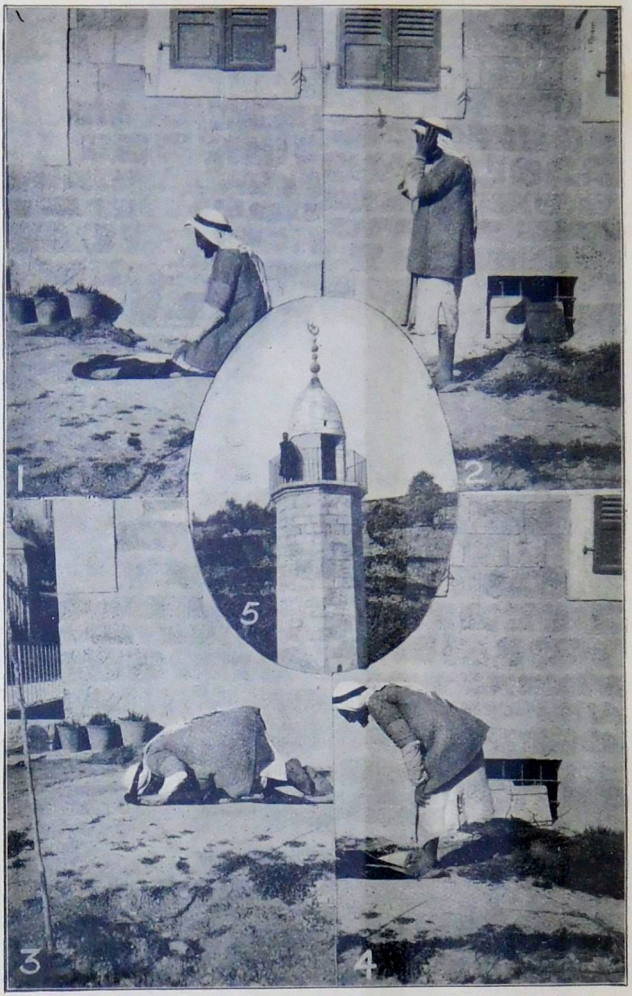


MOHAMMEDAN PEASANT AT PRAYER.

Upon the call to prayer from the minaret (5), devout men perform their ablutions and then offer up prayer. During their devotions, different attitudes (as seen in the above illustrations) are assumed, each attitude having its own importance in the rite that is being performed.

DAILY LIFE IN PALESTINE

Sites, Scenes and Doings in the Holy Land

BY

ARCHIBALD FORDER

(OF JERUSALEM)

Missionary for twenty years among the Arabs, East and West of the River Jordan

Over 80 Illustrations

MARSHALL BROTHERS, LTD

PUBLISHERS,

LONDON, EDINBURGH & NEW YORK

1912

TO THE ONE, WHO BY UNSELFISH SACRIFICE, HOURS
OF SOLITUDE, AND TIMES OF ANXIETY, THROUGH
MY LONG ABSENCES FROM HOME AMONG
THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND, FROM
WHOM THE CONTENTS OF THESE
PAGES HAVE BEEN LEARNED,

MY WIFE,

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

Preface

The contents of this book have been put together at the request of many who on visiting the Holy Land have desired a simple but reliable account of the life and doings of the people as they accord with the Scriptures.

I am well aware that many books have been written on the same subject, but just as two persons see different things in a landscape, so those who have lived among the natives of Palestine see things in different lights and from different standpoints.

My hope in sending out this volume is that it may be helpful to those who study the Bible with the idea of helping others, and keeping in mind the busy days in which we live I have refrained from going too much into detail, so that, "He who runs may read" and learn something new and helpful.

What is written is from personal observation and close contact with the natives, and answers many

questions asked, because I wished to get at the bottom of things myself, long before the idea came of passing on the information gained, in book form.

I have tried to avoid repeating anything that is in my previous books; if there is repetition it has been from necessity, in order to complete some phase of native life, or to fill in some description which otherwise would be incomplete.

The illustrations, all but two, are from my own negatives. For that of Sarah's tomb I am indebted to Mr. Khaleel Raad of Jerusalem, who kindly gave permission to use the photograph, which was taken by himself, and which is the only one of its kind.

If what is written helps the reader to a better understanding of the Bible, and of conditions as they are in the Holy Land, the time, thought, and labour expended on compiling these pages will not have been spent in vain, and with this hope in mind the book is sent out to what I may hope will be a kind and considerate public.

A. FORDER,
Jerusalem.

Contents

Illustrations

Introduction

(To whom it may concern)

I have had the opportunity of looking over the manuscript of this book ere it went to the printer, and after living in close contact with the people of Palestine for the best part of my life, some forty-four years, and having had dealings with them along all lines, and frequent chances of observing them in their daily lives, I am glad to say that in my opinion the contents of this book are a simple, concise, faithful and reliable account of things as they are at the present time.

I have known the writer for many years, and am assured that his long residence among the people of the land has given him unusual privileges in observing the inner life and doings of the natives, a record of which is given in this book.

In my opinion it meets a need, for there are many who continually ask for something reliable but concise about the peoples and places of Palestine; such is found in these pages.

To Bible students, pastors, Sunday school teachers, and all such like, the book should prove invaluable, and to such I recommend it, with the belief that it will be helpful and instructive.

I am pleased to be able to help forward the efforts of the Author to shed light on the Land of the Bible and its people, and with this introduction commend the volume to the public, and wish it all success.

(Signed)

HERBERT E. CLARK,

American Vice Consul,

Jerusalem, Palestine.

Chapter I

Babyhood and Boyhood

EL BENI ADAM, *i.e.*, the Children of Men, all commence life in the same way, and the people of the Land of Sun and Sand are no exception to the rule, for they pass the first years of their existence in their mothers' arms as do those in other lands, so in the consideration of the doings of the natives of Palestine we will begin at the commencement and gradually work our way into the daily life and doings of the people.

It is the desire of every married couple to have offspring, and woe to the wife who is unfortunate enough not to be thus blessed, for the chances are she will be turned adrift to care for herself, or another put in her place. The great desire is for a son, because he it is that is to keep the family name and pedigree going, and for that reason there are hearty congratulations both to father and mother when a son makes his appearance.

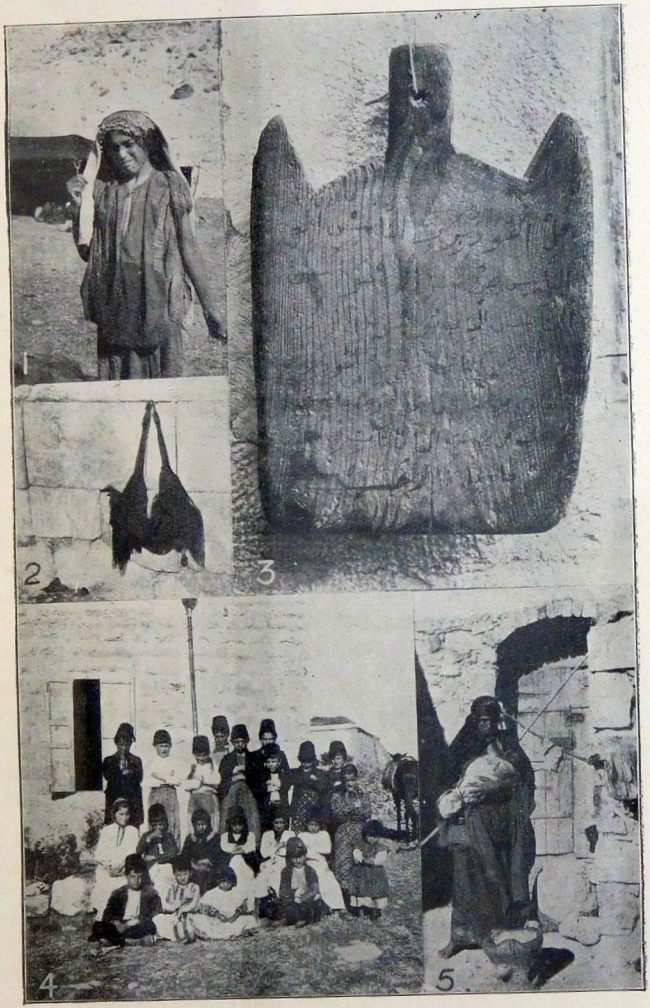
No matter how hard the circumstances under which the little one first sees the light of day, or the

verse 4, the ancient seer compares the city of Jerusalem in its state of sin, corruption, and abomination to a child that, at its nativity, "wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all," so the present-day Palestine mothers are not the first to take precaution for the preservation of their offspring in this curious way.

Baby's first year is one of much going and coming, and all unconsciously it makes many a journey up hill and down dale, always slung on the back of its mother, who has to take it with her wherever she goes.

Sometimes it hangs for hours on a peg driven into the wall in or near the market place where its mother sells her few vegetables or fruits, all unconscious of what is going on around it, at other times it will be carried in its wooden cradle to the harvest field, and there, under the shelter of one of its parent's dirty garments, pass away the long hours 'neath the scorching sun. Thus it grows into boyhood or girlhood, protected always by the tiny blue bead hung on its forehead, which is believed to keep off the dreaded evil eye.

In some cases the child, if a boy, when it is old enough, will go to school, but, alas! for the teaching, discipline, or training it gets whilst there, for its school days are so irregular and brief that the teacher has little chance to do much with his pupil. If he can teach it the main tenets of the religion to which it belongs, and some smattering of reading



(1) An uneducated semi-nomad girl. (2) Baby hanging on a wall. (3) Wooden slate a necessary part of a schoolboy's outfit. (4) A group of school children. (5) An infant in swaddling clothes.

and writing, he will have done well, and, considering the primitive and limited things for school use, it is a wonder that any ever learn to do anything.

Lessons to learn by heart and lessons in writing are inscribed on a thick flat board, which is equivalent to the slate of Western lands, and which is no doubt of very ancient usage. Over the board is smeared some wash of light colour which is allowed to dry ere the lesson is written on it by the teacher or scholar, and this, when finished with, can be easily erased and a new one set. In some parts, where the teaching consists of learning by heart certain portions of their religious books, the lesson is written in ink on the board and stays there until the passage is committed to memory.

There is no doubt that this Oriental slate is none other than the writing table mentioned in Luke i, verse 63, on which the name of John was written by his father, for in these days short notes, items, and even messages are written in like manner on these wooden slates and sent or handed from place to place.

With the ending of school days, be they long or short, the now grown lad enters on the stern realities of life, for it is not going too far to assert that generally speaking the children of the Orient do not know and enjoy childhood as do children in other lands.

At this place it must be said that were it not for the mission schools in Bible lands the girls would

grow up without any education whatever, and what is now done is only small compared with the great need. In writing thus, I refer largely to the Mohammedan communities, although there are many settlements of Oriental Christians that have no school or teacher for their children.

Chapter II

Getting Something to eat

IF any people on earth realise to its fullest extent the meaning of the words spoken to Adam long ago, the peoples of Bible lands certainly do, for they literally, in the sweat of their face eat their bread, and in sorrow or toil eat of the ground all the days of their lives. For the process of getting something to eat is, indeed, a laborious and tedious one, and it is not saying too much to put on record that few of the common people on both sides of the Jordan ever get up from the dish really satisfied, although etiquette requires that they shall say they are, and give thanks accordingly.

The bread-getting process commences soon after the first few showers of rain have fallen to soften the hard, baked earth, generally towards the end of October. Then the peasant gets out his plough and prepares for work. This instrument is no modern appliance, but the same primitive thing as was used three thousand years ago, and consists of three stout poles fitted cross and angle wise, one of which terminates in the iron ploughshare, and

another the cross-piece forming the yoke to which the animals are hitched that are to pull the plough through the earth.

The ploughman is careful to see that the yoke is smooth and well-fitting, otherwise his cattle would soon be rubbed sore and ruined for work; an easy fitting yoke is a comfort to all concerned, because things run on smoothly, and much work can be done in little time. The Son of Man whilst on earth promised an "easy yoke" to those who would come to Him, but for those who rebel there is constant friction and trouble as in the case of the galling yoke and troublesome cattle.

In some parts a company of men go out together to do their ploughing; especially is this the case on border lands and spots far removed from the village or camp of the peasants. This is for protection against raiders and robbers, for as in the days of Job, chapter i, verse 14, so it is now, for the ploughmen are often pounced upon and were they not in bands and able to defend themselves and their stock they would fare badly. It is no unusual thing to see from ten to thirty men on the same plain or patch of land ploughing, each following close beside the furrow of the other. It is most likely that Elisha was out with a company of his neighbours ploughing, he being the twelfth in order, and not as some would think having twelve pairs or yoke of oxen attached to his plough. See 1 Kings xix. 19.

Close on the trail of the ploughmen follows the

sower, in fact more often than not the one has to do both, unless he has a son to assist him. The seed is thrown broadcast over the land and then ploughed into the earth, there is no harrowing or rolling the ground as in the home lands. It is rough and ready farming that is done in the Orient.

During the months of November and December the husbandman sows all his grain, the wheat being sown first and the barley last, whereas in harvest the order is reversed, the last sown being harvested first.

Harvest begins early in April in low-lying parts and in May on the highlands, and is the beginning of many months life out of doors, during which all the workable members of the family are pressed into the service.

The Palestine peasant knows no machinery, he works as did his forefather, either by pulling the grain from the ground by hand or by hacking off the stalks with a small jagged sickle. As an armful is gathered it is tied into a small sheaf and thrown aside to be gathered later on and tied in a huge heap and carried on camels or donkeys to the threshing floor.

The long continued oppression of the government and the expense of living added to increased taxes, have done away largely with the gleaner, for the smaller members of the peasant's family are set to glean the fields so that the granary may be well filled.

The plains of Palestine are not divided by hedges

such as they are in other lands so that each man may know the extent of his land, but are marked off with stones, so that when the grain is high there is the appearance of one large field without any divisions, whereas each owner knows the extent of his cultivated patch, and a fellow must be a rogue if he dares to tamper with his neighbour's landmark. Many have been the quarrels and even bloodshed over the moving of a landmark, for to do so is to break one of the Mosaic commands which has been faithfully observed through the centuries, viz.: "Thou shalt not remove thy neighbour's landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance." Deut. xix. 14.

In some parts of the country, especially near the villages where there are trees the ground will be ploughed and cultivated under the branches, and then may be seen paths through the fields leading from the homes of the people to the country beyond. Through such a path our Lord with His disciples went, and as they passed along plucked the ears of corn and ate them.

It is easy to see how they could do so in the absence of fences and hedges, in fact much grain is lost to the owners in this way, they making no objection unless the passers-by take anything away with them.

As soon as all the grain is placed on the threshing floor, the process of treading out commences. For this it is necessary for the floor to be hard, so a

rocky place is chosen in order that the work may be the better done.

The sheaves are spread about over the ground in a huge circle and in one of two ways the straw is torn asunder and the grain separated from the ear. In southern Palestine treading out by cattle is the fashion; two or more are tied together with leather thongs round their necks, and driven round on the sheaves, in this way doing the work with their hoofs. This mode is perhaps the oldest way of doing the work, for mention is made of it in the Mosaic law which carries us back nearly four thousand years, whereas the other is not mentioned until more than a thousand years later.

The second way of threshing the grain is by means of a large heavy board studded with sharp stones or irons driven into it and turned face down on the sheaves scattered about the floor. This board is weighted and then dragged round and across the straw, very effectually tearing it into bits.

Isaiah in chapter xli. verse 15, refers to this simple yet effective article of husbandry, showing that its use was known in his day. Here is the quotation, "I will make thee a new sharp-threshing instrument having teeth," and from the description given it will be seen how well it is named.

When the sheaves are torn or trodden into fine shreds the winnowing begins; this is a more tedious process than any that has claimed the time and labour of the peasant, for he has to wait for favour-

able breezes in order to do his work. It cannot be done early in the morning because the grain heap is wet with the dew, which in Palestine is frequent and heavy, so that the sun is well in the heavens ere the chopped pile can be worked. Then the peasant, with a primitive wooden fork in his hand, stands on the windward side of the heap and tosses the mass into the air, the result being that the fine dust is carried far away in the breeze, the chaff falls in a heap near by, and the grain being the heavier, drops back on the pile.

For days and weeks this work goes on until the entire floor has been winnowed, then with sighs of relief and thanks to God the peasant puts aside his implements and prepares to garner his grain and chaff.

At this stage of the work we get an idea of the meaning of the words of John the Baptist who no doubt was familiar with this manner of dealing with the produce of the Holy Land, for in describing to those who gathered about him the work of the Messiah he says, "Whose fan (winnowing fork) is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire," this last referring to the coarse stubs and refuse of the floor that are useless as food for cattle, and which are burned on the floor after all that is of use has been removed.

There remains nothing to be done now but to

WINNOWING GRAIN.

This can only be done on a windy day, and after the dew has dried off.

MUD BINS FOR STORAGE.

These are equivalent to barn, cupboard or storeroom ; they are very easily broken

A FIELD OF GRAIN WITH PATH THROUGH IT.

Cultivated lands are not fenced around in Palestine, and in consequence much of the seed is trodden under foot. Constant traffic makes a path through the wheat and barley fields, such paths being most noticeable when the grain is green.

sack up the grain and chaff and carry it home for storage, but ere that is done two things have to take place, one of which is most objectionable to the peasant after all his hard work, the other, to a certain part of the community, a binding and willing duty. The first is to await the coming of the tax assessor, for the government have to take a tenth of the hard-earned produce and not a grain can be taken away until the tax has been paid. Under the old regime it was a tedious task waiting the coming of the unwelcome official, and unless he were bribed to hurry the peasants had to wait his time and convenience. Now things are a little better and matters move quicker minus the bribing, much to the delight of the long-oppressed people. The second matter that prevents the grain being stored only occurs where there is a Christian community with a priest over them.

After the assessing by the official the priest is called to the pile of threshed grain and asked to bless it and give thanks to God for the same; this done the owner measures off a given quantity and presents it to the priest as a thank-offering to the church, to be used in any way that the spiritual head of the community may decide. Sometimes it is divided among the poor, or if the priest is in need of it himself it is permissible for him to use it as food, and sometimes it is sold and the money put into the church treasury.

No doubt this latter proceeding is a remnant of

the offerings that were commanded to be given to the priests by the children of Israel during their sojourn in the land, and have come down from generation to generation in perpetuation of the same.

Having paid the tax and given their offering to the church, the people are free to carry their grain home. Some of it has to be paid out to settle debts contracted during the year, and some sold to pay overdue taxes to the government, while what is left is stored in mud bins erected around the walls of the peasant's home to be drawn on as occasion requires.

These bins are of simple construction being made of clay mixed with chaff, built up in the open air a few inches every day so that they may set thoroughly ere they are carried inside. These mud-made receptacles have a large hole in the top into which the grain is put, after which it is plastered over, at the bottom, in the side is a smaller hole out of which the grain is allowed to run when needed, when not being used it is stopped by means of a huge bung made up of dirty rags. These bins may have been in use in the days of Christ in the homes of the people, and have called forth the remark, to " lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal," Matt. vi. 19, for mud bins are not very effectual in keeping out such destructive things as moths, worms and damp, to say nothing about how easily they could be broken to pieces by robbers.

With the storing away of the grain the man's part of the work ceases, and for the rest of the process toward bread-making the woman has to take her part, which is in no way so laborious, although needing more care and thought, but this process must be dealt with in the next chapter.

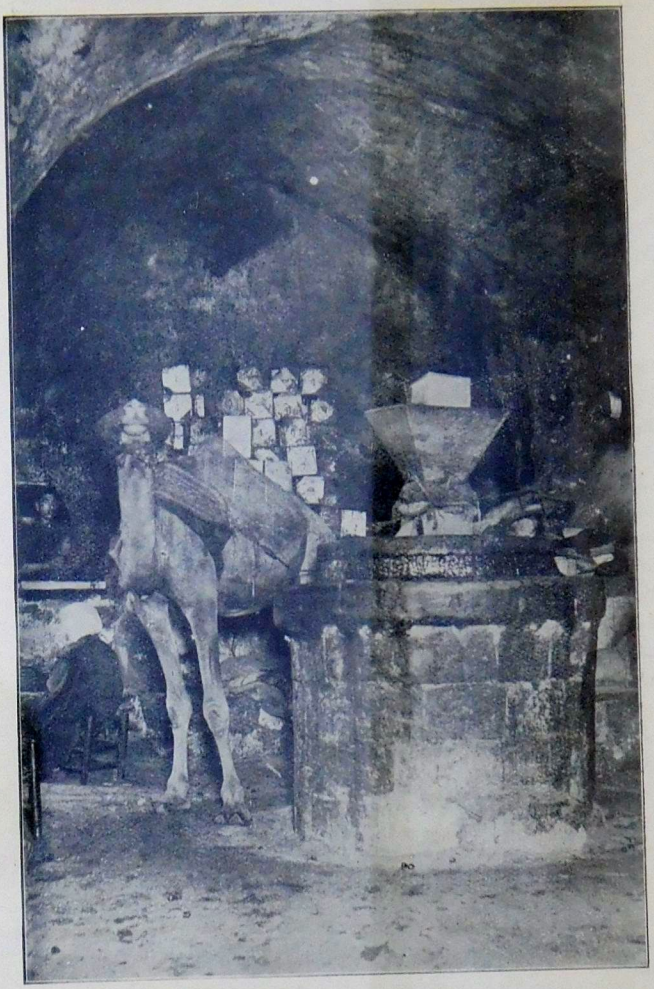
Chapter III

Bread Baking and Cooking

BREAD and water have always been the standby of the Oriental. Frequent are the allusions to such a repast in the Scriptures, and the probability is that bread to-day is made much in the same manner as in the days of the Patriarchs.

