Roman, Saracen, and Crusader; and Napoleon, too, came this way with his army of conquest. But it remained for Allenby and his hosts to rescue the land from its long subjection to the rule of the Crescent and Star.

Two thousand years before Christ, out of the east, from Ur of the Chaldees came Abraham with his flocks and entering Palestine in the north, moved southward to ancient Hebron, near the sandy desert. A thousand years later, Joshua at the head of the wilderness-weary Children of Israel entered Palestine at Gilgal and, driving northward to Samaria, established a kingdom which was to make this land the most important in all the earth; for out of it was to come one who, through his example and precepts, was to show all mankind the way to salvation and eternal life.

The country was then inhabited by Canaanites who included some seven different tribes. These resisted the invasion of the Israelites, but finally yielded, so far as the major part of the country was concerned. Yet the Canaanites remained a formidable enemy who, for many years because of their threatening attitude,

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kept the invaders prepared for resistance almost continuously. In the following centuries, from the East came Assyrian and Babylonian, conquering the country and leading the inhabitants away into long captivity. But the mission of the chosen people could not be fulfilled on the banks of the Euphrates; so back they came and rebuilt their cities, only to fall again under the conquering sword of the West, of Macedonian and Roman. So great was the resistance of the Israelites to the Roman eagles that the conquerors took terrible revenge, and the remnant of the Jews was scattered over the earth. The Jews still remain a "people without a country"; but the Zionist movement promises to place the ancient land once again in the hands of those who have made its history so momentous. The Arab tide from beyond the Jordan ebbed and flowed for centuries, until with the scattering and outnumbering of the Jews it became the dominant race. With the rise of Islam, the Arabs became its devotees, so that Palestine, the country of the Jews, where were uttered the ancient prophecies, and where the Founder of Christianity fulfilled his transcendent mission, came under the control of the followers of Mohammed. This situation continued until the coming of the English in 1917. The assumption of the government of Palestine by the English has not changed the religion of the inhabitants. In fact, to retain the *status quo ante* has been the high purpose of this beneficent administration.

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CHAPTER III

Jerusalem the Golden

Outside the Walls

TO the orthodox Jew, Jerusalem is the Eternal City. To him not only it was and still is the ideal of an earthly paradise, the City of God, but it is type and symbol of the eternal state of bliss toward which he looks with longing eyes, and which he has named, "The New Jerusalem." For him, Jerusalem is forever.

Now that we were in the presence of the "City of the Great King," we were in no hurry to invade its sacred precincts. Rather, it seemed that mental preparation was necessary before entering this most venerated of all cities, to which Jew, Christian and Moslem alike pay reverent homage; and so we remained for a day or two, quietly reviewing the incidents of which Jerusalem has been the center, incidents which have had much to do with shaping the history of mankind. Manifestly, unless some adequate comprehension of the deep significance of these events is had, the importance of the sacred places themselves will not be appreciated. We were told of an American woman, who, becoming enthusiastic when being shown about Jerusalem, exclaimed to her guide, "Why, if I had known that the Bible tells so much about all these things, I would have bought myself

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a copy." It was to avoid like experience that we undertook to make our preparation as thorough as possible.

To see Jerusalem first as a whole, to view it from some commanding height, to look down upon its ensemble of crowded roofs and narrow streets, was our first desire. Accordingly, one afternoon we made our way across the Kedron Valley and ascended by one of the easy paths which quarter the rocky sides of Mt. Scopus, where contented flocks of sheep and goats find pasturage. Reaching the height of land, on turning our eyes southeastward, we looked down upon the red and gray roofs, spires, minarets and domes which are Jerusalem, a mile away. "So this is the Holy City," we say to ourselves, "the city of Jew, Christian and Moslem, the city of David and Solomon, of Pilate and Herod, of Christ Jesus and the Crusaders." In its long history, reaching back three thousand years, although battered and torn by repeated assaults, yet as we look upon it, it stands serene and secure in the golden glow of a spring day, as calm and dignified as though its course had been one of uninterrupted peace.

"What characteristic," we ask ourselves, "does this city possess which has enabled it so often to rise from its own ashes?" The fiercest passions of man have been let loose in its destruction, yet here it stands intact, and apparently, complete. Jerusalem, even in its material aspects, seems to possess something of the eternal, the everlasting, else under the terrific onslaughts to which

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it has been so often subjected, it would lie prone and neglected, a pile of tumbled ruins.

Following along the height of land, we passed on the left the new Hebrew University which has already several imposing buildings and an open air theater where, a few days later, on a Sunday afternoon, we were delightfully entertained by a well trained students' orchestra in a programme of classical music. A little farther along the hill top are the magnificent buildings of a German hospice and sanatorium erected in 1910 by the ex-Empress of Germany, and presented to the Order of Saint John. Now over it waves the English flag, for it is the official residence of the High Commissioner.

For the marvelous view afforded by the high tower of the Church of the Ascension, attached to the hospice, we turned aside and accompanied by a British Tommy climbed up many flights of stairs to the lookout. Our expectations were more than realized. To the east in full view rise the hazy heights of Gilead and Moab. Along their base stretches the valley of the Jordan, with ricks of dense green shrubbery marking the wandering course of the river. In the foreground lies the barren wilderness of Judea, with its rounded hills of clay, stark and forbidding. To the southeast, the blue waters of the Dead Sea glimmering like molten amethyst in the afternoon sun; nearer the west and some seven miles distant lift the towers and spires of Bethlehem, and in the same direction but nearer rises the flat-topped Frank Mountain, site of Herod's sum-

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Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives

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mer palace. In the foreground, we look down full upon the crowded roofs of Jerusalem, interspersed with few open spaces, of which the Temple Area and a field in the farther corner to the southeast are the most conspicuous.

Beyond the walls to the west, stand out the many imposing buildings of the new city, well constructed of brick and limestone, and roofed with red and green tiles. To the north of the city and far beyond rises Nebi Samwîl, the high hill sometimes called Mizpah, where the prophet Samuel lived and from which he judged Israel. To the right of this eminence, in the near foreground, stretched along the southern slope of Mt. Scopus is the British cemetery where lie the bodies of several thousand men of the Egyptian Expeditionary Forces, who gave their lives for the cause of beleaguered liberty.

Farther along the ridge toward Olivet stands a group of buildings behind a high wall, the property of the Greek Church, the Chapel of *Viri Galilaei*, or men of Galilee. The Scriptures state that after the Ascension, the men of Galilee were addressed by "two men . . . in white apparel," and this is claimed to be the spot where the address was made.

Mt. Scopus runs into Olivet, that is, Olivet is a continuation of the same ridge, terminating at the south in a steep slope which descends to the valley of Jehoshaphat in the west, and to the village of Bethany in the east. Leaving the Greek compound, we entered the Arab village, *Kafr et Tur*, in the midst of which

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stands a group of Russian buildings belonging to the Orthodox Greek Church, one of which has a lofty tower. Outside of the modern church which is built on the site of an early Byzantine structure, is the traditional spot marked by a stone, where, it is said, Jesus mounted the ass for his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

A short distance farther along the road, also in the Arab village, stands the little Chapel of the Ascension. Notwithstanding the direct declaration of Luke that the place of the ascension was at Bethany, very early, it appears, a chapel was erected on this site, perhaps because of the statement in Acts that those who had witnessed the Ascension, afterwards had been addressed by the "men . . . in white apparel," and had then returned "unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey." In 351 A. D. a roofless chapel was erected here by Constantine, and later Monk Modestus built on the spot a church which was destroyed in the eleventh century. The Crusaders venerated the site as the place of the Ascension. The present modest chapel was erected by the Moslems in 1835, but Christians are permitted to hold services here at stated times. In the interior is a piece of marble bearing an impression said to have been made by the foot of Jesus; but we are certain that it is only of modern origin, and displayed for the purpose of aiding in holding the spot in veneration. Armenian, Coptic, Greek and Syrian altars stand in

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the churchyard at which these groups respectively worship.

Farther down the slope of Olivet, stands the Church of the Lord's Prayer, erected on the spot where it is said Peter the Hermit, leader of the First Crusade, preached a sermon in the belief that here Jesus taught his disciples how to pray, and gave them the Lord's Prayer. In the "Hall of the Lord's Prayer," about the court, are tablets bearing this prayer in thirty-two languages. What is regarded as positive proof of the authenticity of this site is found in the recent discovery of the foundations of the "Church of Eleana," built over the cave in which the teaching of Jesus took place. This church was erected by Empress Helena, wife of Constantine, in 330 A. D.

It seems assured that many of the claims made for the accuracy of the sites of important incidents in the life of the Nazarene are wholly problematical. Others seem logical and authentic. But we feel about these sacred shrines on Olivet that, if they are not located with absolute accuracy, the sites at least approximate the places where occurred events of compelling interest to all humanity. Of the location of Olivet there can be no doubt; and as its area is not large, there can be no great inaccuracy in the location of the incidents which occurred about this historic height.

Before descending, we dismissed our dragoman, an intelligent Arab who told us that he was forced to serve in the Turkish army against the Allies. Then we sat for a long time on a convenient boulder in

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contemplation of this most impressive scene. Directly below us lay the garden of Gethsemane, of holy memory to all who reverently name the name of Christ Jesus. Beyond and still lower, the brook Kedron threads the valley of Jehoshaphat, as it is sometimes called, the far bank of which rises steeply to the walls of Jerusalem at their highest point. The wall there lifts some seventy-five feet above the earth and, we are told, extends more than eighty feet below the surface, its lower course literally being set into the solid ledge.

Great is our desire as we sit on the slopes of Olivet, to know through which of the gates the Master passed on the occasion of his triumphant entry into the city, now commemorated in Palm Sunday. Of the several entrances utilized at different periods, St. Stephen's Gate and the Golden Gate, now walled up, are located in the section of the wall which is adjacent to the brook Kedron, and opposed across the narrow valley to Olivet. While these gates because of their location are more favorable to the assumption that they might have been the entrance used by Jesus, yet it must not be forgotten that the walls have been razed and rebuilt several times in the intervening centuries. The Single Gate, the Double Gate, the Triple Gate, and the Horse Gate all are in the south wall, and therefore less likely to have been the gate of entrance to the Master.

Excavations near the Triple Gate carried on by the Palestine Exploration Fund have laid bare some very important relics of the past. Far below the pres-

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ent level of the base of the wall, as it now stands, remains of an ancient wall have been found, believed to have been built by the Jebusites. That wall is built slantwise, each course of stones being set farther in than the other, in a manner similar to the Canaanitish structure uncovered at Jericho. A corner built of larger stone has been discovered and attributed to David. As it intervenes in an opening in the Canaanitish wall, it is regarded as "the breach" which David is recorded as having built up.

The long beams of the sun now near its setting strike across the roofs of gray and red, bathing the minarets and domes in golden light. The walls to the right and left, stark and gray in the deepening shadows, bear the scars of many centuries. How often have they been beset by foes bent upon the destruction of the city! From the high hill back of us, Titus gathered his forces and set in motion the assault which utterly destroyed Jerusalem and left few of its inhabitants alive. Again and again, in the centuries both before and after that event, it has been beset and taken by contending forces, razed and rebuilt; and now it stands peaceful and serene, risen from its own ruins, and flooded with the golden rays of the setting sun.

In the foreground, and directly in front of us, looms the rounded dome of the Mosque of Omar in the midst of the Temple Area, inclosing "The Rock," Mt. Moriah, where tradition insists Abraham prepared to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice to the Most High. To the left of the great mosque stands the Mosque of

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Aksa with its lofty minarets, a box-like structure in striking contrast to the beautiful Mosque of Omar. Still farther to the left, and just outside the present walls, stands the group of buildings about Zion's Gate, erected upon the traditional site of the house of Caiaphas and of David's Tomb. This was also the site of the Jebusite village which David captured, preparatory to establishing his capital here. Across the town near the Jaffa Gate, and directly behind the Mosque of Omar, lifts the square form of David's Tower; to the right, the two domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre rise above the low roof, close beside the square tower of the German Church, a modern structure of imposing architecture.

Farther to the northwest, lift the stately towers about the Damascus Gate, the most imposing of all the numerous entrances to Jerusalem. Outside the walls to the north is seen the low hill, termed Gordon's Calvary, where the celebrated British general believed he found the site of Golgotha. In a little garden to the left of the hill is the "garden tomb" which many believe to be the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, in which was laid the body of the crucified Saviour. Within the walls, except in the Temple Area, so closely packed are the buildings that the narrow streets are quite hidden, and the appearance is of a solid mass of somber structures, for the most part low and flat-roofed, with little brilliancy of color except for the blue mosaic of the Mosque of Omar. The prevailing tone is gray, but here and there appear roofs

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of red tile, many of which are moss-grown and blackened by the smoke of centuries.

With the approach of twilight we were prompted to move, and taking the middle of three paths leading down the steep slope of Olivet, descended to the Garden of Gethsemane. A high wall surrounds the Garden on the south side of which stands the magnificent "Basilica of Gethsemane," a recently erected structure in the Byzantine style, the property of the Franciscans who also own the Garden. Gethsemane means "oil press," so one associates it with olive trees, many of which grow here. One tree, apparently very old, standing near the church, is said to be the identical tree under which Jesus prayed. Accordingly, it is called the "tree of agony." While we scarcely credit the implied age of the tree, yet from its gnarled and aged appearance one is ready to grant it at least a thousand years of life. In the Garden are flowers and box-bordered winding paths; and cypress trees lift their stately forms in the somber branches of which birds were quietly tuning their evening songs.

As we lingered in that hallowed spot, there passed in review the closing scenes in the Master's life—the long hours of prayer, the anguish of a stricken heart, the coming of the emissaries of the law, the arrest and the subsequent events of that fateful night during which he was led by his enemies to one after another for trial, judgment and condemnation. The Garden of Gethsemane is a place where one would love to remain long and ponder the deeper meanings of the

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incidents which transpired there, incidents of the greatest moment to humanity, involving salvation itself. Though veiled in the mists of nearly a score of centuries, yet in their poignancy they stand out with a vividness that never pales.

We left the Garden by the gate of entry, and turning down the hill to the brook Kedron, passed the traditional tomb of Mary, which seems too traditional to interest us. Reaching the road which leads up from Bethany, we turned homeward by St. Stephen's Gate and the Damascus road, passing the Garden Tomb and the Tomb of the Kings. Jerusalem is a city of many memories of the deeply buried past, where, as in Egypt, one quickly becomes accustomed to the inspection of rock-cut tombs for the evidences which they bear.

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CHAPTER IV

Jerusalem the Golden

Inside the Walls—I

IT was on a Friday morning when we made our way to the Jaffa Gate and through its imposing portals first entered Jerusalem. At once we were in the midst of a tangled throng. It was the day before the end of the Moslem fast of Ramadan which goes on for thirty days, and every follower of Islam, it seemed, was out to purchase the necessaries for the feast of Beiram to follow on Sunday. To meet the extraordinary demands, the countryside from far and near, to sell and to buy, crowded into the narrow confines of David Street, the chief market, or *sûk*, which runs through the heart of the town, from the Jaffa Gate to the Temple Area, dividing the city into two nearly equal parts. David Street is scarcely more than a dozen feet wide, and even this space is encroached upon by the keepers of the shops which border much of its length. As the street is uneven, descent to its lower level is made by stone steps; and in consequence it is closed to vehicular traffic. But donkeys, camels, sheep, goats, and a motley throng of people crowded it to the limit.

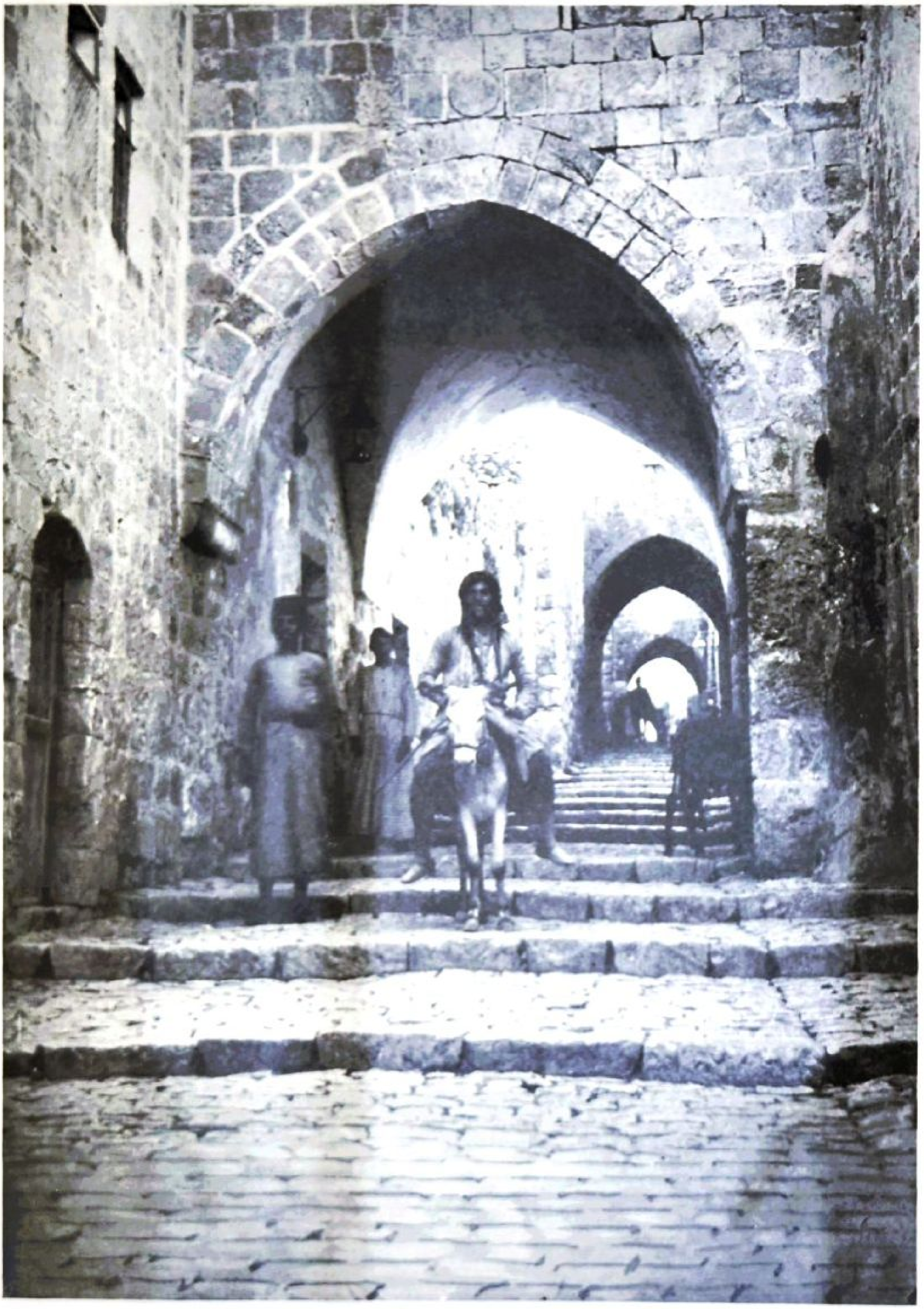
Entering this narrow way, we soon found ourselves jammed and jostled by the hurrying multitude, until the confusion became something more than amusing.

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Now a sheep, carried on the shoulders of an Arab fellahin, kicked you in the head; now a donkey laden with great bags of produce hung on either side rudely thrust you to one side; again, a camel swung its head threateningly toward you as though resentful of your presence. With all this confusion mingled the cries of shopkeepers in the querulous bargaining which so commonly characterizes trade in the bazaars of the Orient. The crowd of shepherds, farmers with their skin coats and queer head-cloths held down by a curl of goat's hair, Bedouins from beyond Jordan, women from Bethlehem with their high headdresses, Jews with long curls hanging down from under round black hats, holy men in tatters, school boys in uniform, tourists from many lands, all in motion, pushed and jostled by the animals, made up an unforgetable scene.

Sections of David Street are mere tunnels, the bordering structures forming a domed roof over the street. In the days of Turkish rule, it is said, if a householder wished to enlarge his premises, instead of adding a story, he extended his house over the street. In consequence, many of the streets are, in sections at least, mere tunnels, filthy and damp, reeking with odors highly offensive to western sense, noisome places through which one is pleased to hurry. In the bazaars the different trades are segregated according to the wares sold. The vegetable bazaar or *sûk* with its variety of green produce is by itself, and neighbors on the saddlery market, where are offered harness and trap-

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Street in Jerusalem

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pings for horse, donkey and camel, including tinkling bells made in Nazareth, strings of bright-colored beads of glass from ancient Hebron, which are believed to keep off the "evil eye," and gaudy saddle bags in many colors.

Shoemakers occupy a section by themselves and the cloth merchants, displaying the bright colored embroideries of the Arab women, abide apart from all the other trades. The silversmiths, jewelers and clothing merchants each occupy their own quarters, and many other trades are similarly disposed. It is a colorful picture, teeming with life crowded into a narrow street, a scene as typical of the present-day Jerusalem as any that can be witnessed. The bustle and confusion, the jam and jostle, however, in time become wearisome and one looks for a way out. A narrow thoroughfare off David Street, scarcely more than a dark tunnel, yet thronged with people and animals, led us to the Jewish quarter of the city where we found no relief from the filth and ill-smelling streets; and we turned away again looking for escape.

Presently an Arab school boy, seeing our need of direction, approached, and in good English inquired if he could assist us. Gladly accepting the proffered aid, we were led back to David Street, toward the Temple Area and presently to the wailing place of the Jews, where we witnessed a strange and appealing scene. Unless one has been an eye-witness to this spectacle, one may think derisively of it, as an emotional outburst of false sentiment by a misguided people.

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The witnessing of it, however, is quite likely to change one's views. A section of the wall of the old Temple Area is the scene of this strange ceremony. Here regularly on Fridays throughout the year gather Jews, who with streaming faces and apparently in deep anguish of spirit, bemoan in loud lamentation the sad fate of the Jews and the destruction of their loved Jerusalem, their sacred city, center of their worship and their ancient glory. Of the sincerity of their emotions and of the depths of their anguish at the downfall of their race there can be no doubt; and hither for centuries they have come regularly to bemoan and lament. At one time the Turks forbade the custom, but it has been restored through the intercession of a prominent Englishman. Jerome relates that even in his day the Jews were wont to bribe the Roman soldiers for permission to weep undisturbed over the ruins of the Holy City.

The lamentations take on the order of a service, although there are many individual mourners besides. A reader recites,

"Because of the palace which is deserted";

to which the people respond,

"We sit alone and weep."

The reader continues:

"Because of the temple which is destroyed;
Because of the walls which are broken down;
Because of our greatness which has departed;
Because of the precious stones of the Temple ground to powder;

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Because of our priests who have erred and
gone astray;
Because of our kings who have contemned
God";
To each of which the people respond,
"We sit alone and weep."

Along the wailing wall and about the street leading to it are many seekers for alms, old men and women in evident poverty. It is a touching spectacle from which one turns thoughtfully away; and if he ponders the history leading up to it, he is deeply impressed with the strange fate of this devoted people.

On our way home we passed outside the walls by the Zion Gate, and to our surprise met shepherds leading their flocks inside to insure their safety during the night. Later we learned that commonly shepherds at nightfall lead their flocks within the walls of the city, an ancient custom still observed in the belief that protection from marauding beasts and robbers is still necessary. During the Ottoman régime, shepherds felt much anxiety for their flocks. Even now hyenas and jackals make their way by night from the wilderness up to the walls of the city.

Jerusalem, that is the enclosed city, has an area of about two hundred and ten acres, one-sixth of which is in the Temple Area. We were quite surprised one day when making our way along the top of the southern wall to find a field of wheat within the city, which was, perhaps, two or three acres in extent. With the exception of this open space and the Temple Area, the

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city is closely crowded. It has few squares and many of its streets are scarcely more than lanes. Into this area is crowded a population of about sixty-two thousand, more than half Jews, the remainder nearly equally divided between Christians and Moslems. The Turkish population has practically disappeared since the Allied victory of 1917.

One finds within the city many compelling proofs of the various destructions, partial or complete, which the city has undergone during the three thousand years of its history. In many parts the present level of the streets and buildings is high above that of the old town. The history of the Church of St. Anne well illustrates this. As a reward for the service which France rendered in the war against Russia, Turkey granted her a concession of considerable territory just north of the Temple Area. From the accumulation of ruins, the French have recovered the beautiful Church of St. Anne, built by the Crusaders, a type of Norman architecture so pleasing in many of its features as to attract architects from distant lands to study its detail. Although buried for centuries in débris, this truly beautiful structure now stands complete and is regularly used for services.

