

**WARNER
CHARLES
DUDLEY**

IN THE LEVANT

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In The Levant / Twenty Fifth Impression:*

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PREFACE

IN the winter and spring of 1875 the writer made the tour of Egypt and the Levant. The first portion of the journey is described in a volume published last summer, entitled "My Winter on the Nile, among Mummies and Moslems"; the second in the following pages. The notes of the journey were taken and the books were written before there were any signs of the present Oriental disturbances, and the observations made are therefore uncolored by any expectation of the existing state of affairs. Signs enough were visible of a transition period, extraordinary but hopeful; with the existence of poverty, oppression, superstition, and ignorance were mingling Occidental and Christian influences, the faint beginnings of a revival of learning and the stronger pulsations of awakening commercial and industrial life. The best hope of this revival was their, as it is now, in peace and not in war.

C. D. W

Hartford, November 10, 1876.

I.—FROM JAFFA TO JERUSALEM

SINCE Jonah made his short and ignominious voyage along the Syrian coast, mariners have had the same difficulty in getting ashore that the sailors experienced who attempted to land the prophet; his tedious though safe method of disembarking was not followed by later navigators, and the landing at Jaffa has remained a vexatious and half the time an impossible achievement.

The town lies upon the open sea and has no harbor. It is only in favorable weather that vessels can anchor within a mile or so from shore, and the Mediterranean steamboats often pass the port without being able to land either freight or passengers, In the usual condition of the sea the big fish would have found it difficult to discharge Jonah without stranding itself, and it seems that it waited three days for the favorable moment. The best chance for landing nowadays is in the early morning, in that calm period when the winds and the waves alike await the movements of the sun. It was at that hour, on the 5th of April, 1875, that we arrived from Port Said on the French steamboat Erymanthe. The night had been pleasant and the sea tolerably smooth, but not to the apprehensions of some of the passengers, who always declare that they prefer, now, a real tempest to a deceitful groundswell. On a recent trip a party had been prevented from landing, owing to the deliberation of the ladies in making their toilet; by the

time they had attired themselves in a proper manner to appear in Southern Palestine, the golden hour had slipped away, and they were able only to look upon the land which their beauty and clothes would have adorned. None of us were caught in a like delinquency. At the moment the anchor went down we were bargaining with a villain to take us ashore, a bargain in which the yeasty and waxingly uneasy sea gave the boatman all the advantage.

Our little company of four is guided by the philosopher and dragoman Mohammed Abd-el-Atti, of Cairo, who has served us during the long voyage of the Nile. He is assisted in his task by the Abyssinian boy Ahman Abdallah, the brightest and most faithful of servants. In making his first appearance in the Holy Land he has donned over his gay Oriental costume a blue Frank coat, and set his fez back upon his head at an angle exceeding the slope of his forehead. His black face has an unusual lustre, and his eyes dance with more than their ordinary merriment as he points excitedly to the shore and cries, "Yâfa! Mist'r Dunham."

The information is addressed to Madame, whom Ahman, utterly regardless of sex, invariably addresses by the name of one of our travelling companions on the Nile.

"Yes, marm; you see him, Yâfa," interposed Abd-el-Atti; coming forward with the air of brushing aside, as impertinent, the geographical information of his subordinate; "not much, I tink, but him bery old. Let us to go ashore."

Jaffa, or Yâfa, or Joppa, must have been a well-established

city, since it had maritime dealings with Tarshish, in that remote period in which the quaint story of Jonah is set,—a piece of Hebrew literature that bears internal evidence of great antiquity in its extreme *naivete*. Although the Canaanites did not come into Palestine till about 2400 b. c., that is to say, about the time of the twelfth dynasty in Egypt, yet there is a reasonable tradition that Jaffa existed before the deluge. For ages it has been the chief Mediterranean port of great Jerusalem. Here Solomon landed his Lebanon timber for the temple. The town swarmed more than once with the Roman legions on their way to crush a Jewish insurrection. It displayed the banner of the Saracen host a few years after the Hegira. And, later, when the Crusaders erected the standard of the cross on its walls, it was the *dépôt* of supplies which Venice and Genoa and other rich cities contributed to the holy war. Great kingdoms and conquerors have possessed it in turn, and for thousands of years merchants have trusted their fortunes to its perilous roadstead. And yet no one has ever thought it worth while to give it a harbor by the construction of a mole, or a pier like that at Port Said. I should say that the first requisite in the industrial, to say nothing of the moral, regeneration of Palestine is a harbor at Jaffa.

The city is a cluster of irregular, flat-roofed houses, and looks from the sea like a brown bowl turned bottom up; the roofs are terraces on which the inhabitants can sleep on summer nights, and to which they can ascend, out of the narrow, evil-smelling streets, to get a whiff of sweet odor from the orange gardens

which surround the town. The ordinary pictures of Jaffa do it ample justice. The chief feature in the view is the hundreds of clumsy feluccas tossing about in the aggravating waves, diving endwise and dipping sidewise, guided a little by the long sweeps of the sailors, but apparently the sport of the most uncertain billows. A swarm of them, four or five deep, surrounds our vessel; they are rising and falling in the most sickly motion, and dashing into each other in the frantic efforts of their rowers to get near the gangway ladder. One minute the boat nearest the stairs rises as if it would mount into the ship, and the next it sinks below the steps into a frightful gulf. The passengers watch the passing opportunity to jump on board, as people dive into the "lift" of a hotel. Freight is discharged into lighters that are equally frisky; and it is taken on and off splashed with salt water and liable to a thousand accidents in the violence of the transit.

Before the town stretches a line of rocks worn for ages, upon which the surf is breaking and sending white jets into the air. It is through a narrow opening in this that our boat is borne on the back of a great wave, and we come into a strip of calmer water and approach the single landing-stairs. These stairs are not so convenient as those of the vessel we have just left, and two persons can scarcely pass on them. But this is the only sea entrance to Jaffa; if the Jews attempt to return and enter their ancient kingdom this way, it will take them a long time to get in. A sea-wall fronts the town, fortified by a couple of rusty cannon at one end, and the passage is through the one gate at the head

of these stairs.

It seems forever that we are kept waiting at the foot of this shaky stairway. Two opposing currents are struggling to get up and down it: excited travellers, porters with trunks and knapsacks, and dragomans who appear to be pushing their way through simply to show their familiarity with the country. It is a dangerous ascent for a delicate woman. Somehow, as we wait at this gate where so many men of note have waited, and look upon this sea-wall upon which have stood so many of the mighty from Solomon to Origen, from Tiglath-Pileser to Richard Cour de Lion, the historical figure which most pervades Jaffa is that of the whimsical Jonah, whose connection with it was the slightest. There is no evidence that he ever returned here. Josephus, who takes liberties with the Hebrew Scriptures, says that a whale carried the fugitive into the Euxine Sea, and there discharged him much nearer to Nineveh than he would have been if he had kept with the conveyance in which he first took passage and landed at Tarsus. Probably no one in Jaffa noticed the little man as he slipped through this gate and took ship, and yet his simple embarkation from the town has given it more notoriety than any other event. Thanks to an enduring piece of literature, the unheroic Jonah and his whale are better known than St. Jerome and his lion; they are the earliest associates and Oriental acquaintances of all well-brought-up children in Christendom. For myself, I confess that the strictness of many a New England Sunday has been relieved by the perusal of his unique adventure.

He in a manner anticipated the use of the monitors and other cigar-shaped submerged sea-vessels.

When we have struggled up the slippery stairs and come through the gate, we wind about for some time in a narrow passage on the side of the sea, and then cross through the city, still on foot. It is a rubbishy place; the streets are steep and crooked; we pass through archways, we ascend steps, we make unexpected turns; the shops are a little like bazaars, but rather Italian than Oriental; we pass a pillared mosque and a Moslem fountain; we come upon an ancient square, in the centre of which is a round fountain with pillars and a canopy of stone, and close about it are the bazaars of merchants. This old fountain is profusely sculptured with Arabic inscriptions; the stones are worn and have taken the rich tint of age, and the sunlight blends it into harmony with the gay stuffs of the shops and the dark skins of the idlers on the pavement. We come into the great market of fruit and vegetables, where vast heaps of oranges, like apples in a New England orchard, line the way and fill the atmosphere with a golden tinge.

The Jaffa oranges are famous in the Orient; they grow to the size of ostrich eggs, they have a skin as thick as the hide of a rhinoceros, and, in their season, the pulp is sweet, juicy, and tender. It is a little late now, and we open one golden globe after another before we find one that is not dry and tasteless as a piece of punk. But one cannot resist buying such magnificent fruit.

Outside the walls, through broad dusty highways, by lanes of

cactus hedges and in sight again of the sea breaking on a rocky shore, we come to the Hotel of the Twelve Tribes, occupied now principally by Cook's tribes, most of whom appear to be lost. In the adjacent lot are pitched the tents of Syrian travellers, and one of Cook's expeditions is in all the bustle of speedy departure. The bony, nervous Syrian horses are assigned by lot to the pilgrims, who are excellent people from England and America, and most of them as unaccustomed to the back of a horse as to that of an ostrich. It is touching to see some of the pilgrims walk around the animals which have fallen to them, wondering how they are to get on, which side they are to mount, and how they are to stay on. Some have already mounted, and are walking the steeds carefully round the enclosure or timidly essaying a trot. Nearly every one concludes, after a trial, that he would like to change,—something not quite so much up and down, you know, an easier saddle, a horse that more unites gentleness with spirit. Some of the dragomans are equipped in a manner to impress travellers with the perils of the country. One, whom I remember on the Nile as a mild though showy person, has bloomed here into a Bedawee: he is fierce in aspect, an arsenal of weapons, and gallops furiously about upon a horse loaded down with accoutrements. This, however, is only the beginning of our real danger.

After breakfast we sallied out to see the sights: besides the house of Simon the tanner, they are not many. The house of Simon is, as it was in the time of St. Peter, by the seaside. We

went upon the roof (and it is more roof than anything else) where the apostle lay down to sleep and saw the vision, and looked around upon the other roofs and upon the wide sweep of the tumbling sea. In the court is a well, the stone curb of which is deeply worn in several places by the rope, showing long use. The water is brackish; Simon may have tanned with it. The house has not probably been destroyed and rebuilt more than four or five times since St. Peter dwelt here; the Romans once built the entire city. The chief room is now a mosque. We inquired for the house of Dorcas, but that is not shown, although I understood that we could see her grave outside the city. It is a great oversight not to show the house of Dorcas, and one that I cannot believe will long annoy pilgrims in these days of multiplied discoveries of sacred sites.

Whether this is the actual spot where the house of Simon stood, I do not know, nor does it much matter. Here, or hereabouts, the apostle saw that marvellous vision which proclaimed to a weary world the brotherhood of man. From this spot issued the gospel of democracy: "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." From this insignificant dwelling went forth the edict that broke the power of tyrants, and loosed the bonds of slaves, and ennobled the lot of woman, and enfranchised the human mind. Of all places on earth I think there is only one more worthy of pilgrimage by all devout and liberty-loving souls.

We were greatly interested, also, in a visit to the well-known

school of Miss Amot, a mission school for girls in the upper chambers of a house in the most crowded part of Jaffa. With modest courage and tact and self-devotion this lady has sustained it here for twelve years, and the fruits of it already begin to appear. We found twenty or thirty pupils, nearly all quite young, and most of them daughters of Christians; they are taught in Arabic the common branches, and some English, and they learn to sing. They sang for us English tunes like any Sunday school; a strange sound in a Moslem town. There are one or two other schools of a similar character in the Orient, conducted as private enterprises by ladies of culture; and I think there is no work nobler, and none more worthy of liberal support or more likely to result in giving women a decent position in Eastern society.

On a little elevation a half-mile outside the walls is a cluster of wooden houses, which were manufactured in America. There we found the remnants of the Adams colony, only half a dozen families out of the original two hundred and fifty persons; two or three men and some widows and children. The colony built in the centre of their settlement an ugly little church out of Maine timber; it now stands empty and staring, with broken windows. It is not difficult to make this adventure appear romantic. Those who engaged in it were plain New England people, many of them ignorant, but devout to fanaticism. They had heard the prophets expounded, and the prophecies of the latter days unravelled, until they came to believe that the day of the Lord was nigh, and that they had laid upon them a mission in the fulfilment of the divine

purposes. Most of them were from Maine and New Hampshire, accustomed to bitter winters and to wring their living from a niggardly soil. I do not wonder that they were fascinated by the pictures of a fair land of blue skies, a land of vines and olives and palms, where they were undoubtedly called by the Spirit to a life of greater sanctity and considerable ease and abundance. I think I see their dismay when they first pitched their tents amid this Moslem squalor, and attempted to “squat,” Western fashion, upon the skirts of the Plain of Sharon, which has been for some ages pre-empted. They erected houses, however, and joined the other inhabitants of the region in a struggle for existence. But Adams, the preacher and president, had not faith enough to wait for the unfolding of prophecy; he took to strong drink, and with general bad management the whole enterprise came to grief, and the deluded people were rescued from starvation only by the liberality of our government.

There was the germ of a good idea in the rash undertaking. If Palestine is ever to be re-peopled, its coming inhabitants must have the means of subsistence; and if those now here are to be redeemed to a better life, they must learn to work; before all else there must come a revival of industry and a development of the resources of the country. To send here Jews or Gentiles, and to support them by charity, only adds to the existing misery.

It was eight years ago that the Adams community exploded. Its heirs and successors are Germans, a colony from Wurtemberg, an Advent sect akin to the American, but more single-minded

and devout. They own the ground upon which they have settled, having acquired a title from the Turkish government; they have erected substantial houses of stone and a large hotel, The Jerusalem, and give many evidences of shrewdness and thrift as well as piety. They have established a good school, in which, with German thoroughness, Latin, English, and the higher mathematics are taught, and an excellent education may be obtained. More land the colony is not permitted to own; but they hire ground outside the walls which they farm to advantage.

I talked with one of the teachers, a thin young ascetic in spectacles, whose severity of countenance and demeanor was sufficient to rebuke all the Oriental levity I had encountered during the winter. There was in him and in the other leaders an air of sincere fanaticism, and a sobriety and integrity in the common laborers, which are the best omens for the success of the colony. The leaders told us that they thought the Americans came here with the expectation of making money uppermost in mind, and hardly in the right spirit. As to themselves, they do not expect to make money; they repelled the insinuation with some warmth; they have had, in fact, a very hard struggle, and are thankful for a fair measure of success. Their sole present purpose is evidently to redeem and reclaim the land, and make it fit for the expected day of jubilee. The Jews from all parts of the world, they say, are to return to Palestine, and there is to issue out of the Holy Land a new divine impulse which is to be the regeneration and salvation of the world. I do not know that

anybody but the Jews themselves would oppose their migration to Palestine, though their withdrawal from the business of the world suddenly would create wide disaster. With these doubts, however, we did not trouble the youthful knight of severity. We only asked him upon what the community founded its creed and its mission. Largely, he replied, upon the prophets, and especially upon Isaiah; and he referred us to Isaiah xxxii. 1; xlix. 12 et seq.; and lii. 1. It is not every industrial community that would flourish on a charter so vague as this.

A lad of twelve or fourteen was our guide to the Advent settlement; he was an early polyglot, speaking, besides English, French, and German, Arabic, and, I think, a little Greek; a boy of uncommon gravity of deportment and of precocious shrewdness. He is destined to be a guide and dragoman. I could see that the whole Biblical history was a little *fade* to him, but he does not lose sight of the profit of a knowledge of it. I could not but contrast him with a Sunday-school scholar of his own age in America, whose imagination kindles at the Old Testament stories, and whose enthusiasm for the Holy Land is awakened by the wall maps and the pictures of Solomon's temple. Actual contact has destroyed the imagination of this boy; Jerusalem is not so much a wonder to him as Boston; Samson lived just over there beyond the Plain of Sharon, and is not so much a hero as Old Put.

The boy's mother was a good New Hampshire woman, whose downright Yankeeism of thought and speech was in odd contrast

to her Oriental surroundings. I sat in a rocking-chair in the sitting-room of her little wood cottage, and could scarcely convince myself that I was not in a prim New Hampshire parlor. To her mind there were no more Oriental illusions, and perhaps she had never indulged any; certainly, in her presence Palestine seemed to me as commonplace as New England.

“I s’pose you ‘ve seen the meetin’ house?”

“Yes.”

“Wal’ it’s goin’ to rack and ruin like everything else here. There is n’t enough here to have any service now. Sometimes I go to the German; I try to keep up a little feeling.”

I have no doubt it is more difficult to keep up a religious feeling in the Holy Land than it is in New Hampshire, but we did not discuss that point. I asked, “Do you have any society?”

“Precious little. The Germans are dreffle unsocial. The natives are all a low set. The Arabs will all lie; I don’t think much of any of ‘em. The Mohammedans are all shiftless; you can’t trust any of ‘em.”