The preparation of the wheat for grinding is a tedious and laborious one, entailing much work on the part of the women. First, the grain has to be thoroughly sifted to remove all dust, grit, tiny straws or other matter that might injure the teeth if eaten. A sieve about twenty inches in diameter is used for this purpose; into it is put the grain which is well shaken and very cleverly worked so that all refuse is shaken to the edge of the sieve; then suddenly, without any cessation in the work, this refuse is thrown over the side, to be gathered by the fowls for what it is worth. This mode of cleansing the grain is very thorough, and the words spoken to Peter, "Satan hath desired to have you that he might sift you as wheat," were full of

(1) Sifting grain to clean it. (2) Hasty bread being cooked. (3) Dipping in the dish : this way of eating shows goodwill, humility and unity. (4) The tanoor is probably the oven to which Jesus referred in connection with the grass of the field.



A CAMEL GRINDING AT THE MILL.

Various grains are ground and pressed in order to extract the oil which they contain, and camels are employed to revolve the huge stones. This is probably the oldest kind of mill known.

meaning as showing how severe was to be the testing that the Apostle was to experience. After the sifting comes the grinding, and it is to be regretted that the introduction of the local petroleum mill is doing away with the hand mill of the home, and ere long "two women grinding at the mill" will be a thing of the past, and only to be seen in picture form.

The hand mill is a simple and small affair composed of one stone that revolves on another and kept in position by a pivot in the centre. Near the edge of the upper stone is a hole into which is fitted a stick which serves as a handle with which to turn the stone, and in the centre is a hole through which the grain is put to find its way between the stones. Grinding is usually done early in the morning ere the heat of the day sets in, for it is hard work.

Oftentimes the women and girls of the family help each other grind, thus making the work easy, but more often than not the work is done single-handed.

An indication of hard times is given when you are told that "the mill is silent," meaning that there is no grain to grind, or, as it is put in Eccles xii. 4, "the sound of the grinding is low."

In some homes the women are relieved of the work by a donkey, who does the work instead of them, this being an agreeable exchange of labour and only to be seen in families that are well off. In this case the mill is of the same make, only larger

and capable of grinding more meal. Mills worked on the same principle may be seen in the cities of Palestine, and used for the extracting of oil from various seeds, only these are turned by a camel blindfolded, so that with its many circumambulations it may not get giddy and fall down.

Probably Samson in Gaza was put to work at some such mill as this, for it needed the strength of a giant to turn the heavy stones, and it is thought a great indignity for a man to put his hand to the mill, so that from an Oriental view Samson was doubly degraded, first by being put to do the work of a beast, and, secondly, by doing that which savoured of female labour.

After grinding, the flour is rarely sifted, all the meal being kneaded into dough. Most families make leavened bread, their yeast consisting of a piece of sour dough kept over from the last batch and worked into the newly-mixed meal, although many a meal is made of unleavened bread, especially when food is needed in a hurry.

Generally speaking, the peasants have two ways of baking their bread, both of which have their references in the Bible. There is the common oven, the "taboon," and what is known as the "saagh," the oven being the more used of the two.

Among the natives the "taboon" is found in use in all the villages of the land; it is a simple construction of mud built up and dried in the sun, in shape like one half of a ball with a hole cut in the

top, over which a cover fits when in use. This is sunk into the ground and heated by being covered with any dried stuff that will smoulder and leave a good bed of hot ashes, by means of which the empty dome inside becomes heated. When bread has to be baked the ashes and cover are carefully removed and the dough in small flat cakes placed on the bottom of the oven, the cover is then replaced, and in some fifteen minutes the bread is baked.

Here is an illustration of how "the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven" (Matthew vi. 30), is utilised by the people of Palestine, and careful are the women to keep on hand a good store of dry twigs, chaff, or manure for use in their ovens.

The "saagh" process of baking bread is, perhaps, more ancient than the oven, besides being more primitive. The "saagh" is a large convex piece of sheet iron which is placed on stones when in use and the fire of thorns or twigs put under it, which quickly heats the iron on which are placed the thin sheets of dough, and which are quickly baked. No housewife can afford to be careless whilst baking bread in this way, otherwise her cakes would get burned and thus be useless and wasted. The probability is that Sarah made bread after this manner when the angels were entertained in the tent of Abraham according to the story given in Genesis xviii. 6, for in these days bread is baked and served to passers-

by or callers in a remarkably short time, and the "saagh" has the advantage over the "taboon" in that it is always ready for use, whereas the latter is not sufficiently heated until the smouldering is over.

"The crackling of thorns under a pot (or saagh)" (Eccles vii. 6), is an assurance that a good meal is in process of preparation, a welcome thing to those who live in a land where it is permissible to turn aside into any home and get a meal free.

There is yet another way of baking bread practised by the people of the Lebanon and Northern Syria, and which also might have been common in the days of our Lord; it is in what is known as the "tanoor."

This baker consists of a large earthen shaft which has been baked in the furnace to harden it, and is about three feet high and eighteen inches across; it is sunk in the ground, and when needed for use a fire of light fuel is kindled in the bottom, the result being a bed of hot ashes. The dough, patted into thin flat cakes, is spread over a cushion and then slapped on to the sides of the deep shaft, the ascending heat cooking the cakes in a few minutes. Bread made in this manner is very good eating, and when rolled together tightly will keep fresh and soft for a long time. This style of oven lends itself to the grass of the field, or any light brushwood, thorns or wood that may be gathered from the hill sides of the country.

An every-day sight in Palestine is that of women

and girls carrying home on their backs huge and heavy loads of fuel which they have gathered from the mountains and valley sides, and which are to be used in their homes to cook their food and bake bread in one or other of the manners described. Rarely are animals used for this purpose, the husband or brother thinking his beast of more value than his wife or sister.

The peasant usually eats his bread warm, and baking takes place twice a day, for the Oriental only has two meals daily, the first about ten in the morning and the other about sunset. In times of prosperity the housewife will arrange something to accompany the bread, into which either the bread can be dipped or broken and mixed, to be extracted with the fingers according to the dexterity of the eater. When more than one has to be fed at the same time, and the meal consists of more than dry bread, the food is served up in a circular dish of wood or tinned copper. Round this the men squat, and with their hands extract what they can from the dish before them, sometimes a slow and painful process because the food is so hot, and when one leaves the dish it is etiquette for the others to follow, whether satisfied or not.

Men and women never eat together at the same dish, neither is it good manners to eat alone if others are sitting near. If they refuse to dip in the dish with you it savours of pride, or might portend unfriendliness or evil intent on their part. "There

is blessing in all eating from the same dish at the same time," say they, and no man who is plotting evil against one is supposed to sit and dip in the same dish. From an Oriental standpoint the action of Judas in dipping in the dish with our Lord and then going out and betraying Him is despicable indeed, and worthy of only a very mean fellow.

For supper there is generally some kind of cookery, either fried eggs or some vegetable stew highly flavoured with garlic, or strong fat; on high days there will be meat either bought from the butcher or the flesh of some sheep or goat that has been slain by the head of the family so that there may be enough to go round, but rarely do the people kill fowls for their own eating, and if such is done it is to provide a supper for some passing guest.

It must be said to the credit of the peasants of Palestine that they are hospitable and kind to strangers, although on the beaten track of those who tour the country things have changed, but among themselves no one need go hungry or sleep in the open air exposed to the dew or cold, there being always a corner and bite for the passer-by and the hungry.

Before leaving this part of the subject it might be well to name the different agricultural products that the average peasant gets from the land. In Southern Palestine he grows wheat, barley, millet, and lentils, also a small pea called kursenny, which is used for camel feed largely.

In Central Palestine and Upper Galilee the same as in the South, with the addition of broad beans, peas, and simsim, a seed very like the carraway, and known in Western lands as sesame. From this latter is extracted an oil which is very much in demand throughout the Orient. All these are cultivated in the ordinary way, the soil receiving sufficient moisture during the rainy season to enable it to produce its crops as the seasons come round. Practically speaking, there is no irrigation in Palestine.

Chapter IV

Dwellings and Clothing

AFTER food comes a place in which to live, and here, again, it may be assumed that the people of Palestine are housed much as they were in the days of old, and are to-day of two classes, the dwellers in villages and towns and the semi-nomad.

Scattered about over Palestine are hundreds of villages and hamlets the like of which were called cities in Bible times. Most of these are built on elevations, partly for defence as also to catch any breezes that may fly across the land, and which in winnowing time are a necessity. It must have been one of these elevated settlements that called forth from the Saviour the words, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid," for many in the land are visible from quite long distances.

From afar these villages are more pleasing to the eye than near at hand, and a general feeling of disappointment results from too close an inspection of them. They are made up of a medley of small dwellings to which there are only one entrance and few

windows, and in which all the belongings and stock of the peasant are housed. Narrow and dirty streets intersect the houses, which in summer are filled with dust and vermin and in winter are inches deep in mud and filth. On the sides of the village are the dung heaps on which are dumped all the refuse and dirt of the place. In windy weather this is blown in all directions, much to the disgust of even the dirty inhabitants themselves.

A closer inspection of the interiors of these Palestine homes only leads one to wonder more and more how human beings exist under such circumstances, for all the comforts of life as known in the West are missing, and yet the natives thrive as long as they keep in health, but when sickness and disease come they are badly off.

The houses are built of roughly-hewn stone, often from the ruins of former and ancient buildings, and on the outside are severely plain, the native caring nothing about decoration or ornament. One opening, the entrance, has to serve for air and light, and when at night everything is shut up close it may be concluded that the atmosphere is not of the freshest kind.

All roofs are flat with a slight slope so that the rain may run off freely and not percolate through the thin layer or earth and mud of which it is made. In the summer, when the houses are unbearable on account of vermin and the heat, the family retires to the roof and sleeps there, erecting thereon

booths of branches or setting up small wigwam-like tents.

Inside, the houses are void of furniture, the people sit on the floor either on rush mats or carpets, and when resting recline on cushions. At night thick quilts are spread as bed, and something of the same nature serves as cover. In the morning these beds are folded up and laid away in recesses made for them in the walls and generally hidden by a curtain.

To carry one's bed about with them from place to place is quite an easy matter, and quite the fashion when on the move in Palestine, for, as already mentioned, the bed is very portable, being only a large thick quilt, light and inexpensive. The man in the gospel was told to do no impossible or unreasonable thing when commanded to "Take up your bed and walk," and frequently girls and women may be seen with beds on their heads—a sight that would attract the notice of none but Westerners.

The average house is divided into two parts, one being raised about three feet above the other. On the raised platform the family live and sleep, and there visitors and guests are entertained. In the lower part the stock are stabled at night, and on stormy days also; here, too, are stored all the surplus supplies of the family. Between the raised and lower platforms is built a row of mud mangers in which is put the feed for the cattle during the night.

THE INTERIOR OF A HOUSE, SHOWING THE MANGERS ATTACHED TO IT.

In Palestine the peasants close their doors at night on nearly everything moveable that they possess. The cattle are stabled in the lower part of the house, and from the mud mangers eat their food. It is very probable that the infant Saviour lay in such a manger as that shown in the illustration.

(1) Booth on house-top, much used by the peasants in the summer time. (2) Money crown head-dress, the coins worn being the woman's wedding presents which cannot be spent except in extreme cases. (3) A Tent home. (4) A typical

With mangers like these the natives associate the birth of our Lord in a like place in Bethlehem, planning it in their minds as happening in this way.

Mary and Joseph, having arrived at Bethlehem, seek for accommodation in the inns of the town, all of which they find full, so they turn into the street to seek a shelter in some home according to the common hospitality of the land. But the houses are full also, that is as far as the upper platforms are concerned and there is no place for the accommodation and entertainment of the strangers, so a corner of the lower part of the house is suggested and accepted, and there in the stable part of a Bethlehem home the Saviour made His advent into this world. But the new-born babe could not be laid on the dirty floor of the stable, and what more safe, suitable, or convenient than the mangers with their beds of chaff, so in such a place the infant Saviour was cradled for the first few hours of His life.

With such homes and fittings before us at the present time we too can enter more fully into the Gospel record of our Lord's birth, and see how every-day and fitting were all the surroundings.

With the exception of a few cooking utensils, rugs and mats, the homes of the Palestine peasants are bare and comfortless. At night they are dimly lit by a tiny petroleum lamp which is allowed to burn itself dry. Candles are never burned in the

homes of the people, except on festive occasions, and then only in the homes of the better classes.

The home of the semi-nomad is of quite a different kind and more suited to the land in which he has to live, by reason of its being portable, airy and light. Like the tent of the Bedouin it is made of goats' hair cloth very thick and durable, capable of keeping out the sun in summer and shedding the rain in winter.

The tent is divided into two parts, one for the men and the other for the women. In the former all the visitors are entertained and in the other the cooking, &c., goes on. In wet weather these portable homes have to shelter both man and beast, and at such times are not the most agreeable or comfortable. In Upper Galilee the Arabs make their dwellings of thick rush mats instead of the black cloth common in other parts of the country, but in no other part of the land are such homes found. When life becomes intolerable by reason of insects and filth it is an easy matter to move the home to another spot, and in this way the tent dweller has the advantage over the village folk.

As regards the daily life and customs of these two classes of people there is no difference, for they are of the same stock and language,

Those who have travelled in Bible lands must have noticed the seemingly clumsy costumes of the people, and indeed so they are, but at the same time they are suitable both for the climate

and life of the native. The loose flowing robes allow a current of air to get at the body, thus keeping it cool on the hottest days, whilst the voluminous folds of their garments give ample room for them to lounge and squat about as they do without any discomfort.

The garments of the peasant are few and simple, and are worn to their last extremity. The more patches the more beautiful, and the more varied the colours the more admired.

The average peasant wears but two garments. First a large cotton shirt reaching down to his ankles girded round the waist with a strong leather strap or belt woven of cotton. In parts of the land, especially east of the Jordan and throughout the Negeb the men have long pointed sleeves to these cotton garments, and the more important the wearer the longer his sleeves.

The pointed extremities of these sleeves serve as pockets, all kinds of things being tied in them irrespective of suitability or flavour.

Naturally one would suppose these long sleeves to be in the way when there is work to be done, and so they would be if there were not some way of disposing of them and setting the arms free from encumbrance. The action is simple, interesting and instructive. The ends are tied together and thrown behind the neck which tends to draw the whole sleeve toward the shoulder thus baring the whole of the arm and freeing it from anything that would

hinder free action in the work to be undertaken. To see a man or woman, for their sleeves are of the same kind, tying the ends of their sleeves together and putting them behind their neck is an indication that something unusual in the shape of work is to be done, and in this case actions speak louder than words.

This simple operation in daily life is illustrative of two old Testament scriptures, which to the Occidental are somewhat obscure, but which in the light of Oriental usage are quite reasonable and understandable, viz., Isaiah lii. 10, "The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations," and also chapter liii. 1, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed;" both passages relating to the great work of the Almighty, and to the Oriental typical of something unusual.

The other garment common to the men of the country is the large outer cloak or garment known as the ABBA, and which is equivalent to the overcoat.

This covering which is made of either cotton, wool or goats hair is indispensable to the wearer as he goes in and out, for it is his only shelter against the wind or rain, and at night serves as a blanket. For that reason the Israelites were forbidden to keep this garment overnight as commanded in Exodus xxii. 26, "If thou at all take thy neighbour's garment to pledge, thou shalt restore it unto him by that the

sun goeth down. For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin, wherein shall he sleep;" also in Deut. xxiv. 12, "If a man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge; in any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and bless thee."

These commands, given so long ago to a people like those of the present day, are still faithfully kept—another proof of how little the customs of the East are changed.

This large outer garment is probably the mantle referred to in connection with Elijah and Elisha, 2 Kings ii. verses 8, 13 and 14, also Ezra ix. 3, 5. It was most likely too that the camel hair garment of John the Baptist (see Matt. iii. iv.) was of the same kind, also the "coat without seam, woven from the top throughout," mentioned in John xix. 23, which the Roman soldiers cast lots for rather than "not rend it," so that this outer garment of the peasant, unattractive though it be, has quite an interest attached to it, and is worthy of study.

In some parts of the country another garment takes the place of the ABBA, and splendidly illustrates the coat of many colours of Joseph's day. This is a smaller and tighter fitting garb than the one described and is more in use among the people of the mountains; they are usually home-made and more expensive than the Abba, neither are they by any means as common.

Another garment much valued by the peasant, but not always possessed, is the "furrowah," a large overall made of roughly tanned sheep skins with the wool left on.

This heavy and warm adjunct to the peasant's wardrobe serves him well on a cold windy day as well as when he has to sleep in the open, either with the flocks in the gardens, or when travelling with some caravan, and the man that has a "furrowah" is usually an object of envy by his fellows.

It is not an uncommon sight to see on a hot summer day a man walking along the road or mountain side with his "furrowah" on, and if asked why he burdens himself thus on a hot day, he will tell you "what keeps out the cold keeps out the heat also," and go on his way wondering why such a question was asked.

The clothing of the women varies little in cut from that of the men, the difference being in colour and costume, that of the average peasant woman being blue with a slight attempt at ornamentation in the way of embroidery. More often than not this blue cotten garment is all the woman is allowed, so that in cold and wet weather they suffer much from exposure which brings on all kinds of ailments, aches and pains.

The women of Bethlehem, Ramullah, and Nazareth have always been famed for the beauty and attractiveness of their garments, and they deserve all the praise they get, for they put lots of

(1) Women carrying beds, which are light and easily conveyed from place to place. (2) Woman spinning wool. (3) Bethlehem head-dress, the high bonnet indicating that the wearer is married.

PEASANT GIRLS OF SOUTHERN PALESTINE.

Christian sisters belonging to a poor family; the elder, although not married, has put her savings on her head. There are many thousands like these in Palestine.

time, work, and money into their dresses. It is a fact to be regretted that the incoming of Western fashions and ideas is doing a lot to do away with the pretty costumes of Palestine, the Western material and cut being less expensive than the native-made materials.

A thickly-padded coat is often a welcome addition to the wardrobe of the women, having been bought from the sales of eggs, fowls, fruit, or vegetables, not by the husband, father, or brother, for why should men spend money on such things for women? Suffice if they provide them with a cotton garment or veil.

The head dresses of the women are always a source of attraction to visitors, and are of a variety of styles. The majority of women throughout the land wear only a large white veil over their heads, which falls in thick and heavy folds over their backs, whilst the single girls and women of Bethlehem are known by the same sign. The married women of the Judean town are distinguished by the upright cone-like bonnet worn on the head, over which is placed a large veil similar to that of other women. On this bonnet is strung a variety of gold and silver coins which were given them at the time of their wedding, and which are their own personal property, never to be spent except in case of dire need.

Farther north the head dress is of quite another kind, and tallies with the "round tires like the moon" of Isaiah iii. 18, which in appearance they

are like. These round tires, or money crowns, are made up of coins from 120 to 140 in number, and are in value about twenty-five cents. each. They, too, were presents at the time of marriage, and are the sole property of the woman, not to be taken from her or spent during her lifetime. Outside of these three styles of head dress there is nothing attractive or striking.

Thus may be seen how simple are the styles and costumes of the people of Palestine who are content to go on as did their forefathers, and yet, all unconsciously, they are pleasing, attractive, sanitary, and healthy without being unreasonably expensive.

Chapter V

Pastoral Life and Gardens, Olive Groves and Vineyards

A QUESTION frequently asked of the Palestine peasant is "How do you pass your time; what do you do?" This we will try and answer in this chapter, for the average peasant of Bible lands is not a lazy fellow.

Hundreds of men and boys are engaged in a pastoral life, that, perhaps, most pleasing calling of the East, and so frequently alluded to in the Bible.

From early years children have care of animals, more frequently being set to care for and watch over the lambs and kids whilst their mothers are away grazing on the hill-sides in the care of the shepherd, so that a thoughtful care is instilled into the mind of the young early in life.

The hardest time of the shepherd's life commences with the lambing season early in December, and during the following months, for the lambs have to be carefully tended, frequently suckled during the first few days, and kept sheltered from the cold

winds or rough storms that are so frequent at that season of the year. As the lambs get strength, they are left at home during the day, but even then the shepherd has to be on the watch for attacks from wild beasts and sometimes has to defend his flock against robbers, and to assure the sheep of his watchful presence, he continually pipes on his reed-flute very much as David did when on the slopes of the Judean hills.

At the season of the year when the sheep are dry they are folded in the open air, for there is no necessity to drive the flock home when there is no milking to be done. At such times they are herded in an enclosure of rough stones piled one on the other with a narrow entrance which can easily be stopped by other stones; under ordinary circumstances the sheep are safe in such places, but the shepherd has to be on the alert lest some beast jump the wall and worry the flock, even killing one or more of them. At such seasons there is more than one in attendance, so that the shepherd on duty during the day may rest during the night.

When storms are raging, the flock is led to the cover of some cave or overhanging rocks for shelter until such time as the weather clears. In many of these caves there is stored a supply of chaff so that the sheep may have feed whilst unable to graze in the open, and it behoves the shepherd to be aware of the place where he can find shelter and provender for those under his care at such times.

When the weather is congenial the flocks pass the night resting in the shelter of some valley or depression in the plain, so that they are free from observation and protected from any slight wind that may be blowing. Under some such circumstances were the shepherds near Bethlehem when the angels appeared and announced to them the birth of the Saviour, for at Christmas time in the Orient the weather allows of out-door living and camping.