In the same area is located the Pool of Bethesda where the impotent man lay waiting for the troubling of the waters. The outline of the pool has been definitely located, it seems, through determining its corners. Descending by a flight of stairs many feet below the present level of the town, one finds the pool itself

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apparently supplied with water from hidden springs. When visiting the pool one day our learned guide explained the five porches recorded in the Bible. The pool, he believes, was in all probability divided into halves by a porch which, together with the porches on each side of the parallelogram made the five,—a reasonable explanation.

One day while passing along the street which leads from the Damascus Gate, a rumbling sound coming from below our feet attracted our attention. Upon inquiry we learned that the sound came from a mill grinding wheat far below the street, on the old level of the city. The changed level of the city, which must be taken into consideration in locating places of Biblical interest, makes many traditional sites seem quite impossible.

The points of greatest interest to the visitor in Jerusalem are perhaps the Temple Area, the *Hâram esh Sherif*, or "noble sanctuary," with its magnificent Mosque of Omar; the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Pilate's house and the Via Dolorosa. The Mosque of Omar stands in the midst of the Temple Area, once the site of King Solomon's wondrous temple and palace, now for the most part an open area. Of all structures within the walled city, this mosque alone has a setting which affords the proper perspective for bringing out its architectural features. As it is built over "The Rock," Mt. Moriah, the place, as the Jews have long believed, where Abraham prepared to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice to Jehovah, the mosque is

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called "Dome of the Rock." Nine gates lead from the town to this area and within are Saracenic arcades, portals and gates of great beauty. There is also a beautiful fountain called "Sebil Kait Bey" built in 1445 by the Egyptian Mameluke Sultan of that name, who left many examples of Saracenic art in Egypt.

Three broad stairways lead up to the elevated platform upon which stands the Dome of the Rock. These stairways terminate in magnificent arcades called in Arabic, "Mozawin" (the scales), in the popular belief that from them will be suspended the scales on which all deeds will be weighed in the day of judgment. Outside the great rock to the east stands its replica in miniature, called "Dome of the Chain," sometimes also termed "David's Judgment Seat." A tradition of the Moslems holds that in David's time a chain was here suspended from heaven which exercised judgment in cases of dispute by permitting the one who was in the right to grasp it, while eluding all efforts of the other to lay hold upon it.

The Mosque of Omar was built in 691 A. D. by Ommyad, Caliph of Damascus, as a rival to Mecca. The Koran makes frequent mention of Jerusalem, and it was from the dome of the sacred rock, it is held, that Mohammed ascended. There have been many restorations of the building which is octagonal in form and 162 feet across, with a flat dome rising more than 100 feet above the floor. The walls above are covered with colorful Persian tiles and adorned with many beautiful Saracenic windows; below they are covered with slabs

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Mosque of Omar in the Temple Area at Jerusalem

of marble so arranged that the veins in the stone form symmetrical designs. The interior presents many features which in design and color are truly magnificent.

The Holy Rock, says the Moslem tradition, is the exact center of the earth, and from beside it was taken the clay from which Adam was created. Beneath the rock is a great cave or grotto where are shown the prayer places of David, Solomon, Abraham and Elijah, as well as that of Mohammed. On the side of the rock is shown a hole made, it is solemnly asserted, by a finger of the angel Gabriel, when holding back the rock as it rose to follow Mohammed into heaven. As the rock measures fifty-eight by forty-four feet and is a part of the solid ledge, the character of this legend needs no comment. These legendary traditions well illustrate the readiness of the oriental mind to accept the purely imaginary as actual.

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CHAPTER V

Jerusalem the Golden

INSIDE THE WALLS—II

THE Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is situated in the Christian quarter of the city, had its beginnings far anterior to the building of Omar's Mosque. Many, perhaps most, Christians believe it to stand upon the holiest spot on earth, on the sites of Golgotha, the place of the crucifixion, and of the Holy Sepulchre, where the body of Jesus was entombed and resurrected.

Those who hold to the authenticity of this location base their conclusions on the fact that Queen Helena, mother of Constantine, asserted that in 325 A. D. she found on this spot three crosses which she believed to have been those on which the Saviour and the two others were crucified. There is no historical mention made regarding it, and her early claim has prevailed with many, chiefly it seems because of its priority.

On the other hand, since the Scriptures state definitely that Golgotha was outside the walls of the city, location of the site of the second wall, which was in position at the time of the crucifixion, would go far toward settling the whole question. Many believe that the site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is within the area, then as now, inclosed by the walls. This

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conclusion precludes the possibility that the accepted location is accurate.

We first entered the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on a Friday when the Franciscans were holding services at the several praying stations within its walls, a part of their regular weekly ceremonies along the Via Dolorosa. So rambling and dark is the edifice that the aid of a guide and lighted candles are indispensable to the visitor. It seemed strange enough to be taken to the Stone of Unction where it is held the body of Jesus was laid for anointing, to the gorgeous Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre with its white tomb, thence up a steep flight of stairs to "Golgotha" where our Greek guide solemnly asserted stood the cross upon which the Saviour was crucified. With equal solemnity we were assured that the blood of Jesus percolating through the earth at the foot of the cross, reached the skull of Adam buried there, thus washing away the sins of the whole world.

Eusebius states that Constantine erected two churches here, one over the tomb of the Saviour, the other over the place of the crucifixion. Chosroes II, of Persia, in 614 destroyed both, so that scarcely a stone of either remains. Again and again have structures been reared and razed on this site. The present buildings, for the Church can scarcely be called a unit, date from different periods, but probably none of them earlier than the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Later in the course of Holy Week we witnessed within this Church, crowded to the doors with eager

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pilgrims, the sacrament of the Holy Fire, an observance designed to strengthen the faith of the followers of the Greek and Armenian rituals in the presence of God. One cannot but feel, however, that the present structure and the uses to which it is put have little relation to the deeper meanings of the life and teachings of our Lord.

After a somewhat protracted ceremony consisting of the recital of a ritual by the Greek and Armenian priests, and much marching about the chapel, the patriarchs of the two orders, divested of their gorgeous robes, withdrew within the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre. Presently fire burst out from the openings in the chapel walls and men clad in the garb of runners, lighting their own candles eagerly ran to relight the altar fires in the church and also to light the candles of the assembled pilgrims, until the gloom of the great structure was dispelled by thousands of candles glowing like fireflies in the dark.

Other runners left the Church and hastened with the sacred fire to distant towns,—Bethlehem, Hebron, Jericho, even to towns in Samaria and Galilee having churches of these orders. It is a spectacular ceremony and observed from the height of the church dome takes on a sense of the weird, difficult to shake off. During the period just before the appearance of the fire, as the assembled pilgrims waited with bated breath for the appearance of what to them is a very sacred phenomenon, the situation became very tense. Apparently these ardent believers are convinced that their

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priests, like Elijah of old, are able to call down fire from heaven. And because of their belief, the ceremony has for them a deep religious significance. All who participate seem spellbound by the spectacle. Yet that its regenerating effects are not far-reaching seems proved by the collision later in the day between the priests of the two participating groups, which became so violent that only police interference prevented a serious riot. As it was, several priests, badly beaten up, were taken away by the English officers. That such a mêlée could occur on the most sacred day of Holy Week and by the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre seems to indicate a sad want of true Christian spirit and understanding of the Master's teachings. We looked upon the ceremony as only a strange exemplification of the observance of a religious rite in which the letter had quite outrun the spirit of Christianity.

One of the most imposing relics of the first century is the *Ecce Homo* Arch, so-called, because it is claimed to be a part of the Prætorium where Pilate uttered those memorable words on that never-to-be-forgotten night. There were formerly three arches over the roadway leading into the city from St. Stephen's Gate past the house where Pilate lived. Part of two arches remain, the third has entirely disappeared. On the north side of the street the magnificent church and convent of the Sisters of Zion occupy the site of the Prætorium. Within the walls of this building is cunningly incorporated a part of the middle arch, the largest of the three, which extends over the street, and which is

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familiar to many because of having been much photographed.

In the basement of the church one is shown a well-laid pavement several feet below the present level of the street which is with reason, it seems, believed to be the courtyard of the Prætorium, the judgment hall, where Jesus was brought before the procurator. In the pavement are designs for games of draughts and marbles, said to have been used in their hours of leisure by the soldiers attendant upon the Roman official. It is a place filled with interest because of an abiding sense that here occurred important incidents of that eventful night.

The Prætorium also marks the beginning of the Via Dolorosa, as at present accepted by many, chief among them the Franciscans who, on every Friday, traverse its winding course to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. As there seems strong evidence that the site of the crucifixion and entombment of the Saviour was at another place than that now occupied by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the authenticity of the present route of the Via Dolorosa also seems highly problematical. It is a question regarding which one may find much ground for speculation. Perhaps it will never be fully settled because of the utter destruction of the city by Titus, scarcely more than two score years after the occurrence of the events which these ceremonies would commemorate.

Of great interest to the sojourner in Jerusalem is a visit to Solomon's Quarries. For many centuries it was

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not known where Solomon procured the stone for building his magnificent palace and temple so minutely described in the Bible. There is no hint in the Scriptures, however, of the source of this part of the building material except the statement that "there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." This would seem to indicate that the stone was not only quarried but trimmed and fitted at some distant point or in some large chamber apart from the scene of the building; and the huge cavern under the city perfectly answers this description. Great mounds of stone chips are within the chamber, and the extent of the excavation is so great that engineers have estimated that enough stone has been taken out to build the structure erected by Solomon and the whole city several times over. It seems probable that material for the walls and buildings of Jerusalem for many centuries came from this source.

The cavern reaches under the city for several hundred yards, the roof being supported by huge columns of stone left for this purpose. The almost pure white limestone is soft but hardens when exposed to the air. The marks of the quarrymen's tools are still seen, and above the niches where rested the little oil lamps which furnished light, the smoke splashes are as plain as though made yesterday. Yet nearly three thousand years have passed since these walls resounded to the blows of the army of workers. The blocks of stone when quarried were cut out vertically on either side,

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then forced off by the expansion of wooden wedges wet with water. Masonic bodies visiting the ancient city are accustomed to hold their meetings below a huge keystone partially quarried, but still *in situ*.

So many are the places of compelling interest in Jerusalem that the lover of sacred history could stay indefinitely, searching into the distant past. Personal contact with the scenes of events set forth in the Scriptures brings them nearer and they seem to possess a greater degree of reality. Accordingly, we became convinced that in no other place on earth could we delve into the ages long past with such profit as in Jerusalem the Golden, the Holy City of Jew, Christian and Moslem, the City of the Great King.

A glimpse of the fateful career of Jerusalem may be had by following the history of the Temple. The Temple was first projected by David, who gathered material for the structure and also prepared the site on Mt. Moriah, on what had formerly been the threshing floor of the Jebusite, Arnon. It, however, fell to the lot of David's son, Solomon, to raise the noble structure described in such detail in the Book of Kings. The dedication of the Temple was the grandest ceremony ever held under the Mosaic dispensation. This magnificent structure stood for more than three hundred and fifty years, the center of worship and ceremony during the period which marked the height of Jewish glory. When Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B. C., the Temple was burned,

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looted of its vast treasures, and reduced to a mass of ruins.

On their return from the Babylonish captivity in 580 B. C. the Jews under the leadership of Zerubbabel rebuilt the Temple; but of this structure we have little knowledge. The apocryphal Book of Ezra, however, recounts something of the decree of Cyrus as to the extent and character of the structure. From this description we conclude it was at least one-third larger than Solomon's Temple, but far less magnificent in the elaborateness of the decorations. This Temple was completed and dedicated in 516 B. C. and was utilized as the center of Jewish worship until 168 B. C. when Antiochus IV, heir in part to Alexander's glory, took the city and spoiled the Temple, desecrating its "Holy of Holies" by setting up an altar to Zeus Olympus, the Greek god. Three years later Judas Maccabeus recaptured Jerusalem from the Greeks, restored and strengthened the Temple; and it remained in Jewish hands until the coming of the Romans.

In 19 or 20 B. C., Herod the Great undertook the rebuilding of the Temple and erected a structure which exceeded its predecessors both in size and splendor of decorations. It was of this structure that the Jews spoke as having been forty and six years in building, and regarding which Jesus uttered the prophecy that "There shall not be left here one stone upon another." How complete was the fulfillment of his words is seen in the fact that today not only is there not left one stone upon another, but there is dispute among

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archæologists as to the exact position of the structure in the Temple Area. The destruction wrought by Titus was complete.

Herod's Temple is entitled to be ranked among the wonders of the world, both because of its size and the magnificence of its decorations. Josephus states that "from a distance the Temple resembles a snow-covered mountain and the light reflected from the gilded porches dazzled the spectators like the sun's own rays."

Titus, it appears, left certain portions of the city walls standing, which because of their great strength should serve as a memorial to the prowess of Roman arms. Remnants of the inhabitants hovered about the city for many years after the dispersion by Titus, and when the rumor reached the ears of the Emperor Hadrian, visiting Jerusalem about 130 A. D., that a plot was afoot to throw off the Roman yoke, he sent most of them to Africa. After Hadrian's return to Rome, under the leadership of Bar-Cochba, "Son of a Star," the Jews again rallied, seized the Holy City and many other places in Palestine. A powerful Roman army, however, soon overcame them, and the few who escaped are said to have been sold into slavery at the very Oak of Mamre, where Abraham first pitched his tent. Soon after the Jews were forbidden by decree ever to approach Jerusalem again.

Hadrian rebuilt the city and named it Aelia Capitolina, "the former after the prænomen of the Emperor; and the latter in honor of Jupiter Capitolanus,

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whose fane now occupied the place of the Jewish Temple." Thus the Holy City became a pagan capital, with sacrifice to Jupiter supplanting worship of the One God.

For two centuries, until the reign of Constantine when Christianity became the religion of Rome, little is known of the history of Jerusalem. Christianity spread during that period although it was scarcely tolerated; but under Constantine the number of adherents increased greatly, and pilgrims to Jerusalem multiplied rapidly. Stimulus was given to interest in the holy places by the visit of Constantine's mother, Helena, to Jerusalem, when, as we have seen, she gave orders for the building of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Helena also caused churches to be erected over the birthplace of Jesus at Bethlehem, and upon the traditional site of the Ascension on Olivet.

Later, the Emperor Julian undertook to rebuild the Temple, but did not succeed because frightened away, it is said, by a manifestation of divine displeasure. On the death of Julian, the Jews were again forbidden freedom of the city except once a year to weep over the destruction of the Temple. This was the beginning of the practice of the Jews to assemble weekly at the now famous Wailing Wall, to lament over their departed glory.

Jerusalem became a Patriarchate by a decree of the council of Chalcedon, and Justinian, who became emperor in 529, built in the Temple enclosure a church in honor of the Virgin. In the early part of the

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seventh century, Chosroes II of Persia swept over Palestine and Syria, took Jerusalem, massacred many Christians, destroyed the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and carried off the Patriarch. In 636 A. D., after the patriarch had returned and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre had been rebuilt, Moslem soldiers under the Khalif Omar besieged the city, took it, and erected upon the Temple Area over Mt. Moriah a mosque called "The Dome of the Rock." It is probable that this first building was replaced a half century later by the magnificent Mosque of Omar which now stands upon that exalted spot.

Until 960 A. D. the Holy City was subject to the Caliphs of Damascus and Bagdad, who were tolerant toward Christians, both inhabitants and pilgrims. In 967 the Fatimites, a fanatical sect of the Moslems, overran Syria and Egypt, took Jerusalem, burned the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and committed many other depredations upon the Christian inhabitants. Their lives were spared, however, as they were a promising source of revenue through taxation.

After the middle of the eleventh century when the Seljukian Turks conquered western Asia, Jerusalem fell to the lot of a leader called Ortok, under whom the Christians suffered terrible hardships, and both pilgrims and residents alike were subjected to the most cruel torture. In the midst of this cruelty, Peter the Hermit appeared on the scene, and became so depressed over the sufferings of the people that he went back to Rome to lay the situation before the Pope.

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The first Crusade was undertaken for the express purpose of wresting the Holy Sepulchre from the hand of the infidel. In 1097 A. D., Antioch fell and Jerusalem was conquered a few years later. The Crusaders rebuilt the Church and for nearly a hundred years, Jerusalem remained under Christian rule. Subsequently it was taken by Saladin and the walls for the most part were razed, but in 1229 by treaty it was delivered over to the Crusaders. The Emir of Kerak captured the city, but four years later, 1243, the Christians again obtained control. After a short period Jerusalem again fell into the hands of the Turks and the Crescent and Star remained over it until that fateful day in 1917 when Allenby, head of the Egyptian Expeditionary Forces, marched through the historic Jaffa Gate.

Surely no city has withstood so many attacks as Jerusalem. No other has been the center of so much strife, engendered by religious zeal. At last it has fallen into the hands of those who, through tolerance and a high sense of justice, purpose to give to all, regardless of religion or race, equal opportunity to worship according to their respective customs. This is the Jerusalem of today, without question freer from religious hatred and fanaticism than at any period of its three thousand years of known history. The spirit of Christianity which went out from its sacred shrines has returned to bless and serve all. The visitor in Palestine is aware of a growing consciousness on the part of the inhabitants that justice for all is at last an accomplished fact.

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CHAPTER VI

Nazareth

FOR a few days about the middle of April, the latter rains kept us housed, or confined our sight-seeing within the vicinity of Jerusalem. As soon as they were over, we left the cosy comfort of the American colony shortly after noon of a cloudy day, and started northward by the old Roman road which led to Cæsarea and Damascus. Out over the hills the road leads, traversing the heights of Judea and Samaria until some sixty miles to the north it finally drops down into the plain of Esdraelon, which separates Samaria from Galilee. Across this fertile plain, by the new towns of Affuleh and Balfouria and into the hills which border it to the north, the road takes its way to an elevated and elongated bowl among the hills wherein lies Nazareth.

Few places associated with the life and ministry of Jesus stir more hallowed thoughts than the town where he spent the greater portion of his earthly experience. Here his childhood days came and went, his youth and young manhood passed—how, we do not know; for with the exception of a single incident a veil is drawn over the happenings of all his years until he took up his holy ministry. In this little hill-set town came to him whatever of earthly preparation he received for the marvelous career that was to follow.

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As there is no mention of the town either in the Bible or in secular history prior to the incidents surrounding the birth of Jesus, so there is nothing in the subsequent history of Nazareth which signalizes it among the cities of Galilee. There is no evidence whatsoever to discredit Nathanael's estimate of it; and his query, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" in reply to Philip's enthusiastic announcement that they had "found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph," probably accurately characterizes the common estimate of the town in that day. There is no mention of Nazareth in the Old Testament; neither does Josephus or the Talmud say aught of it; yet the New Testament record states that here the angel Gabriel came to announce the birth of the long anticipated Messiah, the Saviour to mankind; and here on their return from Egypt came Joseph and Mary with the child, Jesus.

It was late afternoon when, leaving the plain, we began the circuitous ascent which finally took us to the hilltop from which we overlooked Nazareth. The town is quite hidden from the plain and in fact until you surmount the last ascent, when suddenly it lies before you, nestling at the far end of the little valley, to the sides of which it clings. Now several pretentious modern structures erected by the Franciscans even top the hill behind the town to the north. The last rays of the sun were touching the hilltops with a tinge of gold as we descended into the valley, and made our

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way to the Hotel Galilee, located just at the entrance of the town. Our zest was too keen to be curbed, and no sooner were arrangements made at the hostelry than we set out to explore the town. It has a "Main Street," broad in that portion which lies in the valley, but narrowing as it reaches the hills, where it divides into several streets, climbing in different directions to the heights above. Some of the streets are so narrow that camel trains coming through, if the beasts are laden, force one into alleys or the recesses of doorways to escape the protruding burden. The narrow streets are paved with blocks of stone, with a depressed gutter in the middle, down which flow the copious rains.

Bordering the main street are many little shops where artisans ply their primitive trades—makers and venders of various utensils—sickles, crude knives, and long-bladed shears. A coppersmith sits in front of his door beating out rough plates in primitive design. The sickle maker with his toes holds the long curved blade across a block of wood, while sharpening its serrated edge. Shops of shoemakers and cobblers, makers of harness and trappings including bells for camel and donkey, front the main street; and on a side street we found a carpenter shop where a father and son were making furniture of resinous pine and sweet-smelling olive wood. The simple tools, we thought, might be quite like those used by Joseph and the boy Jesus, when he learned and plied the carpenter's trade.

The houses of Nazareth are low, of a single story,

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Main street in Nazareth

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flat-roofed, built of a whitish limestone which quickly disintegrates. At a distance the houses look like squat blocks of white stone arranged in rows.

Many of the women of Nazareth, especially the Christians, are makers of daintily wrought lace, which travelers are importuned, in broken English, to buy; and refusal seems difficult. One woman of whom we bought told us she had been a school teacher in Damascus, and had come to live in Nazareth when she married a Syrian Christian. At her urgent request, we visited her little home of a single room where we met her husband, a tall dark man, and the young daughter. Chickens shared the tiny room with them, but as they were city dwellers, the ubiquitous donkey which shares so many Arab homes was absent.

On the traditional site of the annunciation by the angel Gabriel stands an imposing structure, the Church of the Annunciation. It is in the southern part of the town, off the main street, and within the territory of the Latin Monastery. It stands on the site of a Crusader church which probably was erected on the ruins of the great Basilica, built in the early centuries of the Christian era, perhaps by that builder of many churches, Constantine himself. From the nave which is of simple design, a flight of steps descends to the Chapel of the Angel, from which one enters the Chapel of the Annunciation. The latter is lined with marble, on which is carved the inscription, *Verbum caro hic factum est*,—"Here the word was made flesh." A broken pillar is said to mark the very spot where Mary

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stood when the angel Gabriel appeared to her. As we descended the steps into the Chapel, priests were chanting the litany, so that our stay was brief. So precise are the locations of the incidents of this most appealing experience that we could scarcely escape the feeling that the demands upon our credulity were too great. One is convinced that the whole surroundings were made up, as undoubtedly they were, to satisfy the credulous and, perhaps, to intensify by visible evidence the Scriptural accounts of most sacred incidents.

Near where we stood in the lower Chapel, and upon the same grotto, tradition states stood the house of Joseph and Mary; but when the evil days came and paganism triumphed over Christian piety, angels, we are told, conveyed the house at first to the heights in Dalmatia, and later to the hills of Loretto in Italy where it now stands, a much visited shrine. This type of legend tends to shake one's faith in the traditions which have grown up about many of the sacred places, connected with some of the most significant incidents in the life of the Nazarene.

A tradition equally lacking in authenticity clings about the "Mount of Precipitation," the hill from the brow of which it is alleged the populace, excited and angry over the revolutionary teachings of their young townsman, sought to throw him down. The present location of the hill at a point more than a mile from the town is wholly a modern invention, and it seems was selected more because it afforded a suitable location for the erection of imposing buildings than be-

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cause of any connection with the Biblical narrative. There is good authority for believing that the "Mount of Precipitation" was a low precipice near the center of the village, which has been obliterated in modern time by filling up with rubbish the valley below.

As evening fell, we journeyed out to the Virgin's Well to the east of the town on the road to Tiberias. It seems probable that this location is authentic, as it is still the only spring of "living water" in the town. Here come each evening in a constant line, women, boys and girls, with receptacles in which to carry home the supply of water for the household. While many still carry the traditional water jars gracefully poised on the head, others use the more practical but less picturesque tins, containers of the kerosene which lights their primitive dwellings. Some of the women and girls are fine specimens, with stately carriage from the much carrying of burdens upon the head. While the population is largely Arab and Moslem, there is a considerable sprinkling of Syrian Christians and Jews, so that the gathering at the well offers excellent opportunity to observe the races as they mingle.

It is to the hills, however, that we go for our deepest satisfaction. As so often occurs in Palestine, one finds the sacred places so artificially occupied that he turns to the out-of-doors for his inspiration. It has been well said of Palestine that at present scarcely anything inside is genuine, while everything outside is both genuine and inspiring. Thoroughly convinced of this, in the early morning we took to the hills,

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climbing up through fields thickly strewed with flowers, to the music of many birds, whose notes although strange to our ears, were none the less appealing. Making our way to the height of land to the north of the town, we came upon one of the most extensive views in all Palestine. Far to the north, Hermon lifts its snowy summit, while to the west we looked down upon the sandy shore of the Bay of Acre, where a band of glittering gold borders the blue sea beyond. To the east the heights of Hauran and Bashan, of Gilead and Moab, bordering Jordan, are within view, with the rounded dome of Tabor in the near distance. To the south in the foreground lies the plain of Esdraelon and beyond lift the hills of Samaria, Ebal and Gerizim, Jebel et-For, the "mount of blessing and of cursing," while to the southwest the long reach of Carmel quarters the horizon,—in all a most inspiring scene, especially as we beheld it under blue skies, flecked with fleecy clouds which cast their hurrying shadows here and there across the smiling valley.