“Why don’t you go home?”

“Wal, sometimes I think I’d like to see the old place, but I reckon I could n’t stand the winters. This is a nice climate, that’s all there is here; and we have grapes and oranges, and loads of flowers,—you see my garden there; I set great store by that and me and my daughter take solid comfort in it, especially when *he* is away, and he has to be off most of the time with parties, guidin’ ‘em. No, I guess I sha’n’. ever cross the ocean again.”

It appeared that the good woman had consoled herself with a second husband, who bears a Jewish name; so that the original object of her mission, to gather in the chosen people, is not altogether lost sight of.

There is a curious interest in these New England transplantations. Climate is a great transformer. The habits and customs of thousands of years will insensibly conquer the most stubborn prejudices. I wonder how long it will require to blend these scions of our vigorous civilization with the motley growth that makes up the present Syriac population,—people whose blood is streaked with a dozen different strains, Egyptian, Ethiopian, Arabian, Assyrian, Phoenician, Greek, Roman, Canaanite, Jewish, Persian, Turkish, with all the races that have in turn ravaged or occupied the land. I do not, indeed, presume to say what the Syrians are who have occupied Palestine for so many hundreds of years, but I cannot see how it can be otherwise than that their blood is as mixed as that of the modern Egyptians. Perhaps these New England offshoots will maintain their distinction of race for a long time, but I should be still more interested to know how long the New England mind will keep its integrity in these surroundings, and whether those ruggednesses of virtue and those homely simplicities of character which we recognize as belonging to the hilly portions of New England will insensibly melt away in this relaxing air that so much wants moral tone. These Oriental countries have been conquered many times, but they have always conquered their conquerors. I am told that

even our American consuls are not always more successful in resisting the undermining seductions of the East than were the Roman proconsuls.

These reflections, however, let it be confessed, did not come to me as I sat in the rocking-chair of my countrywoman. I was rather thinking how completely her presence and accent dispelled all my Oriental illusions and cheapened the associations of Jaffa. There is I know not what in a real living Yankee that puts all appearances to the test and dissipates the colors of romance. It was not until I came again into the highway and found in front of The Jerusalem hotel a company of Arab acrobats and pyramid-builders, their swarthy bodies shining in the white sunlight, and a lot of idlers squatting about in enjoyment of the exertions of others, that I recovered in any degree my delusions.

With the return of these, it seemed not so impossible to believe even in the return of the Jews; especially when we learned that preparations for them multiply. A second German colony has been established outside of the city. There is another at Haifa; on the Jerusalem road the beginning of one has been made by the Jews themselves. It amounts to something like a "movement."

At three o'clock in the afternoon we set out for Ramleh, ignominiously, in a wagon. There is a carriage-road from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and our dragoman had promised us a "private carriage." We decided to take it, thinking it would be more comfortable than horseback for some of our party. We made a mistake which we have never ceased to regret. The road I can

confidently commend as the worst in the world. The carriage into which we climbed belonged to the German colony, and was a compromise between the ancient ark, a modern dray, and a threshing-machine. It was one of those contrivances that a German would evolve out of his inner consciousness, and its appearance here gave me grave doubts as to the adaptability of these honest Germans to the Orient. It was, however, a great deal worse than it looked. If it were driven over smooth ground it would soon loosen all the teeth of the passengers, and shatter their spinal columns. But over the Jerusalem road the effect was indescribable. The noise of it was intolerable, the jolting incredible. The little solid Dutchman, who sat in front and drove, shook like the charioteer of an artillery wagon; but I suppose he had no feeling. We pounded along over the roughest stone pavement, with the sensation of victims drawn to execution in a cart, until we emerged into the open country; but there we found no improvement in the road.

Jaffa is surrounded by immense orange groves, which are protected along the highways by hedges of prickly-pear. We came out from a lane of these upon the level and blooming Plain of Sharon, and saw before us, on the left, the blue hills of Judæa. It makes little difference what kind of conveyance one has, it is impossible for him to advance upon this historic, if not sacred plain, and catch the first glimpse of those pale hills which stood to him for a celestial vision in his childhood, without a great quickening of the pulse; and it is a most lovely view after Egypt,

or after anything. The elements of it are simple enough,—merely a wide sweep of prairie and a line of graceful mountains; but the forms are pleasing, and the color is incomparable. The soil is warm and red, the fields are a mass of wild-flowers of the most brilliant and variegated hues, and, alternately swept by the shadows of clouds and bathed in the sun, the scene takes on the animation of incessant change.

It was somewhere here, outside the walls, I do not know the spot, that the massacre of Jaffa occurred. I purposely go out of my way to repeat the well-known story of it, and I trust that it will always be recalled whenever any mention is made of the cruel little Corsican who so long imposed the vulgarity and savageness of his selfish nature upon Europe. It was in March, 1799, that Napoleon, toward the close of his humiliating and disastrous campaign in Egypt, carried Jaffa by storm. The town was given over to pillage. During its progress four thousand Albanians of the garrison, taking refuge in some old khans, offered to surrender on condition that their lives should be spared; otherwise they would fight to the bitter end. Their terms were accepted, and two of Napoleon's aids-de-camp pledged their honor for their safety. They were marched out to the general's headquarters and seated in front of the tents with their arms bound behind them. The displeased commander called a council of war and deliberated two days upon their fate, and then signed the order for the massacre of the entire body. The excuse was that the general could not be burdened with so

many prisoners. Thus in one day were murdered in cold blood about as many people as Jaffa at present contains. Its inhabitants may be said to have been accustomed to being massacred; eight thousand of them were butchered in one Roman assault; but I suppose all antiquity may be searched in vain for an act of perfidy and cruelty combined equal to that of the Grand Emperor.

The road over which we rattle is a causeway of loose stones; the country is a plain of sand, but clothed with a luxuriant vegetation. In the fields the brown husbandmen are plowing, turning up the soft red earth with a rude plough drawn by cattle yoked wide apart. Red-legged storks, on their way, I suppose, from Egypt to their summer residence further north, dot the meadows, and are too busy picking up worms to notice our halloo. Abd-el-Atti, who has a passion for shooting, begs permission to “go for” these household birds with the gun; but we explain to him that we would no more shoot a stork than one of the green birds of Paradise. Quails are scudding about in the newly turned furrows, and song birds salute us from the tops of swinging cypresses. The Holy Land is rejoicing in its one season of beauty, its spring-time.

Trees are not wanting to the verdant meadows. We still encounter an occasional grove of oranges; olives also appear, and acacias, sycamores, cypresses, and tamarisks. The pods of the carob-tree are, I believe, the husks upon which the prodigal son did not thrive. Large patches of barley are passed. But the fields not occupied with grain are literally carpeted with

wild-flowers of the most brilliant hues, such a display as I never saw elsewhere: scarlet and dark flaming poppies, the scarlet anemone, marigolds, white daisies, the lobelia, the lupin, the vetch, the gorse with its delicate yellow blossom, the pea, something that we agreed to call the white rose of Sharon, the mallow, the asphodel; the leaves of a lily not yet in bloom. About the rose of Sharon we no doubt were mistaken. There is no reason to suppose it was white; but we have somehow associated the purity of that color with the song beginning, "I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys." It was probably not even a rose. We finally decided to cherish the red mallow as the rose of Sharon; it is very abundant, and the botanist of our company seemed satisfied to accept it. For myself, the rose by the name of mallow does not smell sweet.

We come in sight of Rainleh, which lies on the swelling mounds of the green plain, encompassed by emerald meadows and by groves of orange and olive, and conspicuous from a great distance by its elegant square tower, the most beautiful in form that we have seen in the East. As the sun is sinking, we defer our visit to it and drive to the Latin convent, where we are to lodge, permission to that effect having been obtained from the sister convent at Jaffa; a mere form, since a part of the convent was built expressly for the entertainment of travellers, and the few monks who occupy it find keeping a hotel a very profitable kind of hospitality. The stranger is the guest of the superior, no charge is made, and the little fiction of gratuitous hospitality so

pleases the pilgrim that he will not at his departure be outdone in liberality. It would be much more agreeable if all our hotels were upon this system.

While the dragoman is unpacking the luggage in the courtyard and bustling about in a manner to impress the establishment with the importance of its accession, I climb up to the roofs to get the sunset. The house is all roofs, it would seem, at different levels. Steps lead here and there, and one can wander about at will; you could not desire a pleasanter lounging-place in a summer evening. The protecting walls, which are breast-high, are built in with cylinders of tile, like the mud houses in Egypt; the tiles make the walls lighter, and furnish at the same time peep-holes through which the monks can spy the world, themselves unseen. I noticed that the tiles about the entrance court were inclined downwards, so that a curious person could study any new arrival at the convent without being himself observed. The sun went down behind the square tower which is called Saracenic and is entirely Gothic in spirit, and the light lay soft and rosy on the wide compass of green vegetation; I heard on the distant fields the bells of mules returning to the gates, and the sound substituted Italy in my mind for Palestine.

From this prospect I was summoned in haste; the superior of the convent was waiting to receive me, and I had been sought in all directions. I had no idea why I should be received, but I soon found that the occasion was not a trivial one. In the reception-room were seated in some state the superior, attended

by two or three brothers, and the remainder of my suite already assembled. The abbot, if he is an abbot, arose and cordially welcomed “the general” to his humble establishment, hoped that he was not fatigued by the journey from Jaffa, and gave him a seat beside himself. The remainder of the party were ranged according to their rank. I replied that the journey was on the contrary delightful, and that any journey could be considered fortunate which had the hospitable convent of Ramleh as its end. The courteous monk renewed his solicitous inquiries, and my astonishment was increased by the botanist, who gravely assured the worthy father that “the general” was accustomed to fatigue, and that such a journey as this was a recreation to him.

“What in the mischief is all this about?” I seized a moment to whisper to the person next me.

“You are a distinguished American general, travelling with his lady in pursuit of Heaven knows what, and accompanied by his suite; don’t make a mess of it.”

“Oh,” I said, “if I *am* a distinguished American general, travelling with my lady in pursuit of Heaven knows what, I am glad to know it.”

Fortunately the peaceful father did not know anything more of war than I did, and I suppose my hastily assumed modesty of the soldier seemed to him the real thing. It was my first experience of anything like real war, the first time I had ever occupied any military position, and it did not seem to be so arduous as has been represented.

Great regret was expressed by the superior that they had not anticipated my arrival, in order to have entertained me in a more worthy manner; the convent was uncommonly full of pilgrims, and it would be difficult to lodge my suite as it deserved. Then there followed a long discussion between the father and one of the monks upon our disposition for the night.

“If we give the general and his lady the south room in the court, then the doctor”—etc., etc.

“Or,” urged the monk, “suppose the general and his lady occupy the cell number four, then mademoiselle can take”—etc., etc.

The military commander and his lady were at last shown into a cell opening out of the court, a lofty but narrow vaulted room, with brick floor and thick walls, and one small window near the ceiling. Instead of candles we had antique Roman lamps, which made a feeble glimmer in the cavern; the oddest water-jugs served for pitchers. It may not have been damp, but it felt as if no sun had ever penetrated the chill interior.

“What is all this nonsense of the general?” I asked Abd-el-Atti, as soon as I could get hold of that managing factotum.

“Dunno, be sure; these monk always pay more attention to ‘stinguish people.”

“But what did you say at the convent in Jaffa when you applied for a permit to lodge here?”

“Oh, I tell him my gentleman general American, but ‘stinguish; mebbe he done gone wrote ‘em that you ‘stinguish

American general. Very nice man, the superior, speak Italian beautiful; when I give him the letter, he say he do all he can for the general and his suite; he sorry I not let him know "forehand."

The dinner was served in the long refectory, and there were some twenty-five persons at table, mostly pilgrims to Jerusalem, and most of them of the poorer class. One bright Italian had travelled alone with her little boy all the way from Verona, only to see the Holy Sepulchre. The monks waited at table and served a very good dinner. Travellers are not permitted to enter the portion of the large convent which contains the cells of the monks, nor to visit any part of the old building except the chapel. I fancied that the jolly brothers who waited at table were rather glad to come into contact with the world, even in this capacity.

In the dining-room hangs a notable picture. It is the Virgin, enthroned, with a crown and aureole, holding the holy child, who is also crowned; in the foreground is a choir of white boys or angels. The Virgin and child are both *black*; it is the Virgin of Ethiopia. I could not learn the origin of this picture; it was rude enough in execution to be the work of a Greek artist of the present day; but it was said to come from Ethiopia, where it is necessary to a proper respect for the Virgin that she should be represented black. She seems to bear something the relation to the Virgin of Judæa that Astarte did to the Grecian Venus. And we are again reminded that the East has no prejudice of color: "I am black but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem"; "Look not upon me because I am black, because the sun hath looked

upon me.”

The convent bells are ringing at early dawn, and though we are up at half past five, nearly all the pilgrims have hastily departed for Jerusalem. Upon the roof I find the morning fair. There are more minarets than spires in sight, but they stand together in this pretty little town without discord. The bells are ringing in melodious persuasion, but at the same time, in voices as musical, the muezzins are calling from their galleries; each summoning men to prayer in its own way. From these walls spectators once looked down upon the battles of cross and crescent raging in the lovely meadows,—battles of quite as much pride as piety. A common interest always softens animosity, and I fancy that monks and Moslems will not again resort to the foolish practice of breaking each other’s heads so long as they enjoy the profitable stream of pilgrims to the Holy Land.

After breakfast and a gift to the treasury of the convent according to our rank—I think if I were to stay there again it would be in the character of a common soldier—we embarked again in the ark, and jolted along behind the square-shouldered driver, who seemed to enjoy the rattling and rumbling of his clumsy vehicle. But no minor infelicity could destroy for us the freshness of the morning or the enjoyment of the lovely country. Although, in the jolting, one could not utter a remark about the beauty of the way without danger of biting his tongue in two, we feasted our eyes and let our imaginations loose over the vast ranges of the Old Testament story.

After passing through the fertile meadows of Ramleh, we came into a more rolling country, destitute of houses, but clothed on with a most brilliant bloom of wild-flowers, among which the papilionaceous flowers were conspicuous for color and delicacy. I found by the roadside a *black calla* (which I should no more have believed in than in the black Virgin, if I had not seen it). Its leaf is exactly that of our calla-lily; its flower is similar to, but not so open and flaring, as the white calla, and the pistil is large and very long, and of the color of the interior of the flower. The corolla is green on the outside, but the inside is incomparably rich, like velvet, black in some lights and dark maroon in others. Nothing could be finer in color and texture than this superb flower. Besides the blooms of yesterday we noticed buttercups, various sorts of the ranunculus, among them the scarlet and the shooting-star, a light purple flower with a dark purple centre, the Star of Bethlehem, and the purple wind-flower. Scarlet poppies and the still more brilliant scarlet anemones, dandelions, marguerites, filled all the fields with masses of color.

Shortly we come into the hills, through which the road winds upward, and the scenery is very much like that of the Adirondacks, or would be if the rocky hills of the latter were denuded of trees. The way begins to be lively with passengers, and it becomes us to be circumspect, for almost every foot of ground has been consecrated or desecrated, or in some manner made memorable. This heap of rubbish is the remains of a fortress which the Saracens captured, built by the

Crusaders to guard the entrance of the pass, upon the site of an older fortification by the Maccabees, or founded upon Roman substructions, and mentioned in Judges as the spot where some very ancient Jew stayed overnight. It is also, no doubt, one of the stations that help us to determine with the accuracy of a surveyor the boundary between the territory of Benjamin and Judah. I try to ascertain all these localities and to remember them all, but I sometimes get Richard Cour de Lion mixed with Jonathan Maccabæus, and I have no doubt I mistook "Job's convent" for the *Castellum boni Latronis*, a place we were specially desirous to see as the birthplace of the "penitent thief." But whatever we confounded, we are certain of one thing: we looked over into the Valley of Ajalon. It was over this valley that Joshua commanded the moon to tarry while he smote the fugitive Amorites on the heights of Gibeon, there to the east.

The road is thronged with pilgrims to Jerusalem, and with travellers and their attendants,—gay cavalcades scattered all along the winding way over the rolling plain, as in the picture of the Pilgrims to Canterbury. All the transport of freight as well as passengers is by the backs of beasts of burden. There are long files of horses and mules staggering under enormous loads of trunks, tents, and bags. Dragomans, some of them got up in fierce style, with baggy yellow trousers, yellow kuffias bound about the head with a twisted fillet, armed with long Damascus swords, their belts stuck full of pistols, and a rifle slung on the back, gallop furiously along the line, the signs of danger but the

assurances of protection. Camp boys and waiters dash along also, on the pack-horses, with a great clatter of kitchen furniture; even a scullion has an air of adventure as he pounds his rack-a-bone steed into a vicious gallop. And there are the Cook's tourists, called by everybody "Cookies," men and women struggling on according to the pace of their horses, conspicuous in hats with white muslin drapery hanging over the neck. Villanous-looking fellows with or without long guns, coming and going on the highway, have the air of being neither pilgrims nor strangers. We meet women returning from Jerusalem clad in white, seated astride their horses, or upon beds which top their multifarious baggage.