During the day it is the duty of the shepherd to find for his sheep suitable pasture and a quiet resting-place beside still waters, for the sheep being a very nervous creature is afraid of rushing water, and fears to approach it. When passing from place to place the shepherd always leads his flock. Rarely is a man seen driving his sheep, he goes ahead, they follow; should one stray it is brought back into line by a stone thrown beyond or on one side of it, but never directly at it, for the shepherd is responsible for any damage done to the sheep.

A shepherd with lambs in his bosom is no uncommon sight, especially in the spring time, for the loose garment of the native above the girdle makes a safe and cosy receptacle for baby sheep and goats.

Shepherds are usually engaged by the season, and in payment receive a small sum of money, a change of garments, and a percentage of the young lambs or kids that they rear successfully. This latter makes him careful, and a watchful man will come

out well at the end of the season. On the other hand, the shepherd has to make good all losses from the flock, unless he can bring or give proof that the loss was not his fault. The prophet Amos may have reference to such action on the part of a shepherd in chapter iii. verse 12: "As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear," as likely to have occurred in his day even as now, when the hireling is responsible for losses.

The outfit of a shepherd is small, simple and effective, consisting of a small leather bag in which he carries some flour or bread, his reed flute with which he whiles away the long days and assures the sheep of his near presence, a stout staff with which to defend himself and flock against the attacks of wild beasts and robbers, a sling and stones with which to hit anything at a distance, and lastly a light stick under which his sheep pass as he counts them on leaving the fold or when given over to his care.

To this latter proceeding the Scriptures refer in three places, viz., Leviticus, xxvii. 32, Jeremiah, xxxiii., 13, and Ezekiel, xx., 37, each being taken from the pastoral life of the Holy Land.

From the facts thus stated it will be learned that the life of the Oriental shepherd is no playgame, but one that calls for watchfulness, care, fidelity, sympathy and love, all of which are found in Him who took to Himself the name of "The Good

Shepherd," and whose care for His own far surpasses that of any earthly shepherd.

Gardening occupies a good share of the peasant's time, and if well done is profitable to those who engage in it. This can only be taken up where there is a constant supply of water with which to irrigate the plots and fields under cultivation, and yet a glance at the markets of the towns in Palestine is sufficient evidence that large numbers must grow herbs and vegetables. The vegetable supply of Palestine is varied and of good quality. Cauliflowers, cabbage, turnips, beans, peas, marrows, pumpkins, melons, carrots, egg plant, salads, a few potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers and onions, are among those generally to be found in the market, all of which have a ready sale at good prices.

These are grown in the valleys around the main centres of population, in about as primitive a way as possible. The soil is levelled and cleared of weeds and thorns, then marked off in squares each about a yard wide and sunk some inches in the ground, the earth that is scooped out forming a bank to each square. In these the seeds are sown and mature, and as occasion requires the plants are removed to more roomy plots.

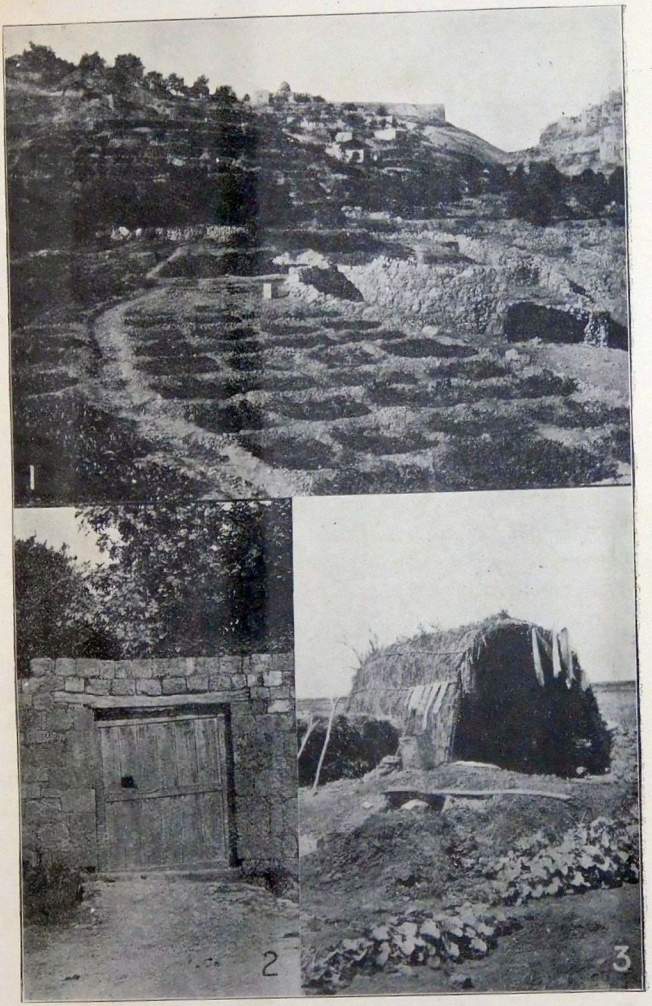
The old fashioned way of watering with the foot (see Deut. xi. 10), is only practised in out-of-the-way places. When such is the case the water is brought from the main source through a service channel to the garden plot, then a small opening is

made with the foot in the bank of earth that surrounds the plot and sufficient water allowed to trickle through to saturate the plot. Another movement of the foot will replace the soil, and turn the water off to another square, thus in a short time a man or woman, or even a child can water a large garden.

The most general way of watering a garden is with the water skin, and here the gardener shows common sense by not pouring the water direct from the skin on to the soil, but allows it to pass through a coarse sieve or piece of a wicker basket, so that the force of the falling water may not wash out the seeds or young plants. Where available the peasant uses an iron hoe, one of the introductions of Western civilization.

Most of the gardens are enclosed, especially fruit orchards, entrance being gained to them through a large gate fastened by means of a lock, the secret of opening being only known to the owner. This lock which is made of wood, and is of huge dimensions, is attached to the inside of the gate, and to get at it and insert the key there must be a large hole in the gate or door.

To this hole in the gate or door the writer of Solomon's Song refers in chapter v, verse 4, again demonstrating that the expressions used in the Bible are from the every-day life and doings of the people and not mere flights of fancy. Such holes in the gate are not limited to gardens only, but may



(1) An Eastern garden, shows the squares in which the peasants cultivate their vegetables and herbs. (2) A garden gate ; the lock being on the inside necessitates the hole in the wood. (3) A lodge in a garden, necessary because of the thieves and wild beasts that steal and damage the produce.

be seen in the doors of hundreds of homes, for smaller locks of the same kind are used to secure the houses of the people as well as their gardens.

Where gardens are on a large scale or spread out over a considerable area it is necessary to have watchmen, to keep off destructive birds, beasts and human beings. These generally pass most of their time on an elevation made of poles and branches of trees, thus enabling them to have an unobstructed view of the gardens. Such structures are mentioned by Isaiah in chapter i, verse 8, as "A lodge in a garden," a very appropriate name seeing that they are only temporary.

The watchman is nearly always a Moor in preference to a native of the country, the former being famed for bravery, honesty and faithfulness.

The vegetables and herbs are carried to the neighbouring market by the women in baskets on their heads, and it is an every-day sight to see a woman with a heavy basket of green stuff on her head and a baby slung on her back trudging along the road or mountain path on her way to dispose of the produce of the garden. After it is sold there comes the settling up with the husband or partner, a bit of business frequently done by the wayside or at the city gate.

Chapter VI

Vineyards, Olive Orchards and Various Trees

THE oft-repeated words, "vine, vineyard, grapes, and vintage," in the Scriptures are sufficient proof that the Land of the Bible is the land of grapes, and although sadly neglected as to cultivation, Palestine still yields a large amount of the luscious fruit. All over the land are traces of a once extensive industry in the way of vineyards, for ruined terraces are to be seen everywhere, on and over which no doubt tens of thousands of vines trailed and bore fruit, and even to-day in some parts of the land great heed is given to the culture of the grape, for around the hillsides of Hebron, Ramullah, Salt, and all through the Lebanon, are miles of land covered with flourishing vineyards, to say nothing about the smaller gardens that are found near almost every village in the land.

The grapes grown in Palestine are unusually fine and of different grades, the green more abundant

than the black, and if only cultivation were practised on scientific lines a fine quality of fruit would result.

The first attention given to the vine is in February or March; then the husbandman comes with his knife and prunes the vine, cutting away such branches and sprouts as he thinks will retard fruit bearing. Then he comes with his primitive plough and turns up the earth all around the roots so that, as he says, "they may smell the weather," next comes a clearing of weeds from the surface, after which the vine has to care for itself.

Most of the vines in Palestine are allowed to trail along on the ground, for the peasant asserts that the grapes ripen slower under the shadow of the leaves, whereas if they were propped up on sticks the fruit would be exposed to the sun and ripen before it had fully grown. Around very ancient ruins and sites there are extensive evidences that the grape was cultivated on a large scale, the vine being trained over heaps of stones, probably with the idea of hastening the ripening of the fruit by the heat drawn by the stone.

The grape ripens about the beginning of July and continues its fruit until well on into October. In elevated parts the fruit will continue until November, and, if covered with paper or calico bags, can be preserved on the vine until Christmas.

From the grape the native preserves raisins in large quantities; he also makes a kind of syrup called "dibs," which is very acceptable in the home

as a luxury to be eaten with bread, and large quantities are taken to the towns and cities of the land to be made into wine, this being almost exclusively done by the Jews. The peasant never makes wine either for his own use or for sale, the Koran forbidding it.

The practice of treading the grape in a wine-press is a thing of the past; if it is done at all it is only on a very small scale and in remote places. The common way of crushing the fruit is with a large round stone.

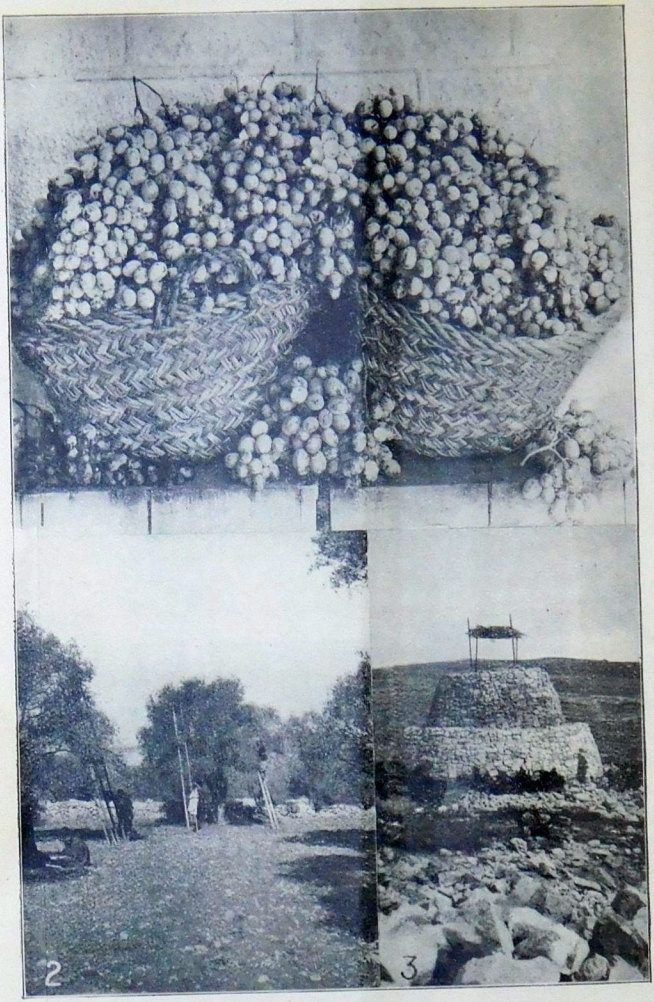
Where Jewish colonies have been established the grape is being extensively cultivated with the object of wine-making, a ready market being found for the wine in the cities of Europe. At present the colonist's difficulty is to get his produce conveyed to the coast for shipment, the natives not being used to the handling of barrels and adjusting them to their camels' backs, and not until Palestine is intersected with good roads will the colonist have much success along the line of exporting the produce of his farm.

With the ripening of the grapes there is a general exodus from the village to the vineyards, where the peasant's family live for the remainder of the fruit season, for the ripe grapes have to be gathered every day and sent to market, and the presence on the spot of some responsible person is necessary to prevent the vineyard from being robbed.

The family take up their abode in the watch-

A MILL FOR GRINDING OLIVES.

Such places may be seen in most of the villages of Palestine. The upright stone varies from three to eight feet in diameter, and is turned by a camel or mule. Olive pressing is remunerative work to the owner of the mill.



(1) Grapes grown near Jerusalem. (2) Beating the olive trees. (3) A Watch-tower, such as may be seen in all vineyards, and which makes a good summer house for the peasant.

tower, which is found in or near every vineyard. This erection, as will be seen from the illustration, is circular in shape and quite high. It is so built that it is hollow, thus making it serve as a living-room for the family, whilst from the top a good and wide look-out may be kept for the approach of those who would come with evil intent. For the protection of those who have to keep watch a shelter from the sun is erected on top of the watch-tower, so that the great heat of the sun may not affect those on duty, as otherwise it would do.

The watch-tower in the vineyard is an ancient institution as well as a necessary one, for there are frequent mentionings of it in the Old Testament, especially in Isaiah i. 8, as "a cottage in a vineyard," and in chapter xxi. 8 as a place from which watch was always kept, "I stand continually on the watch-tower."

When the grapes are finished the vineyard is thrown open to the sheep and goats to come in and eat what remains of the leaves of the vine, for outside the hills and fields are bare of feed, thus nothing is wasted.

Soon after the clearing of the vineyards comes the olive harvest, a time second in importance to the grape season, and in some cases even more important.

Those who possess olive trees are fortunate people, and are counted rich, for the tree is a producer of good cheer in the shape of food, oil, and money.

The olive is an evergreen, and, generally speaking, bears fruit every year. Almost every village in Palestine has its olive grove, the trees of which are the private property of the villagers. There are very few, if any, wild olive trees in the Holy Land; the product of the tree is too precious to allow it to remain unproductive.

The tree blossoms in May, its bloom having the shape of a small white ball-like flower which forms into fruit. The flower of the olive tree is mentioned in Job xv. 33, its product as oil was a part of the payment given to the workmen of Hiram (2 Chron. ii. 10), and its wood, which has a beautiful grain, was used in the decoration of Solomon's temple. To-day olive wood is bought at high prices, and souvenirs made from it are sent, and taken, to all parts of the world.

As at wheat harvest so with the gathering of the olives; the whole family turn out in force to take their share in the work. They go armed with a ladder, stout sticks and sacks, for the berries have to be harvested in the old-fashioned way, such as was commanded to the children of Israel when they turned out in like manner. Deut. xxiv. 20 says: "When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again"; also Isaiah xvii. 6, "as the beating of an olive tree," also chapter xxiv. 13.

Arrived at the olive grove, the men of the party climb the ladders and give the tree a good beating,

which causes the berries to fall to the ground. Under the trees the women and children gather the olives and put them in sacks ready for transportation to their homes. The Mosaic injunction was, "What is left on the tree shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow" (Deut. xxiv. 20). It is doubtful if this is strictly observed in these latter days, the poverty of the peasant making him careful to gather all that is his, and yet there are found those who still have a care for the destitute and see that a share of the olives falls to them.

The family owning a number of trees can afford to dispose of some olives for money, so send them in baskets to the market towns where they find a ready sale being worth about two cents. (an English penny) per pound.

Those that are retained are put to one of two purposes, either salted and put away in jars for food or taken to the olive press to have the oil extracted from them, which latter is very useful in the home or saleable in the market.

Almost every village has its olive press, a large primitive and clumsy affair worked by either a camel or mule, but much preferred to the modern press recently introduced from Europe.

The press consists of a huge stone standing on edge in a large shallow basin ; into this latter the berries are put and the large stone revolved on them, very effectually crushing out all the oil there is in them. After the crushing, the pulp is put under

pressure so that any remaining oil may be extracted from it, then to finish up with the seemingly useless mass is sacked up and sent off to the towns to become fuel for furnaces, so that nothing is lost to the owner. Thus it will be seen that an olive tree is a profitable asset, and as already said those who possess such are fortunate.

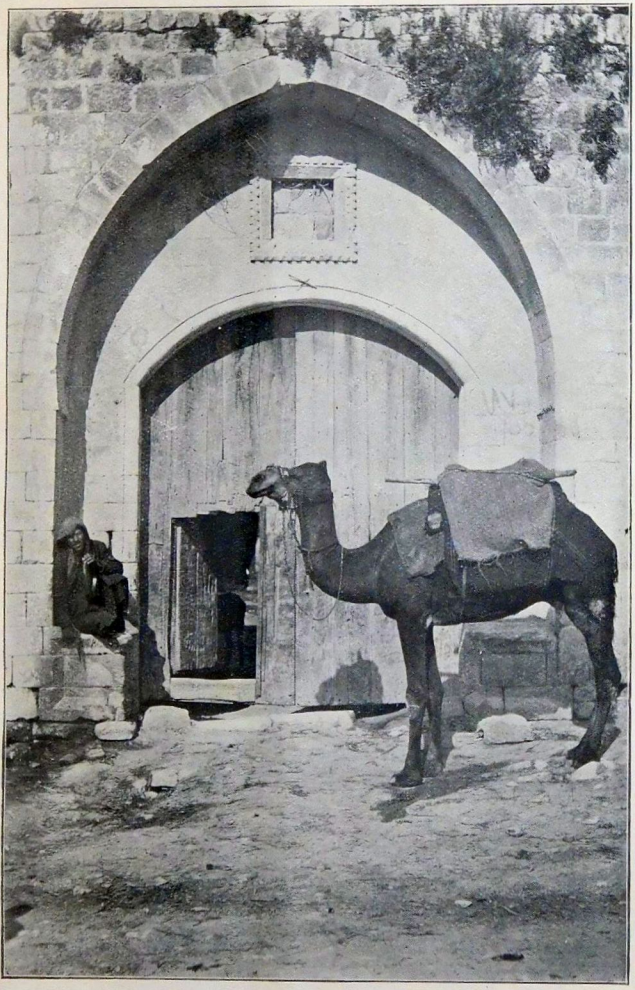
The olive oil is stored away in large jars to be drawn on for family use or sale to the neighbours or merchants who periodically visit the centres of oil activity. Quantities are used in the manufacture of soap, and hundreds of barrels are exported to Europe and America annually.

It should have been stated that the olive harvest commences in November and continues on through December, those berries that remain on the tree longest being considered the best for all-round purposes.

The finest olive groves in the Holy Land are to be seen near Bethlehem and Beirut. The government takes a tax on every olive tree, and sometimes when the crop is poor it pays the peasant better to cut down his tree and sell the wood than pay the tax put upon him. No count is made for bad yields.

Next in utility is the fig tree, not for the value of its wood but for the abundant supply of delicious fruit it yields, and for the cool shade it affords during the heat of long summer days.

There has been much written and said about the yields of the fig tree, some writers asserting that



NEEDLE'S EYE IN KHAN DOOR.

The small opening in the main door is supposed to be the Needle's Eye spoken of by our Lord, and the difficulty of getting a camel through is apparent. The above is an every-day sight in Palestine.

there are three crops of fruit a year and others saying only two, but any conclusion can only be arrived at by considering what the fig crop really is.

The approach of spring is announced by the fig tree putting forth its leaves in advance of most other trees. Almost simultaneously with the early leaves appear small figs that (if left alone) will wither and fall, although when food is scarce the peasant will gather and eat them in spite of their unsuitability for food. Weeks later, when the tree is in full leaf and the summer well commenced, appear other figs, but in limited quantity and unusually large; these which are known as "daffur" are eagerly bought in the market and realise a high price, but their supply is limited and they last only a short time. Then about the end of July comes the crop of fruit called "ripe figs," which, in reality, is the full and proper fruit of the tree. Hence it will be seen that there are three yields of figs, although not all suitable as food, the first called "ajal," the second "daffur," and the third and proper crop, "ripe figs."

Much controversy and speculation have taken place about the Gospel story of the fig tree that was cursed by Jesus, without any proper solution of the question. All that can be said in view of the facts is, that either it was a wild fig tree that bore only leaves, or that an unusually early spring had forced the leaves before the fruit. Occurring as the incident did in the spring, there can be no reason to think that the Lord expected the proper figs to be on the tree

although there might have been a fair showing of leaves. Neither is there anything in the wording of the story to suggest that the tree had previously borne fruit, for barren or wild fig trees are numerous in the Holy Land and generally stand apart from others, and from the Greek we gather that the tree was standing alone. Whatever the facts were the teaching remains the same, that profession without fruit is not acceptable to God, on the contrary it is condemned.

It was quite permissible for the Saviour to go expecting to gather fruit off the tree although it was not His, for custom did and does allow passers-by to help themselves to the product of the vines and gardens of the land.

Here again we are carried back to the teaching of the Mosaic law about these things, "When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel." Deut. xxiii. 24. Josephus thus explains it, "Nor are you to prohibit those that pass by at the time when your fruits are ripe to touch them, but to give them leave to fill themselves full of what you have; and this whether they be of your own country or strangers." Passers through vineyards or visitors are permitted to eat of the fruit, but must carry none away with them, even in these days.

The pomegranate, beautiful when in flower, is a much desired fruit by the Oriental, the juice of

which is a favourite drink to give to sick persons, and the dried rind treasured by the careful wife for dying and tanning purposes.

The prickly pear, of which there is an abundance throughout Palestine, serves a two-fold purpose among the peasants. First it makes a most effective hedge to their fields and gardens through which no animal or human being can penetrate, and its abundant fruit which is always cold, is most acceptable in the heat of summer. This fruit bears a most appropriate name, SUBR, which means PATIENCE, because being covered with fine sharp thorns they have to be carefully handled ere the skin can be removed ready for eating.