The flowers, birds, and memories kept us busy. Here we knew the boy Jesus came and went under these same bending skies of blue, over these same hills, loving the same flowers, and listening to the same bird notes. In the midst of so much of the beautiful, how could he fail to draw so frequently upon the objects of nature for his figures and metaphors. He was a country-bred boy, reared in the midst of a scene as colorful and varied as one could wish.

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Here he gained the inspiration for his great work; and here he was rejected by his own people. Without bitterness but with keen poignancy did he declare, "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country" (Matt. 13:57).

While Nazareth, hidden away by encircling hills in its own little valley, is far from what are now the main streams of travel, at the beginning of the Christian era, it was not far from the chief highway between Egypt and Damascus, between the sea coast and the East. From the hills, this Nazarene boy looked down upon caravans laden with the rich goods of Tyre and Sidon, of Damascus, of Bagdad, and of Persia; upon royal trains decked with barbaric splendor; upon glittering legions marching under the Roman eagle,—all making their way to and fro across the plain of Esdraelon. Over this route the ten cities of the Decapolis, populous and flourishing, had their chief communication with Rome, the Imperial City. The populace of the prosperous cities and towns of Galilee also passed this way; so that Nazareth was just beside one of the busiest arteries of travel in the East, if not of the whole world of that time.

It should not be forgotten that Palestine and the adjoining territory were vastly more populous then than they are today; and that this territory which is now politically and commercially insignificant, was at the beginning of the Christian era, a rich and busy section of the world.

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Beside this bustling activity and within sight of much of it, the boyhood and young manhood of Jesus was passed; not in isolation from the affairs of the world, but in full view of much that was transpiring he spent his youth. To be sure his immediate surroundings were rustic; but within easy reach were cities of prominence, with all the culture and pomp, with all the glitter and pride which characterized the pagan civilization of the time. May we not conclude that it was by contact with a varied and active populace that he learned to know the human heart —knowledge which gave him a depth of sympathy above all others.

Nazareth continued a Jewish community until the time of Constantine, when with the building of the large Basilica, it came under Christian influence. When the Arabic wave inundated Galilee, Nazareth became Moslem and, with the exception of a short period, continued under Islam until the Crusaders took it in the twelfth century. After the Battle of Hattin in 1187, it fell under Saladin and in 1250 was visited by Louis IX of France. Later came the Turks and it declined in importance. Today it is a quiet village of seven thousand inhabitants, its tranquillity disturbed only by the tourists who run in and out by motor on the route from Jerusalem, or Haifa, to Galilee.

Only those who linger catch the quiet charm of the place and learn to love the beauties of its wondrous setting. So charming did we find it that we were not content with our first visit, but returned for a closer

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acquaintance. On the morning of our second visit we were awakened at the first glint of light by the musical tinkling of many bells made by the camel trains passing close under our windows. Down the street they swung, out over the hills and across the plain, bearing the grain of Nazarene farmers to the market at the port of Haifa. We lingered until we were obliged to leave in order to witness the Samaritan Passover celebrated this year at high noon, as of old, on the heights of Mt. Gerizim.

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CHAPTER VII

Blue Galilee

OUR approach to Galilee, scene of so many of Jesus' wondrous works, was from Nazareth, lying some sixteen miles to the southwest. Having lingered long in the hill-set town of Jesus' boyhood and young manhood, we left soon after noon of a late April day by the old Damascus road which skirts the town to the east. Going out by the Virgin's Well, always a center of deep interest to the pilgrim, we climbed the high hill which encircles Nazareth to the north, and from the summit had our last look upon the scene where the Master must have received much of the inspiration which enabled him to become the Way-shower to all mankind out of bondage and misery. As we gazed upon it, the brilliant sun shone full upon the little town, flooding it with a brilliancy which illumined the low gray buildings with something of a golden halo, readily translated by sympathetic eyes into terms of divine glory.

But our course was set for "the Blue Lake" and to linger was to delay our arrival there; and so we took our course down the valley and into the northeast, now rising, now descending through a country of cultivation and of herds, of hills and of valleys, alternating with fertile plains where wheat was growing in luxuriant promise. At our left the hills were high

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miniature mountains, on the side of one of which the rock strata form complete circles, a geological phenomenon I have never elsewhere witnessed. A few miles out on the road lies the Arab village of El-Meshed, the traditional site of Gath-Hepher, a town of the tribe of Zebulun—where the prophet Jonah was born, and where, it is claimed, his tomb is located. In a short half hour of travel, during which the road descends several hundred feet, we arrived at Cana of Galilee, or at least at the traditional site of the little town in which Jesus performed his first miracle.

This experience of the Master follows the lifting of the curtain that shuts out his unknown history, the period which, beginning at the age of twelve, when he was found by anxious friends with the doctors in the synagogue, extends to the age of thirty, when he appeared to John "baptizing in Jordan." Of the intervening years, of what wonders he worked, of what truths he expounded, we have not the slightest record. Returned to Nazareth from Jordan with Simon and Andrew, who upon first beholding Jesus had been strangely drawn to him, it seems Jesus learned that his friends had journeyed to Cana to take part in the celebration of a wedding. Thither he turned his steps, and by adding to the supply of wine which the occasion seemed to demand, publicly performed what is commonly termed his first miracle. The incident, for many reasons, is full of interest. What was the Nazarene's purpose in changing the water into wine? Was it to insure the success of the festival which, in the

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social custom of the day, was of great importance? Or was it primarily to exemplify his understanding of divine power, power of the possession of which he had become keenly aware? Whatever interpretation one may put upon the event, it seems only a strain on one's belief to assume that the Master's chief object was to supply the means for a prolonged period of conviviality.

The Arab village of Kefr Kenna occupies the supposed site of Cana. Here is a flowing stream and a walled-in spring from which tradition says was taken the water used in the miracle. As we approached, thirsty cattle were wading knee-deep in the cool waters and a camel train was halted for refreshment of both men and beasts. We could not, however, bring ourselves to drink of the spring, because of the unsanitary habits of the villagers who there find their constant water supply. In the village a Latin Chapel occupies the site of a Crusaders' church, built upon the site of an earlier church erected, it is said, by order of Constantine.

Leaving the little town with its one winding street, we again passed out into the open country, rising by a long incline to the height of land which divides the waters of the Jordan basin from those flowing into the Mediterranean. Passing over the slope, we came upon a scene which quite entranced us, for before us lay the goal of our immediate journey. Far to the north rose snowy Hermon in plain view from base to summit, with the long slopes of the Lebanon range

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showing beyond. To the left and many miles nearer, Jebel Gerzer, highest point in Palestine, lifted against the blue sky, upon one spur of which sits Safed, the "city that is set on an hill." Because of its lofty situation, obviously, it could by no possibility be hid. In the near foreground to the left rose the "Horns of Hattin," two volcanic peaks only a few hundred feet above the plain, yet prominent in the landscape. Upon one of these it is said Jesus first uttered the sacred Beatitudes; and some authorities would locate there also the place where was delivered the greatest compendium of spiritual truth the world has ever received —the Sermon on the Mount. What seems to be the best authority, however, concludes that this Sermon comprises utterances made at different times, and in different places, and that no specific place or definite time can be assigned to it.

Here also is the scene of the Crusaders' defeat in July, 1187. With the brilliant Saladin as leader, the army of the Saracens attacked the Christians under a blazing sun and without water, defeated them, taking many prisoners including King Guy himself. This was the beginning of a series of defeats suffered by the Crusaders which finally resulted in the Moslems obtaining full control of the region.

To the east and north of us and far below, lay beautiful Galilee, its blue waters shimmering like liquid amethyst in the long rays of the westering sun. At the far end we could see where Jordan makes in from Lake Huleh to the north; and in the nearer fore-

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ground, a group of eucalyptus trees which mark the site of ancient Capernaum. Across the lake where the shores rise rather precipitately, the slopes were radiant in a brilliant floral display, as in a garment of many colors. Above, lift the hills of Gadara, and farther south over the steep banks of Jordan rise the mountains of Gilead, intimately associated with Jacob and his experiences at the brook Jabbok.

From our feet the green fields stretch away in a gradual slope toward the lake, until lost in the steep descent just behind Tiberias. We stand amid masses of wild flowers which thickly strew the fields,—lupins with delicate white centers, the first we have seen. Fascinated by the scene we linger, then returning to our motor, wind slowly down the long incline, passing a sign bearing the legend, "Sea Level," yet several hundred feet above the lake. We are surprised to learn that the Sea of Galilee is 683 feet below sea level. Entering the rambling old town of Tiberias we make our way to the hotel, and our goods disposed of, take a boatman and proceed up the coast to visit Capernaum. Two miles out lies El Mejdel, ancient Magdala, the home of Mary Magdalene, now a group of squalid dwellings, scarcely more than huts, with sleeping porches on the low roofs.

A short distance beyond Magdala lies the fruitful plain of Gennesaret where, because of the abundance of water, the crops grow luxuriantly. Several brooks having their rise in the hills to the west, quarter the plain and empty into the sea. The plain is not large,

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not more than a few hundred acres in extent, yet, because of its great fertility, it produces much of the food supply for Tiberias. From the farther side we look back to the southwest quarter of the plain where between the Horns of Hattin opens up a deep gorge, the "Valley of the White Doves," so named because white wild pigeons live there in numbers. Even while we look, out swings a band of beautiful white doves which circle above our heads and return to their homes in the rocks.

As we ascended from the plain, our friend the botanist paused to cut branches from the "Christ-thorn," a bush with thorns like pointed needles, so sharp as to necessitate great care in handling in order to escape severe wounds. He believes that this shrub is misnamed, holding it to be much more likely that the thorns from which was plaited the crown thrust upon Jesus' head, was the burnett, a low shrub growing abundantly about Jerusalem; while the so-called "Christ-thorn" is comparatively rare.

Passing the high ridge, we again descend a long slope by a circuitous road down to the lake, at the traditional site of Bethsaida. As with Chorazin and many other towns of Biblical interest, there is not left of ancient Bethsaida "one stone upon another." In fact, its site is a subject of much contention among archæologists, some locating it beyond Jordan, some distance above its entrance to the lake. How complete has been the fulfillment of the Master's words, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! . . .

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But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you."

Our boatman presently returned from a short excursion along the shore with a boat manned by three oarsmen, Arabs, dark-skinned, barefooted, bareheaded, lithe and strong, clad in long white garments girdled at the waist. The boat, a clumsily built craft some eighteen feet in length, was without a deck, the usual "ship" of these waters, and we are assured, a counterpart of the ship in which the Master journeyed about Galilee on his errands of the greatest import to mankind of any upon which man was ever engaged.

The oarsmen, standing at the oars, in the course of three-quarters of an hour landed us at Capernaum, where it seems reasonably certain was located the synagogue in which the Master taught and healed. No ancient structures are standing. The only buildings are modern, property of the Franciscans, one of whom accompanied us about the place. From the tumbled ruins it is evident that the synagogue was a plain building but of considerable beauty of ornamentation. Among figures carved in the fallen façade are the Ark of the Covenant, and the seals of David and Solomon, five-pointed and six-pointed stars respectively. The portico and steps leading up at either end are *in situ* and we are assured that here Jesus passed in and out; that these very stones where we are standing resounded to his footsteps; and within these fallen walls he spoke words of life, the words which he assured his

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faithful disciples should not pass away; nor have they. After nearly twenty centuries, pilgrims from many lands still make their way to these scenes because of the eternal truth which was here voiced.

The synagogue at Capernaum is believed to have been destroyed by an earthquake soon after the crucifixion. The modern name of Capernaum, Tel Hûm, signifies a mound, that is, a small hill made by the disintegration of ruins. Filled with the thought of the deep significance of the place we lingered until the lengthening shadows warned us that night was at hand. As we moved slowly down the lake numerous sea birds, gulls, terns, and skimmers uttered their wild cries, while from the shore the evening chorus of songsters added a touch of sweet peace to the scene. Men come and go but the birds remain. And we have no doubt that the same kinds of birds are singing their farewell to the day that sang in those triumphant years.

Across Galilee, in plain view, beyond the entrance of Jordan lies a natural amphitheater, carpeted with green, where it is believed the Master fed the five thousand. We are thrilled with the thought that right here, within our range of vision, perhaps just at hand, Jesus walked on the waters; that right here, also, he stilled the tempest, and encouraged Peter, fearful for his safety. To how many mortals beset with the dangers and trials of human experience, crying "Lord, save me," has he since come with the same gracious words of comfort and cheer, "wherefore didst thou

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doubt?" as he took the fearful one by the hand, and led him into the quiet waters of security and peace. We know that right here also, within our range of vision, after the crucifixion Jesus found his disciples, Galilean fishermen, at their accustomed task, heavy-hearted and silent. Believing that his earthly career had ended, after that fateful day on Calvary and the glorified experiences which followed, their hopes were completely dashed. The long night had been without reward, but his call to them, as the day broke, to cast their nets on the right side brought an abundance of the fish they sought. Obedience to the Master's command, now as then, brings its rich reward. We recall how the disciples, still amazed at his reappearance, shared with him that last meal, a joyous breakfast taken in the light of the newly born proof of his Messiahship.

At the landing place at Bethsaida, Arab boys offered for sale strings of dainty shells of delicate colors taken, we were told, from the lake, the different varieties being found in different localities. We made our way in silence to the hotel to sup on Peter's fish, taken from these waters. Our meal finished, desirous of determining if snowy Hermon could be seen in the moonlight, we hastened down to the shore to find the lake in a tumult where an hour before it had been calm and level. A gale had suddenly arisen, apparently with a violence which quickly expended its fury for the skies were again clear, and the waters a-glisten under the soft rays of the full moon. The fishing boats anchored

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off the pier were tossed up and down by the lapping waves, which soon subsided, however, as the wind had already fallen. To the north rose the form of mighty Hermon as distinctly outlined as under the mid-day sun, its snowy mass showing silvery white in the moonlight. It was a scene never to be forgotten.

As we lingered by the lake, fishermen came with their nets, and piling them high in their boats, silently withdrew to the fishing grounds. How persistent are the basic industries of man, and how constant the food supply provided by an all-wise Providence! For centuries upon centuries these waters have given up of their largess. And nightly do humble fishermen put off into the darkness to ply their trade as they did when the Nazarene trod these shores. As the moon rose above Gadara, from a party of American tourists far out on the lake came the notes of "Blue Galilee," sung with great pathos, an appealing incident in a perfect setting.

At the beginning of the Christian era several prosperous towns lay along the shore of Galilee. Now, Tiberias, the only town of any considerable size about the lake, lies along the western shore, sprawling and unkempt. Its inhabitants number approximately seven thousand five hundred, about five thousand of whom are Jews, the balance Moslems, with a few hundred of various Christian groups. In the year 21 A. D. Herod Antipas, then Tetrarch of Galilee, founded the city and to win the favor of the Emperor Tiberius, named it

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for him. At its height it was a much larger town than at present and above it on the eminence which commands a magnificent view of the lake, of distant Hermon, and the intervening country, Herod built a castle.

Because, during the construction of the city, several tombs were discovered, the Jews refused to live in it. To them violation of the resting-places of the dead was an act of sacrilege. In consequence it became peopled with races less advanced. When Vespasian destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A. D., Tiberias won the favor of the Roman because of its friendly attitude. Later the Sanhedrin, driven from Jerusalem, assembled there and there, also, the famous Talmudic School of Jamnia was established. This accounts for the compiling in Tiberias of the Jewish Mishna. For centuries the tombs of several eminent scholars, compilers of the Talmud, which are still seen outside the town, were visited by many Jewish pilgrims.

The town as it now stands was founded by Crusaders, and many of the old walls are to be seen, although earthquakes have shaken down long stretches of them. Subsequent to the capture of Tiberias by Saracens from the Crusaders, an Egyptian army seized it and destroyed all who were not Moslems. Like most of the cities of this ancient land the struggles of prince and potentate have left their destructive marks upon it, and, in consequence, its ancient glamour has wholly departed. There is no Scriptural proof that Jesus ever entered Tiberias, although it seems

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Tiberias on the shore of Lake Galilee

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strange if he did not, since the adjacent coasts were the scene of so much of his labor.

A short distance to the south by the shore are hot springs which had a great vogue in Roman times because of the supposed healing properties of the water. When Ibrahîm Pasha overran the country in the last century, the present baths were constructed, and are still patronized by seekers for health.

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CHAPTER VIII

Hebron and the Vale of Elah

THE road from Jerusalem to Hebron keeps to the high plateau of Judea and passes near Bethlehem.

A short distance beyond Bethlehem, we turned aside to visit the Pools of Solomon, three huge reservoirs built of solid masonry, the largest some six hundred feet long and nearly four hundred feet broad, but not a parallelogram, as it is wider at one end than the other. Into these pools, which are built one above the other, flows water clear as crystal, collected from various springs in the hills and brought in by ingeniously arranged aqueducts. The pools are surrounded by plots of green, well-kept, and starred with flowers. While it is doubtful if the pools date as far back as Solomon's time, yet it is probable that they were built during the prosperous day of the Hebrew monarchs. "I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees," runs the narrative in Ecclesiastes, and some authorities would identify these as the reservoirs thus referred to.

The old aqueduct which conveyed the water from the pools to the Temple Area, shaken by earthquakes, is no longer in use; but the Turks laid a modern pipe line through which the water is pumped into the reservoirs in Jerusalem. This with water supplied from Ain Farah, the copious springs to the east of Mt.

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Scopus, constitutes the present water supply of the city. A little to the west of the pools is the "Sealed Fountain of Solomon," which it is said once controlled the flow of the water to Jerusalem ("a spring shut up, a fountain sealed"). A short distance from the pools lies the village of Urtâs, a name probably derived from Latin *Hortus,* meaning garden. This small village is sometimes identified as Etam, a garrisoned town which Josephus located at a distance of fifty stadia from Jerusalem. If this be correct the rich valley is the site of the Gardens of Solomon of which he boasts in Ecclesiastes: "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits."

Hebron, the city of Abraham, lies in a level valley between two ridges slightly more than three thousand feet above the sea. The streets are narrow and winding, paved with rough stones, giving one the sense of having been much used through a very long period. Its present population consists of more than sixteen thousand Moslems, a handful of Christians, and a few hundred Jews. Hebron was formerly a walled city but except for two gates, few traces of these walls remain. It is one of the oldest towns in Palestine, the time of its building being fixed in the Book of Numbers as seven years before Soan, a city of Lower Egypt. Its ancient name, Hirzatharba, was derived from Arba, the father of the giant Anak, of whom mention is made in Joshua. Later it took the name of Mamre, who was

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a friend and ally of Abraham. When Josephus wrote of it, Hebron was two thousand years old.

Hebron is indissolubly associated with Abraham, the grand Patriarch who, coming up from Ur of the Chaldees four thousand years ago, stalks across the early pages of Hebrew history, the embodiment of faithfulness and kindness. Patriarch that he was, he came to know God as One, a knowledge which led to so sure an understanding of Him that he was known as "the Friend of God." Although Abraham came into Palestine from the north, pitching his tents and pasturing his flocks at Shechem in Samaria, he presently moved southward, finally to settle in Mamre; the name, however, soon after changed to Hebron. It is probable that Mamre was first situated west of the present city, and that Hebron grew up around the cave of Machpelah, which soon became the center of attraction because of the use made of it.

It is because of the use of the cave of Machpelah as the burial-place of Abraham and Sarah that Hebron has become a place venerated equally by Moslem, Jew, and Christian. Not to honor a mighty warrior, a great king, or a famous philosopher, is the cave held as sacred, but rather in reverence for an old shepherd, a nomad Patriarch, who journeyed hither with his flocks and kinfolk, a man withal so friendly, so sure of God's character and presence that from him sprang a race rightly called "the chosen people," destined to produce the most important personage who has ever appeared upon the earth. It was to Hebron that Joseph's breth-

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A piping shepherd at Solomon's Pool between Bethlehem and Hebron

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ren returned with the blood-stained "coat of many colors," which was proof to the old father that his favorite son was no more. "And," we read, "Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days."

Hebron, like most Palestinian cities, has suffered many vicissitudes. How terrible was the destruction wrought by the Israelitish conquerors. "And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, and he utterly destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the Lord commanded." The picture drawn of Joshua's triumph is one of pitiless slaughter.

Hebron was David's capital until he took Jerusalem from the Jebusites and established there his throne; and Hebron was the birthplace of Absalom, who returned there years later when he plotted to gain the throne for himself. Here Joab slew Abner, Saul's many-sided but most illustrious relative. Later in its history, Hebron fell under the attack of the Edomites, descendants of Esau, who claimed prestige over the Israelites because they said Esau was the first-born of the nation. Judas Maccabeus restored Hebron and later it came under the far-flung rule of the Romans. After the Romans withdrew, it fell into desuetude but was occupied and rebuilt by the Crusaders, who named it *Præsidnivi ad Sanctium Abraham*, and later St. Abraham. It went down before the sword of Saladin and has since remained a Moslem city.

The chief object of interest in Hebron is the Haram,

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the mosque built above the cave of Machpelah. So sacred a shrine do the followers of Islam regard it that until the English occupation, it was closed to Christian and Jew alike. Admission now is only by a ticket, which must be secured in advance from the mufti in Jerusalem. Properly armed with credentials, we approached the ancient pile with a mingled sense of awe and reverence, for here it is believed reposes the dust of the oldest Patriarch and progenitor of the Israelites. The Biblical passage is most touching. "And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her. And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a buryingplace with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight." Touched by the appeal, the sons of Heth bargained with Abraham, and provided for the transfer of the field, the cave, the trees in the field, and that all should be "made sure unto Abraham for a possession." Accordingly, "Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan."

At his own request Abraham's body found the same quiet resting-place as did that of Sarah. Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried there and Jacob and Leah, his wife; and here also is erected a tomb of Joseph, although the scriptural record locates his burial place in Samaria not far from Jacob's Well. On the south

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side of the sacred enclosure stands the mosque, on the floor of which rest the cenotaphs of the Patriarchs and their wives enclosed in chapels and covered with richly embroidered cloth. An opening in the floor leads to the cave itself, entrance to which is forbidden. We were told that a British officer at the time of the occupation made his way down the ancient stairway and found evidences which convinced him of the accuracy of the tradition. In one of the chapels we are shown windows of marvelously beautiful, colored, old glass, said to have been of local production.

On entering all Moslem shrines, shoes are removed or covered by large slippers. For their use a few piasters are paid to an attendant. Properly shod, we were taken about the old pile by a smart young Arab, a most efficient guide who spoke English fluently. When we were leaving he refused the proffered gratuity, but said he would like some American postage stamps sent him. After our return home, the American stamps were forwarded, and a most gracious and appreciative letter was received in reply.

The two chief industries of Hebron are glass blowing and the making of water carriers of goat skins. In an old glass factory we watched the workers ply their primitive trade. The ovens were low and heated by fires fed with olive stones, which made an intense heat. In addition to useful articles various novelties are made, glass bracelets of many colors, and beads of many shapes and hues, which find ready sale among the Moslems who believe that they keep off the "evil

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eye." About the neck of the camel or donkey, and now likewise on the hood of the automobile, a string of these beads is hung to ward off the evil influence, fear of which seems to play a large part in the Moslem mentality. These simple natives are filled with superstition, in this particular resembling the negroes of the South.

After a stroll through the old streets, we journeyed out of the town a mile or so to the traditional spot where Abraham first pitched his tent, and where "the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; and he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him." And after he had greeted them in true eastern fashion and fed them a calf "tender and good," they announced to him that he should have a son; whereof the Patriarch implored mercy upon Sodom and Gomorrah whose doom had been foretold. An aged oak enclosed by a high paling, is pointed out as the very oak under which Abraham pitched his tent, a tale without the slightest claim to authenticity; but in a grove of tall pines near by we spread our lunch, grateful for protection from the midday sun.

After much debate as to whether we should journey to Beersheba, some thirty miles south, or to the valley of Elah to the southwest, scene of David's encounter with Goliath, we chose the latter course. We left Hebron by a road leading into the southwest and, after ascending to one of the highest points in Judea, gradu-

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ally descended over a military road constructed by Allenby.

Keeping to the valley, studded with groves of olive and fig trees, we passed out of the highlands into the Shephelah, the foothills of Judea, and in course of an hour entered the valley of Elah. Long ridges guard the valley on either side, not high enough to be called mountains yet of sufficient altitude to give command over the vale below. A brook bed now dry, but showing signs of a rapid and copious stream in the rainy season, quarters the valley.

One should read the seventeenth chapter of I Samuel on the spot. How vivid it all seems! "The Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and there was a valley between them." On the ridge on which the Philistines were drawn up are the ruins of Shochoh; for, we read, the Philistines "pitched between Shochoh and Azekah." Down the hill strode the haughty Goliath, perhaps the last of the race of giants who had long been the terror of the Israelites. Clad in shining armor with a brazen shield and huge sword he appeared a veritable Mars, symbolizing the spirit of war. Daily for forty days, with his insulting challenge, he confronted the army of Israel, which had in its ranks no man brave enough to meet the threatening giant.