We are leaving behind us on the right the country of Samson, in which he passed his playful and engaging boyhood, and we look wistfully towards it. Of Zorah, where he was born, nothing is left but a cistern, and there is only a wretched hamlet to mark the site of Timnath, where he got his Philistine wife. "Get her for me, for she pleaseth me well," was his only reply to the entreaty of his father that he would be content with a maid of his own people.

The country gets wilder and more rocky as we ascend. Down the ragged side paths come wretched women and girls, staggering under the loads of brushwood which they have cut in the high ravines; loads borne upon the head that would tax the strength of a strong man. I found it no easy task to lift one of the bundles. The poor creatures were scantily clad in a single garment of coarse

brown cloth, but most of them wore a profusion of ornaments; strings of coins, Turkish and Arabic, on the head and breast, and uncouth rings and bracelets. Farther on a rabble of boys besets us, begging for backsheesh in piteous and whining tones, and throwing up their arms in theatrical gestures of despair.

All the hills bear marks of having once been terraced to the very tops, for vines and olives. The natural ledges seem to have been humored into terraces and occasionally built up and broadened by stone walls; but where the hill was smooth, traces of terraces are yet visible. The grape is still cultivated low down the steeps, and the olives straggle over some of the hills to the very top; but these feeble efforts of culture or of nature do little to relieve the deserted aspect of the scene.

We lunch in a pretty olive grove, upon a slope long ago terraced and now grass-grown and flower-sown; lovely vistas open into cool glades, and paths lead upward among the rocks to inviting retreats. From this high perch in the bosom of the hills we look off upon Ramleh, Jaffa, the broad Plain of Sharon, and the sea. A strip of sand between the sea and the plain produces the effect of a mirage, giving to the plain the appearance of the sea. It would be a charming spot for a country-seat for a resident of Jerusalem, although Jerusalem itself is rural enough at present; and David and Solomon may have had summer pavilions in these cool shades in sight of the Mediterranean. David himself, however, perhaps had enough of this region—when he dodged about in these fastnesses between Ramah and Gath, from the

pursuit of Saul—to make him content with a city life. There is nothing to hinder our believing that he often enjoyed this prospect; and we do believe it, for it is already evident that the imagination must be called in to create an enjoyment of this deserted land. David no doubt loved this spot. For David was a poet, even at this early period when his occupation was that of a successful guerilla; and he had all the true poet's adaptability, as witness the exquisite ode he composed on the death of his enemy Saul. I have no doubt that he enjoyed this lovely prospect often, for he was a man who enjoyed heartily everything lovely. He was in this as in all he did a *thorough* man; when he made a raid on an Amorite city, he left neither man, woman, nor child alive to spread the news.

We have already mounted over two thousand feet. The rocks are silicious limestone, crumbling and gray with ages of exposure; they give the landscape an ashy appearance. But there is always a little verdure amid the rocks, and now and then an olive-tree, perhaps a very old one, decrepit and twisted into the most fantastic form, as if distorted by a vegetable rheumatism, casting abroad its withered arms as if the tree writhed in pain. On such ghostly trees I have no doubt the five kings were hanged. Another tree or rather shrub is abundant, the dwarf-oak; and the hawthorn, now in blossom, is frequently seen. The rock-rose—a delicate white single flower—blooms by the wayside and amid the ledges, and the scarlet anemone flames out more brilliantly than ever. Nothing indeed could be more beautiful

than the contrast of the clusters of scarlet anemones and white roses with the gray rocks.

We soon descend into a valley and reach the site of Kirjath-Jearim, which has not much ancient interest for me, except that the name is pleasing; but on the other side of the stream and opposite a Moslem fountain are the gloomy stone habitations of the family of the terrible Abu Ghaush, whose robberies of travellers kept the whole country in a panic a quarter of a century ago. He held the key of this pass, and let no one go by without toll. For fifty years he and his companions defied the Turkish government, and even went to the extremity of murdering two pashas who attempted to pass this way. He was disposed of in 1846, but his descendants still live here, having the inclination but not the courage of the old chief. We did not encounter any of them, but I have never seen any buildings that have such a wicked physiognomy as their grim houses.

Near by is the ruin of a low, thick-walled chapel, of a pure Gothic style, a remnant of the Crusaders' occupation. The gloomy wady has another association; a monkish tradition would have us believe it was the birthplace of Jeremiah; if the prophet was born in such a hard country it might account for his lamentations. As we pass out of this wady, the German driver points to a forlorn village clinging to the rocky slope of a hill to the right, and says,—

“That is where John Baptist was born.”

The information is sudden and seems improbable, especially

as there are other places where he was born.

“How do you know?” we ask.

“O, I know *ganz wohl*; I been five years in dis land, and I ought to know.”

Descending into a deep ravine we cross a brook, which we are told is the one that flows into the Valley of Elah, the valley of the “terebinth” or button trees; and if so, it is the brook out of which David took the stone that killed Goliath. It is a bright, dashing stream. I stood upon the bridge, watching it dancing down the ravine, and should have none but agreeable recollections of it, but that close to the bridge stood a vile grog-shop, and in the doorway sat the most villanous-looking man I ever saw in Judæa, rapacity and murder in his eyes. The present generation have much more to fear from him and his drugged liquors than the Israelite had from the giant of Gath.

While the wagon zigzags up the last long hill, I mount by a short path and come upon a rocky plateau, across which runs a broad way, on the bed rock, worn smooth by many centuries of travel: by the passing of caravans and armies to Jerusalem, of innumerable generations of peasants, of chariots, of horses, mules, and foot-soldiers; here went the messengers of the king’s pleasure, and here came the heralds and legates of foreign nations; this great highway the kings and prophets themselves must have trodden when they journeyed towards the sea; for I cannot learn that the Jews ever had any decent roads, and perhaps they never attained the civilization necessary to

build them. We have certainly seen no traces of anything like a practicable ancient highway on this route.

Indeed, the greatest wonder to me in the whole East is that there has not been a good road built from Jaffa to Jerusalem; that the city sacred to more than half the world, to all the most powerful nations, to Moslems, Jews, Greeks, Roman Catholics, Protestants, the desire of all lands, and the object of pilgrimage with the delicate and the feeble as well as the strong, should not have a highway to it over which one can ride without being jarred and stunned and pounded to a jelly; that the Jews should never have made a road to their seaport; that the Romans, the road-builders, do not seem to have constructed one over this important route. The Sultan began this one over which we have been dragged, for the Empress Eugenie. But he did not finish it; most of the way it is a mere rubble of stones. The track is well engineered, and the road bed is well enough; soft stone is at hand to form an excellent dressing, and it might be, in a short time, as good a highway as any in Switzerland, if the Sultan would set some of his lazy subjects to work out their taxes on it. Of course, it is now a great improvement over the old path for mules; but as a carriage road it is atrocious. Imagine thirty-six miles of cobble pavement, with every other stone gone and the remainder sharpened!

Perhaps, however, it is best not to have a decent road to the Holy City of the world. It would make going there easy, even for delicate ladies and invalid clergymen; it would reduce the cost of

the trip from Jaffa by two thirds; it would take away employment from a lot of vagabonds who harry the traveller over the route; it would make the pilgrimage too much a luxury, in these days of pilgrimages by rail, and of little faith, or rather of a sort of lacquer of faith which is only credulity.

Upon this plateau we begin to discern signs of the neighborhood of the city, and we press forward with the utmost eagerness, disappointed at every turn that a sight of it is not disclosed. Scattered settlements extend for some distance out on the Jaffa road. We pass a school which the Germans have established for Arab boys; an institution which does not meet the approval of our restoration driver; the boys, when they come out, he says, don't know what they are; they are neither Moslems nor Christians. We go rapidly on over the swelling hill, but the city will not reveal itself. We expect it any moment to rise up before us, conspicuous on its ancient hills, its walls shining in the sun.

We pass a guard-house, some towers, and newly built private residences. Our pulses are beating a hundred to the minute, but the city refuses to "burst" upon us as it does upon other travellers. We have advanced far enough to see that there is no elevation before us higher than that we are on. The great sight of all our lives is only a moment separated from us; in a few rods more our hearts will be satisfied by that long-dreamed-of prospect. How many millions of pilgrims have hurried along this road, lifting up their eyes in impatience for the vision! But it does not come suddenly. We have already seen it, when the driver stops, points

with his whip, and cries,—

“Jerusalem!”

“What, *that*?”

We are above it and nearly upon it. What we see is chiefly this: the domes and long buildings of the Russian Hospice, on higher ground than the city and concealing a good part of it; a large number of new houses, built of limestone prettily streaked with the red oxyde of iron; the roofs of a few of the city houses, and a little portion of the wall that overlooks the Valley of Hinnom. The remainder of the city of David is visible to the imagination.

The suburb through which we pass cannot be called pleasing. Everything outside the walls looks new and naked; the whitish glare of the stone is relieved by little vegetation, and the effect is that of barrenness. As we drive down along the wall of the Russian convent, we begin to meet pilgrims and strangers, with whom the city overflows at this season; many Russian peasants, unkempt, unsavory fellows, with long hair and dirty apparel, but most of them wearing a pelisse trimmed with fur and a huge fur hat. There are coffee-houses and all sorts of cheap booths and shanty shops along the highway. The crowd is motley and far from pleasant; it is sordid, grimy, hard, very different from the more homogeneous, easy, flowing, graceful, and picturesque assemblage of vagabonds at the gate of an Egyptian town. There are Russians, Cossacks, Georgians, Jews, Armenians, Syrians. The northern dirt and squalor and fanaticism do not come gracefully into the Orient. Besides, the rabble is importunate and

impudent.

We enter by the Jaffa and Hebron gate, a big square tower, with the exterior entrance to the north and the interior to the east, and the short turn is choked with camels and horses and a clamorous crowd. Beside it stands the ruinous citadel of Saladin and the Tower of David, a noble entrance to a mean street. Through the rush of footmen and horsemen, beggars, venders of olive-wood, Moslems, Jews, and Greeks, we make our way to the Mediterranean Hotel, a rambling new hostelry. In passing to our rooms we pause a moment upon an open balcony to look down into the green Pool of Hezekiah, and off over the roofs to the Mount of Olives. Having secured our rooms, I hasten along narrow and abominably cobbled streets, mere ditches of stone, lined with mean shops, to the Centre of the Earth, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

II.—JERUSALEM

IT was in obedience to a natural but probably mistaken impulse, that I went straight to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre during my first hour in the city. Perhaps it was a mistake to go there at all; certainly I should have waited until I had become more accustomed to holy places. When a person enters this memorable church, as I did, expecting to see only two sacred sites, and is brought immediately face to face with *thirty-seven*, his mind is staggered, and his credulity becomes so enfeebled that it is practically useless to him thereafter in any part of the Holy City. And this is a pity, for it is so much easier and sweeter to believe than to doubt.

It would have been better, also, to have visited Jerusalem many years ago; then there were fewer sacred sites invented, and scholarly investigation had not so sharply questioned the authenticity of the few. But I thought of none of these things as I stumbled along the narrow and filthy streets, which are stony channels of mud and water, rather than foot-paths, and peeped into the dirty little shops that line the way. I thought only that I was in Jerusalem; and it was impossible, at first, for its near appearance to empty the name of its tremendous associations, or to drive out the image of that holy city, “conjubilant with song.”

I had seen the dome of the church from the hotel balcony; the building itself is so hemmed in by houses that only its south

side, in which is the sole entrance, can be seen from the street. In front of this entrance is a small square; the descent to this square is by a flight of steps down Palmer Street, a lane given up to the traffic in beads, olive-wood, ivory-carving, and the thousand trinkets, most of them cheap and inartistic, which absorb the industry of the Holy City. The little square itself, surrounded by ancient buildings on three sides and by the blackened walls of the church on the north, might be set down in a mediæval Italian town without incongruity. And at the hour I first saw it, you would have said that a market or fair was in progress there. This, however, I found was its normal condition. It is always occupied by a horde of more clamorous and impudent merchants than you will find in any other place in the Orient.

It is with some difficulty that the pilgrim can get through the throng and approach the portal. The pavement is covered with heaps of beads, shells, and every species of holy fancy-work, by which are seated the traders, men and women, in wait for customers. The moment I stopped to look at the church, and it was discovered that I was a new-comer, a rush was made at me from every part of the square, and I was at once the centre of the most eager and hungry crowd. Sharp-faced Greeks, impudent Jews, fair-faced women from Bethlehem, sleek Armenians, thrust strings of rude olive beads and crosses into my face, forced upon my notice trumpery carving in ivory, in nuts, in seeds, and screamed prices and entreaties in chorus, bidding against each other and holding fast to me, as if I were

the last man, and this were the last opportunity they would ever have of getting rid of their rubbish. Handfuls of beads rapidly fell from five francs to half a franc, and the dealers insisted upon my buying, with a threatening air; I remember one hard-featured and rapacious wretch who danced about and clung to me, and looked into my eyes with an expression that said plainly, "If you don't buy these beads I 'll murder you." My recollection is that I bought, for I never can resist a persuasion of this sort. Whenever I saw the fellow in the square afterwards, I always fancied that he regarded me with a sort of contempt, but he made no further attempt on my life.

This is the sort of preparation that one daily has in approaching the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The greed and noise of traffic around it are as fatal to sentiment as they are to devotion. You may be amused one day, you may be indignant the next; at last you will be weary of the importunate crowd; and the only consolation you can get from these daily scenes of the desecration of the temple of pilgrimage is the proof they afford that this is indeed Jerusalem, and that these are the legitimate descendants of the thieves whom Christ scourged from the precincts of the temple. Alas that they should thrive under the new dispensation as they did under the old!

A considerable part of the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre is not more than sixty years old; but the massive, carved, and dark south portal, and the remains of the old towers and walls on this side, may be eight hundred. There has been

some sort of a church here ever since the time of Constantine (that is, three centuries after the crucifixion of our Lord), which has marked the spot that was then determined to be the site of the Holy Sepulchre. Many a time the buildings have been swept away by fire or by the fanaticism of enemies, but they have as often been renewed. There would seem at first to have been a cluster of buildings here, each of which arose to cover a newly discovered sacred site. Happily, all the sacred places are now included within the walls of this many-roofed, heterogeneous mass, of chapels, shrines, tombs, and altars of worship of many warring sects, called the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Happily also the exhaustive discussion of the question of the true site of the sepulchre, conducted by the most devout and accomplished biblical scholars and the keenest antiquarians of the age, relieves the ordinary tourist from any obligation to enter upon an investigation that would interest none but those who have been upon the spot. No doubt the larger portion of the Christian world accepts this site as the true one.

I make with diffidence a suggestion that struck me, although it may not be new. The Pool of Hezekiah is not over four hundred feet, measured on the map, from the dome of the sepulchre. Under the church itself are several large excavations in the rocks, which were once cisterns. Ancient Jerusalem depended for its water upon these cisterns, which took the drainage from the roofs, and upon a few pools, like that of Hezekiah, which were fed from other reservoirs, such as Solomon's Pool, at a

considerable distance from the city. These cisterns under the church may not date back to the time of our Lord, but if they do, they were doubtless at that time within the walls. And of course the Pool of Hezekiah, so near to this alleged site, cannot be supposed to have been beyond the walls.

Within the door of the church, upon a raised divan at one side, as if this were a bazaar and he were the merchant, sat a fat Turk, in official dress, the sneering warden of this Christian edifice, and the perhaps necessary guardian of peace within. His presence there, however, is at first a disagreeable surprise to all those who rebel at owing an approach to the holy place to the toleration of a Moslem; but I was quite relieved of any sense of obligation when, upon coming out, the Turk asked me for backsheesh!

Whatever one may think as to the site of Calvary, no one can approach a spot which even claims to be it, and which has been for centuries the object of worship of millions, and is constantly thronged by believing pilgrims, without profound emotion. It was late in the afternoon when I entered the church, and already the shades of evening increased the artificial gloom of the interior. At the very entrance lies an object that arrests one. It is a long marble slab resting upon the pavement, about which candles are burning. Every devout pilgrim who comes in kneels and kisses it, and it is sometimes difficult to see it for the crowds who press about it. Underneath it is supposed to be the Stone of Unction upon which the Lord's body was laid, according to the Jewish

fashion, for anointing, after he was taken from the cross.