Other fruit-bearing trees cultivated by the peasant of Palestine are the orange, lemon, apricot, plum, peach, almond, quince, and damson.

Of other trees there are many kinds, the mention and study of which would be outside the scope of this book.

Chapter VII

Daily Callings and Trades

IT must not be thought that all the people of Palestine are peasants, for such is not the case by any means, as thousands earn their daily bread in other ways, following the same trades and callings as did their forefathers, and in the same primitive style.

Most useful and ancient of the workers of the Holy Land are the potters, for where would the housekeeper be without his wares? from what would the people drink, and in what would they store their olives, oil, water, &c.?

The potters are found in the Anti-Lebanon, Nazareth, Ramleh, Gaza, and Hebron, from which centres the pottery is sent all over the land for sale or exchange. Each place has its distinctive make and colour of goods, some being black, others red, and others variegated and glazed, all of which adds to their value.

The potter generally works under cover in a dark corner, so that climatic changes troubles him little. The clay with which he works is found in the neigh-

bourhood of his home, brought in on donkeys' backs, and thrown into pits to become thoroughly saturated with water so as to become workable. From there it is carried to the potter's bench to be thrown on the wheel to be turned out in the shape of dishes, small water jars for hand use, and larger ones for the storage of water in the homes and yards of the people.

After having been shaped they are carefully lifted into the sun and allowed to harden, after which the necks, handles, and spouts are put on and put aside to set previous to baking.

When a quantity has been prepared the great oven is heated for the baking and hardening of the various vessels made by the potter. For this purpose quantities of brushwood, thorns and anything burnable are collected and piled up near the furnace, and when all the jars are stored away inside the fire is set going and kept burning for six or eight hours, which suffices to bake the contents of the furnace.

After several days the furnace and its contents are sufficiently cool to be opened and removed, the jars sorted, packed in large nets and sent off to be turned into money or kind according to the locality visited.

Broken pottery is collected by the peasants, crushed to powder, and sold to builders to be mixed with lime and used for the linings of wells and cisterns, a bucket full being worth about twenty-

five cents (an English shilling). People make the collection and crushing of pottery their business, and earn and save good money at it.

The potter and his wheel are frequently mentioned in the Bible, and were used by God as types when instructing the prophets and seers what to say and teach the people who were under them. No improvement has been made on the old-time wheel, and even in Western lands the work is done in the same style as the Oriental did it centuries ago.

Next in usefulness comes the skin curer and tanner, another of the old industries of Bible times, for in a land where skins are used instead of buckets, and shoes made of roughly-tanned and dyed leather, necessity requires people to prepare the material, a process not the most pleasant or work the most agreeable.

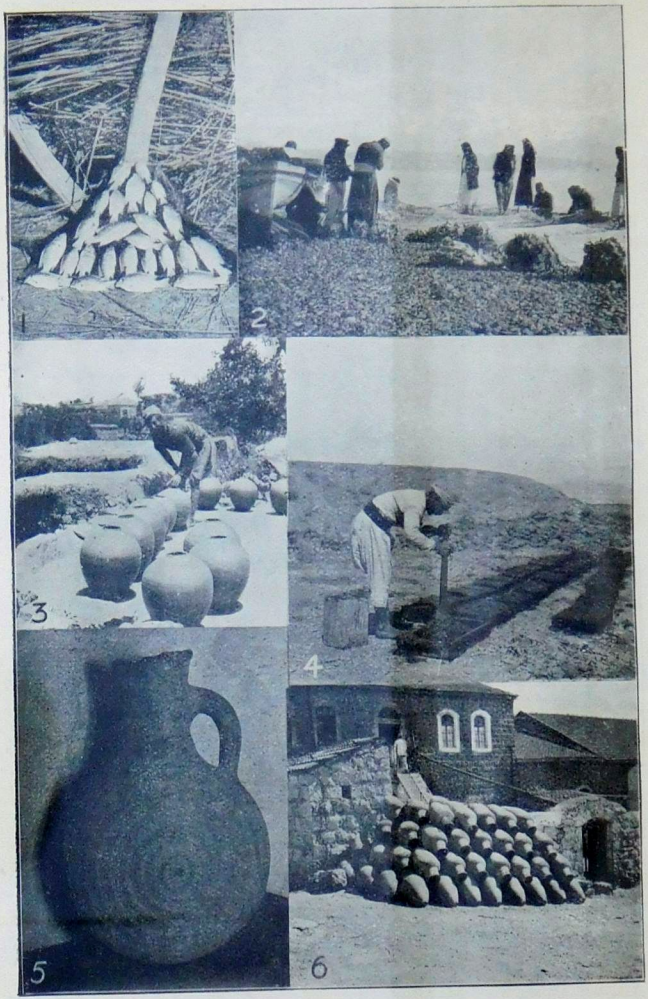
The curer and tanner of skins are found at work in Nablous and Hebron, two of the oldest towns in Palestine, both having a good supply of water, which is necessary to such work.

The skins thus treated are those of the sheep and goat, the former being used for shoe leather and the latter for water skins. As there are no swine in Palestine such hides cannot be used for the purposes mentioned, although people passing through the land often conclude that the water skins seen on men's backs are those of pigs.

The skins are slipped off the carcases whole, minus their extremities, the hair or wool removed

THE POTTER AT HIS WHEEL.

Civilisation has not ousted the old-time way of moulding clay, and the potter of Palestine does his work to-day as did the potter three millenniums ago. The summer is the most favourable season for the work of the potter. This illustration shows how the wheel is worked by the foot, which method sets both hands free for moulding the vessel.



(1) Fish from the Jordan. (2) Fishermen mending their nets. (3) Newly-made pottery out to dry. (4) Brick-maker at work. (5) Jar of money, 1,700 years old. (6) Jars from the Pottery.

and sold, then they are cleaned both inside and out and put to soak in large vats of water. Those to be cured for water-carrying are then stuffed tight with the bark and wood of some tree and laid out in the sun in rows to cook for several days, during which time the sun and stuffing do their required work, after which the four legs are sewn up, the neck strengthened, any defects righted and then put on sale. The skins ready for use vary in price according to size, costing anywhere from one to four dollars, *i.e.*, four to sixteen shillings. They are in great demand, there being a ready market for them as far afield as Egypt, Northern Syria, and even Baghdad, those cured at Hebron being the most sought after.

Sheep skins are treated in such a manner as to make them pliable and soft, then dyed red and yellow and sold in the local markets to be turned into shoes which are worn by the natives.

The tanner—dresser of hides—is only mentioned in one of the books of the Bible, Acts chapters ix. and x. but the mention early in the Old Testament of bottles, literally skins, makes certain the fact that the tanner and his unpleasant trade are a very old institution. At Jaffa are showed the ruined house, yard, and water trough, of Simon, where Peter lodged in the early years of the Christian era.

In these days of demand for the ancient and reliable remains of the early inhabitants of Palestine, many men are getting a living by supplying the need,

and although it cannot properly be labelled a trade, at least it can be named one of the callings of the people.

Tombs are being opened all over the land, and glass, pottery, iron, bronze, and sometimes gold articles found in them, and, in spite of government prohibition of such doings, the relics find their way into dealers' hands who have a ready market for them at high prices in Europe, England, and America.

Frequently valuable and interesting things are turned up by accident, the finder having no knowledge of the value, interest, or worth of the thing unearthed, so it is either cast aside as worthless, smashed, and destroyed for ever or given away to be a benefit to others more interested.

Such an instance occurred in the experience of the author, making him the possessor of an antique such as is rarely found in these days.

An Arab at the south end of the Dead Sea was ploughing up his plot of land previous to sowing his seed, when his ploughshare turned up something unusual and heavy. He stopped to pick it up and examine it, and found it to be an old jar with a broken neck but very heavy; concluding that it was full of earth he tossed it on one side as useless, but on returning to his home took it with him and gave it to a neighbour, who likewise saw no value in the find. Passing that way soon after, the neighbour produced the jar to show to the author and

suggested that he take it for himself as it was useless to any one in those parts. "What do we want with an old jar of earth," said they, so the suggestion was acted upon, and on unstopping the neck of the jar which was stuffed with hard clay it turned out to be filled with coins of the time of the Emperor Constantine, about 300 A.D. The jar and coins are still in my possession and are likely to remain there.

The jar was probably the savings of some man who for want of a better and safer place in which to keep his money had buried it in the earth, and dying had left his hoard unrevealed, to be found seventeen centuries later. The illustration gives a good idea of this old-time savings bank.

Along the shores of the Mediterranean, the Sea of Galilee, and on the Jordan, numbers of men spend their lives fishing as did the apostles and others two thousand years ago; unfortunately the heavy tax on fish keeps the number of fishermen limited and makes the price of fish high, whereas there should be plenty at low prices.

The fish are taken in large drag nets worked by men in companies, who spend the nights at sea, returning early in the morning to sell the catch which is immediately bought by speculators, salted and packed to be sent on mules to the large centres of population in the land, those of Tiberias finding their way to Safed, Nazareth, Nablous, and even Jerusalem at certain seasons of the year when Jewish feasts are frequent.

The fish caught in the Jordan are sent up to Jerusalem and sold in the monasteries and convents of the city; they are of varying sizes and kinds, a species of bass predominating.

Where dwellings are made of mud bricks the brick-maker is in great demand and earns a good living by turning them out by the hundred. In size they are about twelve inches square and six inches thick, made in frames and left in the sun to bake; they are never baked in furnaces. In composition they are made of heavy mud mixed with coarse chaff. Such material can only be used where the rainfall is slight, otherwise the walls would wash out and fall away.

The brick-maker earns all he gets, for his calling is a hard one, forcing him to spend long days under the scorching sun, for where he makes the bricks they are left until dry enough to be moved.

As the majority of the natives shave their heads the barber is another necessity, and is generally found in every community ready to operate on the pates of his neighbours in the most cruel manner, for the instrument with which he does his work is of the crudest kind, pulling off the hair instead of shaving it off. It is not to be wondered at that the boys try to escape the torture inflicted on them by this seeming benefiter of humanity, when their fathers tell them to get their heads shaved, nor is it any wonder that cries, yells, and curses are frequent whilst the operator pushes or draws his native-made blade across the crown of his customer,

Payment for shaving is made in kind, either a measure of wheat, barley, or something that is useable and on hand. In the cities there are barbers who have their shops to which the better-class native goes, but as a rule these establishments are not noted for their cleanliness.

Other ways of earning a living will be dealt with in a later chapter, for many of the peasants are forced to seek work in the towns and cities, returning to their homes to spend feast days, and occasionally what to them serves as Sunday.

Chapter VIII

Religion, Feasts, Charms, Pilgrimages, and Mournings.

PALESTINE is essentially a land of religion, and within its borders are found every adherent of the divisions in Judiasm, Mohammedanism and Christianity, all of which have a strong claim on the Holy Land.

As in these pages we are dealing with the peasant life of the land it would be out of place to consider religion from a Jewish standpoint, especially as the majority of the peasants are Mohammedans, the rest being those attached to either the Greek or Latin Churches.

The Mohammedan religion is so largely followed that any treatise of it here would only weary the reader and be out of place, so a few facts must suffice. Although the majority of peasants are followers of the Arabian prophet, they are very lax in their religious observances, coming up to the scratch once a year, to observe the month of Rummathan, when they fast all day and gorge

themselves at night, yet they very piously lift their eyes heavenward and affirm that they are Mohammedans, for what else could they be, seeing they were born that way?

There are always some in each village who do observe the teaching of their religion and attend to the duties required of them. First and foremost is that of prayer which is conducted in the mosque, or place set aside for worship. They are called to prayer by one called the "muezzin," *i.e.*, the inviter, who ascends the minaret of the mosque, or the roof of a house, five times a day and calls the devout to prayers. The call runs somewhat as follows, "God is great, God is great, There is no God but God, and Mohammed is His messenger. Come to prayer, come to prayer, God is great, and Mohammed is His messenger." This is repeated several times over, the "muezzin" calling north, south, east and west, so that all may hear the invitation. At noon he will add, "Prayer is better than business": at evening, "prayer is better than supper," and in the early morning, "prayer is better than sleep."

Before commencing to pray the worshipper must wash face, hands, arms, and feet, and then standing on his cloak, if outdoors, or a rug or mat, he goes through his prayers, taking up four different positions, as he proceeds with the recital of the first chapter of the Koran with sundry petitions added.

The following is as near a translation of the main prayer as it is possible to get :—

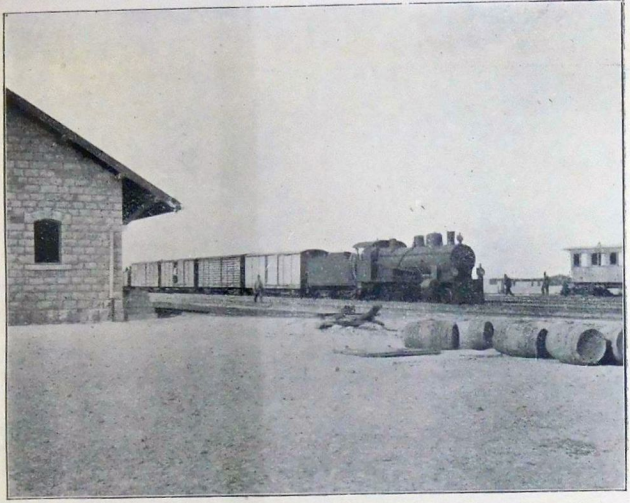
In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate.
Praise be to God, maker of both worlds ;
Thee do we entreat, and Thee do we supplicate ;
Lead us in the way, the straight,
The way of those on whom Thou hast compassion,
Not of those on whom is hate,
Nor those that turn aside.

Women rarely pray, and children never, and, as already stated, only a small number of the men.

Next to prayers comes pilgrimage, most important, if possible, to Mecca, the sacred city of the Faithful, and birthplace of their leader. But few can afford the money for so long a journey, or such long absence from home, and if the pilgrimage is made it is not until the intending pilgrim is well on in years.

The main caravan of pilgrims, called the " Haj," leaves Damascus once a year, a few days after the long fast. It is a great day, for thousands assemble to see the great company start on their long journey of nearly a thousand miles across the desert. Now that a railway runs from Damascus to Medina many pilgrims take advantage of it, as it lands them within about 200 miles of the sacred city, but as it is more meritorious to make the longer and more fatiguing journey, the strict ones still keep to the old-fashioned way of making the whole distance on camel back.

After a man returns from the " Haj " he becomes a much revered person in his community, and is

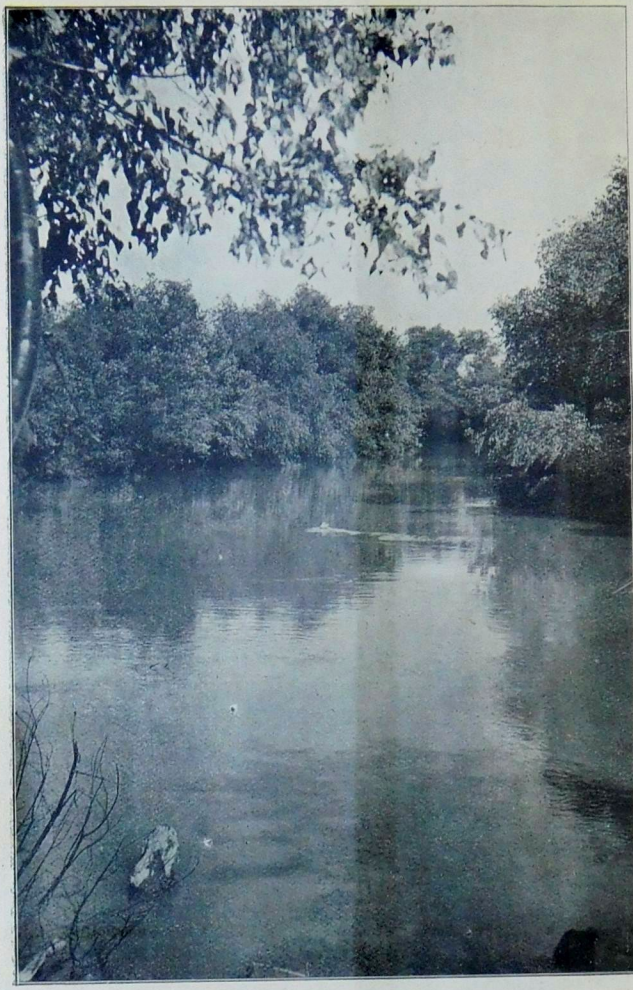


A TRAIN ON THE MECCA RAILROAD.

Most of those who visit Mecca make the pilgrimage by rail, as it is cheaper, safer and quicker.

THE GRAVE OF A VILLAGE CHIEF.

The plaits of hair hung over the grave show respect and grief for the dead.



A VIEW ON THE RIVER JORDAN.

Every year thousands of Pilgrims visit the Jordan. At the part shown in the illustration, Christians of all sects are immersed, as it was here, according to tradition, that the baptism of our Lord took place.

always addressed as "HAJ," meaning one who has made the pilgrimage.

Pilgrimages to shrines are very common among the peasants, and are of frequent occurrence, for almost every district has its sacred place dedicated to some saint or holy person, and usually placed near a grove of trees.

These shrines consist of a square building with a domed roof, inside of which is a cenotaph which is supposed to cover the actual grave of the worthy interred there. To such places both men and women come to pray, offer sacrifices, and beg the assistance of the long dead saint, firmly believing that he is able to hear and assist them. Barren women come asking for the power to bear children, the relatives of sick persons beg relief for those afflicted, others expect healing for crazy folk, shepherds think disease can be averted from attacking their flocks, and warriors think help will be afforded them when they go against their enemies. The saints of different shrines are supposed to have the power to grant these and other requests, which are presented in all sincerity by all classes of the people, long journeys being made to reach certain shrines where it is supposed great benefits are to be obtained.

Pilgrimages to shrines are no modern innovation, for as early as the days of the Judges of Israel we read of such journeys being made (see Judges xi. 39, 40), and such doings have been common ever since.

Charms have a great attraction for the peasant of Palestine, both male and female, and few there are but have one in some shape or other on their person. Even the babies are not free from them, for the mother, fearing lest the dread evil eye (whatever that is) should fasten itself on her child and harm it, fixes a blue bead directly over the mite's forehead to attract the feared evil, and thus ward off harm. The blue bead is also prominent on the mane or tail of fine horses, put there for the same purpose of warding off the eye.

Hanging from men's headgear may frequently be seen triangular tin cases, in which are enclosed charms written on paper, usually the doing of some "Haj," or sacred man, who has the power of overcoming certain powers of evil and warding them off. For these writings the superstitious peasant will pay a high sum of money and think he is proof against certain dangers as long as the charm is attached to his person.

Another very common but inexpensive charm worn by the peasants is a small piece of common alum enclosed in a small bead case, which is on sale in many of the shops in the local market, and belief in such and many other things is the outcome of ignorance and contact with the outside world.

It should be said to the credit of the Oriental Christian that most of the charms are worn by the Moslems, although they are not altogether free from belief in such things.

Feasts are of frequent occurrence with the natives of Palestine, and are usually faithfully kept, although with the Christian community they make considerable inroads on their time and work. Outside the feasts of the church, which are numerous, there are wedding and circumcision rejoicings, which are generally observed for seven days, this being the time that has been in vogue for more than two thousand years, the accounts of feasts in the Bible stating that they were always kept for seven days, just as they are now.

The great Christian feasts observed are Easter, the Feast of the Virgin Mary, and Christmas, with numerous minor ones and saints days between, and the great feast of the Mohammedans, that called Biaram, which concludes the requirements of the pilgrimage in Mecca; then all over the Moslem world a sacrifice is slain and eaten, which commemorates the offering of Ishmael by Abraham (according to the teaching of the Koran), and the shed blood which is supposed to atone for the sins of the past year.

A death in the family is a time of sorrowing for the whole community, everyone thinking it their business to come and take their part in the grief of the bereaved family, and follow the remains to the burying ground, the men taking their part in the washing of the body and carrying it to the grave.

Interment takes place very soon after death, and it often happens that a person is alive and well at

morning and in the grave at noon, and in view of Eastern customs it was no wonder that the wife of Ananias knew nothing of the death of her husband, which had occurred but a short time before she appeared before Peter (Acts v.).

After the burial the women go to the grave to weep and bewail the loss of their relative or neighbour, doing so regularly for seven days, as well as on the anniversary of the death. This, too, is a Bible custom, for the reader will recall the words connected with the death of Lazarus: "She goeth to the grave to weep there" (John xi. 31).

In country places and among the semi-nomads it is customary to show grief for the dead by the men and women cutting off their long plaits of twisted hair and suspending them on a string across the grave of the departed, this being done only in the case of a man and never in that of a woman. Should any interfere with these plaits of hair the belief is that evil will overtake them for thus carrying off what was intended as an offering to the dead as a sign of grief.

In some places it is customary for neighbours to relieve a bereaved family of all domestic duties during the seven days of mourning, so that they may be quite free to bewail their loss. Neither is it customary to tell in plain words that a person is dead, some such expressions as "he is sleeping," "she is under her age," or they will tell you "he is well," the idea being not to convey news that will cause

sorrow, but leave you to find it out. For an illustration read 2 Samuel xviii. 28-32, noting how neither messenger gave direct tidings of Absalom's death.

Chapter IX

Water, Fuel, and Winter Supplies

PEOPLE all the world over must have water, for without it little can be done or life lived for any length of time, and those who live in lands where the supply is abundant are well off indeed, but the peasant of Palestine is badly off as regards his water supply, and has to be careful of what he has to hand.