Then there appeared upon the scene a shepherd boy, sent by an anxious father to learn how fared his three sons who were in Saul's army. As the young shepherd

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arrived, Goliath was making his daily challenge to the hosts of Israel. "And all the men of Israel," we read, "when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid."

Not so David, who listened to the stories of great reward that should be given to him who would slay the giant,—great riches, the hand of the King's daughter, and ten families made free! Surely, the reward was ample! David, unterrified by the threatening giant, inquired, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" This query from a mere stripling of a shepherd boy aroused the anger of his eldest brother who rebuked the lad. But David's reply caused him to be brought before Saul himself. Then was his opportunity, for he declared, "Thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

Armed with the spirit of the Lord, and with the assurance that the same divine Providence which had saved him in encounters with wild beasts would help him now, he went forth with five pebbles from the brook and his shepherd's sling. What an anxious moment for the Israelitish army! How breathlessly must they have looked upon the scene as the handsome lad, a mere stripling, faced the huge bulk of the trained warrior, panoplied in all the trappings of the fighting man of that day. David's victory stands to this day as an example of the triumph which supreme faith in God ever wins over the bragging claims of evil.

It all seemed so real to us in the valley there, the

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valley of Elah, as we walked along the brook-bed, selecting pebbles like those which the shepherd boy might have chosen for his great adventure. The olive trees growing alongside the brook are so gnarled and twisted that it almost seemed that they might have been witnesses to the stirring spectacle. At least the hills are the same, the brook, and the bending blue of the sky. In silence we crossed the bridge and went on to Beit Jebrin, an Arab village on the other side of the plain. Beit Jebrin is the center of much archæological interest. On the site of a Roman ruin, a magnificent mosaic floor has been uncovered representing in colors birds, beasts and flowers, now enclosed to protect it from the weather. In the adjacent valley of Marissa there have recently been discovered many tombs with inscriptions and colored pictures regarded as of great archæological importance. It was in this vicinity that Asa with his five hundred and eighty thousand men of Judah, and Benjamin contended with Zerah, the Ethiopian with "an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots;" and Asa won a signal victory. How incredible it seems that such hosts could have been gathered in a country so sparsely settled as rural Palestine now is.

Leaving our motor, we went on foot to visit the caves of the valley, many of which, excavated in the soft chalk-like stone, were formerly dwellings of the Philistines; and probably at an earlier date by a prehistoric race. Some of the caves are of regular dome shape, like a bee-hive, with a stairway leading in a

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spiral down the side, and with an opening in the top to admit the light. Others are irregular in shape and very extensive, large enough to house comfortably several thousand people. The caves are dry and the white stone gives an appearance of cleanliness, quite unlike the usual underground chamber. We also visited several tombs cut in the soft rock, on some of the walls of which are pictures in color well preserved, even after so many centuries have passed. It is a place where one would linger; for the surroundings call up many questions to which one would like to find the answer.

The country is thoroughly pastoral, an ideal setting for flocks and herds. Crossing the valley we came upon a shepherd boy, whose piping we had heard from a distance. He played most skillfully on his pipe of reed, being able to produce a continuous sound with the intake as well as the expiration of his breath. While we were listening, along came two Bedouin fellahin—the younger a most graceful and refined-looking young man dressed in the flowing robes of his race. Seeing our interest in the shepherd's pipe, he played it for us; and when negotiations were opened with the lad for its purchase, he came to our aid, with the result that it now reposes on the shelf of our library; and from it the purchaser is able to draw liquid notes which take us back to that rocky hillside in far-away Beit Jebrin where a shepherd boy amused himself with his crude pipe as he watched his grazing camels.

Here too we learned to distinguish between tares

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and wheat. The whole valley was planted with grain and now, half grown, was mixed with many tares so closely resembling wheat, that training of the eye was necessary in order to distinguish between them. A Bedouin boy, forestalling my desire, came to my aid and soon I was "cleaning the wheat" with no mistakes. He, too, plucked the tares until I had quite a handful. Presently our guide took us into another series of huge caverns, and I momentarily forgot the lad. On emerging, he was not in sight and I regretted that he had not been rewarded for his aid at the time; but on reaching our motor, there he sat on the running board waiting for the *baksheesh* which I gladly gave him. On our way back from the caverns we came upon two Bedouin women filling their aprons with small stones which presently they deposited in a large shallow basket. When the basket was filled, they set out for the village, the elder of the two carrying the heavy receptacle on her head, apparently with no discomfort whatever, although it must have weighed more than a hundred pounds. The stones, we learned, are used in the baking of bread.

At the village well were gathered a score of Arab women with jars for their evening supply of water. Squatted about the curb with black headdresses and long garments, they looked like ravens, as they gossiped of the affairs of the day. The well is the meeting-place for the women of an Arab village, and they linger till the shadows fall. Seeing our desire to secure a photograph, they eagerly arranged themselves, quite

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willing to have their pictures taken. Then they showed us how in a leathern bucket attached to a rope they draw the water from the cool depths of the well, more than sixty feet below the curb.

Back through the twilight we made our way, revolving in our thoughts the wondrous happenings of this ancient land which we had covered in a single day,—Abraham, "Friend of God," and his flocks—David and his sling—the huge army of Asa—the dwelling places of prehistoric peoples—and the shepherd boy, perhaps a modern David, all unconscious of our presence, as we first caught the mellow notes of his simple pipe across the gray old valley. The dim past and the living present seemed inextricably to blend.

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CHAPTER IX

The World From Mt. Tabor

WHILE the high places of earth noted for the extensive views afforded are numerous, not all look down upon great theaters of action. Palestine, territorially insignificant, has many heights from which views may be had extending far beyond its geographical confines. From no other height of all the Holy Land is the view more comprehensive than from Mt. Tabor; and from no other spot in all the world does one look down upon a stage whereon have been enacted so many thrilling scenes in the drama of human history. The plain of Esdraelon, stretching away from the very foot of Mt. Tabor to the Mediterranean Sea, is absolutely unique in the number and importance of the events for which it has furnished the stage.

We had rested in Nazareth the night before our visit to Mt. Tabor. The little hill-set town where Jesus spent his boyhood and young manhood has for every disciple of the Nazarene a strange fascination. Although on a previous trip to Galilee and the north country, we had halted there for a day and night, yet when the opportunity for a return presented itself we gratefully accepted it and again at evening trod its quiet streets, where humble artisans ply their trades and small merchants seek trade from the passer-by. From

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the high hills which encircle Nazareth to the west, we could look upon Mt. Tabor, lifting its domed head above the lesser heights to the east, the traditional location of the "Hill of Precipitation" where it is said the angry populace, stirred to deep resentment by the words and works of their young townsman, threatened to throw him down the steep declivity.

Leaving Nazareth at an early hour, we wound our way down the crooked road presently to emerge on the plain of Esdraelon, fairly awave with great fields of wheat and barley, thickly strewn with myriads of wild flowers. Above the sea of green the larks poured out their joy in the sparkling sunshine of the new day. There is no well-defined road to Mt. Tabor and the little Arab village, Deburish, probably the ancient Daberath, lying at its western foot. Leaving the main highway, we adventured forth, following the winding trails of the flocks and herds which find pasture in the foothills, and at night are driven to the shelter of the numerous villages scattered about the border of the plain.

It seems a strange experience to lose one's way in a wheatfield, yet but for the directions which the fellahin gave us as they plowed, we should have had great difficulty in reaching Tabor, although its symmetrical form lay in plain view before us. As it was, it took upwards of an hour to find our way to the base of the mountain. Skirting the village, we climbed by hairpin curves, some nineteen in number, which we agreed were the most thrilling we had yet en-

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countered. But we arrived in safety at the iron gate barring the roadway near the western end of the plateau which forms the top of the mountain. Although our driver vigorously rang the bell at the gate, no keeper appeared, and we made our own way on foot to the monastery which with a magnificent church crowns the summit. Large and ferocious dogs guarded the gate to the courtyard, and presently a keeper appeared and stilled their ominous growlings.

Ascending the high tower, we looked upon a scene which both for its natural beauty and historical significance is without parallel. Fifty miles or more to the north rises mighty Hermon, its snow-clad heights glistening like burnished silver in the morning light. In the middle foreground, the blue waters of Lake Galilee are aglow with the long sun-rays. We distinctly recognize the tall eucalyptus trees which mark the site of Tel Hûm, ancient Capernaum, just north of the plain of Gennesaret. Beyond the lake rise the hills of Hauran and Bashan, while to the northeast, dim in the blue distance, the Jebel Druze guards the mysteries of the great Syrian desert, stretching in numberless miles beyond.

To the northwest lie the hills which encompass Nazareth; to the right of this far in the distance lift the mountains about Safed, the city set on a hill, which manifestly cannot be hid because of its lofty situation. In the nearer distance are the Horns of Hattin, traditional site of Jesus' delivery of the Beatitudes. These volcanic peaks rising out of the fertile

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plains are the scene of the defeat of the Crusaders by Saladin and his Saracens. So much for a hasty summary of the northward prospect.

Turning eastward we look down a low slope to the valley of Jordan and the heights beyond, to Gilead and southward to Moab, land of many appealing traditions. Directly to the south in the near distance and just across the plain of Jezreel rises the height of Little Hermon against the base of which, as though for shelter, nestle two villages of deep interest to the student of the Bible, although of widely different appeal, En-dor and Nain. It was to En-dor that Saul, sore beset by the Philistines and, it seemed, facing certain disaster, came at night from his camp at Gilboa to consult the witch. So fallen was he from that strong faith in the Lord which had sustained him as king of Israel in his earlier years, that he was even willing to invoke the powers of darkness, if by such means he could avert the disaster so surely pending. Receiving no comfort from the experience, still confused and fearful, he returned and faced the struggle, which ended in defeat; and his own body and that of his sons including noble Jonathan, greatly beloved of David, were suspended from the walls of Beth-shan.

The little village of Nain to the west of En-dor, is the scene of an incident in the life of the Nazarene upon which Christians love to dwell. The widow's son declared to be dead was restored to life, not through witchcraft or occultism, but through Jesus' clear concept of Life as God.

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Beyond Little Hermon lies rocky Gilboa, not alone associated with Saul's defeat; for it seems clear that here also Gideon won his midnight victory over the Midianite host.

To the right of Gilboa, where the river Kishon takes its course and reaches across the plain of Esdraelon even to the Mediterranean at Haifa, is the scene of those stirring events connected with the defeat by Barak of the Canaanites under Sisera, in which the prophetess Deborah played so important a part. The story as told in the Bible is a glowing epic. Barak, encamped on this very Tabor on which we were standing, encouraged by Deborah, went down to the plain and right there in front of Gilboa engaged and routed the Canaanite horde, and forever broke the power which had divided the tribes of Israel by holding the plain intervening between Samaria and Galilee. Henceforth Israel remained a united people, the tribes of the north having free intercourse with their southern brethren.

Jeremiah, the prophet, is intimately associated with another scene enacted on this same stage, the fertile plain of Esdraelon. It had long been predicted that an Egyptian army would invade this northern state; but the self-satisfied people were deaf, and replying to his words they declared, "Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise; he hath passed the time appointed" (Jer. 46:17). To this Jeremiah gave answer that it would come to pass as "surely as Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea."

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And the Egyptian host came forth when "Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates" (II Kings 23:29). It appears certain that Josiah need not have set himself against this mighty host which was pressing through to attack an enemy far beyond; but untempered zeal controlled him and he fell, and his son was anointed king at Jerusalem in his place. "And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day" (II Chr. 35:25).

Turning farther toward the west we see the long ridge of Carmel bordering the horizon, thrusting its western spur full out to the sea. This height is intimately associated with the prophet Elijah and we see dimly the altar erected on the traditional site of his triumph over the priests of Baal. Across the plain some few miles east of Carmel and in full range of our vision is the probable site of Megiddo, the Armageddon of the Old Testament. Important excavations carried on here have disclosed old walls many yards thick which are thought to be of Canaanitish origin. Megiddo was besieged and taken by the Pharaoh of Egypt as early as 1480 B. C., and the booty taken was so extensive and of such a character as to shed much light upon the advanced civilization of the Canaan of that ancient day.

We also look down upon the scene of Jehu's ride from Beth-shan to Naboth. When anointed by Elisha's servant and told that he was to be king of

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Israel, Jehu set forth to engage Ahab and destroy the heathen population of Israel. This also was the scene of the defeat of Holofernes, Nebuchadnezzar's general, when the besieged Israelites were delivered by Judith, the Jewish heroine.

Back and forth across this peaceful plain in the Hasmonean days swept Egyptians, Syrians, Jews; and here Jonathan Maccabeus was treacherously captured by Trypho. The Romans during their eastward surge came to Esdraelon and left the landmarks of their presence in the names of two towns, Legro and Kastro.

Cleopatra with her glittering train moved in state across these rolling acres; Roman generals—Mark Antony, Pompey, Vespasian and Titus—here carried the eagles of Rome against all who undertook to bar their path.

This was also the main highway of traffic between the eastern cities of the Decapolis with the mother country. Later came the Christians, who set up their shrines throughout the valley, until out of the desert to the east swarmed the Arab hosts, and Moslem mosques supplanted Christian shrines. These foreign invaders remained until the Crusaders, fired by religious fervor, came to contest their mastery of the Holy Land, and Esdraelon again became the scene of mighty strife.

After long years of contention, the hosts of Saladin swept back the bearers of the cross and Christianity was again excluded from the scene of many triumphs. In the closing year of the eighteenth century Napoleon,

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filled with the lust for empire, launched his war-tried armies against the hosts of the Crescent and suffered a defeat to his prestige from which he never fully recovered. Again in our own day, less than ten years ago, the forces of the West confronted on this very plain the hosts of the Star and Crescent. Allenby, with a masterful knowledge of the campaigns fought out on this sanguine stage, out-maneuvered the enemy and again, let us hope for all time, the standard of western Christianity and civilization floats over the scene of many battles.

What a stage and what a history! How different its present aspect! We look upon modern villages, set in the midst of its peaceful fields, new-born in the hope of restoring the glorious prestige of the past, of reëstablishing Zion in the land of its birth, where as of old the one God may be worshipped and ancient Israel come into its own. We made our way slowly down the winding road, filled and thrilled with the review of wondrous pageantry which, through the long centuries, has been paraded upon the broad acres of historic Esdraelon.

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CHAPTER X

Mt. Gerizim and the Samaritan Passover

So fascinating was the scene from the summit of Mt. Tabor that we lingered in the tower of the fine monastery until warned that if we were to reach Nablous in time for the Samaritan feast of the Passover, an immediate departure was necessary. Because of the relation of the year 1927 to the Metonic Cycle, celebration of the ancient feast was begun at high noon rather than at midnight, as in all other years.

Hastening down the mountain, after some delay caused by the meanderings of the cattle trails, the only route from the mountain to the main highway, we finally unraveled the road and set out for Nablous, some thirty-five miles distant, where we arrived at 11:15 o'clock. But there was a mountain to be climbed, and in the heat of midday, with the sun beating fiercely down from a cloudless sky! The sides of Gerizim are steep and bare, affording pasturage for flocks, and the trail is rough from many rolling stones. The Lady in Blue had been in doubt of her ability to walk because of a troublesome accident to her foot a few days before, but she bade me proceed and assured me that she would follow in due course, as it seemed wise.

So the journey was begun and continued up the

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steep trail. Many pilgrims, gathered from the four corners of the earth, bent upon witnessing the spectacle. were making their way up the mountain. The ascent seemed arduous until a young Moslem, with top coat buttoned close and carrying a large and apparently heavy suitcase, marched placidly by me; and a Moslem woman, bearing on her head a package as large as a bushel basket, strode up the mountain bolt upright, as though walking the village street. Then the journey became easier and I arrived at the scene of the Passover soon after the ceremony began. The Lady in Blue made her appearance scarcely ten minutes later.

The ceremony of the Passover is celebrated by the Samaritan population of Nablous on a level spot in a saddle of the mountain, within a space perhaps forty by eighty feet in extent and enclosed by a rough stone wall. In the center is a pit in which burned a brisk fire. Upon iron bars which lay across the pit rested several cauldrons of water; and standing about was a group of men garbed in white garments, not unlike the flowing costumes of the Arabs, and with white scarfs wound about the fez, chanting in ancient Hebrew the service of the Passover as it appears in the Book of Exodus.

The ceremony is carried on with great fervor. Now the participants, who are all men, prostrate themselves, bowing the forehead to the ground; again they lift their hands upward as they appeal to the Most High. The High Priest alternately prays and reads, and in certain portions of the ceremony all join.

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About the central group of celebrants crowded several hundred onlookers of many nationalities; American tourists from ships lying at Haifa and Jaffa; Jews from the newly founded towns of the Zionists; learned men, professors from the Hebrew University at Jerusalem, and scholars from distant lands; archæologists from the excavations of various buried towns of Palestine; Arabs, and Bedouins; Circassians from the towns beyond Galilee—all eager to witness the strange spectacle. British soldiers in khaki, undertaking to keep the group at a respectable distance from the worshipers, were at times almost overwhelmed as the eager spectators surged forward; and many cameras were busy as the ceremony proceeded. The High Priest, a venerable old man with flowing beard and clad in long robes, led the ceremony. After a half hour of this praying, chanting and reading, the lambs were brought in for the blood sacrifice, and held about the pit by men with sharp knives in their hands. At a given signal, with great shoutings and amid intense excitement, they cut the throats of the lambs.

The High Priest dabbled his fingers in the flowing blood and smeared the faces of sickly children, brought up the mountain to be healed at this ceremony. Presently the water, scalding hot, was poured over the bodies of the sheep and the wool pulled off, leaving the skin intact, a protection to the flesh while the lambs are roasted. The bodies were then taken to a tent at the back of the area and prepared for the roasting pit, the rock lining of which a fire, burning

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for several hours, had thoroughly heated. The carcasses with long spits run through to keep them intact were then suspended from iron rods, and the pit covered over. By six o'clock in the evening, the bodies, properly roasted, were taken out and the feast celebrated. The ritual provides that no bones shall be broken; and to prevent the sacrifice from being defiled by the unclean touch of Moslem or Christian, great care is taken to burn all waste. At the feast, as no utensil must touch the meat, the food is eaten with the fingers.

During the days of the celebration only unleavened bread is eaten, the large thin cakes seen in the markets of all Arab towns. It is not crisp like the *matsis* which we ate that night at the house of the Chief Rabbi. A substitute for the bitter herbs eaten at the feast is a species of wild lettuce which grows on the mountains. The hyssop which is dipped in the blood of the sacrifice and struck against the door posts and lintel of each house in which the participants reside during the sacrifice is wild thyme; and strictly observed is the provision that "none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning" (Ex. 12:22). It was this mark upon the door posts which was to be a sign to the Lord who because of it "will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you."

The killing of the lambs, it is held, commemorates the saving of the Hebrews from the plague which smote the Egyptians. The bitter herbs and unleavened bread are eaten to remind them of the hardships of

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Samaritan Passover on Mt Gerizim—plucking wool from the bodies of the slaughtered lambs

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the Children of Israel under Egyptian rule, and again during those trying years in the wilderness. "And they baked," runs the narrative, "unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened; because they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual."

All through the work of preparation, even after the reading is finished, the chant is kept up, "We call and affirm there is no God but God." At the close of the service all bow and kiss the hand of the Priest, saying, "Every year may you have peace." After the pit is sealed, the service is taken up again with the singing of the Song of Moses at the Red Sea, and the Angel's Song. An ancient manuscript of the Pentateuch is presented and read with great show of veneration for the cherished document. The spectacle is highly impressive only as one gains the spirit in which it is carried on. It takes on a deep significance when looked upon as the devout expression of their highest sense of worship. We saw it in broad day, but the spectacle at night must be even more impressive, taking on an added element of weirdness.

No stranger eats of the Samaritan Passover for it is written, "And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof." The roasted bodies are taken out of the pit with more shouting of prayers and in the midst of much excitement. The Samaritan families, men, women and children, gather about and hungrily

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partake of the meat which is placed in large pans. Every scrap not eaten is carefully burned. The feast completed, the participants retire to their tents and the first day of the Passover is ended.

The celebration of the Passover continues for eight days and much of the ceremony takes place at their Holy of Holies, the sacred shrine on the top of Gerizim where the Samaritans claim Abraham was prepared to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice. The Samaritans regard Gerizim rather than Moriah as the holy mountain, in consequence they hold that the true worship is conducted here rather than on the site of the temple in Jerusalem.

During the time of the Passover the Samaritans with their families assemble on the mountain, living in small wooden houses and tents throughout the period. It is on the whole a weird and gruesome spectacle, quite devoid of spiritual significance until one gains the point of view of this peculiar observance. It impresses one as belonging to the distant past, to the days of the grand celebration of the Passover in the temple at Jerusalem, when it is said a hundred thousand lambs would be sacrificed. Through an interpreter we talked to the brother of the High Priest, a fine upstanding man with full gray beard and striped robe, who might have stepped out of the pages of the Old Testament. He insisted upon the authenticity of the ritual, contending that the Samaritans alone hold to the true spirit of the Passover.

The history of the Samaritans is an interesting one,

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but in some particulars not altogether clear. After Sargon at the head of the Assyrian army had conquered the Israelites and led them away captive, he settled members of other conquered tribes in the depopulated cities. "And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof." These strangers, with their worship of other gods, adopted in part at least the Hebrew worship to appease the "God of the land." As they gradually came more generally to worship the one God they established their Holy of Holies on Mt. Gerizim, which has continued to this day to be the center of their devotion. About the origin of their traditional enmity to the Jews there seems to be a degree of uncertainty. Some authorities hold that after the Israelites returned from the Babylonian captivity, the Samaritans attempted to prevent the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Others say their proffered help was refused. At any rate, the Jews and Samaritans were at odds and this bitterness was enhanced by the fleeing to the people of the north of certain outcasts from Jerusalem, among them Manasseh who was exiled because of unrighteous conduct.

This enmity continued through the centuries and was recognized at the time of Jesus' ministry. Although their territory lay in the direct route between Galilee and the Holy City, rarely it seems, did he pass

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through it, presumably because of their unfriendliness. He chose the shorter route through Samaria on one notable occasion, however, when occurred that momentous experience between Jesus and the "woman of Samaria" at the well of Sychar, recorded so appealingly in the Gospel of John. Even though as the woman said, the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, the disciples went into the town to buy food. In the conversation the woman made reference to Mt. Gerizim as the seat of Samaritan worship. So impressive were the Master's words that others of these supposedly unfriendly people came out to him with the result, as we read, that "many more believed because of his own word." And he lingered with them for two days.

The Samaritans in the past have generally been regarded as an unlovely people and are so esteemed even to this day. May it not have been because they were misunderstood? And yet when with a heart filled with love for humanity Jesus came among them they responded, and a bond of sympathy and of understanding was established between them, a situation which did not obtain even in Nazareth, his own city. That in the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus took a member of this despised race to render aid to the injured man has a significance which probably has not been fully recognized. And we should not forget that it was a Samaritan who alone of the ten healed lepers returned to give thanks. The Samaritans are thought to be an ignoble people, and yet there is something

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admirable in their persistency in holding to the ancient rite of the Passover. A weak race would have surrendered long ago.

By mid-afternoon, after the lambs had been safely bestowed in the heated pit, there was a lull in the celebration and we made our way down the mountain in the midst of the dispersing crowd. In need of refreshment, we thought to enter the city but found the roads barred by guards who refused us admittance. Later we learned that the authorities of Nablous had closed the city to strangers to guard against a recurrence of the serious collision which took place two years before between a party of Jews from a tourist ship and the celebrants of the Passover. It seems that the old fires of enmity, still smoldering, broke out afresh into what at one time seemed a serious conflict. As Jerusalem, with the cheerful comforts of the American colony, was only forty miles away, we turned homeward and arrived in time to celebrate a second Passover that evening as guests of the Chief Rabbi of Palestine.

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CHAPTER XI

Over Jordan

AS one journeys about Palestine, from the high places, which are numerous, his eyes frequently wander eastward to that land of mystery out of which came the wilderness-wearied Children of Israel into the land of promise. We first looked over Jordan from Mt. Scopus, which is the continuation of Olivet. Traversing the summit road of that long elevation to the east of Jerusalem, we had suddenly realized that the patch of shiny blue to the southeast upon which we were looking, was the Dead Sea, that the deep gorge to the northward of the blue sea was the Ghor, the valley of the Jordan, and that the high irregular wall beyond, misty in the afternoon haze of an early April day, was the land of Moab and Gilead, of Moses and Elijah. From that moment our desire was kindled to visit those mysterious heights.