I turned directly into the rotunda, under the dome of which is the stone building enclosing the Holy Sepulchre, a ruder structure than that which covers the hut and tomb of St. Francis in the church at Assisi. I met in the way a procession of Latin monks, bearing candles, and chanting as they walked. They were making the round of the holy places in the church, this being their hour for the tour. The sects have agreed upon certain hours for these little daily pilgrimages, so that there shall be no collision. A rabble of pilgrims followed the monks. They had just come from incensing and adoring the sepulchre, and the crowd of other pilgrims who had been waiting their turn were now pressing in at the narrow door. As many times as I have been there, I have always seen pilgrims struggling to get in and struggling to get out. The proud and the humble crowd there together; the greasy boor from beyond the Volga jostles my lady from Naples, and the dainty pilgrim from America pushes her way through a throng of stout Armenian peasants. But I have never seen any disorder there, nor any rudeness, except the thoughtless eagerness of zeal.

Taking my chance in the line, I passed into the first apartment, called the Chapel of the Angel, a narrow and gloomy antechamber, which takes its name from the fragment of stone in the centre, the stone upon which the angel sat after it had been rolled away from the sepulchre. A stream of light came through the low and narrow door of the tomb. Through the passage to this vault only one person can enter at a time, and the tomb will

hold no more than three or four. Stooping along the passage, which is cased with marble like the tomb, and may cover natural rock, I came into the sacred place, and into a blaze of silver lamps, and candles. The vault is not more than six feet by seven, and is covered by a low dome. The sepulchral stone occupies all the right side, and is the object of devotion. It is of marble, supposed to cover natural stone, and is cracked and worn smooth on the edge by the kisses of millions of people. The attendant who stood at one end opened a little trap-door, in which lamp-cloths were kept, and let me see the naked rock, which is said to be that of the tomb. While I stood there in that very centre of the faith and longing of so many souls, which seemed almost to palpitate with a consciousness of its awful position, pilgrim after pilgrim, on bended knees, entered the narrow way, kissed with fervor or with coldness the unresponsive marble, and withdrew in the same attitude. Some approached it with streaming eyes and kissed it with trembling rapture; some ladies threw themselves upon the cold stone and sobbed aloud. Indeed, I did not of my own will intrude upon these acts of devotion, which have the right of secrecy, but it was some time before I could escape, so completely was the entrance blocked up. When I had struggled out, I heard chanting from the hill of Golgotha, and saw the gleaming of a hundred lights from chapel and tomb and remote recesses, but I cared to see no more of the temple itself that day.

The next morning (it was the 7th of April) was very cold, and the day continued so. Without, the air was keen, and within it

was nearly impossible to get warm or keep so, in the thick-walled houses, which had gathered the damp and chill of dungeons. You might suppose that the dirtiest and most beggarly city in the world could not be much deteriorated by the weather, but it is. In a cheerful, sunny day you find that the desolation of Jerusalem has a certain charm and attraction: even a tattered Jew leaning against a ruined wall, or a beggar on a dunghill, is picturesque in the sunshine; but if you put a day of chill rain and frosty wind into the city, none of the elements of complete misery are wanting. There is nothing to be done, day or night; indeed, there is nothing ever to be done in the evening, except to read your guide-book—that is, the Bible—and go to bed. You are obliged to act like a Christian here, whatever you are.

Speaking of the weather, a word about the time for visiting Syria may not be amiss. In the last part of March the snow was a foot deep in the streets; parties who had started on their tour northward were snowed in and forced to hide in their tents three days from the howling winter. There is pleasure for you! We found friends in the city who had been waiting two weeks after they had exhausted its sights, for settled weather that would permit them to travel northward. To be sure, the inhabitants say that this last storm ought to have been rain instead of snow, according to the habit of the seasons; and it no doubt would have been if this region were not twenty-five hundred feet above the sea. The hardships of the Syrian tour are enough in the best weather, and I am convinced that our dragoman is right in saying

that most travellers begin it too early in the spring.

Jerusalem is not a formidable city to the explorer who is content to remain above ground, and is not too curious about its substructions and buried walls, and has no taste, as some have, for crawling through its drains. I suppose it would elucidate the history of the Jews if we could dig all this hill away and lay bare all the old foundations, and ascertain exactly how the city was watered. I, for one, am grateful to the excellent man and great scholar who crawled on his hands and knees through a subterranean conduit, and established the fact of a connection between the Fountain of the Virgin and the Pool of Siloam. But I would rather contribute money to establish a school for girls in the Holy City, than to aid in laying bare all the aqueducts from Ophel to the Tower of David. But this is probably because I do not enough appreciate the importance of such researches among Jewish remains to the progress of Christian truth and morality in the world. The discoveries hitherto made have done much to clear up the topography of ancient Jerusalem; I do not know that they have yielded anything valuable to art or to philology, any treasures illustrating the habits, the social life, the culture, or the religion of the past, such as are revealed beneath the soil of Rome or in the ashes of Pompeii; it is, however, true that almost every tourist in Jerusalem becomes speedily involved in all these questions of ancient sites,—the identification of valleys that once existed, of walls that are now sunk under the accumulated rubbish of two thousand years, from thirty feet to

ninety feet deep, and of foundations that are rough enough and massive enough to have been laid by David and cemented by Solomon. And the fascination of the pursuit would soon send one underground, with a pickaxe and a shovel. But of all the diggings I saw in the Holy City, that which interested me most was the excavation of the church and hospital of the chivalric Knights of St. John; concerning which I shall say a word further on.

The present walls were built by Sultan Suleiman in the middle of the sixteenth century, upon foundations much older, and here and there, as you can see, upon big blocks of Jewish workmanship. The wall is high enough and very picturesque in its zigzag course and re-entering angles, and, I suppose, strong enough to hitch a horse to; but cannon-balls would make short work of it.

Having said thus much of the topography, gratuitously and probably unnecessarily, for every one is supposed to know Jerusalem as well as he knows his native town, we are free to look at anything that may chance to interest us. I do not expect, however, that any words of mine can convey to the reader a just conception of the sterile and blasted character of this promontory and the country round about it, or of the squalor, shabbiness, and unpicturesqueness of the city, always excepting a few of its buildings and some fragments of antiquity built into modern structures here and there. And it is difficult to feel that this spot was ever the splendid capital of a powerful state, that this arid and stricken country could ever have supplied the necessities of such

a capital, and, above all, that so many Jews could ever have been crowded within this cramped space as Josephus says perished in the siege by Titus, when ninety-seven thousand were carried into captivity and eleven hundred thousand died by famine and the sword. Almost the entire Jewish nation must have been packed within this small area.

Our first walk through the city was in the Via Dolorosa, as gloomy a thoroughfare as its name implies. Its historical portion is that steep and often angled part between the Holy Sepulchre and the house of Pilate, but we traversed the whole length of it to make our exit from St. Stephen's Gate toward the Mount of Olives. It is only about four hundred years ago that this street obtained the name of the Via Dolorosa, and that the sacred "stations" on it were marked out for the benefit of the pilgrim. It is a narrow lane, steep in places, having frequent sharp angles, running under arches, and passing between gloomy buildings, enlivened by few shops. Along this way Christ passed from the Judgment Hall of Pilate to Calvary. I do not know how many times the houses along it have been destroyed and rebuilt since their conflagration by Titus, but this destruction is no obstacle to the existence intact of all that are necessary to illustrate the Passion-pilgrimage of our Lord. In this street I saw the house of Simon the Cyrenian, who bore the cross after Jesus; I saw the house of St. Veronica, from which that woman stepped forth and gave Jesus a handkerchief to wipe his brow,—the handkerchief, with the Lord's features imprinted on it, which we have all seen

exhibited at St. Peter's in Rome; and I looked for the house of the Wandering Jew, or at least for the spot where he stood when he received that awful mandate of fleshly immortality. In this street are recognized the several "stations" that Christ made in bearing the cross; we were shown the places where he fell, a stone having the impress of his hand, a pillar broken by his fall, and also the stone upon which Mary sat when he passed by. Nothing is wanting that the narrative requires. We saw also in this street the house of Dives, and the stone on which Lazarus sat while the dogs ministered unto him. It seemed to me that I must be in a dream, in thus beholding the houses and places of resort of the characters in a *parable*; and I carried my dilemma to a Catholic friend. But a learned father assured him that there was no doubt that this is the house of Dives, for Christ often took his parables from real life. After that I went again to look at the stone, in a corner of a building amid a heap of refuse, upon which the beggar sat, and to admire the pretty stone tracery of the windows in the house of Dives.

At the end of the street, in a new Latin nunnery, are the remains of the house of Pilate, which are supposed to be authentic. The present establishment is called the convent of St. Anne, and the community is very fortunate, at this late day, in obtaining such a historic site for itself. We had the privilege of seeing here some of the original rock that formed part of the foundations of Pilate's house; and there are three stones built into the altar that were taken from the pavement of Gabbatha, upon

which Christ walked. These are recent discoveries; it appears probable that the real pavement of Gabbatha has been found, since Pilate's house is so satisfactorily identified. Spanning the street in front of this convent is the Ecce Homo arch, upon which Pilate showed Christ to the populace. The ground of the new building was until recently in possession of the Moslems, who would not sell it for a less price than seventy thousand francs; the arch they would not sell at all; and there now dwells, in a small chamber on top of it, a Moslem saint and hermit. The world of pilgrims flows under his feet; he looks from his window upon a daily procession of Christians, who traverse the Via Dolorosa, having first signified their submission to the Moslem yoke in the Holy City by passing under this arch of humiliation. The hermit, however, has the grace not to show himself, and few know that he sits there, in the holy occupation of letting his hair and his nails grow.

From the house of the Roman procurator we went to the citadel of Sultan Suleiman. This stands close by the Jaffa Gate, and is the most picturesque object in all the circuit of the walls, and, although the citadel is of modern origin, its most characteristic portion lays claim to great antiquity. The massive structure which impresses all strangers who enter by the Jaffa Gate is called the Tower of Hippicus, and also the Tower of David. It is identified as the tower which Herod built and Josephus describes, and there is as little doubt that its foundations are the same that David laid and Solomon strengthened. There

are no such stones in any other part of the walls as these enormous bevelled blocks; they surpass those in the Harem wall, at what is called the Jews' Wailing Place. The tower stands upon the northwest corner of the old wall of Zion, and being the point most open to attack it was most strongly built.

It seems also to have been connected with the palace on Zion which David built, for it is the tradition that it was from this tower that the king first saw Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, when "it came to pass in an eventide that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon." On the other side of the city gate we now look down upon the Pool of Bathsheba, in which there is no water, and we are informed that it was by that pool that the lovely woman, who was destined to be the mother of Solomon, sat when the king took his evening walk. Others say that she sat by the Pool of Gibon. It does not matter. The subject was a very fruitful one for the artists of the Renaissance, who delighted in a glowing reproduction of the biblical stories, and found in such incidents as this and the confusion of Susanna themes in which the morality of the age could express itself without any conflict with the religion of the age. It is a comment not so much upon the character of David as upon the morality of the time in which he lived, that although he repented, and no doubt sincerely, of his sin when reproved for it, his repentance did not take the direction of self-denial; he did not send away Bathsheba.

This square old tower is interiorly so much in ruins that it is not easy to climb to its parapet, and yet it still has a guardhouse attached to it, and is kept like a fortification; a few rusty old cannon, under the charge of the soldiers, would injure only those who attempted to fire them; the entire premises have a tumble-down, Turkish aspect. The view from the top is the best in the city of the city itself; we saw also from it the hills of Moab and a bit of the Dead Sea.

Close by is the Armenian quarter, covering a large part of what was once the hill of Zion. I wish it were the Christian quarter, for it is the only part of the town that makes any pretension to cleanliness, and it has more than any other the aspect of an abode of peace and charity. This is owing to its being under the government of one corporation, for the Armenian convent covers nearly the entire space of this extensive quarter. The convent is a singular, irregular mass of houses, courts, and streets, the latter apparently running over and under and through the houses; you come unexpectedly upon stairways, you traverse roofs, you enter rooms and houses on the roofs of other houses, and it is difficult to say at any time whether you are on the earth or in the air. The convent, at this season, is filled with pilgrims, over three thousand of whom, I was told, were lodged here. We came upon families of them in the little rooms in the courts and corridors, or upon the roofs, pursuing their domestic avocations as if they were at home, cooking, mending, sleeping, a boorish but simple-minded lot of peasants.

The church is a large and very interesting specimen of religious architecture and splendid, barbaric decoration. In the vestibule hang the "bells." These are long planks of a sonorous wood, which give forth a ringing sound when struck with a club. As they are of different sizes, you get some variation of tone, and they can be heard far enough to call the inmates of the convent to worship. The interior walls are lined with ancient blue tiles to a considerable height, and above them are rude and inartistic sacred pictures. There is in the church much curious inlaid work of mother-of-pearl and olive-wood, especially about the doors of the chapels, and one side shines with the pearl as if it were encrusted with silver. Ostrich eggs are strung about in profusion, with hooks attached for hanging lamps.

The first day of our visit to this church, in one of the doorways of what seemed to be a side chapel, and which was thickly encrusted with mother-of-pearl, stood the venerable bishop, in a light rose-colored robe and a pointed hood, with a cross in his hand, preaching to the pilgrims, who knelt on the pavement before him, talking in a familiar manner, and, our guide said, with great plainness of speech. The Armenian clergy are celebrated for the splendor of their vestments, and I could not but think that this rose-colored bishop, in his shining framework, must seem like a being of another sphere to the boors before him. He almost imposed upon us.

These pilgrims appeared to be of the poorest agricultural class of laborers, and their costume is uncouth beyond description. In

a side chapel, where we saw tiles on the walls that excited our envy,—the quaintest figures and illustrations of sacred subjects,—the clerks were taking the names of pilgrims just arrived, who kneeled before them and paid a Napoleon each for their lodging in the convent, as long as they should choose to stay. In this chapel were the shoes of the pilgrims who had gone into the church, a motley collection of foot-gear, covering half the floor: leather and straw, square shoes as broad as long, round shoes, pointed shoes, old shoes, patched shoes, shoes with the toes gone, a pathetic gathering that told of poverty and weary travel—and big feet. These shoes were things to muse on, for each pair, made maybe in a different century, seemed to have a character of its own, as it stood there awaiting the owner. People often, make reflections upon a pair of shoes; literature is full of them. Poets have celebrated many a pretty shoe,—a queen's slipper, it may be, or the hobnail brogan of a peasant, or, oftener, the tiny shoes of a child; but it is seldom that one has an opportunity for such comprehensive moralizing as was here given. If we ever regretted the lack of a poet in our party, it was now.

We walked along the Armenian walls, past the lepers' quarter, and outside the walls, through the Gate of Zion, or the Gate of the Prophet David as it is also called, and came upon a continuation of the plateau of the hill of Zion, which is now covered with cemeteries, and is the site of the house of Caiaphas and of the tomb of David and those Kings of Jerusalem who were considered by the people worthy of sepulture here; for the Jews

seem to have brought from Egypt the notion of refusing royal burial to their bad kings, and they had very few respectable ones.

The house of Caiaphas the high-priest had suffered a recent tumble-down, and was in such a state of ruin that we could with difficulty enter it or recognize any likeness of a house. On the premises is an Armenian chapel; in it we were shown the prison in which Christ was confined, also the stone door of the sepulchre, which the Latins say the Armenians stole. But the most remarkable object here is the little marble column (having carved on it a figure of Christ bound to a pillar) upon which the cock stood and crowed when Peter denied his Lord. There are some difficulties in the way of believing this now, but they will lessen as the column gets age.

Outside this gate lie the desolate fields strewn with the brown tombstones of the Greeks and Armenians, a melancholy spectacle. Each sect has its own cemetery, and the dead sleep peaceably enough, but the living who bury them frequently quarrel. I saw one day a funeral procession halted outside the walls; for some reason the Greek priest had refused the dead burial in the grave dug for him in the cemetery; the bier was dumped on the slope beside the road, and half overturned; the friends were sitting on the ground, wrangling. The man had been dead three days, and the coffin had been by the roadside in this place since the day before. This was in the morning; towards night I saw the same crowd there, but a Turkish official appeared and ordered the Greeks to bury their dead somewhere,

and that without delay; to bury it for the sake of the public health, and quarrel about the grave afterwards if they must. A crowd collected, joining with fiery gesticulation and clamor in the dispute, the shrill voices of women being heard above all; but at last, four men roughly shouldered the box, handling it as if it contained merchandise, and trotted off with it.

As we walked over this pathless, barren necropolis, strewn, as it were, hap-hazard with shapeless, broken, and leaning headstones, it was impossible to connect with it any sentiment of affection or piety. It spoke, like everything else about here, of mortality, and seemed only a part of that historical Jerusalem which is dead and buried, in which no living person can have anything more than an archaeological interest. It was, then, with something like a shock that we heard Demetrius, our guide, say, pointing to a rude stone,—

“That is the grave of my mother!”