One wonders, as they travel through the land, why it is that God has so lavishly supplied the north with water and been so sparing in the south, and it cannot but be believed that in olden times, when the land was more thickly populated, there was a more abundant water supply.

Around the cities there are evidences that ways and means were adopted for the storing of water, but in country parts there are no such traces, so that the supply from springs and wells must have been more than it is at the present time.

Water has always been a source of trouble. "And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently

WATERFALL IN THE LEBANON.

Such a spot as this is a paradise to the peasant, for water is one of the necessities of life, and little can be done without it. Waterfalls are rare in Palestine, and, in consequence, are much appreciated.

(1) Water-skins filled for sale. (2) Well scene in Judea. (3) Jars for storing water. (4) Old water jar at Cana of Galilee, said to be one of the six which held the water that was turned into wine by our Lord.

taken away" (Genesis xxi. 25). "And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours; and he called the name of the well Esek, because they strove with him" (Genesis xxvi. 20, see also verse 21).

Many of the quarrels and old feuds between peasants and tribes in Palestine have been, and still are, over water supplies, and until there is a more abundant supply such will continue to be the case.

The peasants of the Holy Land draw their water from two sources, viz., springs and wells, the former being more abundant in Central Palestine, and the latter throughout the south being supplied largely by the rains. When the rainfall is short the peasants have to go long distances to get water. A fall of from twenty-five to twenty-eight inches of rain during the season means sufficient water to last until the next rainy season; less than that means a shortage and lots of extra work for the people.

Whether water is taken from the springs or wells the mode of procedure is much the same, and the doings of the woman of Samaria are repeated every day.

All who come to draw water have with them either a water skin or jar in which to carry the water to their homes, for buckets are unknown to the peasant of Palestine. The drawer of water from the well must have with her a "deloo," *i.e.*, vessel attached to a rope with which to draw the fluid. The surprise of the Samaritan woman was that

Jesus said He would have given her water had she asked Him, for she said, "Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep"; so the "deloo" is a necessity to the peasant woman.

Water skins are preferred to jars because the latter are so easily broken, and the replacing of them becomes a considerable item in the expenses of the family.

When the woman reaches her home with the water she empties it into a jar hidden away in a corner of her home, these jars being earthenware and made at one of the potteries already mentioned. Sometimes the jars are home-made, but are not very serviceable.

In olden times there used to be stone water jars which were very heavy and durable. Of such we read in John ii. 6: "And there were set there six water-pots of stone"; but nothing of the kind is found in the homes of the people at the present time.

At Cana of Galilee in the Greek church is to be seen a large stone water jar which the people say was one of the six used at the wedding feast when the water was turned into wine. Such would not be serviceable to-day, being too heavy for the women to move and clean, whereas the pottery ones are light and easily moved. These jars are of different sizes and shapes, as will be seen from the illustration.

The semi-nomad has to keep her water in the skin, for in her tent she has no jar. The constant

moving would mean too many breakages, hence too much expense; but whether the water is in a jar or skin it is always cold even on the hottest day, so that vessels are useful as well as easy to get.

For drinking purposes smaller jars are used, especially in the northern part of the land, and where such are in use the people are most careful not to allow their lips to touch the spout or edge of the jar, but pour the water into their mouths, holding the jar several inches from the lips.

From the same sources that the people get their water the flocks are watered as well as the cows and camels, and almost at any hour of the day cattle may be seen patiently waiting until the women come to draw water so that they may get drink also. In some parts wells are only opened once a day, and in order to get a supply everyone that needs has to be on hand at the right time.

Such an instance is given in Genesis xxix. 7, 8: "Water ye the sheep, and go and feed them. And they said we cannot until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep."

In parts of the land where water is scarce and a well is common property, it is customary to stop the mouth by means of a large heavy stone that fits tightly into the opening through which the water is drawn, and not until the shepherds with their flocks and cattle, as also the women with their jars and

skins, are all at the well, does watering begin, for it requires the combined strength of the men to move the stone from the well's mouth. In the south country around Gaza and Beersheba such scenes as the above are frequent, and serve to show how little changed are the customs of the people during all the centuries.

Fuel for cooking and heating purposes is another of the supplies that the peasant has to have constantly in mind, and in a land almost entirely void of wood the question is one difficult to solve, and yet every home has its supply in some shape or another. In Galilee may be seen large heaps of dried manure stored around the outside of the villages which have to serve during the wet and cold months of winter. This kind of fuel is about the worst that is used in Palestine, and yet probably the oldest, for, in 2 Kings ix. 37, there is reference to the "dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel," and it is particularly around and in the Plain of Jezreel.

Another fuel supply much used by the natives is the dried stalks of the millet after they have been utilised in every other way and are fit for nothing else. These are tied up in huge bundles and carried home on the women's backs to be stored away for use when everything else is saturated with rain. These millet stalks make a poor fire, there being no life in them which makes them need constant blowing.

STONE IN WELL'S MOUTH.

The stone in the mouth of a well forms an effectual barrier to all but the rightful owner of the water.

I have already mentioned in Chapter 2, the brush-wood and thorns that are brought in off the hill sides by the women and girls to be used in the ovens and under the cooking pots. This is of such a nature that it cannot be stored in any large quantities, so frequent trips have to made to the hills and valleys to keep up the supply; this makes hard work for the women, and one feels sad that the women and girls have to be made beasts of burden when in almost every home there are donkeys and mules.

Some parts of Palestine are well wooded and fortunate are the people that live in such districts, for they are able to have fuel at very little expense of either time or labour. Such parts of the land as Western Samaria, The Jordan Valley, Hebron, and Gilead, have such quantities of wood that the men of those regions carry on quite a large trade in char-coal, nearly all of which is sold in Jerusalem or Jaffa.

Coal is practically unknown to the peasant of Palestine, and if it were there are no stoves or other conveniences in which to use it, so that under present conditions the peasant must be content with his dried manure, millet stalks, brush-wood thorns, and wood. Fortunately for the people of the land fuel for heating purposes is not needed in any quantity, the sun serving them for warmth nearly all the year round, so that in this respect they are well off.

In many villages of Palestine the people have bees which are hived in mud cases in shape like a drain pipe; these are piled one on the other during

summer whilst the bees are storing their honey. Unfortunately, the peasant knows not how to take the honey without killing the bees so the supply is limited and only served up on special occasions.

From the milk are made several preparations that are put away for use during the months when there is no fruit or vegetable supply, and when more than dry bread is necessary to enable the peasant to do his daily work, but the consideration of the making of semmin, lebben, burghul, cheese and other similar things would be outside the scope of this book.

Mention must be made of one more winter supply which is carefully seen after by the people of the Hauran and Lebanon, but no trace of it is found south of Galilee, or east of the Jordan, viz., the fattening of one or more sheep to be potted down for use during winter.

In early summer the women and girls commence to feed a lamb with all kinds of green food, literally stuffing it down the creatures throat until it cannot take in any more ; many hours a day are taken up at this work and in time the sheep becomes so fat that it is with difficulty that it can raise itself from the ground because of its abnormal weight, caused by the continual stuffing. At the end of summer the beast is killed and its flesh boiled until thoroughly cooked, so that it falls off the bones : it is then minced and preserved in the fat of the sheep, most of which has been obtained from the huge and heavy tail which is peculiar to Syrian sheep, and which is

considered the best part of the animal and fetches the highest price in the market.

This fat and mincemeat are melted and poured over the rice or cooked wheat which serves as meal during the cold months of winter; it is looked upon as a very good dish as well as sustaining.

For the coming of some unusual guest or on some festive occasion this fatted sheep would be killed, but such does not often occur, as other animals are generally to be had with which to provide a feast. In this fattening and killing of the sheep there may be some remnant of the fatted calf of which mention is made in Luke xv. 23, but the sheep being more common and numerous, they have taken the place of the calf. I do not say this is so, but only offer the suggestion as a possibility of the continuation of what was evidently once a custom of the land.

Not all the peasants are able to lay by supplies for winter; many, it might almost be said the majority, live from hand to mouth, for generations of oppression and heavy taxation have done much to pauperise a people that once had plenty, and who again under a good government might rise to be a rich nation, for their land is a good one and the people are industrious.

Chapter X

Amusements and Pastimes

THE foregoing pages will give the reader the impression that the life of the Palestine peasant is one of continual work and worry, and so it is, generally speaking, and yet there are times of relaxation when for the time being the work of the day is left and forgotten, and around the coffee pot, or over a tiny fire the news of the day is discussed, especially prices in the market.

During what might be called years of activity many an hour is whiled away listening to the player on the "arababa," a native-made fiddle having one string, from which are drawn with a cross bow of horse hair the most excruciating sounds in the shape of music.

In every village and camp, as well as among every community, there is one who is supposed to excel on this instrument, and after supper, or during slack hours in the daytime, his services are much in request, especially if he is able to accompany himself by singing songs which are composed as occasion requires.

With the exception of the " Arababa " there is no other music found among the peasants, so that they are compelled to use it on every occasion and for all it is worth. That there were many instruments of music in the land at one time there are many evidences in the Bible, but they have all passed out of use and even mention, for in reading the names of such to the people they have no knowledge whatever of them.

At times of rejoicing, such as weddings, return of pilgrims, or men from military service, singing is always accompanied by the clapping of hands, which when done in unison and by many people has a striking effect. This way of rejoicing is of old time for there are constant references to it in the old Testament, showing that it was practised by the early dwellers in the land.

A pastime of quite another kind is that in the nature of a game which fills up many an hour that otherwise would be unoccupied. The requisites for the game are, a piece of board about twenty-four inches long and nine wide, in which are scooped a number of little saucers, and a quantity of stones each about the size of a small cherry. These stones are distributed in even numbers in the saucers, and the object of the game is for one of the two players to get all the stones. Hours are spent over the game and some skill is required in order to win it. The game is known by the name of MINKALA, and being so very simple of construction is easily obtained, although not easy to learn.

Smoking is common among the peasants, many of the women taking their share in the consumption of the weed ; and such a hold has the habit on the people that a pipe often takes the place of a meal, and is preferred.

Contact with Western civilization has introduced the cigarette, and whereas at one time the pipe was very common, it is now confined almost entirely to the women, the cigarette being more portable and less liable to breakage. The pipe is made of baked clay, and is imported into the land. The stem is a thin stick, with a hole bored through it, or a fine reed, such as are found by the streams of the land. Some of these pipe-stems are three feet in length, and when not in use serve as sticks to urge on the donkey or mule, as well as to correct unruly children.

When a man has sons old enough to relieve him of the ordinary work of the day he retires from active service and passes the remainder of his days lounging about in the village guest-room or street, or sunning himself on the dunghill, usually wrapped in his large outer cloak, no matter how hot the day.

In wet and cold weather the men gather in their homes or the guest-room, and spend their time telling and listening to stories, of which they have a large and varied stock, and in which they delight. The following are samples of what they tell :

WOMEN SMOKING.

Smoking is a common practice amongst many of the peasant women of Palestine, who use in their long pipes a coarse weed instead of tobacco.

What Befell Those who Hurried.

A company of men were returning from the market to their homes with their animals heavily laden with merchant's produce to be delivered to traders in their town. Towards the end of the day clouds appeared in the sky and rain threatened, which caused some of the men, especially the younger ones, to say, "Let us beat our beasts and hurry them on, so that we reach the town before the storm comes upon us and soaks us and the loads." The more experienced said, "Not so, for he who hurries gets into trouble and is delayed." But the young ones would not listen, but set to beating their animals and urging them on at great speed, soon outstripping the older men of the party.

Soon the animals tired and staggered under their heavy loads, finally falling under them, much to the damage of the merchandise entrusted to the men.

Whilst the young men were doing their best to make the fallen animals get up, the elder ones came up and passed on, leaving their hasty companions to unload and readjust the loads, which, through their haste, had become loose and much damaged. Meanwhile, the storm came and soaked those who would not listen to their elders, who had reached the town in time to escape a soaking and damage to the loads entrusted to them for delivery.

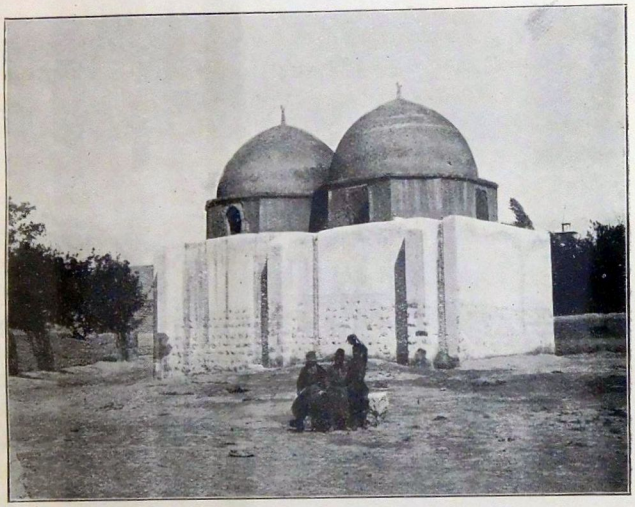
Moral: More hurry, less speed.

man who was noted for his piety and the great and wonderful cures he worked. With him lived a boy who was an orphan and whom he had adopted.

When the lad was grown and quite learned in the religion and cures of the holy man, the latter said to him: "My son, you are now a young man, and have learned all that I can teach you. I am getting old, and shall soon die. It is good for you that you go out into the world, visit the holy places, and see the doings of men. If you do this, you in turn can become like myself, and will eventually get into Paradise. Take this staff and my old donkey, for I need them no longer, and both will serve you well for a time." So the youth set out, not knowing whither he went.

For several days he wandered without meeting anyone, and at last, tired, waterless, and hungry he sat down under a tree to rest, and, whilst resting, his donkey died, much to his sorrow, for it was his only companion and means of travel. Thought he, if I leave the carcase of my companion here it will be eaten by wild beasts, and is deserving of better treatment than that, for it has served both myself and old master well and faithfully for many years, so I will dig a grave and bury it, which, after a lot of hard work, he did, and then sat down to mourn his loss.

Soon there came along a company of horsemen, among whom was a very rich man, who, on seeing the youth sitting under the tree sorrowing, asked



A TYPICAL RESORT OF PILGRIMS.

Many such exist in Palestine, being shrines dedicated to some great or holy man.

the cause of his grief, and, on being told, said, "Never mind, do not sorrow. To-morrow I will send masons and workmen, who will erect a suitable monument to your late and faithful companion," for the youth had told the company that it was for an old and faithful friend he was mourning, and not for his donkey.

Early next day there arrived at the spot masons and workmen, who erected a large cenotaph over the place where the donkey was buried, and near by a small chamber and praying place so that the youth could spend the rest of his days near his late companion in meditation and good works.

Soon the news spread abroad that a new and very holy man had appeared who worked wonders for the sick by writing them charms, and who lived in a small building erected over the grave of one even better than himself. So it came to pass that crowds of people came to consult and obtain the help of the new and holy man, so that his fame reached far and wide, even to his old master, who was by this time quite feeble and aged, but, in spite of age and infirmity, said that he, too, must visit this new saint ere he ended his days.

Accordingly he set out, and, after a long and tiring journey, reached the abode of his old servant, whom he at once recognised and greeted with tears in his eyes, which, however, soon gave way to joy at the prosperity that had come to his adopted child.

After having eaten and drunk, he asked: "What

worthy and sacred man was buried at the shrine which had become the abode of his adopted son, and which attracted such crowds to the place?" and the answer came: "My father, under yonder cenotaph lies the body of your old donkey. No one knows it but you and me, and as long as it remains a secret people will come and pay me well to ask the assistance of so noble a saint, and as long as you live we will share the income of the shrine, which is more than enough to support us both." But the old man soon died, and the young one lived many years to enjoy life from the money that was laid on the tomb of the unknown saint, and paid to implore the help of the same.

Moral. When you have a good thing keep it to yourself.

With such stories as the above many hours are passed away, and the man who can tell such tales is always sure of a welcome in any community.

During recent years ordinary playing cards have found their way into the hands of the peasant, and with these as a pastime much time is passed, but be it said to the credit of the native of Palestine they do not gamble with cards, but simply use them for playing purposes.

Thus it will be seen that the amusements of the people of the Holy Land are few indeed, and that those which are peculiar to the country are indulged in by the adults and not by the young people.

poverty of the home into which it comes, there is no murmuring or complaining as long as it is a boy, and this is not confined to any class, or of modern invention, for our Saviour, who was conversant with the daily life of the common people, said, "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow . . . . but as soon as she is delivered of a child she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world" (John xvi. 21).

There are many references in the Bible to this Oriental desire for male children, and it was one way that the Almighty took of rewarding those to whom He showed special favour, so that their names might not pass off the national roll and thus be forgotten. Solomon, the son of David, was the realisation of God's promise in 2 Samuel vii. 27: "I will build thee an house," and Solomon was assured in 1 Kings xi. 38: "If thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee. . . . I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David."

This idea of being blessed with male children is also brought out in that strange passage in Exodus i. verse 21, where the faithfulness of the midwives was rewarded by "God, that He made them houses," literally, He gave them male children.

No wish is more acceptable to a man than "God build your house," generally expressed after some favour or kindness has been granted.

Soon after the child's advent into this world it

has to conform to the usage of a very binding custom, and is well washed and salted. We would not be surprised at the former proceeding, but why the latter ?

The natives of Bible lands generally believe that unless a child's body is salted soon after birth it will become corrupt, or some infectious disease will come upon it and cause its death, hence the precaution.

Three ways are in fashion in order to preserve the little body from its supposed fate, the most common being to make a bath of brine and dip the child in, allowing time for the bath to have its effect on the skin ; another way is to take finely-powered salt dissolved in olive oil, and with it anoint the little body all over, and the third is to take finely-powdered salt and rub the swathing bands of the babe and then wrap the mite in them. After each process the child is wrapped up mummy fashion and allowed to remain so for periods varying from seven to forty days.

This strange and cruel usage of young children is firmly believed to have the effect I have already mentioned, and a woman would be very little thought of who neglected thus to treat her child in the early hours of its life, but, in doing so, an old custom is being perpetuated, for Scripture tells us that such doings were in vogue long, long ago.

As far back as the days of the Prophet Ezekiel we read of the salting of children, for in chapter 16,

Chapter XI

Street Life in the Cities

MANY of the peasants of Palestine are compelled by force of circumstances to seek a living in the towns and cities of the land, and a man that is handy can earn good money at one or other of the many things that require little or no training to acquire, and which does not need a large stock in trade. Some of the ways in which a living may be gained will be described in this chapter.

Many of the men that live in the villages within walking distance of a town or city find work on the many new buildings that are constantly being erected by the rich immigrants and religious orders that reside in them. A day labourer will be paid about twenty-five cents., *i.e.*, one shilling, for ten or twelve hours' work, a stone carrier about forty cents., *i.e.*, one shilling and eight pence, and boys for light work from ten to fifteen cents., *i.e.*, five to seven pence a day, so that labourers are cheap in Palestine, and if regularly paid those who want them can get all they need.

On every street in the cities may be seen the

bread seller with his tiny tray of flat cakes resting on a stand which is easily moved, so that he is able to travel around and offer his wares in parts where the crowd is thicker and trade promises better. This bread seller will supply the hungry with a good sized loaf and a hard boiled egg for two cents., *i.e.*, one penny, the bread being new but the egg of doubtful quality. The bread is bought by weight from a public oven of which there are many in the cities and towns, and a smart man will sell several hundred loaves during the day.

Next comes the water seller pushing his way through the crowd with his dripping water skin, regardless of those with whom he comes in contact, and many are the curses called down on him for dirtying the clothes of those against whom he rubs. The water sellers usually work in partnership, buying wells from which the skins are filled and carried about the streets for sale. The average price for a skin of water is about six cents., *i.e.*, three pence, but in times when water is scarce it will be double that price.

Sometimes a rich man in return for recovery from illness, or return from pilgrimage or a long journey, will pay for several hundred skins of water to be distributed among the poor, then will be heard the cry, "water for nothing, come ye thirsty ones and drink freely." Needless to say, there are plenty of thirsty ones at such a time.

The vending of lemonade and other drinks is also

another profitable calling which can be carried on during the long summer, and which turns in lots of money although prices are small, for a drink can be had for half a cent., *i.e.*, one farthing, and for double that price it may be had cooled with ice or frozen snow.

This beverage seller usually presents a very smart appearance with his large glass bottle or metal tank both glittering in the sunlight, and with his metal or glass bowls from which the people drink clanging one against the other as he parades the street shouting, "Cold, cold, drink and be satisfied, it is free (meaning the little cost), come and drink." On a hot day the man is kept busy and can sell all the drink he can make, the result being a good profit at the end of the day.

The "ATTAL," or porter, is always a wonder to the visitor to an Oriental city because of the heavy and huge loads he carries on his back for a few coppers. The cities and towns of Palestine would be badly off if it were not for this useful and hard-working member of society, for there are no other means of transferring goods through the narrow streets.