While the familiar saying that "from Jerusalem to Jericho is all down hill" is literally true, in places the motor road to Jericho which traverses the wilderness of Judea, makes gentle rises, the better to negotiate passage around a beetling headland. The Jordan lies due south of Jerusalem, some twenty miles as the crow flies, nearer thirty by motor, so numerous are the hairpin turns made necessary by the deep wâdies and precipitous hills which constitute the forbidding wilderness of Judea.

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The object of greatest interest on the road is the site of the Inn of the Good Samaritan, now known as the Kâhn Hadrûr. It is a modern structure although there are fine pieces of ancient walls in the court. It is of more than passing interest that the Master chose a Samaritan as the dispenser of charity in this compelling parable for, as we have seen, the Samaritans were a despised and unfriendly race; of the ten healed of leprosy, the only one who returned to acknowledge his healing was a Samaritan; to a woman of Samaria also Christ Jesus uttered his marvelous words at the well of Sychar. Is there a significance in this that has not yet been revealed?

Modern Jericho is but a straggling Arab village with flat-roofed houses of sun-baked clay, just waking up from a lethargy which has lasted for centuries. It is situated at some distance south of the Jericho of the time of Jesus' visits, near Elisha's Fountain; and the town of that day probably was situated somewhat apart from the site of the Canaanite towns which Joshua attacked and conquered as his first victory after entering the Promised Land. Not satisfied with his conquest, Joshua laid a curse upon the man who should rebuild it, a prophecy which was fulfilled it seems to the very letter. Jericho was known as the city of palms and attained considerable importance under the kings of Israel.

Jericho, which lies at the edge of the Jordan plain, is eight hundred twenty feet below sea level, thirty-three hundred ninety-two feet below Jerusalem. As

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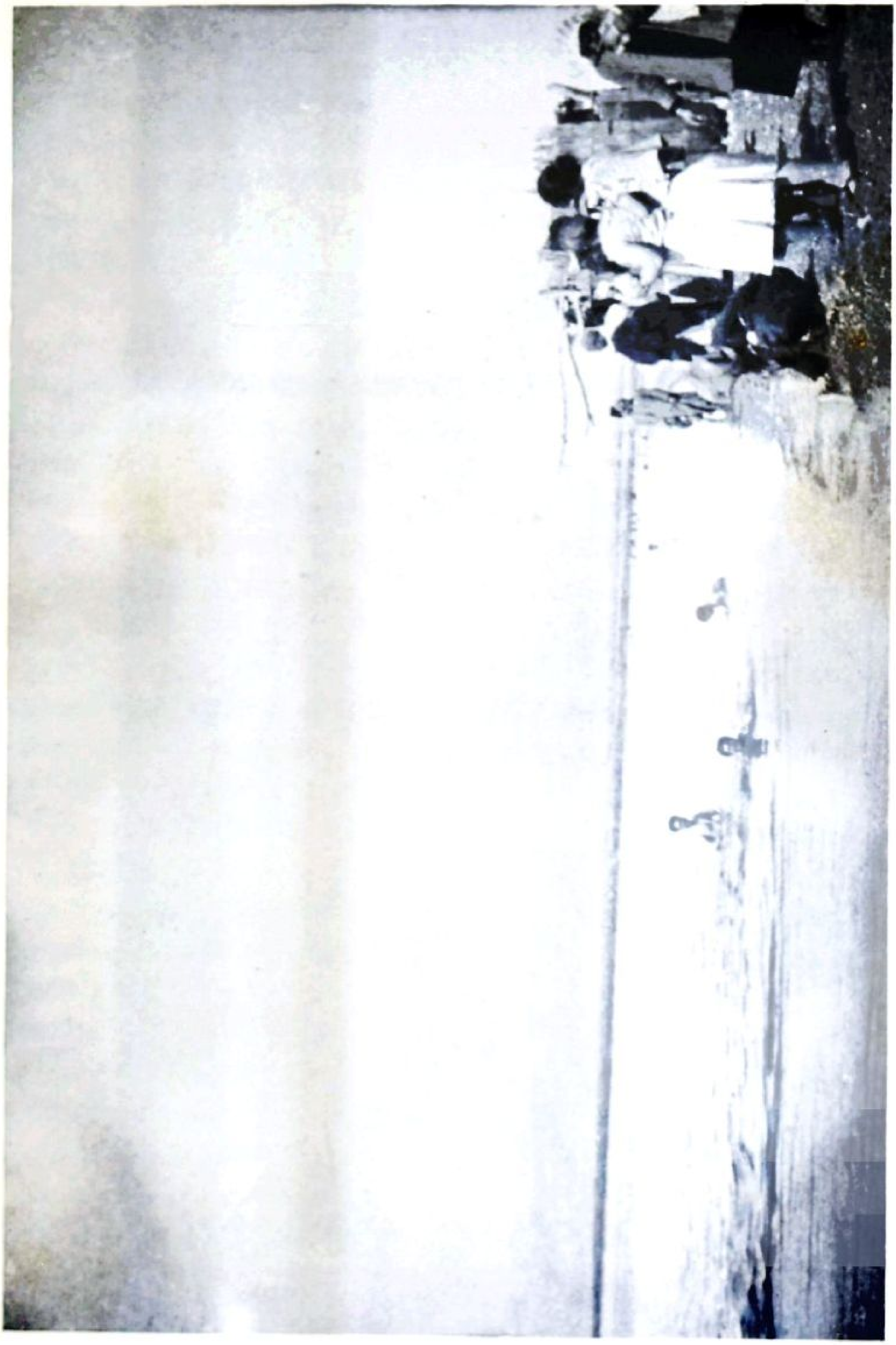
the Dead Sea is thirteen hundred feet below sea level, on leaving Jericho we still descend, and crossing seven miles of plain, for the most part barren, arrive at the shore of that strange phenomenon, a sea nearly fifty miles in length, into which flows each day some five million tons of fresh water, yet has no outlet. Its water is so impregnated with salt and other minerals that no form of life can exist in its depths except at the mouth of the fresh water streams which flow into it. There is no vegetation along its shores, no aquatic life on its bottom. It is as desolate as the arid plain which borders it.

As our objective is the country beyond Jordan, we halt but briefly at the Dead Sea, then return to Jericho where we strike the road leading across the plain of Jordan some five miles to the Allenby bridge. After paying a toll of fifteen piasters we cross into Trans-jordania where the "mountains of the other side" loom so invitingly.

At the bridge the Jordan is a swift, muddy stream, scarcely more than a hundred feet wide, with a sharp turn one hundred fifty yards above, where it strikes against precipitous banks of clay standing fifty feet sheer above the turbulent tide. Except where these high banks border the river, above and below the bridge, it flows through luxuriant vegetation, a tropical tangle, the home of many wild folks, both beast and bird.

Never have I looked upon a more forbidding scene than the wide plain which borders Jordan,—arid,

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Bathing in the Dead Sea

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fairly shimmering with heat even at this season, treeless and devoid of vegetation except for clumps of scrubs here and there dotting the plain, and scanty flowers which thrive in tropical heat. This does not apply to the banks of the river, but rather to what might be termed the flood plain extending for several miles on either side back to the high bluffs, which wall in the valley both to the east and the west.

We cross the heated plain toward an opening in the hills which promises an exit. Rolls of twisted barbed wire by the roadside bear silent witness to the operations of war which went on here during the great conflict. What tremendous hardships the men were called upon to endure! As we ascend the wâdi Sha'ib almost immediately the character of the country changes. In the wâdi a crooked tumbling stream makes down from the heights of Gilead, far to the northeast, its course bordered with a continuous rick of oleanders, now in full bloom, a sight quite fascinating to our eyes unaccustomed to such floral profusion. Above the fresh bloom of the oleanders wave the tawny heads of tall reeds, the *Arundo durax*, like pampas grass in their feathery grace. The reeds bowing and shaking before the strong breeze give us a new meaning to the words "a reed shaken with the wind" (Luke 7:24). We ascend by a road winding in and out, around projecting headlands of gray limestone. The scene grows wilder and we catch only occasional glimpses of the plunging stream, now far below us.

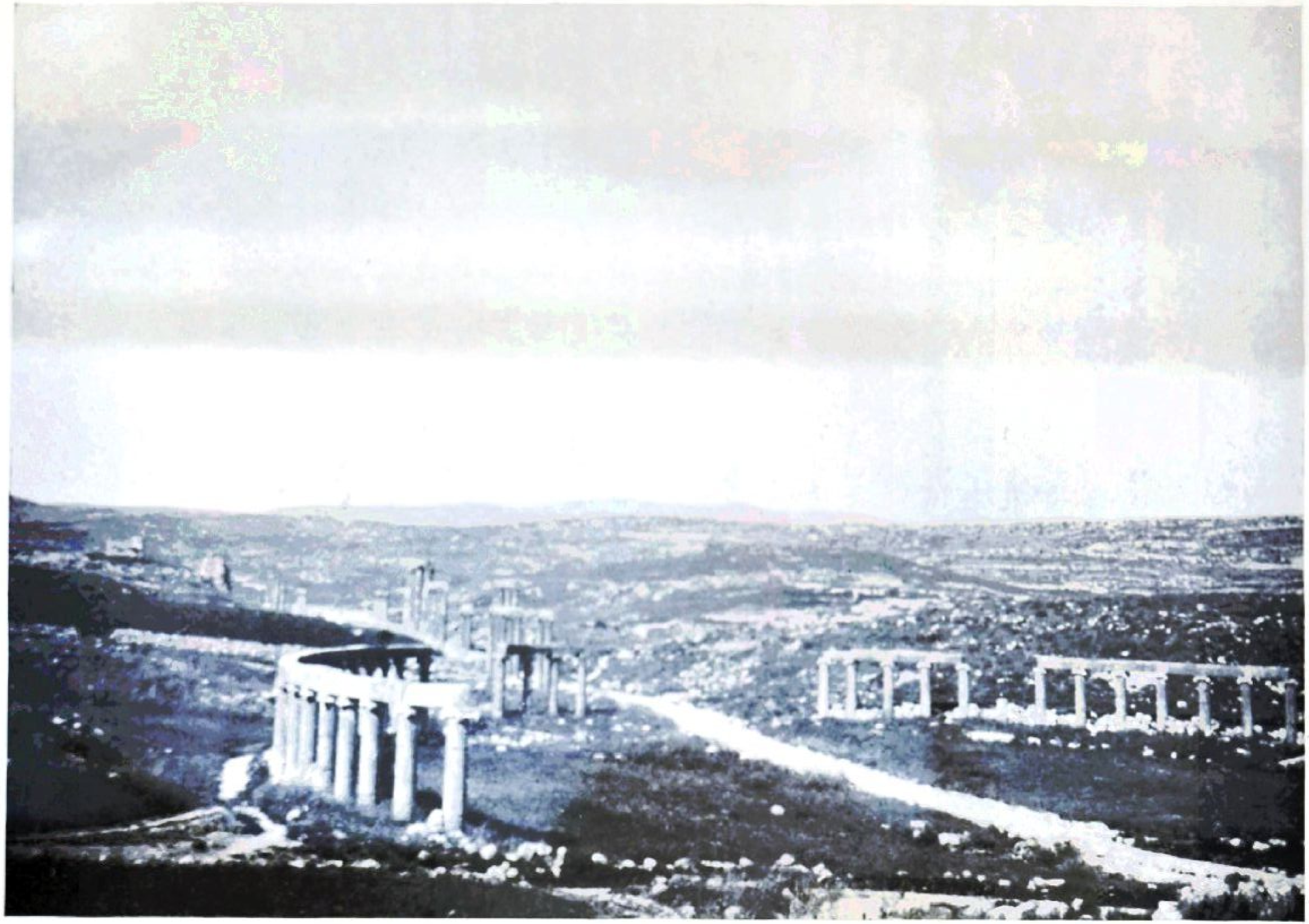
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Along the bed of the brook and up the steep sides of the gorge lie patches of cultivation, which with numerous flocks of sheep and goats give an air of pastoral prosperity even to this rugged scene. The wild flowers are in lavish abundance. Rock-roses both pink and white cling to the cliffs; wild hollyhocks mingle their dainty pink with the fine yellow of the stately fennel, while anemones, poppies, pheasant's eye and ranunculus join their shining scarlet with the white of the May weed, the blue of the tiny speedwells and the golden yellow of the wild chrysanthemum, as golden as the coreopsis which we so assiduously cultivate in our home garden. Wonderful stalks of anchusa, another friend of our summer days in New England, add their deep blue to the colorful symposium.

Meantime we have steadily ascended until, gaining the heights of Gilead, we overlook a broad plateau with the hills of Judea in the distant west. The Bedouin farmers are all about us, their black tents of goats' hair dotting the landscape. We are scarcely up when we begin a descent, for the Sha'ib must be crossed before we can reach our objective. Down the cliffs we wind past great caves where shepherds dwell like swallows in the cliff, animals and the family in the one room. Crossing the stream on a well-built bridge of stone we ascend gradually to El Salt, a prosperous Arab town, a market place for the Bedouin farmers. It lies on two steep hills, the clay-colored houses rising tier on tier to the very summits, completely hiding the narrow streets. This town was

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East of Jordan—ruins of the Forum at Jerash, ancient Gerasa, a city of the Decapolis

badly shattered by an earthquake only a few weeks after our visit.

There we leave the wâdi Sha'ib and turning north climb still higher until we are some three thousand feet above sea level, more than four thousand feet above the Dead Sea. The country opens out into a broad plateau affording excellent opportunity for distant observation. We descend again through fields of wheat and barley and cross the brook Jabbok which has its rise in distant hills to the east and flows almost a direct westerly course between the mountains of Gilead and emptying into the Jordan at a point half way between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea.

Much of interest centers about the mountain-born Jabbok. It was the northern border of the tribe of Ammon. On the south bank, and, tradition says, at a point near our crossing, occurred the meeting between Jacob and Esau. Here Jacob wrestled with the angel until the break of day, refusing to let the heavenly visitant go until he had been blessed. Later the Jabbok was the boundary between the kingdom of Sihon, who refused passage to Moses and the Children of Israel, and Og, whose domains extended northward over the plains of Bashan even to snow-clad Hermon and the hills of Hauran. The stream now bears the no more euphonious name of *Nahr Zurka* in reference to the peculiar milky appearance of the water.

Again we ascend to a plateau partly forested with pine and oak. The road swings over broad ridges, affording extensive views of Samaria to the west. Just

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past midday we catch the first glimpse of our quest, the ruins of Jerash, or ancient Gerasa. This was one of the most prosperous of the ten cities forming the Decapolis of the Romans, who brought to this far eastern border the enterprise which built the world's greatest empire, and the culture of Greece.

Gerasa is mentioned by Josephus as having been taken by Janneus, in 85 B. C. Its early history is much shrouded in darkness, although Ptolemy, Strabo and Pliny make mention of it. In the second century it was built with great architectural splendor; and its ruins are the most extensive and by far the most magnificent beyond Jordan.

Entering the area of the city by a huge triumphal arch, we pass a deep basin which formed a miniature lake where naval spectacles were presented. Fifty-two of the five hundred twenty stately columns which enclosed the large forum are still in place. To the southwest of the forum is a theater built in the form of an amphitheater in excellent state of preservation, the high rows of seats and much of the proscenium still in place. In the north section of the city is another theater, less well preserved, eloquent testimony of the effort of the Roman authorities to entertain the populace.

From the forum the main street, stone paved, and bordered by fine columns, extends more than a half mile northward. The pavement bears the deep marks of hurrying chariots and many interesting inscriptions are found upon the broken pedestals. The ruins of temples, basilicas, and huge baths bespeak a large city,

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teeming with life, which entirely disappeared long before the Middle Ages. The fate of Gerasa is unknown; its ruins alone remain to bear mute witness to the methods of life in vogue in those ancient days. The head of a marble statue believed to represent Christ Jesus recently unearthed here has excited great interest in London where it has been sent. Excavation is still being carried on under the direction of an English archæologist.

What tremendous enterprise Rome displayed in carrying its conquest, its civilization, and its borrowed art to points as widely separated as north Britain, the upper Nile, and the very edge of the Syrian desert!

Leaving this fascinating location, in the blaze of the afternoon sun, we motor back to Ramman, and turning to the southeast in an hour and a half reach another city of the Decapolis, Ammân, ancient Philadelphia. Here Joab fought against the children of Ammon and took the royal city. Here, following the directions of his king, Joab set Uzziah in the forefront of the battle that, by his destruction, David's sin might be hidden. After the victory, Joab sent word to David of his triumph over "the city of waters" asking him to encamp against the city and take it himself also, lest, as he (Joab) had taken the city, it be called by his name. And it is related that the spoil of the city was brought forth in great abundance. Ammân is watered by the Jabbok, one branch of which has its rise among the high hills to the east. It is a busy town where the Arab farmers come to buy and sell and the tourist is just beginning to make his way.

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CHAPTER XII

Moab and Madeba

AMMÂN, which is the capital of Transjordania, is the Rabbah Ammon of the Old Testament. Its streets crowded with sheep and goats, with camels and cattle, recall the prophecy of Ezekiel, "I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couchingplace for flocks: and ye shall know that I am the Lord." Ptolemy Philadelphus rebuilt the city in the third century and gave it his name. As a city of the Decapolis, Philadelphia was prosperous, and when Rome embraced Christianity was made an Ecclesiastical See. But like all the region about, it was inundated by the great Arabic wave and fell into desuetude. In modern times, however, the building of the railroad northward to Damascus and southward to Maan (Alsahba) and Medina has increased its importance.

The Roman ruins of Ammân scattered over a considerable area are important and, in sections, well preserved. The chief of these both in interest and magnificence is the theater directly in front of our hotel. Eight of the fifty columns which marked the entrance are in place, and the semicircular rows of stone benches rising above one another, forty in all, form an amphitheater capable, it is estimated, of seating some seven thousand persons. One wonders at the extent of these

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Roman towns. The population must have been much greater than at present. Today a theater of the size of this ancient structure in this community would be an anomaly. Yet scarcely thirty miles away was Gerasa with two great theaters, and other cities of the Decapolis in the general vicinity, also supplied with extensive theaters. The country has undergone great changes since the Roman legions trod its hills and victorious generals here held their triumphant celebrations.

So filled with interest is this country that one quickly becomes an enthusiast regarding it. After a last look at the ancient theater in the early morning light, we take the road southward and cross the Jabbok, here called the Ammân. Leaving the village we soon enter upon a plain which, in course of a half hour, opens out so broadly that, in every direction, it reaches to the horizon. This is the plain of Moab, deep in luxurious crops of barley and of wheat. As the land lies in long swells the road rises and falls over gentle slopes and we are reminded of Aroostook County in our own state of Maine. The fields now green with waving grain, barley and wheat, stretching away in every direction, bespeak a happy and prosperous land. The black tents of the Bedouins stand back from the road, their sides raised to admit the air, for these plains are now bathed in the shimmering heat of spring. The eminences where the ledges break through are crowned here and there by small villages of sun-baked

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clay houses, Circassian and Arab, but the plain bears no habitation other than the black tents.

The spell is delightful. In the midst of cultivation wild flowers grow in profusion. A beautiful iris in full bloom, maroon in color and with petals like soft velvet, dots the fields profusely. A convolvulus of mauve gray clings to the dark red soil like drops of glittering water. A dainty blue gladiolus lifts among the grain, and pink flax springs, wherever the plow has not been. Notes of many birds add to the charm of the scene. Skylarks twitter from the ground as we pass and, flinging themselves high in air, pour out their gladness in merriest tones. This is not the crested lark we have seen so commonly in Palestine, but a larger variety, a horned lark, having dark wings edged with white. They are as common as sparrows in the fields of New England and add a distinct charm to the landscape.

Storks are everywhere! Sedately they walk about the fields in an unending quest for food. How tame they are! Sometimes when we pass at barely fifty feet they pay no attention to us. And when they do take alarm, their flight is short. Soon their pink legs drop like anchor ropes from a balloon and they gently touch ground again, taking three or four steps to regain their equilibrium. They are excellent examples of the fearlessness displayed by birds which are immune from destruction. So long have storks been protected in European countries that they have lost much fear. They are at present on passage and shortly

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they will leave for their nesting-grounds to the north and west.

Vultures hover above the plain, hawks and falcons quarter the sky, and a dainty quail springs from a cover of wild rye as we search for the iris blooms. White throated stonechats and finches frequent the rocky hills and wild pigeons hurry away in direct flight. They are large birds, the counterpart of the pigeons of St. Mark's in Venice, or in the Public Gardens in Boston. No doubt they have a common ancestor.

Charming as is this scene of peace and plenty, our chief interest lies in the historic background of the country. To our right, but back from the motor road along the border of the high plain, lies Hesban, ancient Heshbon where Sihon, king of the Amorites, had his capital. It marked the border between the tribes of Reuben and Gad. These two tribes, it seems, wearied with their wilderness wanderings, faltered at the very gates of the Promised Land and asked Moses to be allowed to remain in this fertile plain. One can easily understand their desire, for a more promising prospect for a pastoral or agricultural people could scarcely be conceived. "And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben inheritance according to their families," runs the narrative in Joshua. "And their coast was from Aroer, that is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain of Medeba; Heshbon, and all her cities that are in the plain" (Jos. 13:15-17). This seems definitely to have located the tribe of Reuben;

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but there is no means of knowing the boundary between it and Gad. Some accounts place Gad south, on the Arnon, others, north of Reuben. Both tribes had almost constant warfare with the Moabites whose warlike spirit could not be held in check even in the deep defiles of the Arnon. The tribe of Reuben gradually disappeared and its subsequent history is unknown.

As we pass southward over the plain of Moab toward Madeba, our thoughts continuously turn to that beautiful pastoral of the Scriptures, the story of Ruth, the Moabitess. How strange it seems to be traversing the land where this inspiring character spent her youth before the famine drove Elimelech from Bethlehem Ephratah into the land of Moab, in the hope of finding food for Naomi and their sons, Mahlon and Chilion. How little had we realized in reading the story in the Scriptures that Ruth accompanying Naomi, returning a widow and childless to her native Judea, could look back from her adopted land across the Dead Sea to the plains of her homeland! As the crow flies it is scarcely more than two score miles from the plain of Moab to Bethlehem, and in clear skies each is plainly visible from the other.

The Moabite maiden became the mother of Obed, the grandfather of David. Thus does divine Providence work out the plan of human history.

David, it seems, recognized his Moabitish ancestry; for, when hard pressed by Saul, he committed his parents to the king of Moab, although later David

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made the Moabites tributary to his realm. The last trace of this fierce people, worshipers of Chemosh and Moloch, disappeared early in the Christian era. A hint of their presence found in the name Kir-moab, manifestly akin to Moab in derivation, has given place to modern Kerah. The history of the Moabites, as given in the Biblical records, has corroboration in inscriptions on the Moabite Stone found in 1868 at ancient Dibon. While the stone had been somewhat disfigured by Ahab, it was possible to read its inscriptions in Phœnician characters telling of the wars of Mesha, king of Moab, with Israel (II Kings 3). It mentions King Omri and the names of other men and places dealt with in the Bible, and in every case testifies to the integrity of the Scriptural records.

We make our way through this luxuriant wheatland, some of which we are told bears even eighty fold, to ancient Madeba, originally a city of the Moabites mentioned in Joshua. It was a city of the Amorites when Moses reached this land, and later was taken by Reuben. Omri, king of Israel, took it in his campaign east of Jordan, but later it again fell under the rule of the Moabites. In the early Christian era it became the site of an Ecclesiastical See, but was utterly destroyed when the Persian armies of Chosroes II swept the plains of Syria. Scarcely a half century ago a band of Christian Arabs again settled the hilltop and in excavating for cellars found many ancient ruins. Of greatest interest is a mosaic map of the world as then known, variously ascribed to the fourth and

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fifth centuries. Its nomenclature is in Greek and was worked out with a marvelous skill which required great patience. It is now exhibited in the floor of a Greek church.

From the edge of Madeba our eyes look longingly to the west and north in search of Nebo the lonely mountain from which Moses saw the Promised Land and where his body is supposed to lie in a grave upturned by "an angel of God." One thinks of Nebo as a mountain rising high above the plain, perhaps like Sinai or Ararat. But there are no mountains here. The plain itself is high, some twenty-six hundred feet above the sea, and only rocky eminences rise in swells above the plain. Where Pisgah stands, or Nebo, no one can tell. Probably the whole ridge to the west and north of Madeba was called Pisgah and some eminence was known as Nebo. But the position of both is conjectural. It seems that a half century or more ago, in response to the urgent demands of pilgrims to be shown the height from which Moses viewed the Promised Land he had so long sought but was never to enter, a certain ridge was pointed out; and as is the case with so many places surrounded with holy memories in Palestine, it has been found profitable to establish the exact spot where occurred incidents closely associated with the Bible. The word "traditional" has sprung into common use and covers a multitude of uncertainties. Anyhow, we are satisfied to know that this was the land across which the great law-giver led the Children of Israel, seeking asylum

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East of Jordan—"Tents of Kedar"—a Bedouin encampment in Transjordania

in some land where they could work out their great destiny.