Demetrius was a handsome Greek boy, of a beautiful type which has almost disappeared from Greece itself, and as clever a lad as ever spoke all languages and accepted all religions, without yielding too much to any one. He had been well educated in the English school, and his education had failed to put any faith in place of the superstition it had destroyed. The boy seemed to be numerous if not well connected in the city; he was always exchanging a glance and a smile with some pretty, dark-eyed Greek girl whom we met in the way, and when I said, “Demetrius, who was that?” he always answered, “That is my cousin.”

The boy was so intelligent, so vivacious, and full of the spirit of adventure,—begging me a dozen times a day to take him with me anywhere in the world,—and so modern, that he had not till this moment seemed to belong to Jerusalem, nor to have any part in its decay. This chance discovery of his intimate relation to this necropolis gave, if I may say so, a living interest to it, and to all the old burying-grounds about the city, some of which link the present with the remote past by an uninterrupted succession of interments for nearly three thousand years.

Just beyond this expanse, or rather in part of it, is a small plot of ground surrounded by high whitewashed walls, the entrance to which is secured by a heavy door. This is the American cemetery; and the stout door and thick wall are, I suppose, necessary to secure its graves from Moslem insult. It seems not to be visited often, for it was with difficulty that we could turn the huge key in the rusty lock. There are some half-dozen graves within; the graves are grass-grown and flower-sprinkled, and the whole area is a tangle of unrestrained weeds and grass. The high wall cuts off all view, but we did not for the time miss it, rather liking for the moment to be secured from the sight of the awful desolation, and to muse upon the strange fortune that had drawn to be buried here upon Mount Zion, as a holy resting-place for them, people alien in race, language, and customs to the house of David, and removed from it by such spaces of time and distance; people to whom the worship performed by David, if he could renew it in person on Zion, would be as distasteful as is that of the Jews in

yonder synagogue.

Only a short distance from this we came to the mosque which contains the tomb of David and probably of Solomon and other Kings of Judah. No historical monument in or about Jerusalem is better authenticated than this. Although now for many centuries the Moslems have had possession of it and forbidden access to it, there is a tolerably connected tradition of its possession. It was twice opened and relieved of the enormous treasure in gold and silver which Solomon deposited in it; once by Hyrcanus Maccabæus, who took what he needed, and again by Herod, who found very little. There are all sorts of stories told about the splendor of this tomb and the state with which the Moslems surround it. But they envelop it in so much mystery that no one can know the truth. It is probable that the few who suppose they have seen it have seen only a sort of cenotaph which is above the real tomb in the rock below. The room which has been seen is embellished with some display of richness in shawls and hangings of gold embroidery, and contains a sarcophagus of rough stone, and lights are always burning there. If the royal tombs are in this place, they are doubtless in the cave below.

Over this spot was built a church by the early Christians; and it is a tradition that in this building was the Conaculum. This site may very likely be that of the building where the Last Supper was laid, and it may be that St. Stephen suffered martyrdom here, and that the Virgin died here; the building may be as old as the fourth century, but the chances of any building standing so long

in this repeatedly destroyed city are not good. There is a little house north of this mosque in which the Virgin spent the last years of her life; if she did, she must have lived to be over a thousand years old.

On the very brow of the hill, and overlooking the lower pool of Gibon, is the English school, with its pretty garden and its cemetery. We saw there some excavations, by which the bedrock had been laid bare, disclosing some stone steps cut in it. Search is being made here for the Seat of Solomon, but it does not seem to me a vital matter, for I suppose he sat down all over this hill, which was covered with his palaces and harems and other buildings of pleasure, built of stones that “were of great value, such as are dug out of the earth for the ornaments of temples and to make fine prospects in royal palaces, and which make the mines whence they are dug famous.” Solomon’s palace was constructed entirely of white stone, and cedar-wood, and gold and silver; in it “were very long cloisters, and those situate in an agreeable place in the palace, and among them a most glorious dining-room for feastings and comutations”; indeed, Josephus finds it difficult to reckon up the variety and the magnitude of the royal apartments,—“how many that were subterraneous and invisible, the curiosity of those that enjoyed the fresh air, and the groves for the most delightful prospect, for avoiding the heat, and covering their bodies.” If this most luxurious of monarchs introduced here all the styles of architecture which would represent the nationality of his wives, as he built temples

to suit their different religions, the hill of Zion must have resembled, on a small scale, the Munich of King Ludwig I.

Opposite the English school, across the Valley of Hinnom, is a long block of modern buildings which is one of the most conspicuous objects outside the city. It was built by another rich Jew, Sir Moses Montefiore, of London, and contains tenements for poor Jews. Sir Moses is probably as rich as Solomon was in his own right, and he makes a most charitable use of his money; but I do not suppose that if he had at his command the public wealth that Solomon had, who made silver as plentiful as stones in the streets of Jerusalem, he could materially alleviate the lazy indigence of the Jewish exiles here. The aged philanthropist made a journey hither in the summer of 1875, to ascertain for himself the condition of the Jews. I believe he has a hope of establishing manufactories in which they can support themselves; but the minds of the Jews who are already restored are not set upon any sort of industry. It seems to me that they could be maintained much more cheaply if they were transported to a less barren land.

We made, one day, an exploration of the Jews' quarter, which enjoys the reputation of being more filthy than the Christian. The approach to it is down a gutter which has the sounding name of the Street of David; it was bad enough, but when we entered the Jews' part of the city we found ourselves in lanes and gutters of incomparable unpleasantness, and almost impassable, with nothing whatever in them interesting or picturesque, except the

inhabitants. We had a curiosity to see if there were here any real Jews of the type that inhabited the city in the time of our Lord, and we saw many with fair skin and light hair, with straight nose and regular features. The persons whom we are accustomed to call Jews, and who were found dispersed about Europe at a very early period of modern history, have the Assyrian features, the hook nose, dark hair and eyes, and not at all the faces of the fair-haired race from which our Saviour is supposed to have sprung. The kingdom of Israel, which contained the ten tribes, was gobbled up by the Assyrians about the time Rome was founded, and from that date these tribes do not appear historically. They may have entirely amalgamated with their conquerors, and the modified race subsequently have passed into Europe; for the Jews claim to have been in Europe before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, in which nearly all the people of the kingdom of Judah perished.

Some scholars, who have investigated the problem offered by the two types above mentioned, think that the Jew as we know him in Europe and America is not the direct descendant of the Jews of Jerusalem of the time of Herod, and that the true offspring of the latter is the person of the light hair and straight nose who is occasionally to be found in Jerusalem to-day. Until this ethnological problem is settled, I shall most certainly withhold my feeble contributions for the "restoration" of the persons at present doing business under the name of Jews among the Western nations.

But we saw another type of Jew, or rather another variety, in this quarter. He called himself of the tribe of Benjamin, and is, I think, the most unpleasant human being I have ever encountered. Every man who supposes himself of this tribe wears a dark, corkscrew, stringy curl hanging down each side of his face, and the appearance of nasty effeminacy which this gives cannot be described. The tribe of Benjamin does not figure well in sacred history,—it was left-handed; it was pretty much exterminated by the other tribes once for an awful crime; it was held from going into the settled idolatry of the kingdom of Israel only by its contiguity to Judah,—but it was better than its descendants, if these are its descendants.

More than half of the eight thousand Jews in Jerusalem speak Spanish as their native tongue, and are the offspring of those expelled from Spain by Ferdinand. Now and then, I do not know whether it was Spanish or Arabic, we saw a good face, a noble countenance, a fine Oriental and venerable type, and occasionally, looking from a window, a Jewish beauty; but the most whom we met were debased, mis-begotten, the remnants of sin, squalor, and bad living.

We went into two of the best synagogues,—one new, with a conspicuous green dome. They are not fine; on the contrary, they are slatternly places and very ill-kept. On the benches near the windows sat squalid men and boys reading, the latter, no doubt, students of the law; all the passages, stairs, and by-rooms were dirty and disorderly, as if it were always Monday morning there,

but never washing-day; rags and heaps of ancient garments were strewn about; and occasionally we nearly stumbled over a Jew, indistinguishable from a bundle of old clothes, and asleep on the floor. Even the sanctuary is full of unkempt people, and of the evidences of the squalor of the quarter. If this is a specimen of the restoration of the Jews, they had better not be restored any more.

The thing to do (if the worldliness of the expression will be pardoned) Friday is to go and see the Jews wail, as in Constantinople it is to see the Sultan go to prayer, and in Cairo to hear the darwishes howl. The performance, being an open-air one, is sometimes prevented by rain or snow, but otherwise it has not failed for many centuries. This ancient practice is probably not what it once was, having in our modern days, by becoming a sort of fashion, lost its spontaneity; it will, however, doubtless be long kept up, as everything of this sort endures in the East, even if it should become necessary to hire people to wail.

The Friday morning of the day chosen for our visit to the wailing place was rainy, following a rainy night. The rough-paved open alleys were gutters of mud, the streets under arches (for there are shops in subterranean constructions and old vaulted passages) were damper and darker than usual; the whole city, with its narrow lanes, and thick walls, and no sewers, was clammy and uncomfortable. We loitered for a time in the dark and grave-like gold bazaars, where there is but a poor display of attractions. Pilgrims from all lands were sopping about in the

streets; conspicuous among them were Persians wearing high, conical frieze hats, and short-legged, big-calfed Russian peasant women,—animated meal-bags.

We walked across to the Zion Gate, and mounting the city wall there—an uneven and somewhat broken, but slightly promenade—followed it round to its junction with the Temple wall, and to Robinson's Arch. Underneath the wall by Zion Gate dwell, in low stone huts and burrows, a considerable number of lepers, who form a horrid community by themselves. These poor creatures, with toeless feet and fingerless hands, came out of their dens and assailed us with piteous cries for charity. What could be done? It was impossible to give to all. The little we threw them they fought for, and the unsuccessful followed us with whetted eagerness. We could do nothing but flee, and we climbed the wall and ran down it, leaving Demetrius behind as a rear-guard. I should have had more pity for them if they had not exhibited so much maliciousness. They knew their power, and brought all their loathsomeness after us, thinking that we would be forced to buy their retreat. Two hideous old women followed us a long distance, and when they became convinced that further howling and whining would be fruitless, they suddenly changed tone and cursed us with healthful vigor; having cursed us, they hobbled home to roost.

This part of the wall crosses what was once the Tyrophan Valley, which is now pretty much filled up; it ran between Mount Moriah, on which the Temple stood, and Mount Zion. It was

spanned in ancient times by a bridge some three hundred and fifty feet long, resting on stone arches whose piers must have been from one hundred to two hundred feet in height; this connected the Temple platform with the top of the steep side of Zion. It was on the Temple end of this bridge that Titus stood and held parley with the Jews who refused to surrender Zion after the loss of Moriah.

The exact locality of this interesting bridge was discovered by Dr. Robinson. Just north of the southwest corner of the Harem wall (that is, the Temple or Mount Moriah wall) he noticed three courses of huge projecting stones, which upon careful inspection proved to be the segment of an arch. The spring of the arch is so plainly to be seen now that it is a wonder it remained so long unknown.

The Wailing Place of the Jews is on the west side of the Temple enclosure, a little to the north of this arch; it is in a long, narrow court formed by the walls of modern houses and the huge blocks of stone of this part of the original wall. These stones are no doubt as old as Solomon's Temple, and the Jews can here touch the very walls of the platform of that sacred edifice.

Every Friday a remnant of the children of Israel comes here to weep and wail. They bring their Scriptures, and leaning against the honey-combed stone, facing it, read the Lamentations and the Psalms, in a wailing voice, and occasionally cry aloud in a chorus of lamentation, weeping, blowing their long noses with blue cotton handkerchiefs, and kissing the stones. We were told

that the smoothness of the stones in spots was owing to centuries of osculation. The men stand together at one part of the wall and the women at another. There were not more than twenty Jews present as actors in the solemn ceremony the day we visited the spot, and they did not wail much, merely reading the Scriptures in a mumbling voice and swaying their bodies backward and forward. Still they formed picturesque and even pathetic groups: venerable old men with long white beards and hooked noses, clad in rags and shreds and patches in all degrees of decadence; lank creatures of the tribe of Benjamin with the corkscrew curls; and skinny old women shaking with weeping, real or assumed.

Very likely these wailers were as poor and wretched as they appeared to be, and their tears were the natural outcome of their grief over the ruin of the Temple nearly two thousand years ago. I should be the last one to doubt their enjoyment of this weekly bitter misery. But the demonstration had somewhat the appearance of a set and show performance; while it was going on, a shrewd Israelite went about with a box to collect mites from the spectators. There were many more travellers. there to see the wailing than there were Jews to wail. This also lent an unfavorable aspect to the scene. I myself felt that if this were genuine, I had no business to be there with my undisguised curiosity, and if it were not genuine, it was the poorest spectacle that Jerusalem offers to the tourist. Cook's party was there in force, this being one of the things promised in the contract; and I soon found myself more interested in Cook's pilgrims than in

the others.

The Scripture read and wailed this day was the fifty-first Psalm of David. If you turn to it (you may have already discovered that the covert purpose of these desultory notes is to compel you to read your Bible), you will see that it expresses David's penitence in the matter of Bathsheba.

III.—HOLY PLACES OF THE HOLY CITY

THE sojourner in Jerusalem falls into the habit of dropping in at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre nearly every afternoon. It is the centre of attraction. There the pilgrims all resort; there one sees, in a day, many races, and the costumes of strange and distant peoples; there one sees the various worship of the many Christian sects. There are always processions making the round of the holy places, sect following sect, with swinging censers, each fumigating away the effect of its predecessor.

The central body of the church, answering to the nave, as the rotunda, which contains the Holy Sepulchre, answers to choir and apse, is the Greek chapel, and the most magnificent in the building. The portion of the church set apart to the Latins, opening also out of the rotunda, is merely a small chapel. The Armenians have still more contracted accommodations, and the poor Copts enjoy a mere closet, but it is in a sacred spot, being attached to the west end of the sepulchre itself.

On the western side of the rotunda we passed through the bare and apparently uncared-for chapel of the Syrians, and entered, through a low door, into a small grotto hewn in the rock. Lighted candles revealed to us some tombs, little pits cut in the rock, two in the side-wall and two in the floor. We had a guide who knew

every sacred spot in the city, a man who never failed to satisfy the curiosity of the most credulous tourist.

“Whose tombs are these?” we asked.

“That is the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and that beside it is the tomb of Nicodemus.”

“How do you know?”

“How do I know? You ask me how I know. Have n’t I always lived in Jerusalem? I was born here.”

“Then perhaps you can tell us, if this tomb belonged to Joseph of Arimathea and this to Nicodemus, whose is this third one?”

“O yes, that other,” replied the guide, with only a moment’s paralysis of his invention, “that is the tomb of Arimathea himself.”

One afternoon at four, service was going on in the Greek chapel, which shone with silver and blazed with tapers, and was crowded with pilgrims, principally Russians of both sexes, many of whom had made a painful pilgrimage of more than two thousand miles on foot merely to prostrate themselves in this revered place. A Russian bishop and a priest, in the resplendent robes of their office, were intoning the service responsively. In the very centre of this chapel is a round hole covered with a grating, and tapers are generally burning about it. All the pilgrims kneeled there, and kissed the grating and adored the hole. I had the curiosity to push my way through the throng in order to see the object of devotion, but I could discover nothing. It is, however, an important spot: it is the centre of the earth; though

why Christians should worship the centre of the earth I do not know. The Armenians have in their chapel also a spot that they say is the real centre; that makes three that we know of, for everybody understands that there is one in the Kaaba at Mecca.

We sat down upon a stone bench near the entrance of the chapel, where we could observe the passing streams of people, and were greatly diverted by a blithe and comical beggar who had stationed himself on the pavement there to intercept the Greek charity of the worshippers when they passed into the rotunda. He was a diminutive man with distorted limbs; he wore a peaked red cap, and dragged himself over the pavement, or rather skipped and flopped about on it like a devil-fish on land. Never was seen in a beggar such vivacity and imperturbable good-humor, with so much devilry in his dancing eyes.

As we appeared to him to occupy a neutral position as to him and his victims, he soon took us into his confidence and let us see his mode of operations. He said (to our guide) that he was a Greek from Damascus,—O yes, a Christian, a pilgrim, who always came down here at this season, which was his harvest-time. He hoped (with a wicked wink) that his devotion would be rewarded.

It was very entertaining to see him watch the people coming out, and select his victims, whom he would indicate to us by a motion of his head as he hopped towards them. He appeared to rely more upon the poor and simple than upon the rich, and he was more successful with the former. But he rarely, such was his

insight, made a mistake. Whoever gave him anything he thanked with the utmost *empressement* of manner; then he crossed himself, and turned around and winked at us, his confederates. When an elegantly dressed lady dropped the smallest of copper coins into his cap, he let us know his opinion of her by a significant gesture and a shrug of his shoulders. But no matter from whom he received it, whenever he added a penny to his store the rascal chirped and laughed and caressed himself. He was in the way of being trodden under foot by the crowd; but his agility was extraordinary, and I should not have been surprised at any moment if he had vaulted over the heads of the throng and disappeared. If he failed to attract the attention of an eligible pilgrim, he did not hesitate to give the skirt of his elect a jerk, for which rudeness he would at once apologize with an indescribable grimace and a joke.