Men have been seen on the street with a grand piano on their backs going along quite unaided with their heavy loads; the illustration of the porter shows a man carrying a piano. The writer came across the man whilst moving furniture from one house to another a distance of more than a quarter of a mile,

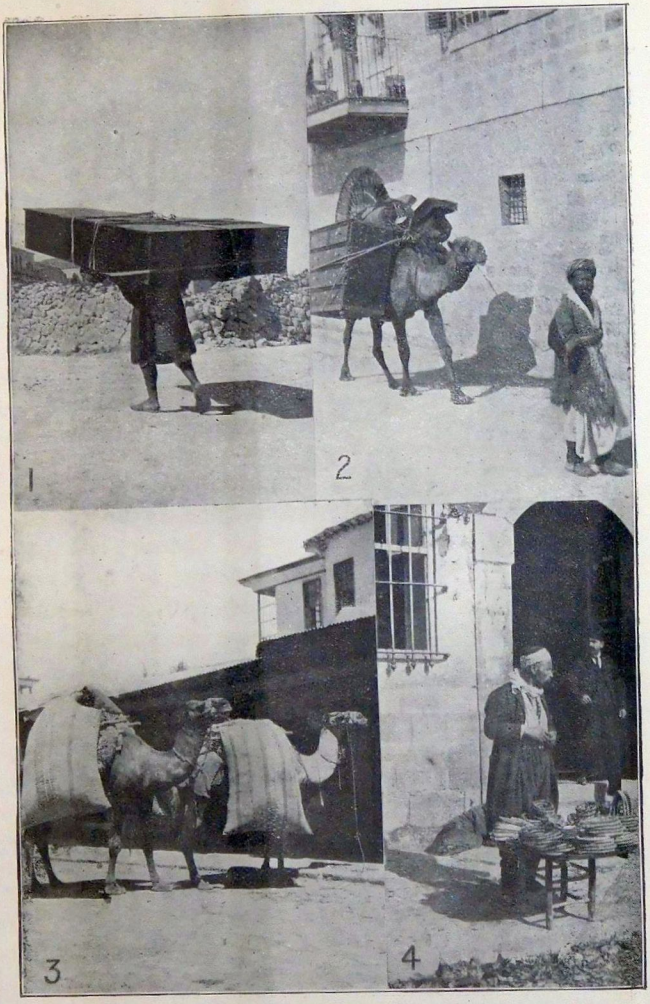
but the heavy load was not put down nor any stop made for rest between the two houses.

Probably our Lord saw a man thus burdened when He said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Matt. xi. 28. Reference to the burden bearer is also made in the condemnation of the lawyers by Christ in Luke xi. 46, "Woe unto you also, ye lawyers, for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers."

The porter, like the water seller, usually works in partnership with others, so as to have their assistance in the lifting and adjusting of the loads. Latterly in Jerusalem all porters have been required by the local authorities to have a licence to work, good only for one year, for which they have to pay a Turkish medjedie, *i.e.*, eighty cents., or three shillings and four pence, surely a "burden grievous to be borne."

Another way of getting a living in the city on the street is to become a mender of shoes and sandals, for the peasant and poor of the cities will never throw away their foot gear as long as they can be held together by any kind of stitching or patching, and wonderful in appearance are some of the shoes that have passed many times through the mender's hands.

These native cobblers generally carry on their business in shady nooks or by the way-side, always choosing a spot where there are plenty of passers-by;



(1) Man carrying grand piano. (2) Camel with furniture. (3) Camels laden with sacks of chaff, which sells at a high price as there is always a demand. (4) A bread-seller.

A TYPICAL SCENE ON MARKET DAY.

A busy lot are the peasants as they gather to sell their wares, and the scene depicted in the illustration may be witnessed on any market day.

PASSOVER LAMBS.

Just before Easter the Jews buy lambs for the great feast.

their outfit is very limited consisting of some pieces of roughly tanned leather, string, and a dish of water in which to soften the leather and shoes brought them to repair. It is quite the thing for the peasants to bring their own leather or raw hide, and simply pay for the work that is done for them. Unfortunately for the shoemender, his is a trade that can only be carried on in fine weather, so that in reality he has to make hay whilst the sun shines.

Once a year there is a general moving of house and home, and then the peasant with his camel comes to town to assist in the moving of furniture, for some prefer to have their goods moved on animals' backs in preference to the porter. There is no regular rate of pay for such work—it all depends on the nature of the things to be moved and the distance from house to house—but an ordinary day's work and pay for camel and man will mean about sixty cents, *i.e.*, two shillings and sixpence, the man providing food both for himself and camel.

Mention has already been made of the daily trips to market by the men and women to dispose of their fruit and vegetables, for in the villages there is no market for such produce. In addition to the produce of the gardens the women bring in eggs, wood, fowls, clay braziers for charcoal fires, and various other things for which they find a ready sale. Those that live far from the markets have to be up early and leave home at daybreak, for unless they arrive early at the market their wares will not fetch good

prices, and not only this, but others will have taken the good places, and the late comer would have to squeeze in where she could.

Some of the money realised in the market by the sales is the private income of the women, to be saved or spent by them as they see fit, although in hard times the woman has to help in providing for the needs of the family from her savings.

Another source of income occurs in the spring time of the year, just before the feast of the Passover, which is faithfully observed by the Jews wherever they are found, for a lamb is necessary to the strict keeping of the feast, and as such are not to be bought in the shops of the city, the peasant supplies the need.

For days before the feast men may be seen parading the streets, and especially the Jewish quarters, with lambs for sale, and it is no uncommon sight to see several lambs carried by one man, one across his shoulders, others in his bosom, and yet others in his arms, and if the lambs are clean and free from deformity the peasant finds a ready scale for them at good prices.

For many months during the year cucumbers are produced in large quantities from the gardens of the peasants, and with dry bread these make a good meal for the people, there being always a demand for them.

They are taken to market in sacks and sold by auction near one of the city gates. Some find their way to the shops of the vegetable seller, others are

sold by the way-side, whilst others are hawked through the streets on donkeys' backs. This last mentioned method is the most profitable, for the vendor with his donkey and pannier of cucumbers is able to get at the people who live in the narrow streets and alleys of the city, whereas the others are stationary and have to depend on customers coming to them.

When cucumbers are not in season the man intent on getting a living will load his donkey with oranges, onions, potatoes, or even pickles, carrying the last in tubs on a tray tied to the donkey's back, so that altogether the hawker of such commodities makes a very comfortable living at very little cost.

Between the clearing of the threshing floors and the commencement of the rainy season hundreds of peasants make their way to the market towns with their camels laden with huge sacks of chaff for which they find a ready sale, but these unlike all the others cannot put their goods on the wayside or in some tiny shop, so they have to keep on the move until customers are found that will lead them to stables or stores and thus relieve the camels of their huge loads.

An average price for a load of chaff would be about one dollar, *i.e.*, four shillings, but in times of short harvests or toward the end of the rainy season the price is considerably more, and then those are fortunate who have a good supply on hand either for use or sale.

As stated in a previous chapter, the peasant looks for the price of some of his chaff to help him to pay the taxes, or debts that he has incurred.

One more living gained on the streets of the city is that made from the changing of money, for small change is scarce in the land of the Turk. But this business is confined almost entirely to the Jews, for the peasant would not be smart enough to engage in such a calling.

The exchanger of coins and paper money sits by the side of the sidewalk with his box of money on a small table before him, and is ready to give you change of any nature you may request, taking commission in cash for so doing and frequently paying himself well by giving the ignorant bad coins, which it is needless to say they never take back again.

The money-changer is one that is much in request, for not only is he ready to supply change, but also to negotiate cheques and money orders of all kinds, for he can sell these again at a profit to those wanting to send money out of the country, and when there is a demand for such he will leave his table and go in search of foreign notes and cheques to those with whom he thinks he is likely to find such things, and he generally knows where that is.

The money-changer is a very old calling in the Holy Land for such were there in the days of our Lord, and so eager were they to carry on their business that they trespassed on the Temple precincts,

and on being discovered by the Saviour had their small tables overturned and were driven out. It is to be feared that the money-changer of the present time has not improved on those of centuries ago, his contact with all classes of men and his life on the street not being helpful to a better way of dealing with his fellow man.

Much more could be written about the doings of both country and city dwellers, both of which very largely keep up the customs that were in vogue two and three millenniums ago, but which are destined to change and pass away with the incoming of Western civilization and the increase of education. For this reason all that can be gleaned on the subject is of value, as it will tell to those who come after us up to what time and date the customs of the Bible were observed and by whom practised.

Chapter XII

Announcing the Sabbath

WHEREVER Jews are found in Palestine their presence is noticeable by the strict observance of Saturday, which day they keep as their Sabbath. On that day all work is suspended, and among the strictest sects not the smallest thing is taken from one place to another, lest they should be accused by the Rabbi of carrying a burden on the Sabbath, which would constitute a breach of the law of Moses.

In order that the people may know that the Sabbath is near—for it commences at sunset on Friday—some of the rabbis of the community go through the streets of the colony or district where the Jews reside, and at given places blow rams' horn trumpets, to announce to the people that the time is near to leave off work and rest.

These strange instruments are in reality rams' horns, and give out a very weird sound when blown, and only after a good deal of practice is one able to blow them properly. In order to get them shaped so as to form a horn or trumpet the horn is soaked

RAMS' HORN TRUMPETERS.

Orthodox Jews announce the nearness of the Sabbath by blowing trumpets, so that all work may be completed ere the day of rest begins, which it does at sunset on Friday. This is probably an old time custom.

in a solution of vinegar and acids which makes it pliable, so that it can be straightened as needed, and made to give the required sound.

These rams' horn trumpets are of ancient origin, for frequent mention is made of them in the Old Testament, and they probably constituted one of the earliest of musical instruments.

In price they vary according to size, some of the largest being worth four dollars, *i.e.*, sixteen shillings.

Chapter XIII

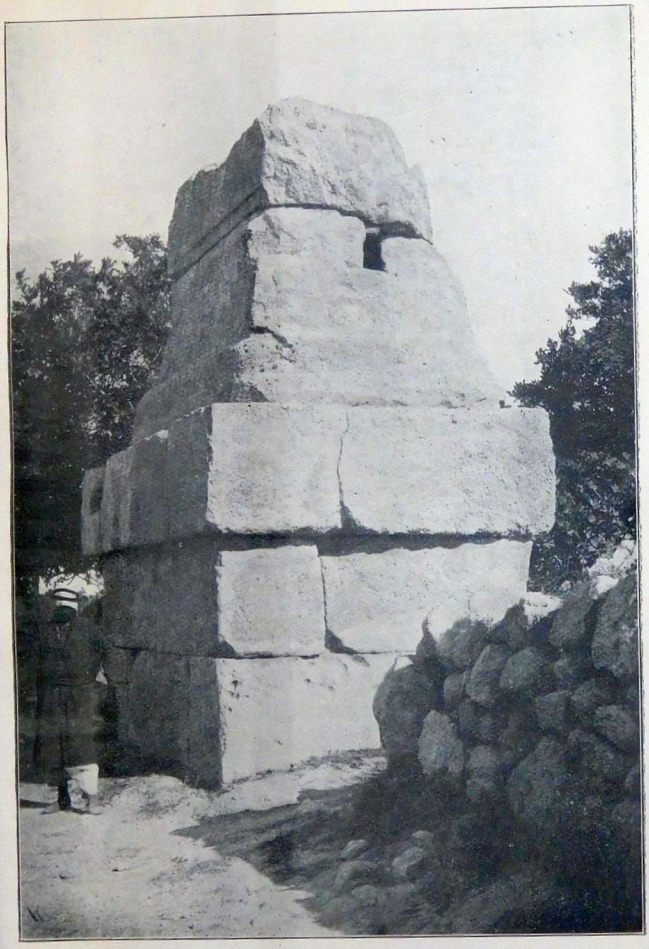
Memorials of the Past

PALESTINE, like Egypt, is a land of monuments, many of them dating back for centuries. Many of the monuments are named after Bible characters, who are held in reverence by the different peoples of the country.

A monument not seen by the ordinary traveller in Palestine is the one shown in the adjoining illustration, and which is known as the Tomb of Hiram, king of Tyre—the king who provided men and material in such quantities for the building of Solomon's temple at Jerusalem.

The tomb, as it stands, consists of a huge pile of stones, each about thirteen feet long, nine feet wide, and two feet thick. On this lies a thick slab of rock overhanging on every side, and supporting a huge sarcophagus with a stone lid of pyramidal form. The whole erection is about twenty feet high.

As there is no inscription on the monument, which would most likely be the case if it were Roman or Greek, the probability is it is of much



HIRAM'S TOMB, NEAR TYRE.

The famous builder who served Solomon has his memorial on the hill sides of Asher. His memory is perpetuated by the massive erection shown in the illustration, which is visited by pilgrims at stated times.

earlier date, and might be Phœnician, which would make it of the same period as Hiram.

This interesting tomb is situated by the side of the main road from Tyre to Northern Galilee, about one hour's ride east of Tyre, and from it may be had a fine view of the surrounding country.

Mention has already been made of the materials used in the construction of the temple at Jerusalem by Solomon, and the reader will hardly need telling that much of the material was cedar wood, which was sent from the mountains of Lebanon in Syria.

The question is often asked, "Are there any cedar trees now?" To that the answer is, Yes, but in order to see them a long tiring journey has to be made into the mountains of Southern Syria, and there are found a few groups of these ancient and interesting trees, which are under the protection of the Government to keep them from extinction.

The group of cedars from which the illustration is taken is the largest in the Lebanon, and numbers about four hundred trees, the highest being about eighty-five feet, and the largest having a circumference of about forty-five feet.

The shade of the trees and the sweet perfume from them make the spot a favourite one for picnic parties and holiday-keepers, and as there is an abundant supply of cold water near, many pass the summer there in tents.

This group of trees stands on a hill 6,300 feet above sea level, and is inaccessible during the early

spring because of the deep snow, but in summer the climate there is most pleasant.

The wood of the cedar is no longer worked in the Holy Land, for the supply is not sufficient for any demand that might be made for it, so that many of the souvenirs sold as cedar wood are deceptions. Three thousand years ago the cedars must have been numerous, otherwise such quantities could not have been shipped to Jaffa for Jerusalem. With the devastation of the land during the past centuries the trees have suffered considerably, and none have cared to plant others, so that the probability is that in time this tree will cease to exist, at least in its old home and native land.

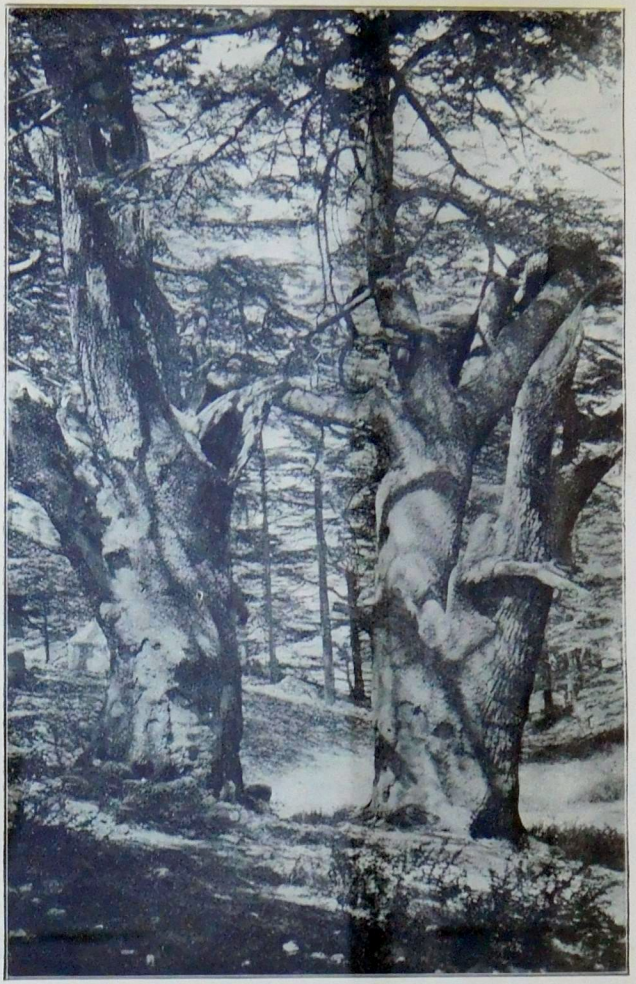
There are not many things in the Holy Land or Syria that deserve to be called giants, neither are there any human beings that are big enough for such a name. There are, however, two things in the mountains of Lebanon large enough to be called giants, but few who live in Western lands ever get to see such massive works, hence the reason for showing and describing them here.

The first of what I have ventured to call a giant is all that remains of a once famous temple to which tens of thousands of people went annually to worship the Sun, to which it was dedicated.

Six huge columns, standing alone in their grandeur and solitude, form a magnificent relic of the temple, which in the days of its glory had no fewer than fifty-six colossal pillars.

A CEDAR OF THE LEBANON.

From such trees Solomon made many things connected with the Temple and also with his palaces. Few cedars remain to-day, and while no attempt is made to renew them, the Government of the Lebanon protects from damage the groves that yet exist and prohibits the sale of the wood.



CEDAR TRUNKS OF LEBANON.

Many of these ancient trees have a circumference varying from 28 to 32 feet. The tree on the left is hollow, and was once used as a prison.

These giants of stone are each over sixty feet high, and seven and half feet in diameter. On the top of them are cross stones which make the whole nearly eighty feet high, and one cannot but wonder how the builders got such heavy and massive stones into position, and what caused such ruin and devastation as are evident to-day.

Each column is in three pieces, held together by iron clamps fitted into the stone so as not to be visible, each joint having three of these joins.

The bases on which these stone giants rest are so high that a man standing erect could not reach the top of them, thus adding to the grandeur of their appearance.

The other giant of the Lebanon is not far removed from the one just mentioned, being only about half a mile distant, and is of the same material—stone.

It might well be called the giant among stones, for it is the largest of its kind known to have been quarried and intended for use by man, but for some unknown reason it was never finished on the under side, so is still attached to the rock of which it is a part.

This stone measures 69 feet in length, and in breadth is 17 feet 4 inches at one end and 13 feet 10 inches at the other end; in height it is 13 feet 10 inches, its estimated weight is about 915 tons, and if it had to be moved by human beings it would require the united strength of forty

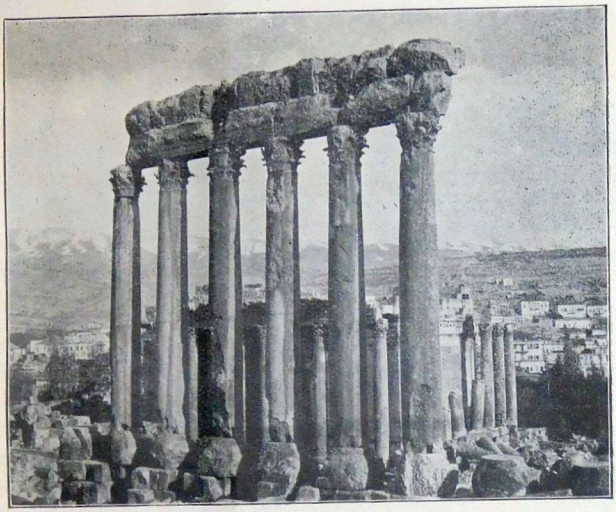
thousand men to pull it from the quarry to its destined place.

That this giant among stones was intended for use is demonstrated by the fact that there are three other stones only a little smaller in a wall not far away from the quarry where this monster has lain for centuries, and had not war or something else intervened this one would doubtless have been finished and put into position.

It is difficult to give the exact date or age of these two giants of the Lebanon, but authorities think that they may be about the second century of the Christian era, making them nearly eighteen hundred years old, and probably the work of the Romans, who, it is well known, built the enormous temples at Baalbek, using thousands of slaves to do the work.

The small illustration will give a good idea of the diameter of the six large columns, and lead the reader to ask a question that has been on human lips for centuries: "How was such work done, and, when done, how put into position?" But as long as these giants of the mountains remain on view the question will remain unanswered, and succeeding generations will be left to wonder and surmise.

Far off the track of travellers, and in one of the oldest of Bible lands, is to be seen the sentinel of the Moab plains, called by the Arabs El Serboot, meaning the stander-up, a relic of three thousand years ago when the people had no knowledge of the One true God.



COLUMNS AT BAALBEK.

These six are all that remain of fifty-six pillars that once formed the Temple of the Sun.

GIANT PILLARS AT BAALBEK.

Some idea of the diameter can be gathered by the outstretched arms of the

A MYSTERY OF THE AGES THAT ARE GONE.

This stone in the quarry at Baalbek is the largest hewn stone known. How the ancients were able to move such huge blocks is a mystery which has never been solved. The stone shown in the illustration is over 70 feet long and 17 feet square, while its weight is more than 1,400 tons.

This stone, for such it is, is one of the "obelisks" of the Revised Old Testament, a word used instead of "images" in the Authorised Version, and one much more appropriate in every way.

In these rude erections the ancients believed the spirits of their gods lived, and wherever found they are in pairs, representing male and female, the companion of the one represented here having fallen on its side and become partly buried in the earth.

This relic of an ancient Semitic religion is about 17 or 18 feet in height, and has a varying width of from 28 to 64 inches, with an average thickness of 16 inches. It is not finished off in any artificial way, but appears to have been erected just as it was hewn from the quarry or mountain side.

Perched on a slight eminence facing due East the "serboot" is visible for miles around, and although deserted now, it at one time attracted its thousands who journeyed there to sacrifice and worship the one that they served as God, and that probably the Sun.

This interesting pillar of three millenniums past makes clear and intelligible the command given to the Israelites after coming out of Egypt into Canaan, "Neither shalt thou set thee up any image, which the Lord thy God hateth" (Deut. xvi. 22), the image being one of these stone columns.

Chapter XIV

By the Dead Sea or Salt Lake of the Orient

IN the great depression between the mountains of Judea and Moab lies the most wonderful lake in the world, and which is called by many names, such as "The Sea of Lot," "The Lake Ashphalite," "The Salt Sea," and commonly, "The Dead Sea."

Its surface is 1292 feet below the Mediterranean Sea, and 3932 feet below Jerusalem, it is forty-eight miles long and has an average width of eight miles. Its depth varies from 3 to 1300 feet, the south end being the shallowest.