One can but speculate as to what were Moses' thoughts as he looked across the Dead Sea, to the desolate mountains beyond. The rugged and forbidding prospect is not alluring, unless one's gaze penetrate Judea to the shimmering plains which lie beyond the mountains, bordering the Mediterranean. Perhaps he gave full credence to the reports of Caleb and Joshua, discounting the unfavorable return of the others "sent to spy out the land." What he thought will never be disclosed, but subsequent history of his flock fulfills his hopes and fully justifies his sublime faith.

We return from ancient Madeba by the same road, as there is no other route practicable for motor travel. Back to Ammân with its storied ruins, its citadel above the town still bristling with cannon, and its gently flowing stream, bordered with green trees and luxurious gardens where the birds drink and bathe; back to Ramman and El Salt, and to the wâdi Sha'ib with its swift-running brook. We halt for lunch by a fountain of clear, cool water which gushes out of the sheer rocks. The noon-day heat is somewhat tempered by the overcast sky, but the air is heavy and oppressive. Amid the sheltering bushes the birds sing to us, strange voices to be sure, but none the less charming. A motor halts to enable its occupants to partake of the cooling water. Its occupants are Arabs, bound, we conjecture, for the great festival of Nebi Mousa which is taking

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place at a shrine built amid the desolate hills near Jericho, to the west of Jordan. Presently an Arab farmer leads his donkey to the spring for its grateful refreshment. As the young man gazes at us with what we interpret as a wistful look, we offer him a portion of our lunch; he bashfully accepts the egg and sandwich but gives no sign of appreciation. Our Arab driver, also a Moslem, assures us that an Arab never gives thanks.

Down the valley we pass, grateful for the good road which rounds many high promontories that seem perilous. We can't resist the temptation to pick a bunch of the beautiful oleanders, which, however, soon wilt in the intense heat of the Jordan plain. We cross the substantial Jordan bridge and after traversing the seven miles to Jericho, turn aside from the main road to visit the Moslem shrine of Nebi Mousa. We have been meeting long lines of pilgrims on donkey back, sometimes a whole family on a single beast, scarcely able, it seems, to bear one person. They are in fantastic costume, mothers with babies slung at their backs, all returning from their annual sojourn of several days at this famous shrine. The conception of Nebi Mousa was strange. It seems that eight hundred years or more ago the Moslems, jealous that so many Christian pilgrims came to Jerusalem during the Easter season, determined to meet the situation by establishing a shrine and festival in honor of the prophet Moses. Regardless of the fact that Moses never crossed Jordan, on the west side not far from the

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Dead Sea, in a section absolutely arid and desolate, they built a tomb, with a mosque and shrine to which thousands of Moslems annually repair, it seems as much for social intercourse as for religious purposes. We make our way there through a cloud of dust so blinding that at times we halt, as collision seems imminent. A brief visit suffices, so forbidding to Christian eyes is the whole spectacle, and we gladly turn toward Jerusalem by the Inn of the Good Samaritan and Bethany of sacred memory.

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CHAPTER XIII

"Bethlehem of Judea"

AS the student of the life and works of Christ Jesus naturally, it seems, first turns to the story of Bethlehem as the spot where began that marvelous career destined to change the subsequent course of human history, so the visitor to Palestine plans to make an early excursion to the scene of the Saviour's birth. A series of circumstances caused us to delay, however, and it was not until we had spent several weeks in the Holy Land that on a beautiful Sunday afternoon late in April we found ourselves on our way to Bethlehem accompanied by two friends, members of the English colony now settled in Jerusalem to administer the affairs of government.

We had planned to see Bethlehem and Hebron on the same trip; but as the Mosque of Machpelah at the ancient capital of Judea is one of Islam's most sacred shrines, it was necessary to secure special tickets of admission from the mufti in Jerusalem. During the festival of Nebi Mousa, which corresponds to the Christian's Holy Week, Christians are not admitted to the Mosque, so we were obliged to wait until the festival was over and affairs in the ancient capital had again assumed their accustomed aspect. In the meantime came our friends to take us to Bethlehem.

The road to Bethlehem runs out from the Jaffa

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Gate, and descending abruptly, crosses the vale of Hinom to the great stone which, tradition says, was the south wall of the pool of Sihon, of which Hezekiah speaks. To the left, as we make the ascent beyond, lies the Hill of Evil Counsel, topped by ruins of a village in which stood the country house of Caiaphas. A tree standing solitary near by is pointed out as that upon which Judas hanged himself. But, as in the case of so many Palestinian traditions, one is under no obligation to accept it as authentic. On the Hill of Evil Counsel, Solomon built an altar to Moloch, where many abominations, even human sacrifices, were practiced during his and subsequent reigns.

The sites of many interesting Biblical incidents lie all about us, as we proceed. On our right, lies the plain of Rephaim, a point on the border between Judah and Benjamin, scene of many encounters between the armies of Israel and their numerous enemies, and where David signally defeated the Philistines. A mile farther is the Well of the Magi, where tradition says the Wise Men, after their interview with Herod, stopped to draw water. Tradition also states that Mary and Joseph halted here on their way to Bethlehem. Opposite the orthodox monastery of Mar Elyas, which stands on the summit of a hill east of the road, is a memorial in the form of a seat of white marble, in Greek design, erected by Mrs. Holman Hunt in honor of her husband, to whom we are indebted for many interesting pictures of the Holy Land and its strange peoples. Halting for the magnificent view of

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the country to the eastward of the Dead Sea and the heights of Moab, our attention is drawn to the figure of an old man, sitting under a nearby olive tree with shirt removed, quietly "delousing" himself. That he is a Moslem holy man, we are assured, a wanderer who subsists wholly upon charity, a traveler through many lands, his earthly belongings consisting of the contents of a red handkerchief, a coconut shell, and a staff. On the following day as we were leaving the office of the mufti in the Temple Area, who supplied our tickets for the Hebron Monastery, we saw the same old pilgrim again, properly clothed with his bundle and staff sitting quietly on the curb waiting for the charity upon which he depends for his subsistence.

On the left, a mile from our road stands Jebel Fureidîs, or Frank Mountain, a truncated cone, symmetrical, rising several hundred feet above the surrounding country, where Herod the Great built for himself a magnificent castle. In the same vicinity is a labyrinthine grotto, the cave of Adullam, where the youthful David, with his shepherd's flute came to soothe the distraught Saul. On the right, as we proceed, stands the tomb of Rachel, a shrine cared for by the Jews, yet equally venerated by Moslem and Christian. The story of Jacob's bereavement as set forth in Genesis reads: "And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day" (Gen. 35:19). There

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is, however, some difficulty in reconciling this location with the statement that the tomb was situated on the boundary between Judah and Benjamin.

From Jerusalem our road for the most part has kept to the high places, traversing a country of vineyards, and groves of olives and figs. It bears a distinct air of prosperity, many of the dwellings being substantial, some even pretentious.

Beyond Beit Jala, a flourishing Christian village set in the midst of the largest olive groves in Palestine, the road forks, the right hand leading by the Pools of Solomon on to Hebron; the left direct to Bethlehem, which now stands in full sight before us. Just beyond the fork of the road, an iron enclosure surrounds David's Well, identified as "the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate," from which when the Israelites were besieged by the Philistines, David's three mighty men at great risk to their lives brought water. Entering the town by a narrow street, we find ourselves in the old market place before the Church of the Nativity, the center of interest for all pilgrims.

Bethlehem, next in interest only to Jerusalem, is one of the oldest cities in Palestine. Besides the one event which all Christendom holds in sacred memory, it has many other associations of compelling interest. It was the home of Naomi and Boaz, the scene of the romantic idyl so appealingly told in the Book of Ruth. It was also the home of Jesse and David, who was called from tending his father's sheep in the nearby hills to be anointed king over Judah and

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Israel. Bethlehem means the "house of bread," so named probably because of the plenitude of the crops produced in ancient times in the fertile fields which surround it. It is claimed, and it seems with good authority, that the variety of corn from which originated cultivated wheat was found only in this country. The Old Testament name, Ephrath, signifies fertility.

Bethlehem sits astride two ridges some twenty-five hundred feet above the Mediterranean, overlooking on the north the valley of the Carob Tree, Wâdi el Kharroubeh, and on the south, it touches the Wâdi el Rahib. It is now a very prosperous town of approximately twenty thousand people. Its inhabitants, said to be descendants from the Crusaders with a mixture of Arab and Syrian, are intelligent and energetic. Their chief interests are agriculture and cattle raising. They also manufacture a large variety of religious souvenirs of mother-of-pearl, olive wood, and the Dead Sea stone, an industry dating back many centuries. The three religious groups, Orthodox Greek, Roman Catholic, and Armenian, have established many institutions in the town and its environs.

The two chief objects of interest in Bethlehem are the Church of the Nativity and the Shepherds' Field. The Church is probably the oldest Christian church in the world. It stands over the grotto which is the traditional manger in which was cradled the infant Saviour, and it is believed that the cave or grotto was connected with the Inn in which the Christ child was

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born. Cander, author of "Tent Work in Palestine," says, "The rude grotto with its rocky manger may, it seems to me, be accepted by even the most skeptical of modern explorers." Its location at the end of the road in the eastern part of the town seems a very probable site for the Inn, the purpose of which was to accommodate the traveler. As early as the second century, Justin Martyr mentions the site, and Origen states, "There is shown in Bethlehem the cave where he, Jesus, was born and the manger in the cave." Thus for eighteen centuries at least, this site has been accepted. In 330 A. D., Constantine chose it as the location for his Basilica.

As our interest centers on the Church of the Nativity, we immediately proceed thither and stand long before the ancient Basilica, a huge pile, blackened by time. There is probably no means of determining whether the present structure was actually built by the Byzantine emperor or by Justinian two hundred years later. It seems, however, that Justinian at least overhauled it. The Crusaders found it intact and it escaped the ferocious assaults by the numerous enemies of Christianity to which Jerusalem has been subjected. The Basilica is quite hidden by the convents, Latin, Orthodox Greek, and Armenian which cling to its outer walls. The atrium is seen, from which three doors lead into the vestibule of the Church. Two of these have been closed and the third greatly reduced in size, the better to resist Moslem assault, as well as to keep out wandering camel and stray donkey. The

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interior is of the simplest architecture. The roof is supported by four rows of red stone columns of Corinthian design, upon several of which Crusaders' crests have been engraved. A wooden architrave surmounts each colonnade, supporting the roof timbers of English oak. Eleven circular windows are set in the upper part of each wall. A wall, erected by the Greeks at the extremity of the aisles, was removed by the English in 1919, thus affording an unrestricted view of the nave, double aisles, wide transept, and semi-circular apse.

Down the slippery staircase we went, to a vault-like room some thirty-three by eleven feet, at the east side of which beneath an altar rests a silver star, set in the pavement, said to mark the spot where the Christ-child was born. The inscription about it reads *Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus Natus Est*. We are taken to the Chapel of the Innocents where, it is alleged, a number of children, assembled for safety, were slain by order of Herod in his efforts to destroy the Christ-child. Through a narrow passage, we pass to a rock-cut chapel, said to be the abiding-place of St. Jerome, "Father of the Church," who first translated the Bible into Latin.

From a slight eminence on the outskirts of the town, we look out over the Shepherds' Field which slopes away to the east, in the midst of which is the Grotto of the Shepherds, a subterranean chapel of the Orthodox Greek church. In this field, the Bible states, shepherds were watching their flocks by night when

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Field of the shepherds where angels announced the birth of the Christ-Child

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"the angel of the Lord" came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all the people." Looking eastward the eye rests on distant Moab with the gorge of the Dead Sea in the nearer foreground. With the devout Christian, Bethlehem stirs the deepest emotions.

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CHAPTER XIV

Mandated Government in Palestine

THE difficulties attendant upon the establishment of a just and efficient government in Palestine cannot be fully appreciated without due consideration of the extreme racial and religious differences of the inhabitants. While the population may be roughly divided into Arabic (Moslem), Jew and Christian, there are many minor subdivisions, both racial and religious, within the larger groups, each differing in some essential from all the others, a condition which greatly complicates the problem of government.

The Moslems of Palestine, of many races and varying in color from white to coal black, with all the ethnic differences which that implies, are for the most part Sunnis, that is, Traditionists. They are further divided into four groups, viz., Shafi, Hanbali, Hanafi, and Maliki — all Moslems and followers of the Prophet, yet each group differing from every other in some more or less important particular in respect of worship.

What is true of the Moslem is also true to a certain extent of some of the other religious groups into which the cosmopolitan population of Palestine is divided. These groups include Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, the Uniate churches (which while

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acknowledging the authority of the Pope yet preserve in some degree their own liturgies and customs), the Armenian church, Jacobites, Copts, and Abyssinians, the Anglican group, the American colony, the German Templar community, Jews, Samaritans, Druses, Metawîleh and Bahais, each group bent upon preserving its identity and its peculiar religious rites.

While it would seem that their racial and religious differences offer difficulties almost insurmountable in the administration of a government inspired by outside authority, the difficulties are immeasurably increased when a benevolent power undertakes to establish self-government by so mixed a population. Then it is that the lack of political experience becomes manifest.

The desire of a community to govern itself is natural and commendable; self-determination is a term often heard in recent years. But to prepare for self-government a community so widely divergent in tradition, race, industry, and religion, as the present population of Palestine, is a work requiring almost inexhaustible patience and the exercise of great wisdom.

To illustrate: soon after England established civil government in Palestine, a plebiscite was undertaken to elect a legislative council which should function with the High Commissioner in formulating ordinances to supplant the Turkish laws, and to institute new laws where necessary. What happened? The largest racial group, the Arabs, refused to participate in the election, thus frustrating the whole project.

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Now, four years later, April, 1927, the first general election in Jerusalem is being held amid great excitement among the various groups, arising from a zeal to elect their respective candidates. Although in certain cases this excitement has found expression in the discharge of firearms, no casualties have been reported.

It is evident that while the interim between the first attempts to hold an election and the present has brought some understanding of the rights, duties, and privileges of citizenship in a self-governing community, there is still much to be done in the way of political education to develop the true sense of service. Self-interest, the desire to use political privilege purely for personal gain, is still uppermost among these primitive peoples.

In the proclamation which General Allenby caused to be read to the inhabitants of Jerusalem in English, French, Italian, Arabic, and Hebrew, on the occasion of his formal entry into the Holy City, two days after its capitulation in December, 1918, occurs this notable passage:

"Since your city is regarded with affection by the adherents of three great religions of mankind and its soil has been consecrated by the prayers and pilgrimages of multitudes of devout people of these three religions for many centuries, therefore do I make known to you that every sacred building, monument, holy spot, shrine, traditional site, endowment, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer, or whatsoever form of the three religions, will be maintained and

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protected according to the existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faiths they are sacred."

That the government established by British military authority scrupulously carried out the high purpose of this declaration, there is not the slightest doubt.

The Balfour resolution declared the purpose of the British Government to be to look with favor upon the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and to use its best endeavor to facilitate that object. It also stated, "If the growth of Jewish influence were accompanied by Arab degradation, or even by a neglect to promote Arab advancement, it would fail in one of its essential motives."

With so definite and so noble a purpose as its goal, the English Government under the mandate of the League of Nations set out to establish a righteous and efficient government over a territory some eight thousand square miles in extent, having a population of more than seven hundred thousand, which had suffered for centuries from oppression and misrule.

That the government established under the mandate has succeeded in maintaining the *status quo ante bellum* regarding the holy places, and in protecting the rights of the various religious groups, is evidenced by the increasing amity and cordiality among them. It has also succeeded in introducing civic betterment in the form of improved public utilities and the establishment of free public schools.

For purposes of administration, Palestine is divided

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into three districts or provinces, viz., northern, middle and southern, the middle district including Jerusalem, which is the seat of government. The chief executive, the High Commissioner, is appointed by the Crown and is answerable to the British Government. The Chief Secretary is the Commissioner's principal adviser, and also the channel for all communications with other officials. He becomes the executive in the absence of the High Commissioner.

An executive council, consisting of the High Commissioner, the Chief Secretary, Attorney-General, and Treasurer, aids in an advisory capacity in the exercise of the administrative authority. There is also a council consisting of the heads of the various departments, which exercises a certain legislative function, its acts and ordinances being subject to veto by the British Secretary of State.

No ordinance may be passed "which shall restrict complete freedom of conscience and free exercise of all forms of worship when not subversive to the maintenance of public order and morals." Thus is religious liberty fully safeguarded.

The executive head of each province, or district, is a governor, or commissioner, as he is more commonly termed, also appointed by the Crown. In the district including Jerusalem, the governor is in effect the deputy of the High Commissioner, who resides in the Government House, the pretentious German hospice founded by ex-Empress Auguste and placed by her under the protection of the Order of St. John.

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Each of the four cities in the district has an elective council. That in Jerusalem numbers twelve, divided as follows: Moslem, five; Jew, four; Christian, three. The recent election occupied three days. The better to avoid disturbance, each group has its own polling place outside the walls in the new city.

Suffrage is exercised by male Palestinians twenty-five years of age who pay one pound municipal house tax, or half that sum as a government land tax. Only those who pay double these amounts are eligible for election to the council. Aliens acquire citizenship by a process of naturalization after two years' residence in the country. From the council of each city the Commissioner appoints a mayor, who thus becomes the executive officer for his city. As the district of Jerusalem includes Ramallah, Jericho, and Bethlehem, the Commissioner has the selection of four mayors in this district.

While the general government is responsible for education, general welfare, roads, police, and sanitation, there are many phases of public well-being which fall to the city council. This body is especially helpful in promoting cleanliness and maintaining peace and good will among the many factions. Taxation still follows the Turkish custom. A tithe of one-tenth of his crops is collected from each farmer, besides which there is a small land tax. A revision of the methods of taxation is a problem for early consideration.

The judicial department is quite separate from the

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executive, and the chief judges receive appointment from the Crown. Local magistrates are appointed by the High Commissioner. Ecclesiastical courts of the various religious groups exercise exclusive jurisdiction over marriage and divorce, questions of alimony and confirmation of wills. They also control all endowments for religious purposes, and their judgments are executed by process of the civil courts.

One of the great needs in Palestine is the establishment of a more extensive public school system, in which the children of all races and creeds may participate. Thus would prejudice in some degree at least be overcome and the common interest be emphasized. So long as each religious group keeps its children apart from all the others, so long will there be lack of that sense of unity which is essential in a self-governing community.

As one travels about Palestine he sees many evidences of new courage and hopefulness. Homes are under construction far from neighbors, where formerly habitations were grouped for protection. With the development of industries and the introduction of improved methods in agriculture, a period of prosperity will ensue, the like of which has not been known before. Stable and just government will in time win the respect of all classes.

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CHAPTER XV

Damascus, the Ancient of Days

OUR approach to Damascus, the most ancient of all cities, was from the high plains of Hauran. Leaving Galilee in the early morning, just below Lake Huleh, we crossed the Jordan by the *Jisr Benât Ya'kûb*, "the bridge of the daughters of Jacob," so named because, it is alleged, Jacob once crossed the Jordan at this point. Here the Jordan is now the frontier between Palestine and Syria, that is, between France and England, in the exercise of authority received by each through the mandate of the League of Nations. Our passports were examined on the Palestine side and, after paying a tax of twenty-five piasters each, we crossed, to be halted again, this time by French authority near an old kahn a hundred yards beyond the bridge.

Our road is the old caravan route between Egypt and the Euphrates, between Memphis and Damascus, trodden for time immemorial by the caravans exchanging the goods of the Orient and Occident. In long curves, we climb from sea level to the plains of Hauran, a high, treeless plateau strewn with black basalt rock, from which rise cone-shaped peaks, extinct volcanoes, a thousand feet above the surrounding country. These cones are as regular in shape as heaped-up measures of wheat.

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It is a forbidding country, yet not without interest. The Bedouin farmers with black oxen are plowing the fields radiant with wild flowers, and the crested larks pour out their melody on every hand. On our left mighty Hermon, snow-clad and serene, shoulders out the sky, while to the east dimly seen on the blue horizon lies Jebel Druze, the home of the warlike people who have caused France so much trouble. This range forms a barrier against the encroachment of the Arabian desert, the shifting sands of which are constantly adrift. At the little town of El-Kuneitra we are held up for passport examination again.

Circassians, whose home was formerly in the Caucasus, when conquered by the Russians, moved westward in order to be enabled to still live under the Moslem rule. Abdul Hamid, then Sultan of Turkey, planted seven of these colonies along the eastern edge of Syria and Palestine.

No sooner is our car at a standstill, than we are surrounded by a group of rather fierce looking Arabs and Circassians in fezzes of Persian lamb, the first of this race we have encountered. They seem greatly interested in the shiny varnish of our car, passing their hands over it and manifesting all the curiosity of children.

We lunch by the side of a rushing stream, Naaman's Pharpar, the center of the inquisitive eyes of a group of Bedouin children who assembled in an incredibly short time after our halt. By mid-afternoon, as we top a slight elevation, in the dim distance our sharp-eyed

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Arab driver sights the city set in the midst of a great mass of green and the magic word "Damascus" broke from his lips. From the plains of Hauran we descend to a level of two thousand feet, the elevation of the city.

Damascus lies like an oasis on the edge of a great desert. It is as much the gift of the river Abana as Egypt is of the Nile. Rising amid the snows of the Anti-Lebanon range, the Abana (the modern Barada) flows some fourteen miles through rocky wâdis, then flings its ice-born waters into the desert, giving life and prosperity to a great city. Its seven branches water a plain thirty by ten miles in extent, and their work done, lose themselves in the desert beyond. The river literally has no destination, no mouth.

The plain of Damascus is a forest of fruit trees, a most attractive setting for luxuriant plantations of vegetables and gardens of gay flowers. Looking down upon the city from the hills to the west, the appearance is of a thick wood studded with many houses, and pierced with shining minarets.

Damascus is the oldest of all cities, that is, it has longest been the continuous habitation of man. It antedates Nineveh, Babylon, and Memphis, all of which in turn conquered it; yet Damascus endures while they are crumbled into dust. Tradition has it that this city was founded by the grandson of Noah, a record old enough to satisfy the most inveterate of antiquarians. Yet Damascus does not, as do Jerusalem and Hebron, possess any buildings hoary with age, as

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one would expect from its long career, the beginnings of which are lost in the mists of ancient time.

The plan of Damascus in form is often likened to a spade; the handle and loop represent the Moslem quarter, the blade the Christian and Jewish. Its population of four hundred thousand is divided among Moslems, Jews, and Christians, the latter including sprinklings of many other races. Situated on the edge of the desert, it is the resort of the Bedouins, who, in contrast to their desert waste, look upon it as the very symbol of lavish luxuriance. Here these wandering Ishmaelites resort for trade and traffic; here they fairly swarm in the streets, cafés, and bazaars, fine upstanding types with an air of independence and mystery, and with a native grace that is unmistakable.

The main branch of the Abana flows straight through the heart of the city, its turgid tide confined between substantial walls surmounted by an ornamental balustrade. Along the river are plazas, little parks, and promenades where the leisure class resort for sociability and play. If one looks for a section of the city devoted to fine residences, he will be disappointed, for fine residences are lacking; if he search for ancient structures, his disappointment will be no less. In the many conflicts, staged at this crossroads of the world, the city has been destroyed again and again, only to rise, like Phœnix, from its ashes.

To the Christian, the most important fact of history associated with the city is the advent of Paul, who here experienced conversion from the most ortho-

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dox of Jews to the most militant apostle of the Christian religion. The "street which is called Straight" in which he resided is still one of the most important highways of the city, although it suffered considerable damage from the recent bombardment. It is called in Turkish *Sûk et-Tarwileh,* "the long bazaar," and runs from east to west the entire length of the city. It was to the house of Judas in this street that Ananias "a certain disciple" was sent by the word of the Lord: "And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight" (Acts 9:11). In strict obedience, Ananias went and the scales fell from Saul's eyes and he received his sight.

We are shown the house in which Paul lived when the effort was made to destroy him: and even the very window, from which he was let down in a basket by his friend in order to escape the wrath of the Jews, is pointed out. In both cases, we are certain that the word "traditional" should be appended. There is little evidence that the house in question dates back to the beginning of the Christian era, but that trifle seems to weigh little with those determined to fix the precise spot of Paul's adventure.

By far the most imposing building in Damascus is the Great Mosque, ranking in significance to the Mos-

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lem with the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem, and in sanctity with the mosques at Medina and Mecca. It presents three different styles of architecture, marking the three great dynasties which have controlled it. The foundation and exterior colonnades which are Greek, are believed to have belonged to a Roman temple, the site we are told of the temple of Rimmon mentioned in the Bible (II Kings 5:18) where Naaman placed his "two mules' burden of earth" and erected an altar. After Constantine's accession to the throne of the Eastern empire, the temple, which had been sacred to Jupiter, became a place of Christian worship dedicated to John the Baptist, whose head, it is said, reposes here, enclosed in a wonderful casket resting in a highly decorated tomb.