When the crowd had passed, he slid himself into a corner, by a motion such as that with which a fish suddenly darts to one side, and set himself to empty his pocket into his cap and count his plunder, tossing the pieces into the air and catching them with a chuckle, crossing himself and hugging himself by turns. He had four francs and a half. When he had finished counting his money he put it in a bag, and for a moment his face assumed a grave and business-like expression. We thought he would depart without demanding anything of us. But we were mistaken; he had something in view that he no doubt felt would insure him a liberal backsheesh. Wriggling near to us, he set his

face into an expression of demure humility, held out his cap, and said, in English, each word falling from his lips as distinctly and unnaturally as if he had been a wooden articulating machine,—

“Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

The rascal’s impiety lessened the charity which our intimacy with him had intended, but he appeared entirely content, chirped, saluted with gravity, and, with a flop, was gone from our sight.

At the moment, a procession of Franciscan monks swept by, chanting in rich bass voices, and followed, as usual, by Latin pilgrims, making the daily round of the holy places; after they had disappeared we could still hear their voices and catch now and again the glimmer of their tapers in the vast dark spaces.

Opposite the place where we were sitting is the Chapel of the Apparition, a room not much more than twenty feet square; it is the Latin chapel, and besides its contiguity to the sepulchre has some specialties of its own. The chapel is probably eight hundred years old. In the centre of the pavement is the spot upon which our Lord stood when he appeared to the Virgin after the resurrection; near it a slab marks the place where the three crosses were laid after they were dug up by Helena, and where the one on which our Lord was crucified was identified by the miracle that it worked in healing a sick man. South of the altar is a niche in the wall, now covered over, but a round hole is left in the covering. I saw pilgrims thrust a long stick into this hole, withdraw it, and kiss the end. The stick had touched a fragment

of the porphyry column to which the Saviour was bound when he was scourged.

In the semicircle at the east end of the nave are several interesting places: the prison where Christ was confined before his execution, a chapel dedicated to the centurion who pierced the side of our Lord, and the spot on which the vestments were divided. From thence we descend, by a long flight of steps partly hewn in the rock, to a rude, crypt-like chapel, in the heavy early Byzantine style, a damp, cheerless place, called the Chapel of Helena. At the east end of it another flight of steps leads down into what was formerly a cistern, but is now called the Chapel of the Invention of the Cross. Here the cross was found, and at one side of the steps stands the marble chair in which the mother of Constantine sat while she superintended the digging. Nothing is wanting that the most credulous pilgrim could wish to see; that is, nothing is wanting in *spots* where things were. This chapel belongs to the Latins; that of Helena to the Greeks; the Abyssinian convent is above both of them.

On the south side of the church, near the entrance, is a dark room called the Chapel of Adam, in which there is never more light than a feeble taper can give. I groped my way into it often, in the hope of finding something; perhaps it is purposely involved in an obscurity typical of the origin of mankind. There is a tradition that Adam was buried on Golgotha, but the only tomb in this chapel is that of Melchizedek! The chapel formerly contained that of Godfrey de Bouillon, elected the first king of

Jerusalem in 1099, and of Baldwin, his brother. We were shown the two-handed sword of Godfrey, with which he clove a Saracen lengthwise into two equal parts, a genuine relic of a heroic and barbarous age. At the end of this chapel a glimmering light lets us see through a grating a crack in the rock made by the earthquake at the crucifixion.

The gloom of this mysterious chapel, which is haunted by the spectre of that dim shadow of unreality, Melchizedek, prepared us to ascend to Golgotha, above it. The chapels of Golgotha are supported partly upon a rock which rises fifteen feet above the pavement of the church. The first is that of the Elevation of the Cross, and belongs to the Greeks. Under the altar at the east end is a hole in the marble which is over the hole in the rock in which the cross stood; on either side of it are the holes of the crosses of the two thieves. The altar is rich with silver and gold and jewels. The chamber, when we entered it, was blazing with light, and Latin monks were performing their adorations, with chanting and swinging of incense, before the altar. A Greek priest stood at one side, watching them, and there was plain contempt in his face. The Greek priests are not wanting in fanaticism, but they never seem to me to possess the faith of the Latin branch of the Catholic church. When the Latins had gone, the Greek took us behind the altar, and showed us another earthquake-rent in the rock.

Adjoining this chapel is the Latin Chapel of the Crucifixion, marking the spot where Christ was nailed to the cross; from that

we looked through a window into an exterior room dedicated to the Sorrowing Virgin, where she stood and beheld the crucifixion. Both these latter rooms do not rest upon the rock, but upon artificial vaults, and of course can mark the spots commemorated by them only *in space*.

Perhaps this sensation of being in the air, and of having no standing-place even for tradition, added something to the strange feeling that took possession of me; a mingled feeling that was no more terror than is the apprehension that one experiences at a theatre from the manufactured thunder behind the scenes. I suppose it arose from cross currents meeting in the mind, the thought of the awful significance of the events here represented and the sight of this theatrical representation. The dreadful name, Golgotha, the gloom of this part of the building,—a sort of mount of darkness, with its rent rock and preternatural shadow,—the blazing contrast of the chapel where the cross stood with the dark passages about it, the chanting and flashing lights of pilgrims ever coming and going, the neighborhood of the sepulchre itself, were well calculated to awaken an imagination the least sensitive. And, so susceptible is the mind to the influence of that mental electricity—if there is no better name for it—which proceeds from a mass of minds having one thought (and is sometimes called public opinion), be it true or false, that whatever one may believe about the real location of the Holy Sepulchre, he cannot witness, unmoved, the vast throng of pilgrims to these shrines, representing as they do every section

of the civilized and of the uncivilized world into which a belief in the cross has penetrated. The undoubted sincerity of the majority of the pilgrims who worship here makes us for the time forget the hundred inventions which so often allure and as often misdirect that worship.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre offers at all times a great spectacle, and one always novel, in the striking ceremonies and the people who assist at them. One of the most extraordinary, that of the Holy Fire, at the Greek Easter, which is three weeks later than the Roman, and which has been so often described, we did not see. I am not sure that we saw even all the thirty-seven holy places and objects in the church. It may not be unprofitable to set down those I can recall. They are,—

The Stone of Unction.

The spot where the Virgin Mary stood when the body of our Lord was anointed.

The Holy Sepulchre.

The stone on which the angel sat.

The tombs of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.

The well of Helena.

The stone marking the spot where Christ in the form of a gardener appeared to Mary Magdalene.

The spot where Mary Magdalene stood.

The spot where our Lord appeared to the Virgin after his resurrection.

The place where the true cross, discovered by Helena, was

laid, and identified by a miracle.

The fragment of the Column of Flagellation.

The prison of our Lord.

The “Bonds of Christ,” a stone with two holes in it.

The place where the *title* on the cross was preserved.

The place of the division of the vestments.

The centre of the earth (Greek).

The centre of the earth (Armenian).

The altar of the centurion who pierced the body of Christ.

The altar of the penitent thief.

The Chapel of Helena.

The chair in which Helena sat when the cross was found.

The spot where the cross was found.

The Chapel of the Mocking, with a fragment of the column upon which Jesus sat when they crowned him with thorns.

The Chapel of the Elevation of the Cross.

The spot where the cross stood.

The spots where the crosses of the thieves stood.

The rent rock near the cross.

The spot where Christ was nailed to the cross.

The spot where the Virgin stood during the crucifixion.

The Chapel of Adam.

The tomb of Melchizedek.

The rent rock in the Chapel of Adam.

The spots where the tombs of Godfrey and Baldwin stood.

No, we did not see them all. Besides, there used to be a piece

of the cross in the Latin chapel; but the Armenians are accused of purloining it. All travellers, I suppose, have seen the celebrated Iron Crown of Lombardy, which is kept in the church at Monza, near Milan. It is all of gold except the inner band, which is made of a nail of the cross brought from Jerusalem by Helena. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre has not all the relics it might have, but it is as rich in them as any church of its age.

A place in Jerusalem almost as interesting to Christians as the Holy Sepulchre, and more interesting to antiquarians, is the Harem, or Temple area, with its ancient substructions and its resplendent Saracenic architecture. It is largely an open place, green with grass; it is clean and wholesome, and the sun lies lovingly on it. There is no part of the city where the traveller would so like to wander at will, to sit and muse, to dream away the day on the walls overhanging the valley of the Kidron, to recall at leisure all the wonderful story of its splendor and its disaster. But admission to the area is had only by special permit. Therefore the ordinary tourist goes not so much as he desires to the site of the Temple that Solomon built, and of the porch where Jesus walked and talked with his disciples. When he does go, he feels that he treads upon firm historical ground.

We walked down the gutter (called street) of David; we did not enter the Harem area by the Bab es-Silsileh (Gate of the Chain), but turned northward and went in by the Bab el-Katanm (Gate of the Cotton-Merchants), which is identified with the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. Both these gates have twisted columns and

are graceful examples of Saracenic architecture. As soon as we entered the gate the splendor of the area burst upon us; we passed instantly out of the sordid city into a green plain, out of which—it could have been by a magic wand only—had sprung the most charming creations in stone: minarets, domes, colonnades, cloisters, pavilions, columns of all orders, horseshoe arches and pointed arches, every joyous architectural thought expressed in shining marble and brilliant color.

Our dragoman, Abd-el-Atti, did the honors of the place with the air of proprietorship. For the first time in the Holy City he felt quite at home, and appeared to be on the same terms with the Temple area that he is with the tombs of the Pharaohs. The Christian antiquities are too much for him, but his elastic mind expands readily to all the marvels of the Moslem situation. The Moslems, indeed, consider that they have a much better right to the Temple than the Christians, and Abd-el-Atti acted as our cicerone in the precincts with all the delight of a boy and with the enthusiasm of faith. It was not unpleasant to him, either, to have us see that he was treated with consideration by the mosque attendants and ulemas, and that he was well known and could pass readily into the most reserved places. He had said his prayers that morning, at twelve, in this mosque, a privilege only second to that of praying in the mosque at Mecca, and was in high spirits, as one who had (if the expression is allowable) got a little ahead in the matter of devotion.

Let me give in a few words, without any qualifications of

doubt, what seem to be the well-ascertained facts about this area. It is at present a level piece of ground (in the nature of a platform, since it is sustained on all sides by walls), a quadrilateral with its sides not quite parallel, about fifteen hundred feet long by one thousand feet broad. The northern third of it was covered by the Fortress of Antonia, an ancient palace and fortress, rebuilt with great splendor by Herod. The small remains of it in the northeast corner are now barracks.

This level piece of ground is nearly all artificial, either filled in or built up on arches. The original ground (Mount Moriah) was a rocky hill, the summit of which was the rock about which there has been so much controversy. Near the centre of this ground, and upon a broad raised platform, paved with marble, stands the celebrated mosque Kubbet es-Sukhrah, "The Dome of the Rock." It is built over the Sacred Rock.

This rock marks the site of the threshing-floor of Oman, the Jebusite, which David bought, purchasing at the same time the whole of Mount Moriah. Solomon built the Temple over this rock, and it was probably the "stone of sacrifice." At the time Solomon built the Temple, the level place on Moriah was scarcely large enough for the *naos* of that building, and Solomon extended the ground to the east and south by erecting arches and filling in on top of them, and constructing a heavy retaining-wall outside. On the east side also he built a porch, or magnificent colonnade, which must have produced a fine effect of Oriental grandeur when seen from the deep valley below or from the Mount of

Olives opposite.

To this rock the Jews used to come, in the fourth century, and anoint it with oil, and wail over it, as the site of the Temple. On it once stood a statue of Hadrian. When the Moslems captured Jerusalem, it became, what it has ever since been, one of their most venerated places. The Khalif Omar cleared away the rubbish from it, and built over it a mosque. The Khalif Abdel-Melek began to rebuild it in a. d. 686. During the Crusades it was used as a Christian church. Allowing for decay and repairs, the present mosque is probably substantially that built by Abdel-Melek.

At the extreme south of the area is the vast Mosque of Aksa, a splendid basilica with seven aisles, which may or may not be the Church of St. Mary built by Justinian in the sixth century; architects differ about it. This question it seems to me very difficult to decide from the architecture of the building, because of the habit that Christians and Moslems both had of appropriating columns and capitals of ancient structures in their buildings; and because the Moslems at that time used both the round and the pointed arch.

This platform is beyond all comparison the most beautiful place in Jerusalem, and its fairy-like buildings, when seen from the hill opposite, give to the city its chief claim to Oriental picturesqueness.

The dome of the mosque Kubbet-es-Sukhrah is perhaps the most beautiful in the world; it seems to float in the air like a blown

bubble; this effect is produced by a slight drawing in of the base. This contraction of the dome is not sufficient to give the spectator any feeling of insecurity, or to belittle this architectural marvel to the likeness of a big toy; the builder hit the exact mean between massiveness and expanding lightness. The mosque is octagonal in form, and although its just proportions make it appear small, it is a hundred and fifty feet in diameter; outside and in, it is a blaze of color in brilliant marbles, fine mosaics, stained glass, and beautiful Saracenic tiles. The lower part of the exterior wall is covered with colored marbles in intricate patterns; above are pointed windows with stained glass; and the spaces between the windows are covered by glazed tiles, with arabesque designs and very rich in color. In the interior, which has all the soft warmth and richness of Persian needlework, are two corridors, with rows of columns and pillars; within the inner row is the Sacred Rock.

This rock, which is the most remarkable stone in the world, if half we hear of it be true, and which by a singular fortune is sacred to three religions, is an irregular boulder, standing some five feet above the pavement, and is something like sixty feet long. In places it has been chiselled, steps are cut on one side, and various niches are hewn in it; a round hole pierces it from top to bottom. The rock is limestone, a little colored with iron, and beautiful in spots where it has been polished. One would think that by this time it ought to be worn smooth all over.

If we may believe the Moslems and doubt our own senses, this rock is suspended in the air, having no support on any side.

It was to this rock that Mohammed made his midnight journey on El Burak; it was from here that he ascended into Paradise, an excursion that occupied him altogether only forty minutes. It is, I am inclined to think, the miraculous suspension of this stone that is the basis of the Christian fable of the suspension of Mohammed's coffin,—a miracle unknown to all Moslems of whom I have inquired concerning it.

“Abd-el-Atti,” I said, “does this rock rest on nothing?”

“So I have hunderstood; thim say so.”

“But do you believe it?”

“When I read him, I believe; when I come and see him, I can't help what I see.”

At the south end of the rock we descended a flight of steps and stood under the rock in what is called the Noble Cave, a small room about six feet high, plastered and whitewashed. This is supposed to be the sink into which the blood of the Jewish sacrifices drained. The plaster and whitewash hide the original rock, and give the Moslems the opportunity to assert that there is no rock foundation under the big stone.

“But,” we said to Abd-el-Atti, “if this rock hangs in the air, why cannot we see all around it? Why these plaster walls that seem to support it?”

“So him used to be. This done so, I hear, on account of de women. Thim come here, see this rock, thim berry much frightened. Der little shild, what you call it, get born in de world before him wanted. So thim make this wall under it.”

There are four altars in this cave, one of them dedicated to David; here the Moslem prophets, Abraham, David, Solomon, and Jesus, used to pray. In the rock is a round indentation made by Mohammed's head when he first attempted to rise to heaven; near it is the hole through which he rose. On the upper southeast corner of the rock is the print of the prophet's foot, and close to it the print of the hand of the angel Michael, who held the rock down from following Mohammed into the skies.

In the mosque above, Abd-el-Atti led us, with much solemnity, to a small stone set in the pavement near the north entrance. It was perforated with holes, in some of which were brass nails.

"How many holes you make 'em there?"

"Thirteen."

"How many got nails?"

"Four."

"Not so many. Only three and a half nails. Used to be thirteen nails. Now only three and a half. When these gone, then the world come to an end. I t'ink it not berry long."

"I should think the Moslems would watch this stone very carefully."

"What difference? You not t'ink it come when de time come?"

We noticed some pieces of money on the stone, and asked why that was.

"Whoever he lay backsheesh on this stone, he certain to go into Paradise, and be took by our prophet in his bosom."

We wandered for some time about the green esplanade, dotted with cypress-trees, and admired the little domes: the Dome of the Spirits, the dome that marks the spot where David sat in judgment, etc.; some of them cover cisterns and reservoirs in the rock, as old as the foundations of the Temple.