The water of the Dead Sea contains from 24 to 26 per cent. of solid substances, 7 per cent. of which is common salt, its water is so heavy that it is possible to stand erect in it without sinking, and swimmers have great difficulty in keeping their feet under water.

There are no fish in the water of the Dead Sea, those which pass from the fresh water streams into

SERBOOT, THE SENTINEL OF THE MOAB PLAINS.

An ancient monolith once connected with the heathen worship of the country. Ten such remain ; hence the interest and importance attached to such things.

ON THE SHORE OF THE DEAD SEA.

The wood on the shore is brought down by the many streams that flow into the lake.

the salt water live only a few minutes as the water of the sea soon kills them. Birds of many kinds abound on the shores and fly across its waters, and many parts of the shores are strewn with wood that has been washed down from the surrounding valleys, this wood being useless as it is so impregnated with salt.

Sulphur in large quantities may be picked up on the shores of the sea, and bitumen is frequently found floating on its surface. The probability is that with scientific investigation this marvellous lake could be made to yield rich results and prove a profitable asset to those who undertake the task. At present no attempt is made to utilise the riches of the Dead Sea but the re-occupation of Palestine will in time alter that, as has occurred in other lands.

On the eastern shores of the Dead Sea may be seen a striking natural monument to Lot's wife, bearing the name of the disobedient woman who through disregarding the command of God became a pillar of salt.

This curious and remarkable likeness to a human being is composed of a mixture of grit, sand, and salt, and instead of getting smaller each year increases in size, this being accounted for by the dampness of the atmosphere and the constant dust and sand storms, the sand sticking to the moistened pillar.

In height this supposed petrified human being is about twenty feet and is located on the edge

of the water overlooking a ledge of rock quite forty feet deep, and isolated from everything about it. It is most difficult and dangerous of approach, as if Providence had decreed that no human beings should visit the place, and indeed very few do get there, even the Arabs who live in the uplands rarely going near it.

The natives of the plains of Moab firmly believe that this pillar of marl encloses Lot's wife, and although this is not likely to be the case the thing serves one good purpose in that it keeps before the people what was one result of disobeying God, and also perpetuates the Bible story.

It is remarkable that this account of Lot's wife and also this memorial have come down from a people that for many centuries have never seen a Bible, and yet they have a correct account of all that occurred at the time of the destruction of Sodom, a fact it would be well for those who doubt and criticise the sacred record to ponder and bear in mind.

If this pillar were on the west side of the sea there might be some probability of its being what it is alleged to be, but being on the east and far from the supposed sites of Sodom and Zoar it is unwise to be too definite. However, I present it for what it is worth.

The one place of interest in Southern Palestine is unfortunately fast closed to all but the followers of the Arabian prophet, Mohammedans, for the burial place of the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and

"LOT'S WIFE," NEAR THE DEAD SEA.

The story of the woman who was turned into a pillar of salt is familiar to all Palestine peasants, and to this pillar they confidently point as a proof of the Divine record. Few, however, see the "monument," as it is difficult and dangerous of access.

SARAH'S TOMB AT HEBRON.

The only shrine closed to Christians in Palestine is the mosque over the cave of Machpelah in Hebron. Moslems jealously guard the tombs of the patriarchs which are inside. Few Christians have entered the place, for to attempt to do so is to court death.

Jacob, is in their hands, and their great antagonism to all but their own religionists makes access to the place impossible and dangerous.

The Cave of Machpelah at Hebron, about which mention is made in Genesis xxiii. 9, and elsewhere, is one of the sites in Palestine that all authorities agree upon as being the original place bought by Abraham as a burial place for his wife Sarah, and which is now built over by a large mosque, a part of which is very old.

The supposed graves of the Patriarchs and their wives are under the floor of the mosque in a large natural cave, but none are allowed to enter it, not even Mohammedans themselves, but directly over the graves are erected huge cenotaphs to mark the site of each one, these too being very jealously and carefully guarded.

Lately, Mr. Khaleel Raad, photographer of Jerusalem, gained an entrance to the mosque and photographed for the first time the sacred tombs, and by his permission I am able to show the cenotaph of Sarah, which is very fine and costly.

It is a long, high erection of well-shaped stone, covered with a large cloth and enclosed in a small chamber, the entrance to which is barred with iron gates which are rarely opened. The pall that covers the grave, so called, is richly embroidered with gold and silver thread, and all colours of silks, woven into Arabic inscriptions, which gives the whole a beautiful and rich appearance.

On the side of the pall is woven in large Arabic characters the following inscription, which translated reads thus, "This is the grave of our Lady Sarah; it pleased God that she (should be) wife to the Prophet Abraham the Merciful; on her be peace," the whole being surrounded by a beautifully worked border.

The other tombs are of like kind but not so elaborately worked as that of Sarah. But to examine them for ourselves is not possible, and as long as fanaticism keeps these places closed to all but Moslems we must be content with seeing representations of them.

Chapter XV

The Closed Gate, Elijah's Hiding Place and the Wady Kelt Hermits

IN the eastern wall of Jerusalem is a gate that for many centuries has been built up in such a manner that entrance through it is quite impossible, and those who have looked upon it have wondered why it is thus blocked and not used as such gates usually are. There are two answers, both of doubtful origin.

Some think the gate has been so long closed in fulfilment of the words of the Prophet Ezekiel in chapter xliv. verse 2, "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord, the God of Israel hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut," the words probably referring to the day on which our Lord entered the Temple in triumph, the crowd thronging Him and singing Hosannah.

This was no doubt the Beautiful gate of the Temple mentioned in Acts iii. verse 2, where Peter and John healed the lame man, and it is a remark-

able fact that since about the 8th century the gate has been built up solid, and is now known as the Golden gate.

This name was attached to it by mistake, for in an early translation of the New Testament the Latin word for "golden" was inserted instead of the Greek word for "beautiful."

The other reason why this gate is closed is because the Mohammedans, who now possess the Temple area, believe that some day a Christian king will enter Jerusalem through this gate, and that will mean the end of their power and the beginning of their downfall, so they very jealously guard it and have done all they can to make it difficult for anyone to approach it from either side, in the hope that their possession of Jerusalem may be prolonged.

Both the exterior and interior of this gate are very beautiful from an architectural point of view, but access to the inside is difficult, for the key is kept by the chief of the Mosque inside and only as a favour will he allow it to be opened. Those privileged to see the delicate carving on the inner walls as well as the work on the outside all agree that the gate well deserves the name Beautiful, which is more suitable than Golden.

Until some political change comes about in Jerusalem the probability is that this gate will remain closed and continue to be a source of interest and admiration to all who see it.

One of the grandest and barest bits of scenery in

THE CLOSED GATE.

While other gates are utilised, this one remains closed—as it has been for centuries. Unique amongst the gates of the country, prophecy, history, war and peace are all woven into its story.

INTERIOR OF THE CLOSED GATE.

Folk-lore says that the huge pillars here shown were presented by Solomon to the Queen of Sheba.

all Palestine is to be seen in the wilderness of Judea between Bethany and Jericho, and those fortunate enough to have a good guide when journeying to the river Jordan will be shown what is known as Wady Kelt, or the valley of the Cherith.

This gorge which is several miles long and very deep is for a part of the year well supplied with water which comes from springs rising at the head of the valley, and after heavy rains a mad torrent rushes through the bed of the gorge making passage impossible.

Some authorities think that this gorge is the Valley of Achor (Joshua xv. 7), while others say it is the place in which Elijah hid himself at the command of God. See 1 Kings xvii. 3, 5.

This latter supposition accounts for the large monastery which is built on the north side of the valley and which is believed to cover the cave in which the Prophet hid himself during the time he was in hiding, and which has in it the remains of mosaic floors which belonged to some Christian building of many centuries past.

The building, which belongs to the Greek Patriarchate in Jerusalem, is in reality a religious prison for refractory priests and monks, and in appearance looks as if it were hung on the side of the valley instead of being built on the solid rock, as it is. The average number of inmates is about thirty, and these pass their time in meditation and prayer,

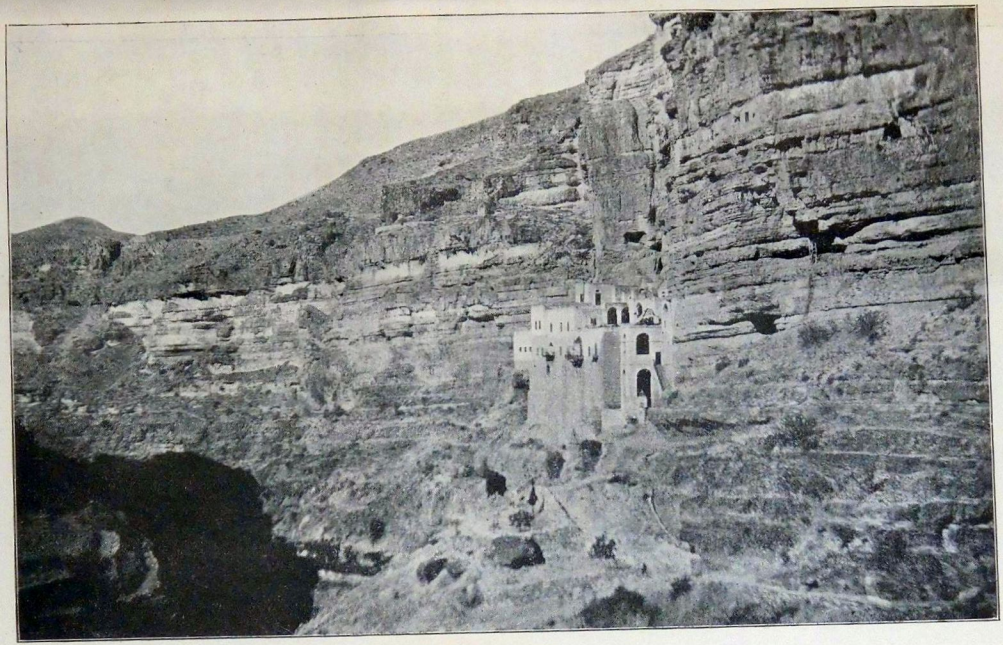
also in the cultivation of tiny gardens on the hill sides below the monastery.

Every year thousands of Russian and Greek pilgrims visit this isolated institution to worship in the church dedicated to Elijah, and built on the spot where he hid when his life was in danger from Jezebel, and it is hardly necessary to say that the monks are the better off for the coming of the pilgrims, for the latter leave lots of money behind them, thinking there is merit in so doing. Thus is the memory of Elijah perpetuated from generation to generation and the Bible story substantiated.

The gorge of the Cherith, already mentioned, has not only an attraction for pilgrims and sight-seers, but is also frequented by quite a different class of people, these being hermits, or religious recluses.

For reasons only known to themselves these men shut themselves off from the world and spend their lives in the caves and tiny huts erected on the steep and rugged sides of the gorge, the supposition being that as they are separated from the world they will be away from all tendencies to sin, and so in the sight of God be sinless, and being thus they are able to pray effectually for those outside who are in danger of being lost.

These men, most of them Greeks or Roumanians, have so arranged their little cells that it is very difficult to get at them, and some of them never leave their dwellings after they enter them, their



THE PLACE WHERE ELIJAH IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE HID HIMSELF.

The Monastery of Elijah, erected on the side of the cliff, is supposed to cover the hiding place of the prophet when he concealed himself at the command of the Lord.

A HERMIT OF THE CHERITH GORGE.
For fifteen years this man has lived in the same cave.

THE DWELLING-PLACES OF HERMITS.

death becoming known by there being no response when the weekly supply of provisions is let down to them.

Some of these hermits' cells can only be reached by means of rope ladders, which are let down by the recluse when he comes down to get water or visit the other hermits, which visit they make about once a week, drawing the ladder up after them on returning to their cells.

The monk shown in the picture has been in his cell for fifteen years, and previous to this was for many years in the monastery of Mount Sinai. By nationality he is a Roumanian, and when visited by the author he assured him that he was sinless because he never saw or did anything that would make him sin. Alas! for what man can be led to believe!

Some of the cells are perched on small promontories of rock overlooking the gorge, and the few yards of floor are all the space that the hermit has on which to exercise himself. Water he draws from the bed of the gorge in a small bucket which runs up and down on a wire rope, and his food is lowered to him in a basket once a week.

These men are not in the cells for punishment as the monks in the monastery above, but entirely from their own free will, hoping to gain the favour of God and work out their own salvation.

Palestine is largely a country of pilgrimage, for to it come peoples from every land that has any savour-

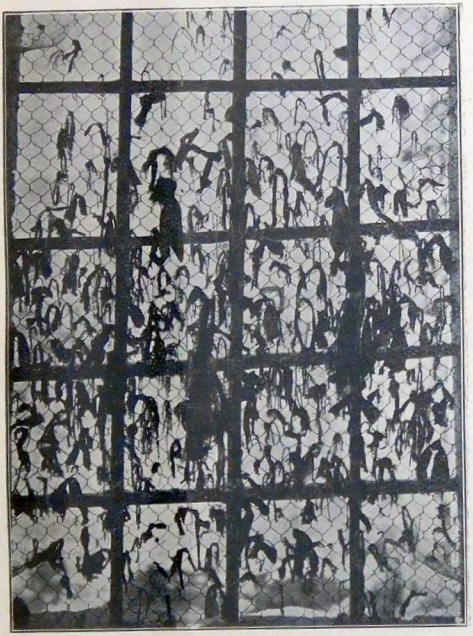
ing of the Christian religion, Judaism or Mohammedanism, each bent on worshipping at the shrines of those who have had some part in the religious history of the country.

Many of these pilgrims are extremely poor, so much so that they walk wherever it is possible, and trust to Fate to transport them when walking is not possible. For food they rely on the good-natured and hospitable of the lands through which they travel and in which they sojourn, so that they are not burdened with much that is of anxiety to them.

When visiting shrines it is customary and meritorious to leave something behind as a proof that the devotee has done his or her duty, and also to gain the favour of the saint at whose shrine they have worshipped.

Christian pilgrims usually leave money behind them or a supply of candles to be burnt on special occasions. In the wailing wall of the Jews at Jerusalem thousands of nails may be seen driven between the stones as witness to those who have visited the place and have been obliged to leave the land.

On sacred trees, and wherever there is a window connected with any shrine, there may be seen thousands of shreds of all colours. These have been torn off the garments of pilgrims who have nothing else to give or leave as their witness that they have visited the shrine. It should be said that such simple and strange witnesses are those of



PILGRIM EMBLEMS.

The windows of holy places, being sacred shrines of the Mohammedans, are all adorned with strips of rags, which are hung there by poor pilgrims as a testimony of their having visited and prayed at the place.

Mohammedans, and rarely Christian or Jewish, although in out-of-the-way places where the people are ignorant and superstitious even these latter hang up rags on their shrines.

To remove one of these witnesses is to court danger and trouble, for by so doing the natives believe that the spirit of the saint will haunt the one guilty of such desecration, and follow him until revenged for such an outrage.

The first mention in the Bible of any memorial being set up over a grave is in connection with the death of Rachel, the second wife of Jacob, in Genesis xxxv. verse 20: "And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave, that is, the pillar of Rachel's grave until this day."

Among the many doubtful things in the Holy Land there is one at least which most authorities agree is reliable and authentic, and that is the large erection by the wayside near Bethlehem, known as Rachel's tomb, because there was buried the one for whom Jacob served fourteen years.

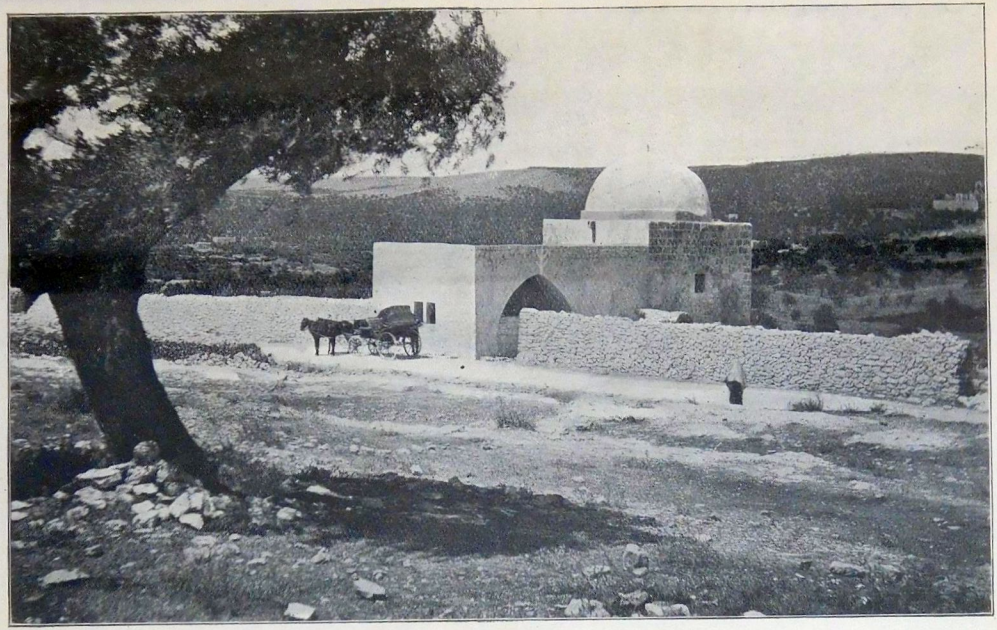
The tomb, in its present form, consists of two chambers, the one on the west side containing the tomb or cenotaph, which, like all Oriental sacred shrines, is a large erection of stones covered with plaster and whitewashed.

Over the closed chamber is a large dome, which is very prominent in the landscape, and stands out boldly against the sky.

During certain seasons of the year the Jews, who

naturally claim the tomb, go there to bewail the one whom they call "The Mother of our Nation," and at such times the inner chamber is opened so that the weeping may be done around the tomb directly over the spot where the body is supposed to be buried.

The location of Rachel's tomb, as we see it to-day, accords with the account of its location in Genesis xxxv. 19, which is another evidence of its being the probable site. The above scripture reads: "And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem." With the unchanging nature of things in the Orient it is fairly safe to conclude that Rachel's tomb or memorial is on or near the original site where Jacob buried her after returning from his long absence from home.



THE MOTHER OF THE JEWS: RACHEL'S TOMB NEAR BETHLEHEM.

By the roadside near Bethlehem stands the shrine of the woman for whom Jacob served fourteen years. Hundreds of years old, this building stands upon the site of an earlier erection.

Chapter XVI

The Burial Place of our Lord

IT is generally agreed that the roads of the Holy Land are just about the same as they were two thousand years ago, and wherever the Turks have made new ones it is more often than not over or near former tracks, so that travellers to Palestine at the present time journey over or near the roads used by many of the Bible characters and those who came after them.

All who visit Palestine are naturally interested in the places connected with the life and doings of our Lord, and especially those sites and places relating to His last days.

The close neighbourhood of Jerusalem is full of such associations, and especially the garden of Gethsemane and its approaches, for to the Garden go thousands of visitors, and *en route* all unconsciously traverse the same road as did the Saviour on the night of his arrest in the Garden.

Between the gate in the city wall on the east side, and the bed of the Kedron Valley, is a distance of about one thousand yards, down which the main

road has led for centuries. On one side is the east wall of the Temple Area, with the Golden Gate visible, and on the other side an olive grove which runs down to the bed of the valley.

Over this road and between these surroundings the arrested Saviour was hurried by the Roman soldiers and excited mob, and probably the Golden Gate so prominent above reminded Him of the different entering into the city only a short week before.

This highway of the Kedron Valley is still used by thousands of people, for it is the main road to Jericho and the East, but few of those who traverse it in these days think of Him to Whom the same road was a veritable "way of sorrow."

Is the sepulchre pointed to as the tomb of our Lord really the place in which He was buried? This has been the question asked by thousands of people, and who can answer it? None; and yet there is a strong probability that the tomb in the garden near the Damascus Gate and directly under the shadow of Gordon's Calvary, is the one in which our Lord lay between the crucifixion and the resurrection.

The tomb generally called "Gordon's Tomb" has been known since 1892 as the "Garden Tomb," and because of its being so regarded by many leading and able authorities was purchased by a committee of prominent people in England.

General Gordon was in Jerusalem in 1883, and

THE KEDRON HIGHWAY, WHICH WAS PROBABLY TRAVERSED BY OUR LORD.

Roads in the Holy Land rarely alter their course, and the one shown in this illustration, leading from Gethsemane to Jerusalem, was probably often traversed by our Lord and His disciples. To-day this road leads to Jericho.

STONE FOR CLOSING TOMB.

An ancient way of making secure the place of the dead, the stone fitting the opening as a cork fits a bottle.

through his observations the tomb and its surroundings were made public. Long before that, however, the tomb was familiar to many, but since Gordon's investigations were published the belief that this is the site of our Lord's burial has steadly grown in public favour.

The tomb is cut in the solid rock, and evidently was prepared with more than usual care, as though it were to be the private sepulchre of some one of the prominent men of Jerusalem. In addition to the door there is a slanting window through which it would be possible to look and see if any body interred there had been removed or interfered with, and which would also serve as a ventilating shaft, which in such a tomb would be a necessity.

There is a question whether or no the tomb was closed by a rolling stone such as was common in those days, or by means of a large boulder of rock which would effectually block all entrance to the interior, or by what may be called the plug stone, which fitted the entrance just as a cork fits a bottle, and which was also common to such tombs. No trace of a rolling stone was ever found, but that does not weaken the possibility of its being the Lord's tomb.

Excavation has shown that this rock-hewn sepulchre was in a garden, for all around have been found traces of such, and it is not too much to say that it might have been the garden of Joseph of Arimathea.