When Arcadius ascended the throne in 379 A. D., he caused the inscription to be placed over the door: "Thy Kingdom O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." After the fire of 1893 a second inscription in Greek was added, "God is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence of all them that are about Him." This inscription has now been covered.

For nearly three centuries this structure continued to be the center of Christian worship in Damascus. When the city fell into Moslem hands in 634, it was divided between Christians and followers of Islam. A hundred years later, the Khalif demanded all for wor-

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ship of the Prophet and, accordingly, the Christians were expelled and every vestige of their worship destroyed. Its subsequent history was varied. Destroyed by fire in 1069, it was ravaged by Tamerlane in 1399 and again destroyed by fire in 1893.

The mosque is the largest ever built, being four hundred thirty-two feet long by one hundred twenty-five feet wide. Its high vaulted roof of wood, and empty nave give it a very barren appearance. Its marble floor is covered with many highly colored, oriental carpets.

The industries of Damascus, which are numerous, are of the handcrafts rather than of manufacture and include brass and copper utensils and ornaments, cutlery of great variety and excellent quality, oriental rugs, furniture inlaid with ivory, glass, and mother-of-pearl ware, silk weaving, leather goods, and many other minor industries.

We visited brass works, a furniture shop, and rug-weaving establishments, in all of which child labor is employed at what the Occidental would call "starvation wages." The man, who showed us about the brass works where children of ten are employed at the most intricate work of inlaying copper and silver on brass, told us that some of the work was so trying for the eyes that it could be carried on by a person for not more than two hours a day, when change was made to some less trying work. Boys were making furniture and little girls were laboriously filing the

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mother-of-pearl for the inlaid work. When remonstrated with regarding the hard labor the children were called upon to perform, the reply was, "This or starvation." There is much to be done by the French government to protect women and children employed in the factories of Damascus.

The streets of the bazaar are roofed in, and the shops are grouped according to the kind of articles sold. The street life is of immense interest to the stranger and the street cries are a subject of constant amusement. The bread boy shouts, "O Allah who sustaineth us, send us trade." The drink seller cries, "Oh! cheer thine heart," rattling his copper cup to attract attention.

The seeker for local color can scarcely find humanity in more varied hue and more closely associated than in Damascus. Here the races of the world meet and freely mingle. On the streets, in the bazaars and public squares, the stream of life runs full and strong. Arab and Circassian rub elbows with Christian and Jew. Bedouins from the endless desert, the rocky slopes of Anti-Lebanon, and the plains of Hauran, dressed in sheep skins, jostle the millionaire from Paris and New York, clad in the most fashionable of habiliment. Soudanese, coal black and blue black, Tartars, Georgians, Armenians, Copts from Egypt, Abyssinians and Persian Effendi, mingle freely with the Algerian and Senegalese soldiers of France, while dainty ladies, families of French officers quartered here, give a touch

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of refined femininity to the scene. It is a motley throng which peoples this ancient city, restless yet restrained.

With its long lines of human history, its multi-varied life, its mingled odors of burning olive wood and fruit bloom, its blue skies and rushing waters, Damascus is a city one enters with keen expectancy and leaves with a pang of regret.

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CHAPTER XVI

Syria and the French Mandate

THE impression, which the traveler in Syria receives regarding the political condition of the country, may be quite at variance with the opinions he formulated before entering the district, perhaps when thousands of miles away. The atmosphere fairly pulsates with the military spirit and he is conscious of a sense of unrest which, at any moment, might burst into open violence. This is especially true of Damascus and portions of Lebanon, less applicable to Beyrouth, which, lying west of the Lebanon Mountains along the smiling Mediterranean, seems more European than Asiatic.

Although Syria is nominally under civil government, the French military establishment is visible over much of the territory under their control. We came from peaceful Galilee, crossing into Syria over the Jordan River just below Lake Huleh and climbing to the high plain of Hauran, traversed it and adjacent Bashan, the ancient land of Og. As we approached Damascus in its beautiful setting of green trees, a huge oasis, two armored cars rumbled by, and on either hand men in arms were at drill, or engaged in some kind of labor entailed by the military occupation.

On the way to our hotel we reported to the police, for every motor car must be registered at police head-

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quarters both on entering and leaving the city. A tour of the town disclosed many signs of military operations. A considerable portion of the Moslem quarter was still in ruins from the bombardment of 1925. The houses, built of sun-baked brick or mud held in place by slight timbers, crumbled like egg shells under the cannonading and now lie in a tumbled mass. Even the "street . . . . called Straight" (Acts 9:11) associated with Paul's appearance in this ancient city was in part destroyed.

However, already one improvement has resulted from this destruction; a magnificent boulevard, a hundred feet wide, has been constructed through a portion of the ruined section, the only street of its kind in the city, a striking contrast to many of the streets which are scarcely more than winding lanes. Wire entanglements were still in place in the outskirts; and, in the very heart of the city, the barricades made of brush wired together and filled with stones and cement were seen in the converging streets. These barricades, some eight feet in height, with embrasures for the guns gave substantial protection to the soldiery in the time of turbulence. French officers in smart uniforms frequented the streets and the red-fezzed Senegalese soldiers mingled freely with the crowds. Here and there a Druse is seen, distinguished by the white about his headdress.

While beyond question the purpose of the French is to establish just civil government for the entire community as soon as practicable, the situation seemed to

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call for the exercise of firm control expressed in terms of military power. One may at first think the display of force unnecessary or overdone, especially if he hails from a country where soldiers are few and confined to military posts. But after moving about the city and country and conversing with those well informed as to the situation, we were convinced that the policy adopted by the French has been in the main wise, and probably not more drastic than the situation has demanded in order to restore and maintain order.

A business man from Jerusalem, who was in Damascus at the time of the bombardment, expressed to me his firm conviction that the operations carried on by General Sarrail were wholly justified. The circumstances in part were these: Druses had openly rebelled against the French rule and were supported in their rebellion by a large party of Moslems, equally desirous of freeing themselves from what they regarded as foreign interference. The Damascus Art Museum, the celebrated "Azam Palace," had been burned to the ground by the Moslems, my informant stated, although its destruction was laid at the door of the French. A plot to destroy the Commandant himself had also been carefully laid. The Government House was set on fire at a time when it was believed that General Sarrail was in his offices. Fortunately he had been called away a short time before and thus escaped. The building was destroyed.

These incidents coupled with the ambuscade and almost complete destruction by the Druses of two

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French detachments numbering nearly a thousand men seemed to the authorities to call for drastic measures. And the number of troops was greatly increased, until some forty thousand men were quartered throughout the four states into which Syria has been divided. That the French desired to reduce this number at the earliest practicable moment was certain. The High Commissioner recently stated in Paris that he believed that soon the number of troops could with safety be reduced to twenty thousand.

The wisdom and efficiency of the French rule was also commended to us by an American who for four years had played an important part in the administration of the Near East Relief. Having spent much time in Turkey before the war, he is altogether familiar with the Moslem attitude and he expressed himself as convinced that less drastic measures than those taken by the French might have resulted in a religious uprising with the possibility of far-reaching consequences.

Shift the scene for a moment to Lebanon, which for nearly seventy years, ever since the massacres of 1860, in fact, has been under a sort of guardianship of four European nations. Even in this comparatively quiet state, there is intense prejudice against the Christians. The proprietor of the hotel in Baalbek, where we halted for a day, a Christian Syrian, told us the following, and the story is fully authenticated. Less than a year before, in his absence from home, a band of Druses and local Moslems entered his house, compelled

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his wife to open the safe, took all the valuables it contained and made off with his son, a young man twenty-four years of age. From their mountain retreat, they sent a demand for a heavy ransom which he paid in order to insure his son's safety. In view of this and similar incidents was it any wonder that the Syrian Christians are praying that the hand of France be not withdrawn, but remain however long may be necessary in order to establish a safe and stable government?

Already Lebanon enjoys a large measure of self-determination. The French occupation has had to do with scarcely more than the maintenance of peace and some direction in the collection and disbursement of the revenue. Even in the Jebel Druze, the stronghold of a sturdy and fanatical race, the French have undertaken to establish local self-government so fast as the conditions warrant.

The problem facing the French government in Syria is a difficult one, not unlike that of the United States in the Philippines. To withdraw, it seems, would invite strife between factions opposed racially, religiously, linguistically and traditionally. Having accepted the mandate of the League for this troublous country, France is in duty bound to carry on. Being in, there is no retreat. They must go forward in the restoration and maintenance of peace. Already, we were assured, there had been much improvement over the methods of government in vogue under Turkish rule. Taxes had been reduced to a more equable basis; civic

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administration of local affairs was being instituted, education encouraged, sanitation and improved methods of agriculture introduced. Each of the four states had its individual problems and needed to be treated accordingly. Lebanon, with its long experience of European tutelage, seemed much more fitted for complete autonomy than did Jebel Druze.

Lebanon opens to the sea with its busy port of Beyrouth, hill-set and beautiful. Here the American college has made felt its gracious and enlightening influence, upon not only the immediate city but upon the many nationalities from which its student body is drawn. Ideals of service, which make for democracy and altruism, are here inculcated with the result that its graduates go back to their respective communities inspired with a vision of better things.

After visiting both Palestine under English influence and Syria under the French, one concludes that England has the easier task. The same racial and religious differences which are met with in Palestine are found in a more aggravated form in Syria. The Moslem population in Palestine is gradually coming to feel something of the friendly spirit of the English government; they are learning to trust the officials whom at first they greatly distrusted. During the services attendant upon the Moslem festival of Nebi Mousa in 1927, for the first time was sung the English national anthem, a small incident to be sure, but a most significant one.

In Syria the singing of the Marseillaise by the

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Druses and Moslems seems a long way off; but even now the Christian Syrian is singing it in his heart, even though fear may prevent him from singing it openly. Righteous administration on the part of the French government is sure to leave its impress upon even the most recalcitrant portion of the population. A government wisely beneficent while firm in its administration is ready to meet more than half-way friendly advances on the part of its subjects. When governed and government understand each other's motives and purposes, a permanent basis of good will is near at hand. Meantime the nations, upon which these burdens have not been imposed by humanitarian necessity, can well afford to exercise patience and restraint in judging the acts of the governments upon whom the burdens have fallen. In the working out of better conditions for the less fortunate groups of humanity, the more enlightened nations will do well to maintain toward one another a friendly and sympathetic attitude. He who faces the necessity of action also faces the possibility of erroneous action; only the inactive are free from the possibility of making mistakes.

We came away from Syria much encouraged by the understanding gained of French purposes and methods in the handling of a situation fraught with many dangers and bristling with possibilities of still greater difficulties, were its affairs not wisely administered. But the spirit of truth is at work in Syria as throughout the earth and ultimately righteousness will be established.

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CHAPTER XVII

One Day in Palestine

IN no other country in all the world can one with a single glance encompass so many witnesses of the important past, of events which have been really vital to the well-being of the human race, as in Palestine. Our last day in the Holy Land perfectly exemplified the possibilities in this direction.

April 28 dawned clear and crisp. Two days before a half-inch of rain had fallen, one of the latter rains which bring joy to the heart of shepherd and farmer alike; for it both insures good pasturage for the flocks far into the hot months, and makes certain a bountiful harvest of grain.

The country is fresh and smiling as we leave Jerusalem by the Damascus road which leads northward over the hills of Judea. We touch the old Roman road here and there for a few miles until it forks, one branch leading to Jaffa, the other to ancient Cæsarea. Along the way the Arab farmers are busy with the late sowing of millet and sesame, the summer crops, while the women are engaged with cleaning the wheat, now well grown, of weeds and tares. The grape vines are putting on their summer foliage and the olive and fig trees are now in full dress of soft green, with promise of an abundant yield. Wild flowers are still in lavish abundance; rock roses and gay hollyhocks, bril-

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liant red poppies and yellow broom, pheasant's eye and cyclamen, lend a happy variety of color to the fields and roadside.

About nearly every one of the numerous hilltops we pass cluster some appealing incidents of sacred history. We are scarcely over the height of Scopus and well out upon the ridge beyond when we come upon the village of Shaffat, ancient Nob, "a priestly city of Benjamin" where, for a time, in Saul's day, the Tabernacle was placed. From this eminence the traveler out of the north catches the first sight of the Holy City. Hither David fled from the jealous Saul and, received by Abimelech, in desperate need, ate of the shew-bread before continuing his flight to Achish at Gath.

To the west rises the high peak of Nebi Samwîl where Samuel judged Israel and where tradition says the prophet is buried. It is one of the places sometimes called Mizpah, but there is room for doubt as to the authenticity of this claim. The claimants to the ancient honor of Mizpah are not less in number than the cities claiming to be the birthplace of immortal Homer. Nebi Samwîl was the scene of severe military operations during the Great War, for here the Turks made a last desperate stand to defend the Holy City, only five miles to the east. The little village, which crowned the hilltop, was laid in ruins by the persistent shell fire of both sides and when finally the British prevailed, the fall of Jerusalem was inevitable. The village is now rebuilt and a tall minaret crowns

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the mosque erected above the traditional burial place of the Prophet. Nebi Samwîl, rising nearly three thousand feet above sea level, affords a surpassing view of Judea. From its crest with a turn of the head, one's vision sweeps from the Mediterranean across Jordan to Moab and Gilead.

Another hilltop is pointed out as the Gibeah of Benjamin, where the abuse of "a certain Levite" led to serious consequences. Ten miles out we pass the village of *El-Râm* on the frontier between Judea and Israel, identified with the Ramah of Benjamin. It is believed that in this place the Hebrews were gathered by their captors before being taken to Babylon.

On many of the hillsides stand round, stone watch-towers, useful for the farmers guarding their vineyards when the grapes are ripened. Many of these towers are very old, dating back to the early centuries of the Christian era. As the road bends around the hilltops, we pass the little village of *El-Bireh* thought to be ancient Beeroth. A Crusader church crowned this nearby hill because tradition holds that it was here that the youthful Jesus was missed by his parents on the occasion when, after anxious search, he was found in the synagogue with the elders. The tradition seems to be based upon the fact that Beeroth was the first stopping place for caravans and bands of travelers coming out of Jerusalem. While it was scarcely a day's journey distant from the city, a late start made it a practical halting-place for the first night out on the journey to Nazareth, Tiberias and Damascus.

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We soon leave the high places of Judea and descend through olive groves into the valley known as the Wâdi el Harram, "the valley of the robbers." Here at the foot of a steep hill are many caverns which sheltered evil-doers, giving the place its name "Fountain of the Robbers." Our companion, who is also a very efficient guide and wise counselor, and who for many years has been a resident of this country, tells us that, before the coming of the motor car and the railroads, there were no roads, only trails for horse, donkey and camel, and that travel was dangerous because of robbers. The present-day traveler in Palestine rejoices in a sense of freedom and security quite lacking under Turkish rule.

The hills of Judea now give way to the mountains of Samaria, for Gerizim and Ebal lie across our path. These mountains, the intervening valley, and the plain to the east were the scene of many important incidents in the early history of the Children of Israel. The Samaritans hold that it was on Mt. Gerizim that Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac. Here Jacob built an altar and in due time dug a well. Into this valley Joshua led the Children of Israel and the towering heights became to them the "mountains of blessing and of cursing." So near are they that, from a natural amphitheater on the lower base of each, the human voice may be distinctly heard on the other. It was up the steep trail on Gerizim two weeks earlier that we climbed to witness the rites of the Samaritan Passover which is still kept in strict accordance with Levitical

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law, even to the slaughtering of the lambs before the altar.

At the foot of Mt. Gerizim to the east is located Jacob's well where Jesus held his memorable conversation with a Samaritan woman from the village of Sychar, modern *Askar*, in plain sight, nestling against the foot of Ebal. How appealing the setting! Jesus on his way from Jerusalem, contrary to his custom because of the unfriendly inhabitants, was passing through the country of the Samaritans. Wearied by the journey, he sat by the well, the place of refreshment, and a Samaritan woman from the nearby village of Sychar came for her pitcher of water. The words he uttered convey one of the most important lessons ever delivered to mankind. Neither on this mountain nor at Jerusalem shall be the true worship, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

The visitor is quite likely to be disappointed by the present surroundings of Jacob's well. He probably has pictured an open situation, and a curbed well where he may sit and ponder the significance of the message delivered there. This, however, will not be his privilege. A Russian church partly constructed occupies the site, while a completed chapel covers the well. We entered the chapel amidst the smoke of incense and the chanting of the litany, ceremonial rites which seemed strangely out of place. A boy lowered a cluster of lighted candles to show us the great depth of the well, some seventy-five feet, and drew for us a bucket

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of water; but we hastened out as the open air seemed more in harmony with our thoughts.

Between *Bir Yakoub*, Jacob's well, and Sychar stands Joseph's tomb in the "parcel of ground" which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, "for an hundred pieces of money" and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph. It would be difficult to name many objects so widely venerated as is Joseph's tomb. Jew, Samaritan, Christian, and Moslem alike recognize the universal qualities of Joseph, and, recognizing them, wish to do homage to his memory.

Abraham, entering the land of the Canaanites, pitched his tent under the terebinth of Shechem. Later, when Jacob came, it was a city of the Hivites, and Shechem was the headman from whom Jacob purchased the "parcel of ground." Abimelech induced the Shechemites to revolt from the Hebrew commonwealth and elect him as their king. After three years of unjust rule they expelled him from the city. Then Abimelech raised an army and attacking Shechem destroyed the city and sowed the ground with salt to make it sterile. That the land and city were restored, however, is evident from the return of the Israelites under Rehoboam, Solomon's successor.

After the Samaritans sprang up, the history of Shechem becomes inextricably involved with this strange people. The keeper of the excavations showed us about the old ruins, the city gates and walls, the walls of the temple, the remains of the houses and

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heaps of potsherds, bits of pottery some of which, it is believed, antedate the coming of Abraham. He also gave us wheat found in a grain bin near a rock mill, under many feet of rubbish accumulated during the intervening centuries. It is believed, and it seems with reason, that this grain dates back to the destruction of the city by Abimelech some three thousand years. It is as well preserved as though harvested yesterday.

Passing through the well-watered valley between the mountains, we leave Nablous on the left, and proceed about seven miles to the site of Omri's capital, the ancient city of Samaria, the chief object of our journey. The oblong hill upon which the city was built stands high above the surrounding plain, a prosperous and fertile valley. It was an ideal site for a city, both as regards defense and because of the commanding view it affords of the surrounding country. Omri, king of Israel, "bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria" (I Kings 16:24). So runs the narrative in the Book of Kings. This occurred about the year 925 B. C. Samaria became the capital of the ten tribes of Israel and gave its name to the surrounding country.

Omri, like Solomon, built substantially, setting the foundation stones of his temple into the very rock. Ahab, to please Jezebel his wife, daughter of the king of Tyre, followed with a temple to Baal. Then came

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the Assyrians under Shalmaneser II, who after a long siege took the city and built upon the ruins. The next conquerer of this hill-set city was Alexander the Great. He replaced the inhabitants with Syro-Macedonians, who occupied it until it was taken by John Hyracanus in 108 B. C. after a siege that nearly destroyed it.

During all these centuries Samaria was a small city, scarcely more than crowning the hill. But Herod the Great rebuilt it, greatly extending its area and magnificence.

Standing on the escarpment near the western gate of the city, one views at a glance the works of the early successive conquerors and builders; the rock-set walls upon which Omri's temple rested; the foundations of Ahab's pagan temple; above these are the vertical stones set by Shalmaneser II, and resting upon these are the works of Alexander, firm and in place, notwithstanding the seven sieges to which the city was afterwards subjected.

Above all and extending on every hand are the works of Herod the Great, remains of a colonnade reaching quite around the hill, of a theater, a basilica, and the many buildings which made up a magnificent Roman city.

What a panorama of human history is here laid bare! What endeavor to establish the ideals of the various conquerors are here exemplified! The history of fifteen hundred years is depicted in these stones and columns amid the ruins of which the mutilated statue

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of Augustus Cæsar, "Sebaste," lies prostrate, an eloquent witness of the temporality of the works of men. The modern Arab village clinging to the eastern slope of the hill bears the name of Sebastieh, a corruption of Sebaste, named in honor of Cæsar.

Arabs crowd about us eager to sell the ancient coins which they have dug from the ruins. Our friend with a keen eye quickly selects those really worth while, coins of the first and second centuries, which we gladly purchase. A company of school boys from Nablous, playing football amid the ruins, join us, eager to try their knowledge of English, and to ask many questions about America.

After lunch under an ancient olive tree, leaving this historic site, we retrace our road for a few miles, then strike down a valley toward the sea, passing on to the plains of Sharon where the green fields speak of peace and plenty. After an hour and a half, we enter the orange groves which for many miles in all directions surround Jaffa by the sea.

The country there is very prosperous, but Tel-Aviv, the suburb of Jaffa, a settlement of some forty thousand which has sprung up like a mushroom, gives one the impression of waning prosperity, as though there was no good reason for its existence. Its inception and up-building was a part of the first movement having for its purpose the reëstablishing of Zion.

After searching out in Jaffa the house of Simon

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the tanner, where Peter lodged in the long ago, we visited the traditional tomb of Dorcas. Then, passing out again upon the fertile plain of Sharon, all aglow with the rays of the setting sun, we turned homeward over the Shephelah into the hills of Judea with their winding wâdies, and reached the Golden City just as the mantle of night was thrown over its historic domes and minarets.

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CHAPTER XVIII

Reëstablishing Zion

THE traveler in Palestine today is brought face to face with a new order of things. No sooner does he enter upon the plain of Sharon, whether he arrive by sea through the water gate of Jaffa, or by rail from El-Kantara via Gaza and Ashdod, than he encounters evidences of activity quite out of keeping with his preconceived notions of the antiquated methods of the East. While he may still chance upon an Arab fellah scratching the ground with a nail plow drawn by a bullock or camel, a method as old as Jacob, he is more likely to see a tractor with its following gang of bright steel shares turning up the rich soil in wide deep furrows; or, he may witness the extraordinary spectacle of two sets of twin plows pulled alternately by a long steel cable back and forth across a wide field, the motive power being two stalwart oil-burning engines stationed at either side. While all this may seem quite unrelated to the reëstablishing in Palestine of Jews gathered from the four corners of the globe, nevertheless it has a direct and most important bearing upon this great enterprise.

The effort now well under way to populate again with Jews the Promised Land of Moses and the Children of Israel has attracted world-wide attention, both for sentimental reasons and because of the eco-

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nomic problems involved. Sentimental—because the idea of restoring this race, scattered by the winds of adversity and prosperity alike, blown hither and yon for nearly a score of centuries throughout the earth, a people literally without a country; economic—because of the necessity of providing for the returning Jews the means of gaining a livelihood in a country having little industrial development outside of agriculture, for the most part of a primitive kind. The idea of restoring the scattered flock to the scene of their unparalleled successes has appealed to people the world over, susceptible to the stir of patriotic sentiments.

Much has been written about this great nationalistic movement, and much more has been said; but there still remains, it seems, a deal of uncertainty as to the present situation in Palestine, partly because the promoters of the enterprise are unwilling to talk about certain unfavorable conditions and partly because of the difficulty of determining just what the truth is about a situation involving interests apparently as opposite as the poles,—interests of the Jew and the Moslem.

Why do steel plows, tractors, and oil engines have to do with establishing a large Jewish population in Palestine? Because agriculture is and must be the basic industry of this ancient land; and in order for it to sustain any considerable increase in its present population, there must be a corresponding increase in the productivity of the soil. The old methods of tillage must give way to the new and scientific methods, a

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transition which in itself involves the expenditure of large sums for equipment and for the establishment of schools of agriculture with experiment stations; and above all there must be engendered a love for this most essential of industries among a people who, for the most part, have for a hundred generations been city dwellers, shopkeepers, and artisans. Obviously, the problem is not an easy one, and it can scarcely be expected that so gigantic an enterprise can be carried to a successful issue without retracing some of the steps taken.

That there has been a propitious beginning no one can doubt. Already nearly one hundred thousand Jews have come from many lands to this Jewish Mecca, a considerable number of whom have settled upon farms, and under the encouragement and direction of the Zionist movement have established themselves as agriculturists. In the smiling plain of Sharon they are raising oranges and grapes, almonds and olives, wheat and barley; wheat, millet, maize, and herds on the historic plain of Esdraelon. Industrial centers have been established in the coastal towns and by the Sea of Tiberias. Tel-Aviv, a suburb of Jaffa, has been developed until it quite overtops in population the city itself. Homes for more than forty thousand have been built there, and this has been done notwithstanding that the industries necessary for the support and well-being of this considerable community have not been established. With the people housed and materially provided for, now has arisen the all-important

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question: What shall be the basic industry? How are these newcomers to gain a livelihood? This is the question facing Tel-Aviv at present; and already a considerable number, it seems, have decided that it may not be solved here and have turned sadly back to the lands from which they set out with hearts filled with high emprise. Their departure does not, however, spell failure for the cause,—far from it. It simply means that certain phases of the enterprise were entered upon without due consideration of the economic problems involved.