In the corridor of the Mosque of Aksa are two columns standing close together, and like those at the Mosque of Omar, in Cairo, they are a test of character; it is said that whoever can squeeze between them is certain of Paradise, and must, of course, be a good Moslem. I suppose that when this test was established the Moslems were all lean. A black stone is set in the wall of the porch; whoever can walk, with closed eyes, across the porch pavement and put his finger on this stone may be sure of entering Paradise. According to this criterion, the writer of this is one of the elect of the Mohammedan Paradise and his dragoman is shut out. We were shown in this mosque the print of Christ's foot in a stone; and it is said that with faith one can feel in it, as he can in that of Mohammed's in the rock, the real flesh. Opening from this mosque is the small Mosque of Omar, on the spot where that zealous khalif prayed.

The massive pillared substructions under Aksa are supposed by Moslems to be of Solomon's time. That wise monarch had dealings with the invisible, and no doubt controlled the genii, who went and came and built and delved at his bidding. Abd-el-Atti, with haste and an air of mystery, drew me along under the arches to the window in the south end, and showed me the opening of

a passage under the wall, now half choked up with stones. This is the beginning of a subterranean passage made by the prophet Solomon, that extends all the way to Hebron, and has an issue in the mosque over the tomb of Abraham. This fact is known only to Moslems, and to very few of them, and is considered one of the great secrets. Before I was admitted to share it, I am glad that I passed between the two columns, and touched, with my eyes shut, the black stone.

In the southeast corner of the Harem is a little building called the Mosque of Jesus. We passed through it, and descended the stairway into what is called Solomon's Stables, being shown on our way a stone trough which is said to be the cradle of the infant Jesus. These so-called stables are subterranean vaults, built, no doubt, to sustain the south end of the Temple platform. We saw fifteen rows of massive square pillars of unequal sizes and at unequal distances apart (as if intended for supports that would not be seen), and some forty feet high, connected by round arches. We were glad to reascend from this wet and unpleasant cavern to the sunshine and the greensward.

I forgot to mention the Well of the Leaf, near the entrance, in the Mosque of Aksa, and the pretty Moslem legend that gave it a name, which Abd-el-Atti relates, though not in the words of the hand-book:—

“This well berry old; call him Well of the Leaf; water same as Pool of Solomon, healthy water; I like him very much. Not so deep as Bir el-Arwâh; that small well, you see it under the rock;

they say it goes down into Gehenna.”

“Why is this called the Well of the Leaf?”

“Once, time of Suleiman [it was Omar], a friend of our prophet come here to pray, and when he draw water to wash he drop the bucket in the bottom of the well. No way to get it up, but he must go down. When he was on the bottom, there he much surprised by a door open in the ground, and him berry cur’ous to see what it is. Nobody there, so he look in, and then walk through berry fast, and look over him shoulder to the bucket left in the well. The place where he was come was the most beautiful garden ever was, and he walk long time and find no end, always more garden, so cool, and water run in little streams, and sweet smell of roses and jasmine, and little birds that sing, and big trees and dates and oranges and palms, more kind, I t’ink, than you see in the garden of his vice-royal. When the man have been long time in the garden he begin to have fright, and pick a green leaf off a tree, and run back and come up to his friends. He show ‘em the green leaf, but nobody have believe what he say. Then they tell him story to the kadi, and the kadi send men to see the garden in the bottom of the well. They not find any, not find any door. Then the kadi he make him a letter to the Sultan—berry wise man—and he say (so I read it in our history), ‘Our prophet say, One of my friends shall walk in Paradise while he is alive. If this is come true, you shall see the leaf, if it still keep green.’ Then the kadi make examine of the leaf, and find him green. So it is believe the man has been in Paradise.”

“And do you believe it?”

“I cannot say edzacly where him been. Where you t’ink he done got that leaf?”

Along the east wall of the Harem there are no remains of the long colonnade called Solomon’s Porch, not a column of that resplendent marble pavilion which caught the first rays of the sun over the mountains of Moab, and which, with the shining temple towering behind it, must have presented a more magnificent appearance than Babylon, and have rivalled the architectural glories of Baalbek. The only thing in this wail worthy of note now is the Golden Gate, an entrance no longer used. We descended into its archways, and found some fine columns with composite capitals, and other florid stone-work of a rather tasteless and debased Roman style.

We climbed the wall by means of the steps, a series of which are placed at intervals, and sat a long time looking upon a landscape, every foot of which is historical. Merely to look upon it is to recall a great portion of the Jewish history and the momentous events in the brief life of the Saviour, which, brief as it was, sufficed to newly create the earth. There is the Mount of Olives, with its commemorative chapels, heaps of stone, and scattered trees; there is the ancient foot-path up which David fled as a fugitive by night from the conspiracy of Absalom, what time Shimei, the relative of Saul, stoned him and cursed him; and down that Way of Triumph, the old road sweeping round its base, came the procession of the Son of David, in

whose path the multitude cast their garments and branches of trees, and cried, "Hosanna in the highest." There on those hills, Mount Scopus and Olivet, were once encamped the Assyrians, and again the Persians; there shone the eagles of Rome, borne by her conquering legions; and there, in turn, Crusaders and Saracens pitched their tents. How many times has the air been darkened with missiles hurled thence upon this shining prize, and how many armies have closed in about this spot and swarmed to its destruction! There the Valley of Jehoshaphat curves down until it is merged in the Valley of the Brook Kidron. There, at the junction of the roads that run over and around Olivet, is a clump of trees surrounded by a white wall; that is the Garden of Gethsemane. Near it is the tomb of Mary. Farther down you see the tomb of Absalom, the tomb of St. James, the monolith pyramid-tipped tomb of Zacharias (none of them apparently as old as they claim to be), and the remains of a little temple, the model of which came from the banks of the Nile, that Solomon built for his Egyptian wife, the daughter of Pharaoh, wherein they worshipped the gods of her country. It is tradition also that near here were some of the temples he built for others of his strange wives: a temple to Chemosh, the Moabite god, and the image of Moloch, the devourer of children. Solomon was wiser than all men, wiser than Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; his friend Hiram of Tyre used to send riddles to him which no one in the world but Solomon could guess; but his wisdom failed him with the other sex, and there probably never

was another Oriental court so completely ruled and ruined by women as his.

This valley below us is perhaps the most melancholy on earth: nowhere else is death so visibly master of the scene; nature is worn out, man tired out; a gray despair has settled down upon the landscape. Down there is the village of Siloam, a village of huts and holes in the rocks, opposite the cave of that name. If it were the abode of wolves it would have a better character than it has now. There is the grim cast of sin and exhaustion upon the scene. I do not know exactly how much of this is owing to the Jewish burying-ground, which occupies so much of the opposite hill. The slope is thickly shingled with gray stones, that lie in a sort of regularity which suggests their purpose. You fall to computing how many Jews there may be in that hill, layer upon layer; for the most part they are dissolved away into the earth, but you think that if they were to put on their mortal bodies and come forth, the valley itself would be filled with them almost to the height of the wall. Out of these gates, giving upon this valley of death, six hundred thousand bodies of those who had starved were thrown during the siege, and long before Titus stormed the city. I do not wonder that the Moslems think of this frightful vale as Gehenna itself.

From an orifice in the battlemented wall where we sat projects a round column, mounted there like a cannon, and perhaps intended to deceive an enemy into the belief that the wall is fortified. It is astride this column, overhanging this dreadful

valley, that Mohammed will sit at the last, the judgment day. A line finer than a hair and sharper than a razor will reach from it to the tower on the Mount of Olives, stretching over the valley of the dead. This is the line Es-Serat. Mohammed will superintend the passage over it. For in that day all who ever lived, risen to judgment, must walk this razor-line; the good will cross in safety; the bad will fall into hell, that is, into Gehenna, this blasted gulf and side-hill below, thickly sown with departed Jews. It is in view of this perilous passage that the Moslem every day, during the ablution of his feet, prays: "O, make my feet not to slip on Es-Serat, on that day when feet shall slip."

IV.—NEIGHBORHOODS OF JERUSALEM

WHEREVER we come upon traces of the Knights of St. John, there a door opens for us into romance; the very name suggests valor and courtesy and charity. Every town in the East that is so fortunate as to have any memorials of them, whatever its other historic associations, obtains an additional and special fame from its connection with this heroic order. The city of Acre recalls the memory of their useless prowess in the last struggle of the Christians to retain a foothold in Palestine; the name of the Knights of Rhodes brings before every traveller, who has seen it, the picturesque city in which the armorial insignia of this order have for him a more living interest than any antiquities of the Grecian Rose; the island fortress at the gate of the Levant owes all the interest we feel in it to the Knights of Malta; and even the city of David and of the Messiah has an added lustre as the birthplace of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem.

From the eleventh century to the fifteenth, they are the chief figures who in that whirlwind of war contested the possession of the Levant with the Saracens and the Turks. In the forefront of every battle was seen their burnished mail, in the gloomy rear of every retreat were heard their voices of constancy and of courage; wherever there were crowns to be cracked, or wounds

to be bound up, or broken hearts to be ministered to, there were the Knights of St. John, soldiers, priests, servants, laying aside the gown for the coat of mail if need be, or exchanging the cuirass for the white cross on the breast. Originally a charitable order, dwelling in the Hospital of St. John to minister to the pilgrims to Jerusalem, and composed of young soldiers of Godfrey, who took the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, they resumed their arms upon the pressure of infidel hostility, and subsequently divided the order into three classes: soldiers, priests, and servants. They speedily acquired great power and wealth; their palaces, their fortifications, their churches, are even in their ruins the admiration and wonder of our age. The purity of the order: was in time somewhat sullied by luxury, but their valor never suffered the slightest eclipse; whether the field they contested was lost or won, their bravery always got new honor from it.

Nearly opposite the court of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is the green field of Muristan, the site of the palace, church, and hospital of the Knights of St. John. The field was, on an average, twenty-five feet above the surrounding streets, and a portion of it was known to rest upon vaults. This plot of ground was given to the Prussian government, and its agents have been making excavations there; these were going on at the time of our visit. The disclosures are of great architectural and historical interest. The entrance through a peculiar Gothic gateway leads into a court. Here the first excavations were made several years

ago, and disclosed some splendid remains: the apse of the costly church, cloisters, fine windows and arches of the best Gothic style. Beyond, the diggings have brought to light some of the features of the palace and hospital; an excavation of twenty-five feet reaches down to the arches of the substructure, which rest upon pillars from forty to fifty feet high. This gives us some notion of the magnificent group of buildings that once occupied this square, and also of the industry of nature as an entomber, since some four centuries have sufficed her to bury these ruins so far beneath the soil, that peasants ploughed over the palaces of the knights without a suspicion of what lay beneath.

In one corner of this field stands a slender minaret, marking the spot where the great Omar once said his prayers; four centuries after this, Saladin is said to have made his military headquarters in the then deserted palace of the Knights of St. John. There is no spot in Jerusalem where one touches more springs of romance than in this field of Muristan.

Perhaps the most interesting and doleful walk one can take near Jerusalem is that into the Valley of Kidron and through Aceldama, round to the Jaffa Gate, traversing "the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes," in the cheerful words of Jeremiah.

We picked our way through the filthy streets and on the slippery cobble-stones,—over which it seems dangerous to ride and is nearly impossible to walk,—out through St. Stephen's Gate. Near the gate, inside, we turned into an alley and climbed

a heap of rubbish to see a pool, which the guide insisted upon calling Bethesda, although it is Birket Israil. Having seen many of these pools, I did not expect much, but I was still disappointed. We saw merely a hole in the ground, which is void of all appearance of ever having been even damp. The fact is, we have come to Jerusalem too late; we ought to have been here about two thousand years ago.

The slope of the hill outside the gate is covered with the turbaned tombs of Moslems; we passed under the walls and through this cemetery into the deep valley below, crossing the bed of the brook near the tombs of Absalom, Jehoshaphat, St. James, and Zacharias. These all seem to be of Roman construction; but that called Absalom's is so firmly believed to be his that for centuries every Jew who has passed it has cast a stone at it, and these pebbles of hate partially cover it. We also added to the heap, but I do not know why, for it is nearly impossible to hate any one who has been dead so long.

The most interesting phenomenon in the valley is the Fountain of the Virgin, or the Fountain of Accused Women, as it used to be called. The Moslem tradition is that it was a test of the unfaithfulness of women; those who drank of it and were guilty, died; those who were innocent received no harm. The Virgin Mary herself, being accused, accepted this test, drank of the water, and proved her chastity. Since then the fountain has borne her name. The fountain, or well, is in the side-hill, under the rocks of Ophel, and the water springs up in an artificial cave.

We descended some sixteen steps to a long chamber, arched with ancient masonry; we passed through that and descended fourteen steps more into a grotto, where we saw the water flowing in and escaping by a subterranean passage. About this fountain were lounging groups of Moslem idlers, mostly women and children. Not far off a Moslem was saying his prayers, prostrating himself before a prayer-niche. We had difficulty in making our way down the steps, so encumbered were they with women. Several of them sat upon the lowest steps in the damp cavern, gossiping, filling their water-skins, or paddling about with naked feet.

The well, like many others in Syria, is intermittent and irregular in its rising and falling; sometimes it is dry, and then suddenly it bubbles up and is full again. Some scholars think this is the Pool Bethesda of the New Testament, others think that Bethesda was Siloam, which is below this well and fed by it, and would exhibit the same irregular rising and falling. This intermittent character St. John attributed to an angel who came down and troubled the water; the Moslems, with the same superstition, say that it is caused by a dragon, who sleeps therein and checks the stream when he wakes.

On our way to the Pool of Siloam, we passed the village of Si-loam, which is inhabited by about a thousand Moslems,—a nest of stone huts and caves clinging to the side-hill, and exactly the gray color of its stones. The occupation of the inhabitants appears to be begging, and hunting for old copper coins, mites, and other pieces of Jewish money. These relics they pressed upon

us with the utmost urgency. It was easier to satisfy the beggars than the traders, who sallied out upon us like hungry wolves from their caves. There is a great choice of disagreeable places in the East, but I cannot now think of any that I should not prefer as a residence to Siloam.

The Pool of Siloam, magnified in my infant mind as “Siloam’s shady rill,” is an unattractive sink-hole of dirty water, surrounded by modern masonry. The valley here is very stony. Just below we came to Solomon’s Garden, an arid spot, with patches of stonewalls, struggling to be a vegetable-garden, and somewhat green with lettuce and Jerusalem artichokes. I have no doubt it was quite another thing when Solomon and some of his wives used to walk here in the cool of the day, and even when Shallum, the son of Colhozeh, set up “the wall of the Pool of Siloah by the king’s garden.”

We continued on, down to Joab’s Well, passing on the way Isaiah’s Tree, a decrepit sycamore propped up by a stone pillar, where that prophet was sawn asunder. There is no end to the cheerful associations of the valley. The Well of Joab, a hundred and twenty-five feet deep, and walled and arched with fine masonry, has a great appearance of antiquity. We plucked maidenhair from its crevices, and read the Old Testament references. Near it is a square pool fed by its water. Some little distance below this, the waters of all these wells, pools, drains, sinks, or whatever they are, reappear bursting up through a basin of sand and pebbles, as clear as crystal, and run brawling off

down the valley under a grove of large olive-trees,—a scene rural and inviting.

I suppose it would be possible to trace the whole system of underground water ways and cisterns, from Solomon's Pool, which send? its water into town by an aqueduct near the Jaffa Gate, to Hezekiah's Pool, to the cisterns under the Harem, and so out to the Virgin's Well, the Pool of Siloam, and the final gush of sweet water below. This valley drains, probably artificially as well as naturally, the whole city, for no sewers exist in the latter.

We turned back from this sparkling brook, which speedily sinks into the ground again, absorbed by the thirsty part of the valley called Tophet, and went up the Valley of Hinnom, passing under the dark and frowning ledges of Aceldama, honey-combed with tombs. In this "field of blood" a grim stone structure forms the front of a natural cave, which is the charnel-house where the dead were cast pell-mell, in the belief that the salts in the earth would speedily consume them. The path we travel is rugged, steep, and incredibly stony. The whole of this region is inexpressibly desolate, worn-out, pale, uncanny. The height above this rocky terrace, stuffed with the dead, is the Hill of Evil Counsel, where the Jews took counsel against Jesus; and to add the last touch of an harmonious picture, just above this Potter's Field stands the accursed tree upon which Judas hanged himself, raising its gaunt branches against the twilight sky, a very gallows-tree to the imagination. It has borne no fruit since Iscariot. Towards dusk, sometimes, as you stand on the wall by

Zion Gate, you almost fancy you can see *him* dangling there. It is of no use to tell me that the seed that raised this tree could not have sprouted till a thousand years after Judas was crumbled into dust; one must have faith in something.