The tomb is within a stone's throw of the Skull Hill, which many have come to think is the real Calvary, and if there are no other evidences in favour of its being the place, it at least fits into the Gospel narrative, for it is "nigh to the city," and "without the gate," as well as being between roads, so that all passers could see what was going on, and, as they passed, "railed on Him, wagging their heads."

Until some more suitable tomb appears to compete with "The Garden Tomb," it will hold its own as the probable resting-place of our Lord's body.

Whilst there is much to interest on the exterior of the Garden Tomb as already indicated, the interior is equally interesting, and leads to a more intelligent understanding of these rock-hewn chambers for the dead.

The inside consists of two chambers separated by a low partition, the entire excavation measuring about seven feet in height, eleven feet wide, and nearly fifteen feet long. In the inner chamber are three receptacles for human bodies, but only one of these appears to have been actually completed.

At the head of the completed receptacle is a seat which is a part of the rock, and all around a groove into which a slab could fit and rest, so that, if necessary, another body could be laid on the top—a very common way of burial in rock-hewn tombs.

Supposing there was no slab on the side of the receptacle, it would be quite possible to look through

THE GARDEN TOMB: EXTERIOR VIEW.

"Hewn in the rock, without the city, nigh unto the gate," unoccupied for centuries, and in a garden under the shadow of a hill called Calvary—"there they laid Him."

INTERIOR VIEW OF THE GARDEN TOMB.

Rock tombs abound in the Holy Land, but none has caused so much interest or controversy as that near the

the window and see if the tomb contained a body or not, which from the door would not be so easy.

When the tomb was discovered in 1867, there were on the eastern wall two crosses in red paint, with Greek letters in the corners. These probably belonged to Crusading times, and show that the tomb was used for Christian purposes.

In some rock tombs in the near vicinity were found some inscriptions, one of which, when translated, reads thus: "To Nonus and Onesimus, Deacons of the Church of the Witness of the Resurrection of Christ." A second inscription in Greek reads: "Buried near his Lord." These go a long way toward showing that the Tomb in the Garden was believed to be the burial place of our Lord many centuries ago, as well as its answering all the requirements of the Gospel story.

Authorities agree on one thing, viz., that this was originally a Jewish tomb, which was later used as a Christian burial place, as were hundreds of others in all parts of the land. And this, probably because, He was laid to rest in Joseph's Garden Tomb, literally "in the place where He was crucified."

I have included these remarks and opinions on the Sepulchre in the Garden because of the great interest in the subject, not from any belief that I have in it being the actual burial place of our Lord. Personally, I am persuaded that the place is not known, and never will be, for what purpose

would it serve if the actual sepulchre were known ? As I have stated, it fulfils the requirements of the Gospel story, and as such is valuable from an illustrative standpoint, that making another reason for including the description of the Garden Tomb in this book.

Chapter XVII

A Place of Perpetual Prayer

HIDDEN away in an off-road of Jerusalem is a small church which few of the visitors to the city ever see, but which is of interest because of the great amount of devotion displayed there, and although most people think it is misplaced those who display it are to be commended.

In this church prayer never ceases, for it is being said every hour of the day and night, year in and year out, without any stop.

An order of nuns have given themselves up to this service, and devote their entire time to the adoration of the Virgin Mary, whose image stands before them as they repeat their petitions.

This sisterhood of nuns numbers twenty-four, and the writer has been told that they are from the finest families of Europe, and, of course, all members of the Roman Catholic Church. These nuns kneel in pairs before the altar of the church for one hour at a time, and in appearance are like stone figures, for they are dressed in white robes with an edging of light blue, and have veils over

their faces, which, however, are thrown back during prayers.

Exactly on the stroke of the hour two nuns appear through a side door near the altar, and take their place behind those praying, and on these leaving their place the new comers take up the same position, and the other two retire to the convent adjoining the church to await their turn, which comes round every twelve hours.

Twice daily all the nuns assemble in the church for prayers, then the two before the altar take their places with the others and join in the prayers and singing in which they are accompanied on a small organ.

The nuns are separated from the congregation by a fine iron screen, so that it is impossible to approach them and talk with them about their reason for thus spending their lives instead of being like their Master who "went about doing good," and thus benefited His fellowmen, whereas these devotees of perpetual prayer do no good to themselves or to others.

A PLACE OF PERPETUAL PRAYER.

This is one of the sights of Palestine ; nuns are constantly kneeling on hard stools before the altar of their church, praying and adoring the Virgin Mary.

Chapter XVIII

An Oriental Commentary on the Twenty-third Psalm

AROUND the Shepherd Psalm there has raged quite a controversy, some contending that the language is figurative and others that it is taken from the daily life of the shepherd, but those who have lived in the Orient for any time and observed and studied the life of the shepherd incline to the latter idea. Having for some time carefully observed the dealings of the shepherd with the flock under his care, and after closely questioning these hillside guardians of sheep and goats, the author has concluded that the words of the Psalm are written as though the shepherd had taken the place of a sheep and was freely expressing its thoughts about its circumstances and surroundings, hence the following comments.

"The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want."

No hireling is my keeper; if it were so I might hunger or thirst at times or want rest after wandering over hills, plains and valleys in search of pasture.

The Lord, master, owner, is my shepherd, and as I am His property He will not allow me to lack anything that is for my good. If an hireling were my shepherd I might through his neglect and carelessness want many things, and so my confidence in him would not be such as it is in having the Lord Himself for the shepherd.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Instead of making me wander on hour after hour all through the long hot day, my Lord guides me to a place where I am soon satisfied and can lie down and revel in the green place to which He has brought me. By being satisfied I am made to lie down, through the kind thought of my Master who owns me. And then when the time comes to quench my thirst I am not led to a place where the water rushes down in torrents or flows swiftly and dangerously through its channel, but beside still waters where I can drink without fear or danger. This is because I am cared for by my Master and not by an hireling whose only thought is to get through his day's work.

"He restoreth my soul; He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

My Master's kindness in causing me to lie down in green pastures, and leading me beside still waters, is so helpful to me that my innermost being, my soul, is restored or renewed, and I am ready for whatever is to follow. Past fatigues, dangers and hardships are all forgotten, and I am inwardly

restored, and from the side of the still restful waters I am to be led in right paths until I reach the shelter of the fold at the close of the day. No path of uncertainty full of stones, over which I might stumble, but "right paths" so that in them I shall be restful, assured that as the Lord is leading me all will be well, and although a little longer than the cross-cut road, it will eventually lead me home. My Master is not doing this entirely for my sake, but for His name's and credit's sake, so that people shall not have occasion to say to Him, "How poor and weary Your sheep look, how restless they are, what have You been doing with them?" which would be a disgrace to Him and His care for the sheep. So for His name's sake He sees to it that we are well cared for, that others may have a desire to belong to Him too, and thus in thinking about His own reputation we are blessed by being led in right paths.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

Then the pasture on the hills being scarce, and the rough storms, snow and cold making it impossible and dangerous for me to stay longer in such exposed regions, my Master leads me down into the lowlands, for there are to be found warmth, shelter, and even early grass. But in order to reach such a place long, dangerous valleys have to be gone through, in which lurk robbers, wild beasts and perils from thirst and hunger; this is why it is called the "valley of the

shadow of death," because of the many dangers that abound on every hand.

Such places, however, have no fear for us, because the Lord our Shepherd goes with us, even before us, through such dangerous valleys and Himself first meets whatever may come that would cause us alarm or do us hurt. An hireling would fear and flee, but because "Thou art with me" I fear nothing.

Under such circumstances I have a twofold comfort, not only the presence of my Lord the Shepherd and my owner, but in His hand He has the rod and staff, emblems of ownership and protection. When I "passed under the rod" this morning it was an assurance to me that I belonged to my Lord and that He had not traded me off to another during the night or early morning, and the staff that my Master carries assures me that should some danger come He is prepared to defend not only Himself but me also. Because of these I pass through the "valley of the shadow of death" without fear, comforted instead of restless and fearful.

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

Although I am so well off in my Lord's keepinge I am constantly reminded that there are enemies about, those who would do me harm, steal me, lead me astray, and even ruin me, yet, in the very presence of such, all needs are so bountifully supplied that it is as a well-spread table continually

GOOD SHEPHERDS WITH THEIR LAMBS.

Lambs are the special care of the shepherd, as they are given in payment, according to the number reared. In cold and wet weather they must be sheltered in warm places, and when tired must be carried by their keeper. The care of sheep is a duty that calls for untiring energy, patience and thought.

before me, from which I can draw supplies whenever I need. So near is this provision, even "in the presence of mine enemies," that no harm can come to me, for the Lord is on the watch, and I have no fear.

My Lord cares so much for me that He treats me as one of His favoured guests, for have I not seen them being anointed with oil after long weary days of travel, so that their dried-up skin might relax itself, and they repose and rest in comfort under His roof. Sometimes thorns have torn my face and neck, and but for the anointing oil I should have suffered much, but my Lord's watchful eye has seen the scars, and has soothed them with oil such as He would have done with His most respected guest.

Surely when I consider the state of those committed to the care of an hireling how much better off I am, and, like those receiving extra consideration in my Lord's guest room, whose cups are filled to overflowing, I, too, am compelled to exclaim, "My cup runneth over." So much do I enjoy through having the Lord for my Shepherd, instead of being turned over to the carelessness of an hired servant.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

With all the experiences of the past can there be any doubt about the future? To me there is none, or my Lord's goodness is such that I shall not

"lack any good thing," and my Lord's mercy is such that should I stray away "He restoreth my soul," and all the time has His eye on me to guard me from the evil that is all about me on every hand.

With such bounty, protection, and provision could I desire another master or dwelling place? No, the house of such a Lord is sufficient for me, and I will dwell in it "to length of days," assured that all will be well with me, and want will be a thing unknown, because "The Lord is my Shepherd," and none other.

Chapter XIX

Excavated Jericho

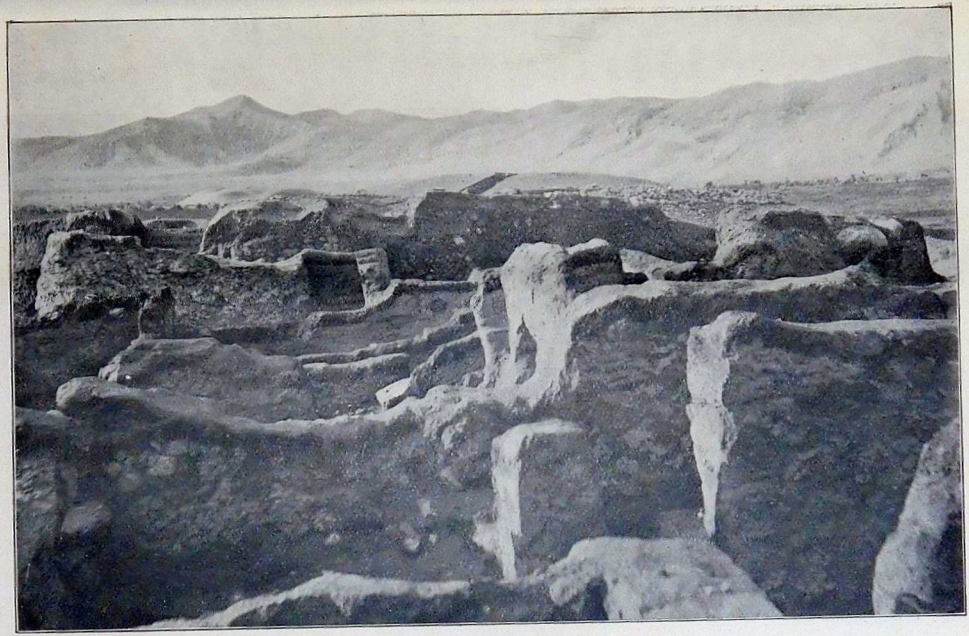
EXCAVATION is an instructor, substantiator, and enlightener, and should be of interest to all who read and study the records of past times. During the past twenty years excavators have unearthed much that has thrown light on ancient sites and customs; especially has this been the case in Palestine, where the excavation societies of England and Germany have done so much along these lines.

The last place attacked by the pick, spade, and crowbar of the excavator, and with most valuable results, is the site of Jericho, the city first taken by the Israelites after they had crossed the Jordan. For several months during the cool seasons of the past three years, hundreds of men, women, and girls have been busily engaged on the huge mounds that have been undisturbed for long, long centuries, how many it would be almost impossible to say or even guess. The result of all this expenditure of money and labour has been to lay bare the probable site of

Jericho as it was vacated during the early years of the Kings.

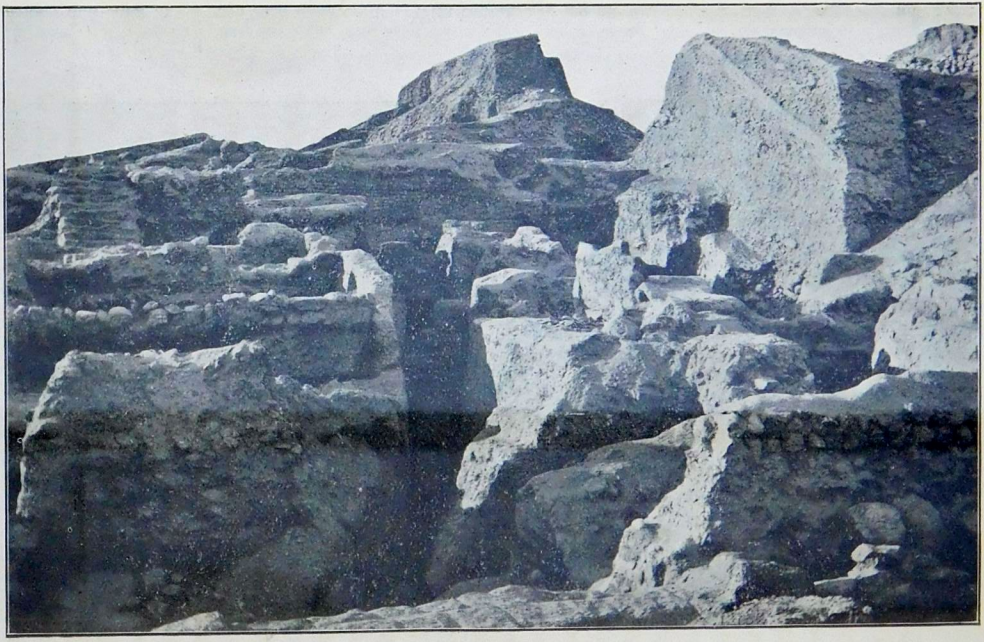
It is to be regretted that the German excavators have been so reticent over the discoveries made on this interesting site, but such is the case, and the ancient pottery, coins, and such things were all shipped off to some place in Europe without anyone having opportunity to see them; but what is left is interesting, as it gives some idea of the way the people lived and did things so far back in the history of the Canaanites; therefore, this chapter is written and the photographs are reproduced, in order that the reader may get some idea as to how "excavated Jericho" looks after being deserted by the excavator.

The story of the fall of Jericho after being encompassed by the Israelites is of so unique a nature that we get enlarged ideas as to the size of the city that succumbed in so remarkable a manner, whereas in reality Jericho was what we should call a village very compactly built, the houses being nothing more than rooms adjoining one another, as will be seen by the illustrations taken on the spot. The location of the city, for such we shall call it, was directly under the eastern border of the wilderness and mountains of Judea, as well as under the shadow of what has been named by tradition the Mount of Temptation. No doubt the presence of a strong spring of good water was accountable for the building of the city there, for water is a necessity for any people.



A GENERAL VIEW OF EXCAVATED JERICHO.

German excavators have unearthed the remains of the city once famous in the history of the Israelites, and walls, houses, pottery and other things have been discovered. With exposure to the air and sun, the ruins, so long covered over, will soon fall into decay



EXCAVATED JERICHO: A VIEW OF ANCIENT WALLS AND OTHER BUILDINGS

During the excavation operations, deep shafts were dug in order to locate walls, foundations and depths. In some places they are forty feet deep, and are cut through many layers of debris of different periods.

The excavators set to work in the usual way by making huge incisions in the mound from different points, and then working crossways from one to the other. It was not long before they were well rewarded for their pains by coming across low walls built of sun-dried mud bricks, each one about 15in. square and 6in. thick. As the accumulation of debris was cleared away, small rooms began to appear, and it was not long ere rows of such were discovered, each with an entrance off from a long, narrow passage that ran along the entire front of these tiny dwellings. In many of these Jericho hovels, which in extent were about 9ft. by 6, there were traces of fire, and the conclusion is that the cooking for the residents was done in one corner of these limited homes. In some of the tiny enclosures, for that is all they can be called, are the well-preserved remains of earthenware water jars in which the daily supply for the family was stored.

At one end of the city, that toward the south-west, the well-preserved remains of a small citadel were discovered, sufficient to show that the inhabitants of Jericho found it necessary to be prepared against the attacks of their warlike neighbours. Further excavation is necessary to reveal the extent and capacity of this military section of the city.

Much labour was expended in unearthing the walls of the place. From what has been revealed, there appear to have been three walls, one built of huge unhewn blocks of stone forming the outer

defence of the city, and two inner walls composed entirely of huge mud bricks. On the north and west sides of the city the excavators were successful in unearthing three sections of the foundation of what was probably the original wall of the city, which is interesting as a sample of early Canaanitish work. All three pieces of wall are alike in manner of construction. Instead of being built upright, the wall has a decided slope inward, and there are no regular courses of hewn stone, but a jumble of all kinds of stone intermixed with a very durable mortar, which has stood the test of at least three thousand years.

As some attempts were made to rebuild Jericho after its first fall, it was not to be expected that anything in the nature of fallen walls was to be found, but we are fairly safe in concluding that what has been brought to light is the original foundation of the wall that surrounded Jericho at the time of the entrance into Canaan by the Israelites.* This discovery alone proves that the task of the excavator has not been in vain.

Among the ruins were discovered various kinds of pottery, one thing found being quite unusual in that line. It was in the shape of an old time English-

*This statement is of special importance at the present time, as newspaper reports have been in circulation to the effect that the excavations by the Germans proved that the walls of Jericho never fell. Whether this is the actual conclusion of the German excavators or not we have not been able to ascertain as yet.

horn lantern, but made entirely of earthenware; for what purpose it was used has yet to be determined. Quantities of round balls, some of stone, others of baked clay, were found, each having a hole through the centre. These were either weaver's weights or weights used in connection with the trade and commerce of those days. So numerous were these that quantities were left lying about the ruins and have been taken to all parts of the world by travellers who have visited the place since it was vacated by the excavators.

Hand mills of a very primitive kind were also found in the tiny homes. They are different from anything in use in these days, as there was no revolving stone to crush the grain. In form these mills were oblong, slightly hollow in the middle, and, instead of the grain being ground by an upper stone it was crushed by a heavy stone being rolled to and fro on it, which must have been a much more laborious process than that of the present time. The stones forming this important item of household necessity are very rudely hewn and finished, and take us back to a time when the people were not so efficient in the art of handling stone as they were later down in the centuries.

Scattered about over the ruins are numerous stones distinctly showing that the dwellings had doors which were hung on hinges which revolved in upper and lower sockets, the latter being deep holes hollowed out in heavy, hard slabs of flint or lime-

stone. This style of door hinge, still in vogue in out-of-the-way places, is one of the simplest and most primitive modes of swinging a door, and has probably come down from preceding generations.

Among the many things that were unearthed within the walls of the city was one which has not a little puzzled those that have seen it, and even yet awaits a reasonable explanation as to its probable use and purpose. Referring to the illustration it will be seen to resemble an elongated drum standing erect, about 12ft. high. It is built entirely of mud and has the appearance of being solid, for there is nothing in the way of entrance or opening either on the top or in the sides. Such objects seem to have been erected in such positions as to be protected from any likely damage, and, being isolated from their surroundings by about a foot of space, it would appear that the constructors were desirous of protecting them from damp or the inroads of vermin or rodents. Around the top is a barricade about 12in. high, made of clay, which was probably intended to keep whatever was deposited on it from rolling or falling off. As far as is known, nothing of the kind has been found in the other sites unearthed in Palestine, and in this respect the excavations of Jericho are unique.

Nothing in the way of obelisks or pillars was found that would connect with the worship of those times, although once the excavators thought that they had come upon the religious centre of the city, but

PECULIAR STRUCTURE AT ANCIENT JERICHO.

There is much speculation as to the purpose of such erections, which must have been of some service to the ancients.

there was nothing of sufficient importance to verify anything connected with early Semitic worship.

As at Gezer, several skeletons were found under the foundations of the buildings and houses, leading us to believe that the early inhabitants of Palestine were accustomed to slay a human being as a sacrifice on the construction or dedication of a home or public place.

The probability is that the remains of this early Canaanitish city will not long remain in their present condition, for the able men who undertook the revealing of this ancient site are of the opinion that under what has been exposed is a pre-historic city, and, with permission granted from the authorities in Constantinople, excavations might begin again and what has been revealed of Joshua's Jericho pass off the face of the earth forever.

It was a matter of regret to the excavators that nothing in the form of inscribed stones or tablets was found among the ruins or accumulation of debris, and although great care was taken to sift and examine all that was dug up, nothing in the way of writing was found. As far as can be learned, the only letters or words discovered were those found on the handles of jars and pitchers, and these were nearly all of one kind and referred to some one of the many gods of that period.

Although there may have been disappointment along some lines as regards the results of three seasons' work, yet it must be admitted that much of

interest has been added to the world of discovery and research, and not the least are the location and probable appearance of an early city of the Holy Land, thus confirming, as nothing else can, the truth of the Bible in what it records of the doings of the early inhabitants of the land.

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