The Balfour resolution which contemplated a peaceful settlement of this ancient land of Israel, for more than a thousand years in the hands of the Moslem, did not specify the ways and means of carrying out its proposed measures. The Zionist organization, under the direction of enterprising leaders and with the encouragement of a friendly government, with vast sums of money raised mostly in America, undertook to translate their ideals into practical results. Accordingly, in 1923, the stream of immigration set in. During that year more than seven thousand came to Palestine, followed in 1924 by more than twelve thousand. In 1925, the number swelled to more than thirty-three thousand, mostly from Poland, all intent upon establishing homes in the land to which the eyes of many generations of their ancestors had been yearningly turned. During the following years, the incoming tide was met by a considerable ebb and materially slackened. In 1927, the departures exceeded the arrivals.

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Why was this? Largely because of zeal without understanding, that is, failure to give due consideration to the economic conditions of Palestine, conditions which, it is true, may be improved and even entirely overcome, but which cannot with impunity be ignored.

The mere desire to reëstablish Israel in the Holy Land, however appealing, will not of itself accomplish the feat. The land must be developed, made ready for the support of a greatly increased population. Soil cultivated for untold centuries must be rehabilitated, its lost fertility restored, new areas must be opened up. The natural resources must be developed, its water power harnessed, a more comprehensive system of irrigation laid out, swamp lands reclaimed; in short, the whole territory must be prepared for the reception and support of the millions which it is proposed to bring in. Success in this vast undertaking depends entirely upon the thoroughness with which the preparatory work is done.

It does not appear that, in making plans for this transcendent enterprise, due consideration has been given to the future of the more than seven hundred thousand inhabitants of Palestine,—the Arab fellahin, who for centuries have tilled the fertile valleys and shepherded their flocks on the barren hills of a territory less than eight thousand square miles in extent, roughly the area of New Hampshire. It already carries a population in excess of its present productivity, if one judge by the poverty of the peasantry.

Undoubtedly the improved methods of agriculture

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brought in by the Jews will greatly increase the productivity of the soil. Will the increase be sufficient to meet the needs? "There's the rub!" At present there is no data available from which one can justifiably return an affirmative answer to this troublesome question.

The acquisition of land seems comparatively easy. Large areas in the most fertile valleys and along the coast have been acquired, some two hundred fifty thousand acres in all, much of it at prices so high as to preclude the possibility of gaining from the crops a fair return, if any, upon the investment. So long as the Jewish farmers are subsidized by the Zionist movement, they can carry on. When the subsidy ceases, as ultimately it must, and the population is left to its own resources, then will be the testing time. Much of the land of Palestine is owned by wealthy Arabs, the effendi, who, having rented it profitably to the fellahin, are little inclined to sell it. Moreover, the Arab farmer is so inured to the hardships and forced frugality of his simple life, that the newcomer, unaccustomed to the climate and to the ways of living which peasant life involves, does not promise to be a successful competitor. The fellah is dug in, and may not be easily dislodged. Besides, if he is to be supplanted, where will he go? The Zionist would answer "to the crown lands," the lands taken from the Turks at the time of the English occupation—or better still "over Jordan." But life in Transjordania involves new problems. The conditions of life there are so

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different that the Arab farmer of Palestine will not take kindly to the proposed hegira.

This proposal inevitably, it seems, fans the spark of racial enmity always smoldering between the Jew and the Moslem, and the outlook does not promise an early solution. It becomes evident to the observer that the enterprise of the colonizing agency has uncovered many conditions which are far from settled. In the zest for the acquisition of large areas of land and in the desire to fit it quickly for a large number of settlers, some important factors have been neglected, especially the preparation of the immigrant for the life before him as a small farmer in this peculiar land. A wise comment upon the situation, as applicable now as when written, is found in the report of the Department of Agriculture for 1925. "To call a halt to the purchase of additional lands at inflated values: to concentrate all available resources on the development of existing holdings: to organize a comprehensive system of instruction through the medium of residential schools, training farms and a scheme of apprenticeship, basing the whole on systematic and localized research, would appear in the opinion of a growing body of laymen as well as agriculturists to be the only policy offering escape from the impasse in which Jewish settlement now finds itself." It should be said, however, that already many of the lines of activity above proposed have been undertaken. In this fact lies the hope for success of this novel enterprise.

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CHAPTER XIX

Industry in Palestine

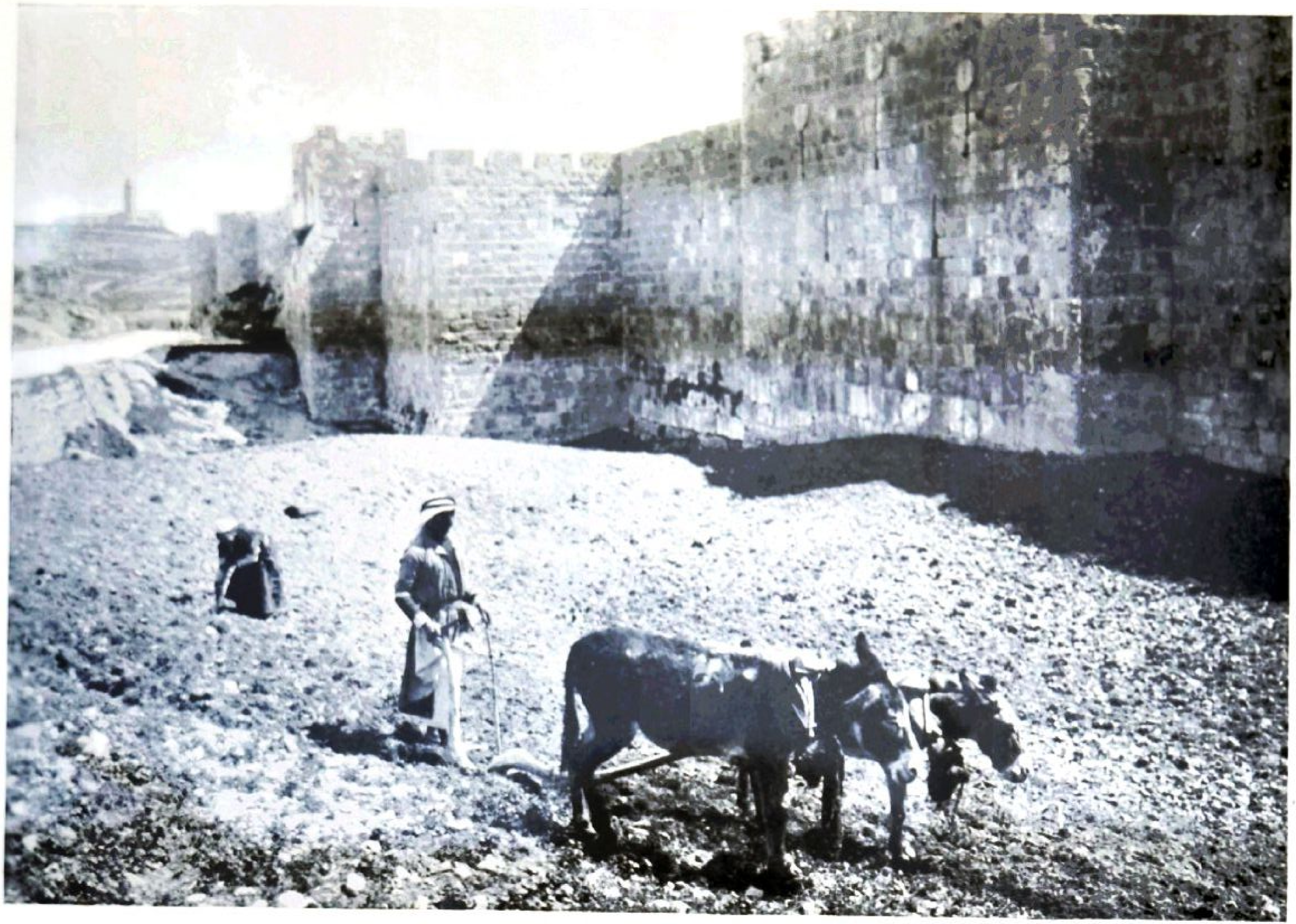
AN economic survey of Palestine reveals some startling figures. The trade balance is almost three to one against the country, a serious situation if it were to continue. The only remedy in sight is to be found in the fostering of industry within its territory, in order more nearly to supply the needs of its population, and a large increase in its products which, as surplus, may be exported. In these ways only may the balance of trade become more favorable.

No consideration of the industrial situation in Palestine should fail to take into account the fact that only since the Great War has industry been encouraged. Under Turkish rule, the black clouds of dread and discouragement settled so heavily upon the country as to render impossible business expansion in any direction. Under English rule, however, industry is being encouraged, and stimulated. As a result, the industrial and economic situation is bound to improve. Proof of confidence that the present government is stable, and is bringing a sense of security to the people, is found in the building of country homes by business men of Jerusalem, miles away from the city, something never before undertaken.

Both because of its geographical situation and the character of its natural resources, it seems extremely

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Agriculture outside the walls of Jerusalem

doubtful if Palestine will ever become an extensive manufacturing country. Apart, as it is, from the great centers of the world, with little raw material, and with almost no fuel supply beyond its domestic needs, there is little to favor the building up of extensive manufacturing industries. Her immediate neighbors, Syria, Transjordania, Iraak and Egypt, are not large prospective buyers because of the comparative poverty of these populations.

The first development, then, for Palestine, must be directed to the meeting of her own needs. To this problem attention should first be given. Even a cursory survey of Palestine emphasizes increasingly the conclusion that its basic industry must be, as it long has been, agriculture, including animal husbandry. There is ample room through the use of modern methods for increase in agricultural products.

Through better cultivation and irrigation, the great plains of Esdraelon and Sharon, as well as the territory about Lake Galilee and the valley of the Jordan may be made much more productive than at present. The water now flowing to waste into the seas may be turned upon the parched land and the crops greatly benefited. With the carrying out of the Rutenberg proposition of harnessing the Jordan for hydro-electric power may be coupled a plan for the irrigation of the Jordan plain. This project opens up large possibilities of agricultural expansion. The plain of the Jordan through which flows the eccentric river has a climate suited to the growing of tropical fruits and other products.

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Already the oranges of Jericho have made an enviable name for themselves in the local markets and, with the use of better methods, the annual output may be greatly increased.

The three basic products of the highland regions in the early days were figs, olives, and grapes. Few countries in the old world have conditions more favorable to the production of these staples. With new methods and better cultivation these crops may be greatly increased. The land tilled for uncounted centuries must be rehabilitated. The project about to be consummated of extracting potash and other minerals from the Dead Sea should supply ample fertilizers at comparatively cheap prices.

The British government is lending encouragement and practical aid in the improvement of agriculture in its various branches, in which they are supplemented by agricultural experts of the Zionist movement. It seems certain that Palestine is at the beginning of an era of expansion in this most basic of industries.

The outlook for expansion in manufacturing industries is less favorable. With hydro-electric development on the Jordan, some two hundred thousand horse-power being projected, power will be at hand for manufacturing as well as for domestic use. But it seems that isolation from large markets and the lack of raw materials would lessen, if not positively prohibit, development of the industries which other more favorably situated countries find profitable. Without

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skilled labor, textile industries, for example, are quite out of the question.

There are, however, certain lines of development which seem practical. Already at Haifa, a factory for the manufacture of Portland cement has been established and is turning out a considerable quantity of this useful material. With unlimited quantities of lime rock at hand, it appears that this industry is possible of considerable expansion. Modern flour mills have been constructed, and many more are needed to supplant the slow-moving water mills, the output of which is both scanty and of poor quality.

The large production of olives, sesame, and other oil-producing crops makes the manufacture of soap a practical industry. For many years Nablous has produced large quantities of olive oil, much of which has been used in the soap industry, the product being largely exported to Egypt and Syria. With the introduction of up-to-date methods, this industry is capable of expansion and promises considerable profit. Two companies, one German, the other English, have already established modern plants. Of the approximately fifty thousand tons of olives raised annually in Palestine, from not more than ten thousand tons is the oil expressed. A considerable portion of the residue is used for fuel. While most of the olive oil is used for soap making, with improved methods there is no reason why a quality of oil should not be produced for export which would compare favorably with that of any section of the world. From time immemorial

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olives have been grown there, and both soil and climate are well adapted to their production.

There is a saying in Palestine that setting an olive grove is better than a life insurance policy. While it takes about twenty-five years for olive trees to come into bearing, once under way they will last for hundreds of years, producing annually a profitable crop. It is believed that there are olive trees in bearing now in Palestine which are more than one thousand years old.

Those who are looking to the expansion of industry in Palestine make much of the possibilities of utilizing the fruit crops. It is reported that three million boxes of Jaffa oranges were exported this year. The acreage of orange groves is being increased and there seems to be a highly favorable outlook for expansion. It is hoped also that factories will be established for the making of marmalade and jellies and for the canning of such fruits and berries as the land seems well adapted to produce.

The project of extracting potash and other valuable salts from the water of the Dead Sea is looked upon as promising a most profitable industry. Nearly twenty-five per cent of the weight of the water is mineral, and it seems that, under the highly improved methods of modern chemistry, a profitable use can be made of this tremendous reservoir, nearly fifty miles in length, in places a dozen miles wide, and thirteen hundred feet deep. The possibilities of this development are truly tremendous.

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Small plants have been established for the production of citrate of lime and other extracts which are essential to the manufacture of perfumes. This has occasioned the development of plantations for the growing of roses, jasmine, and other scented plants necessary to the industry. This will make practical use of the lemons now grown in considerable quantities.

A growing business in the manufacture of brick is already established, but, as with many industries, the introduction of improved methods is essential to its expansion and success.

It seems that lack of education (only about five per cent of the native population being able to read), has been a tremendous handicap to the development of many industries. With the general dissemination of education, however, which is now being carried on by the British government, this handicap will be overcome and industrial development will follow. In Jerusalem, two factories are engaged in making pottery and glass tiles, and the products are both artistic and durable. At Hebron, a glass factory turns out a product that finds a ready market in the stores dealing with souvenirs, and many of its wares have a practical value. The furnaces are fed with olive seeds which produce an intense heat. In brick and tile making the shrub known as "burnett" makes an excellent fuel and may be had at a low cost.

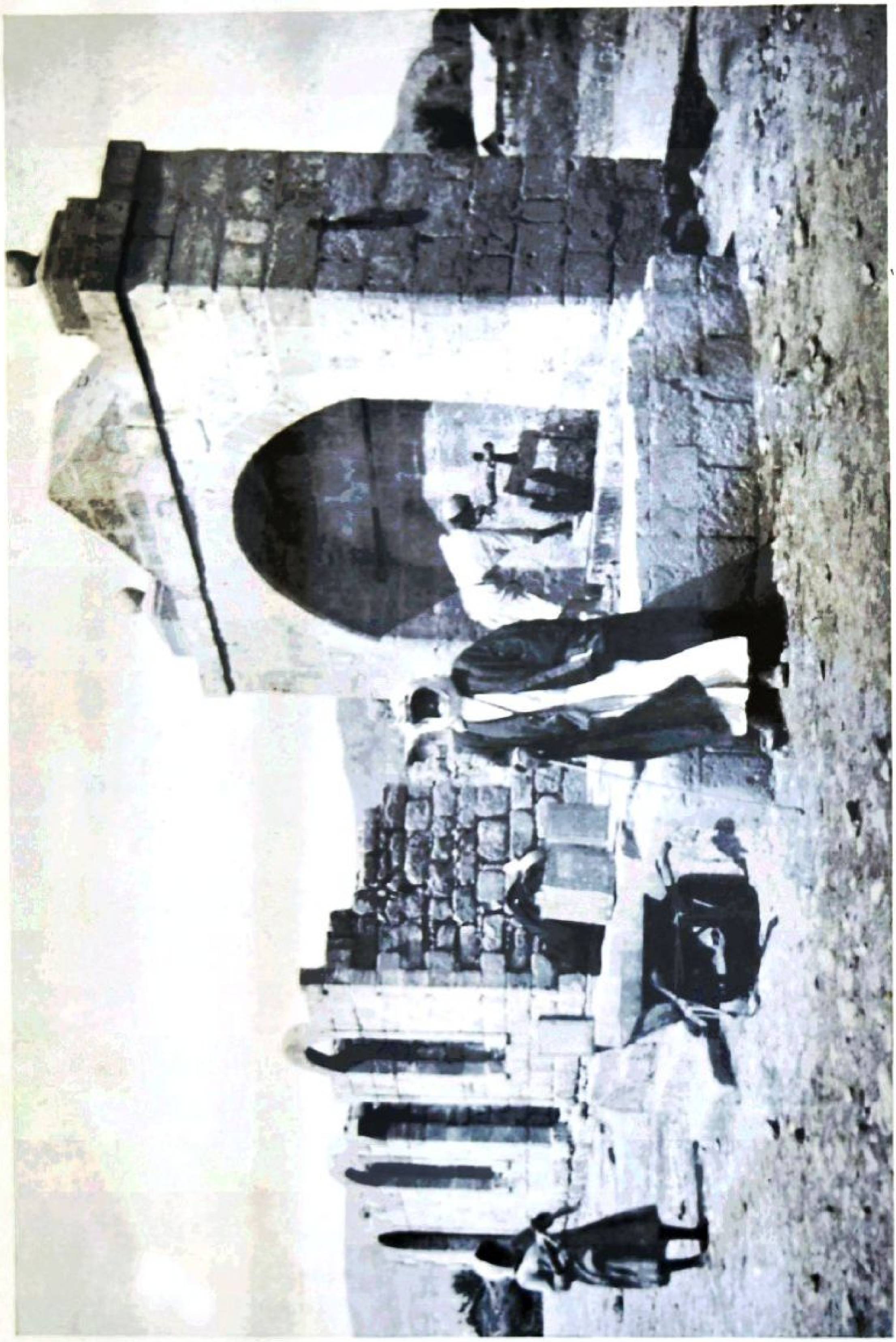
In countries with so many flocks and herds, tanning, with the allied industries using leather, seems a

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logical line of activity. Damascus with its great users of leather would furnish a nearby market. Already the tanning industry is under way at Tel-Aviv. While many of the building industries have had a great expansion, at Tel-Aviv it seems that, as the boom is past, they will experience no permanent revival in that locality. This should not be regarded, however, as in any way an index of the status of industry throughout Palestine. The unfortunate experience of that community is but another example of development under excitement and mistaken zeal, where the credulity and innocence of worthy persons are capitalized by the manipulator and boomer.

It seems that the essentials of industrial growth in Palestine are already established, or are in process of development, namely, just and stable government, a seaport at Haifa, more railroads, and perhaps above all, additional facilities for education, especially among the masses. Enhanced prosperity will follow the general dissemination of education.

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An old well at Jericho

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CHAPTER XX

Birds in Palestine

THE lover of nature will find in Palestine much to interest and instruct him. The wild flowers are in great profusion and of extraordinary variety. A botanist who for thirty years has studied the flowers of Palestine and Syria says that there are in these countries approximately twenty-five hundred varieties of wild flowers; and while to one accustomed to woods and parks, Palestine seems treeless, yet there are one hundred varieties of trees to be found within its borders, a very large number when one considers its small extent. Owing to the comparatively treeless condition of the country and the lack of protective laws, one might readily conclude that Palestine is not a favorable habitat for birds. But a closer acquaintance will lead to a change of conclusion. Tristram, who wrote of the natural history of Palestine sixty years ago, gave a list of three hundred and twenty-two varieties of birds found there, of which more than one hundred were listed as permanent residents. This is on the whole a large list, for only in the most favorable localities would that number be exceeded. California, for example, has a list of more than five hundred species; and Florida probably equals or exceeds that number. But both of these localities are especially favorable to the propagation of bird life, and both are highways for a large number of migrants.

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Palestine, likewise, because of its geographical position and contour, is a favorite route for many migrants passing to and fro between their winter homes in Egypt and their summer habitats in Europe and Western Asia. Many varieties which in April are seen in abundance are wholly absent during the summer.

The sharp contrast in climatic conditions and the consequent large variety of plant life tend greatly to increase the bird population. Between the slopes of Hermon in the north, which wears its mantle of snow far into the summer, to the valley of the Jordan, which is always tropical, is found a variation of climate and conditions favorable to a wide range in the numbers and species of the feathered host.

Entering Palestine at the end of March, we were in time for the spring migration, and in consequence have had the most favorable season of the year in which to observe bird life. As we have journeyed about north and south, east and west, in Palestine, Syria, and Transjordania, the birds most in evidence have been the stately stork and the crested lark, the latter exceeding in numbers the ubiquitous house or English sparrow. This sturdy disciple is as common in Palestine as in America. At the farthest point of our travel they were found in abundance, inhabiting the ruins of Baalbek and Ammon, at Damascus and Hebron, at Haifa and at Jordan. One can scarcely fail to applaud the hardiness of this bird which enables it to adapt itself to such wide variations of climate and surroundings.

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Storks are in great numbers and have afforded us much delight, for these birds, common enough in central Europe, are quite unknown in America. Their white bodies, coal black wings, and long pink legs and bills make them figures in the landscape, at once conspicuous and picturesque. They walk sedately about the fields in search of food, insects, and small reptiles, so tame that frequently we pass in our motor within thirty feet of them without their becoming alarmed. When preparing to alight they drop their long legs and touch the ground, and while folding their wings run several steps, the better to enable them to gain their equilibrium. We see them flying high above the wilderness of Judea, describing great circles on majestic wings, in sheer love of aerial adventure, as it seems to us in our earth-bound condition. At Lake Huleh, which may be described as the first station of the Jordan, we saw them in great numbers,—a thousand or more, we judged, turning stately circles, some so high as to be only faintly visible. As April advanced, their numbers diminished until by the end of the month only solitary birds were seen here and there. Storks are devoid of vocal power, their only utterance being caused by the rapid snapping of the bill, a sound like the rattle of castanets.

The crested larks are common birds throughout most of Palestine, except, perhaps, in the Jordan Valley, where we did not observe them. They remain throughout the season, nesting here. We first heard them in the Nile Valley at Luxor, where by mid-

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March they were in full song. On arriving in Palestine we welcomed them as old friends. This little sparrow-like bird, scarcely seven inches long, has a sharp-pointed crest, so characteristic that one can scarcely mistake its identity. On the ground, when alarmed, they utter sharp metallic notes, quite unmusical. But when they launch themselves into the air and rise in great spirals, they pour out a flood of melody which quite rivals the lyrical song of the English skylark. So clear and far-reaching are their notes that sometimes we could hear a bird which was scarcely visible in the blue dome above us.

There are a dozen varieties of larks in Palestine and Syria, an incredible number it seems to Americans, who have so few of this family. On the plains of Moab a larger lark with dark, almost black wings, edged with white, is very common. It sang to us one morning as we plucked the beautiful dark maroon iris, growing in profusion in the fields of wheat and barley. Its song is melodious, but less musical than the notes of the crested lark, and its call is harsh and metallic, much like the alarm notes of our own meadow lark. To identify the many varieties of larks without a descriptive list, or a well-arranged museum, we find a difficult task.

Another bird which has quite delighted us is the common bee-eater, a beautiful and highly interesting creature. We first saw them at Tiberias as we were having our first day on glorious Galilee. On the heights above the ruins of Herod's castle, they were

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circling above like swallows, uttering notes not unlike the melodious call of the bluebird. As we saw them only in flight, they were unidentified. In the afternoon, however, we found them in numbers near Semakh, at the lower end of the lake. They were nesting in the clay banks like bank-swallows, and, as they perched on the telegraph wires nearby their homes, we had opportunity to become well acquainted with these brilliant strangers. The common bee-eater is a good-sized bird, some eight inches long, with a sharp strong bill like all the fly-catchers. The wings are broad at the base, and when extended form an equilateral triangle, like the wings of the purple martin. The plumage is very beautiful. The back is golden brown, shading into bright gold on the rump. The body and head are a brilliant blue, while the throat is golden yellow. Bee-eaters are among the most gorgeously plumaged of all birds. In Egypt we saw one in bright green, changing in the sunlight into golden bronze, with two long tail feathers, a delicate and wonderful creature. About Lake Galilee are many sea birds, small gulls, terns and skimmers. The nightingale reaches Palestine during the season of migration and we hear that the famous bul-bul of the East is also a visitor. It would be a most interesting experience to make a close study of bird life throughout the country, for the great variety of climate in the small area makes possible the presence of an unusually large list of these feathered friends of man.

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