This savage gorge, for the Valley of Hinnom is little more than that in its narrowest part, has few associations that are not horrible. Here Solomon set up the images ("the groves," or the graven images), and the temples for the lascivious rites of Ashtaroth or the human sacrifices to Moloch. Here the Jews, the kings and successors of Solomon, with a few exceptions, and save an occasional spasmodic sacrifice to Jehovah when calamity made them fear him, practised all the abominations of idolatry in use in that age. The Jews had always been more or less addicted to the worship of the god of Ammon, but Solomon first formally established it in Hinnom. Jeremiah writes of it historically, "They have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire." This Moloch was as ingenious a piece of cruelty as ever tried the faith of heretics in later times, and, since it was purely a means of human sacrifice, and not a means of grace (as Inquisitorial tortures were supposed to be), its use is conclusive proof of the savage barbarity of the people who delighted in it. Moloch was the monstrous brass image of a man with the head of an ox. It was hollow, and the interior contained a furnace by which the statue was made red-hot. Children—the offerings to the god—were then placed in its glowing arms, and drums were beaten

to drown their cries. It is painful to recall these things, but the traveller should always endeavor to obtain the historical flavor of the place he visits.

Continuing our walks among the antiquities of Jerusalem, we went out of the Damascus Gate, a noble battlemented structure, through which runs the great northern highway to Samaria and Damascus. The road, however, is a mere path over ledges and through loose stones, fit only for donkeys. If Rehoboam went this way in his chariot to visit Jeroboam in Samaria, there must have existed then a better road, or else the king endured hard pounding for the sake of the dignity of his conveyance. As soon as we left the gate we encountered hills of stones and paths of the roughest description. There are several rock tombs on this side of the city, but we entered only one, that called by some the Tombs of the Kings, and by others, with more reason, the Tomb of Helena, a heathen convert to Judaism, who built this sepulchre for herself early in the first century. The tomb, excavated entirely in the solid rock, is a spacious affair, having a large court and ornamented vestibule and many chambers, extending far into the rock, and a singular network of narrow passages and recesses for the deposit of the dead. It had one device that is worthy of the ancient Egyptians. The entrance was closed by a heavy square stone, so hung that it would yield to pressure from without, but would swing to its place by its own weight, and fitted so closely that it could not be moved from the inside. If any thief entered the tomb and left this slab unsecured, he would be instantly caught

in the trap and become a permanent occupant. Large as the tomb is, its execution is mean compared with the rock tombs of Egypt; but the exterior stone of the court, from its exposure in this damp and variable climate, appears older than Egyptian work which has been uncovered three times as long.

At the tomb we encountered a dozen students from the Latin convent, fine-looking fellows in long blue-black gowns, red caps, and red sashes. They sat upon the grass, on the brink of the excavation, stringing rosaries and singing student songs, with evident enjoyment of the hour's freedom from the school; they not only made a picturesque appearance, but they impressed us also as a Jerusalem group which was neither sinful nor dirty. Beyond this tomb we noticed a handsome modern dwelling-house; you see others on various eminences outside the city, and we noted them as the most encouraging sign of prosperity about Jerusalem.

We returned over the hill and by the city wall, passing the Cave of Jeremiah and the door in the wall that opens into the stone quarries of Solomon. These quarries underlie a considerable portion of the city, and furnished the stone for its ancient buildings. I will not impose upon you a description of them; for it would be unfair to send you into disagreeable places that I did not explore myself.

The so-called Grotto of Jeremiah is a natural cavern in the rocky hill, vast in extent, I think thirty feet high and a hundred feet long by seventy broad,—as big as a church. The tradition

is that Jeremiah lived and lamented here. In front of the cave are cut stones and pieces of polished columns built into walls and seats; these fragments seem to indicate the former existence here of a Roman temple. The cave is occupied by an old dervish, who has a house in a rock near by, and uses the cavern as a cool retreat and a stable for his donkey. His rocky home is shared by his wife and family. He said that it was better to live alone, apart from the world and its snares. He, however, finds the reputation of Jeremiah profitable, selling admission to the cave at a franc a head, and, judging by the women and children about him, he seemed to have family enough not to be lonely.

The sojourner in Jerusalem who does not care for antiquities can always entertain himself by a study of the pilgrims who throng the city at this season. We hear more of the pilgrimage to Mecca than of that to Jerusalem; but I think the latter is the more remarkable phenomenon of our modern life; I believe it equals the former, which is usually overrated, in numbers, and it certainly equals it in zeal and surpasses it in the variety of nationalities represented. The pilgrims of the cross increase yearly; to supply their wants, to minister to their credulity, to traffic on their faith, is the great business of the Holy City. Few, I imagine, who are not in Palestine in the spring, have any idea of the extent of this vast yearly movement of Christian people upon the Holy Land, or of the simple zeal which characterizes it. If it were in any way obstructed or hindered, we should have a repetition of the Crusades, on a vaster scale and gathered

from a broader area than the wildest pilgrimage of the holy war. The dribblets of travel from America and from Western Europe are as nothing in the crowds thronging to Jerusalem from Ethiopia to Siberia, from the Baltic to the Ural Mountains. Already for a year before the Easter season have they been on foot, slowly pushing their way across great steppes, through snows and over rivers, crossing deserts and traversing unfriendly countries; the old, the infirm, women as well as men, their faces set towards Jerusalem. No common curiosity moves this mass, from Ethiopia, from Egypt, from Russia, from European Turkey, from Asia Minor, from the banks of the Tagus and the Araxes; it is a true pilgrimage of faith, the one event in a life of dull monotony and sordid cares, the one ecstasy of poetry in an existence of poverty and ignorance.

We spent a morning in the Russian Hospice, which occupies the hill to the northwest of the city. It is a fine pile of buildings, the most conspicuous of which, on account of its dome, is the church, a large edifice with a showy exterior, but of no great merit or interest. We were shown some holy pictures which are set in frames incrusting with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and other precious gems, the offerings of rich devotees, and displaying their wealth rather than their taste.

The establishment has one building for the accommodation of rich pilgrims, and a larger one set apart for peasants. The hospice lodges, free of charge, all the Russian pilgrims. The exterior court was full of them. They were sunning themselves, but not inclined

to lay aside their hot furs and heavy woollens. We passed into the interior, entering room after room occupied by the pilgrims, who regarded our intrusion with good-natured indifference, or frankly returned our curiosity. Some of the rooms were large, furnished with broad divans about the sides, which served for beds and lounging-places, and were occupied by both sexes. The women, rosy-cheeked, light-haired, broad, honest-looking creatures, were mending their clothes; the men were snoozing on the divans, flat on their backs, presenting to the spectator the bottoms of their monstrous shoes, which had soles eight inches broad; a side of leather would be needed for a pair. In these not very savory rooms they cook, eat, and sleep. Here stood their stoves; here hung their pilgrim knapsacks; here were their kits of shoemaker's tools, for mending their foot-gear, which they had tugged thousands of miles; here were household effects that made their march appear more like an emigration than a pilgrimage; here were the staring pictures of St. George and the Dragon, and of other saints, the beads and the other relics, which they had bought in Jerusalem.

Although all these pilgrims owed allegiance to the Czar, they represented a considerable variety of races. They came from Archangel, from Tobolsk, from the banks of the Ural, from Kurland; they had found their way along the Danube, the Dnieper, the Don. I spoke with a group of men and women who had walked over two thousand miles before they reached Odessa and took ship for Jaffa. There were among them Cossacks, wild

and untidy, light-haired barbarians from the Caucasus, dark-skinned men and women from Moscow, representatives from the remotest provinces of great Russia; for the most part simple, rude, clumsy, honest boors. In an interior court we found men and women seated on the sunny flagging, busily occupied in arranging and packing the souvenirs of their visit. There was rosemary spread out to dry; there were little round cakes of blessed bread stamped with the image of the Saviour; there were branches of palm, crowns of thorns, and stalks of cane cut at the Jordan; there were tin cases of Jordan water; there were long strips of cotton cloth stamped in black with various insignia of death, to serve at home for coffin-covers; there were skull-caps in red, yellow, and white, also stamped with holy images, to be put on the heads of the dead. I could not but in mind follow these people to their distant homes, and think of the pride with which they would show these trophies of their pilgrimage; how the rude neighbors would handle with awe a stick cut on the banks of the Jordan, or eat with faith a bit of the holy bread. How sacred, in those homes of frost and snow, will not these mementos of a land of sun, of a land so sacred, become! I can see the wooden chest in the cabin where the rosemary will be treasured, keeping sweet, against the day of need, the caps and the shrouds.

These people will need to make a good many more pilgrimages, and perhaps to quit their morose land altogether, before they can fairly rank among the civilized of the earth. They were thickset, padded-legged, short-bodied, unintelligent. The

faces of many of them were worn, as if storm-beaten, and some kept their eyes half closed, as if they were long used to face the sleet and blasts of winter; and I noticed that it gave their faces a very different expression from that produced by the habit the Egyptians have of drawing the eyelids close together on account of the glare of the sun.

We took donkeys one lovely morning, and rode from the Jaffa Gate around the walls on our way to the Mount of Olives. The Jerusalem donkey is a good enough donkey, but he won't go. He is ridden with a halter, and never so elegantly caparisoned as his more genteel brother in Cairo. In order to get him along at all, it needs one man to pull the halter and another to follow behind with a stick; the donkey then moves by inches,—if he is in the humor. The animal that I rode stopped at once, when he perceived that his driver was absent. No persuasions of mine, such as kicks and whacks of a heavy stick, could move him on; he would turn out of the road, put his head against the wall, and pretend to go to sleep. You would not suppose it possible for a beast to exhibit so much contempt for a man.

On the high ground outside the wall were pitched the tents of travellers, making a very pretty effect amid the olive-trees and the gray rocks. Now and then an Arab horseman came charging down the road, or a Turkish official cantered by; women, veiled, clad in white balloon robes that covered them from head to foot, flitted along in the sunshine, mere white appearances of women, to whom it was impossible to attribute any such errand as going

to market; they seemed always to be going to or returning from the cemetery.

Our way lay down the rough path and the winding road to the bottom of the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Leaving the Garden of Gethsemane on our right, we climbed up the rugged, stony, steep path to the summit of the hill. There are a few olive-trees on the way, enough to hinder the view where the stone-walls would permit us to see anything; importunate begging Moslems beset us; all along the route we encountered shabbiness and squalor. The *rural* sweetness and peace that we associate with this dear mount appear to have been worn away centuries ago. We did not expect too much, but we were not prepared for such a shabby show-place. If we could sweep away all the filthy habitations and hideous buildings on the hill, and leave it to nature, or, indeed, convert the surface into a well-ordered garden, the spot would be one of the most attractive in the world.

We hoped that when we reached the summit we should come into an open, green, and shady place, free from the disagreeable presence of human greed and all the artificiality that interposed itself between us and the sentiment of the place. But the traveller need not expect *that* in Palestine. Everything is staked out and made a show of. Arrived at the summit, we could see little or nothing; it is crowned with the dilapidated Chapel of the Ascension. We entered a dirty court, where the custodian and his family and his animals live, and from thence were admitted to the church. In the pavement is shown the footprint of our ascending

Lord, although the Ascension was made at Bethany. We paid the custodian for permission to see this manufactured scene of the Ascension. The best point of view to be had here is the old tower of the deserted convent, or the narrow passage to it on the wall, or the top of the minaret near the church. There is no place on wall or tower where one can sit; there is no place anywhere here to sit down, and in peace and quiet enjoy the magnificent prospect, and meditate on the most momentous event in human history. We snatched the view in the midst of annoyances. The most minute features of it are known to every one who reads. The portion of it I did not seem to have been long familiar with is that to the east, comprising the Jordan valley, the mountains of Moab, and the Dead Sea.

Although this mount is consecrated by the frequent presence of Christ, who so often crossed it in going to and from Bethany, and retired here to meditate and to commune with his loved followers, everything that the traveller at present encounters on its summit is out of sympathy with his memory. We escaped from the beggars and the showmen, climbed some stone-walls, and in a rough field near the brow of the hill, in a position neither comfortable nor private, but the best that we found, read the chief events in the life of Christ connected with this mount, the triumphal entry, and the last scenes transacted on yonder hill. And we endeavored to make the divine man live again, who so often and so sorrowfully regarded the then shining city of Zion from this height.

To the south of the church and a little down the hill is the so-called site of the giving of the Lord's Prayer. I do not know on what authority it is thus named. A chapel is built to mark the spot, and a considerable space is enclosed before it, in which are other objects of interest, and these were shown to us by a pleasant-spoken lady, who is connected with the convent, and has faith equal to the demands of her position. We first entered a subterranean vaulted room, with twelve rough half-pillars on each side, called the room where the Apostles composed the creed. We then passed into the chapel. Upon the four walls of its arcade is written, in great characters, the Lord's Prayer in *thirty-two* languages; among them the "Canadian."

In a little side chapel is the tomb of Aurelia de Bossa, Princesse de la Tour d'uvergne, Duchesse de Bouillon, the lady whose munificence established this chapel and executed the prayer in so many tongues. Upon the side of the tomb this fact of her benevolence is announced, and the expectation is also expressed, in French, that "God will overwhelm her with blessing for ever and ever for her good deed." Stretched upon the sarcophagus is a beautiful marble effigy of the princess; the figure is lovely, the face is sweet and seraphic, and it is a perfect likeness of her ladyship.

I do not speak at random. I happen to know that it is a perfect likeness, for a few minutes after I saw it, I met her in the corridor, in a semi-nunlike costume, with a heavy cross hanging by a long gold chain at her side. About her forehead was

bound a barbarous frontlet composed of some two hundred gold coins, and ornaments not unlike those worn by the ladies of the ancient Egyptians. This incongruity of costume made me hesitate whether to recognize in this dazzling vision of womanhood a priestess of Astarte or of Christ. At the farther door, Aurelia de Bossa, Princesse de la Tour d'uvergne, Duchesse de Bouillon, stopped and blew shrilly a silver whistle which hung at her girdle, to call her straying poodle, or to summon a servant. In the rear of the chapel this lady lives in a very pretty house, and near it she was building a convent for Carmelite nuns. I cannot but regard her as the most fortunate of her sex. She enjoys not only this life, but, at the same time, all the posthumous reputation that a lovely tomb and a record of her munificence engraved thereon can give. We sometimes hear of, but we seldom see, a person, in these degenerate days, living in this world as if already in the other.

We went on over the hill to Bethany; we had climbed up by the path on which David fled from Absalom, and we were to return by the road of the Triumphal Entry. All along the ridge we enjoyed a magnificent panorama: a blue piece of the Dead Sea, the Jordan plain extending far up towards Herraon with the green ribbon of the river winding through it, and the long, even range of the Moab hills, blue in the distance. The prospect was almost Swiss in its character, but it is a mass of bare hills, with scarcely a tree except in the immediate foreground, and so naked and desolate as to make the heart ache; it would be entirely desolate but for the deep blue of the sky and an atmosphere that bathes

all the great sweep of peaks and plains in color.

Bethany is a squalid hamlet clinging to the rocky hillside, with only one redeeming feature about it,—the prospect. A few wretched one-story huts of stone, and a miserable handful of Moslems, occupy this favorite home and resting-place of our Lord. Close at hand, by the roadside, cut in the rock and reached by a steep descent of twenty-six steps, is the damp and doubtful tomb of Lazarus, down into which any one may go for half a franc paid to the Moslem guardian. The house of Mary and Martha is exhibited among the big rocks and fragments of walls; upon older foundations loose walls are laid, rudely and recently patched up with cut stones in fragments, and pieces of Roman columns. The house of Simon the leper, overlooking the whole, is a mere heap of ruins. It does not matter, however, that all these dwellings are modern; this is Bethany, and when we get away from its present wretchedness we remember only that we have seen the very place that Christ loved.

We returned along the highway of the Entry slowly, pausing to identify the points of that memorable progress, up to the crest where Jerusalem broke upon the sight of the Lord, and whence the procession, coming round the curve of the hill, would have the full view of the city. He who rides that way to-day has a grand prospect. One finds Jerusalem most poetic when seen from Olivet, and Olivet most lovely when seen from the distance of the city walls.

At the foot of the descent we turned and entered the enclosure

of the Garden of Gethsemane. Three stone-wall enclosures here claim to be the real garden; one is owned by the Greeks, another by the Armenians, the third by the Latins. We chose the last, as it is the largest and pleasantest; perhaps the garden, which was certainly in this vicinity, once included them all. After some delay we were admitted by a small door in the wall, and taken charge of by a Latin monk, whose young and sweet face was not out of sympathy with the place. The garden contains a few aged olive-trees, and some small plots of earth, fenced about and secured by locked gates, in which flowers grow. The guardian gave us some falling roses, and did what he could to relieve the scene of its artificial appearance; around the wall, inside, are the twelve stations of the Passion, in the usual tawdry style.

But the birds sang sweetly in the garden, the flowers of spring were blooming, and, hemmed in by the high wall, we had some moments of solemn peace, broken only by the sound of a Moslem darabooka drum throbbing near at hand. Desecrated as this spot is, and made cheap by the petty creations of superstition, one cannot but feel the awful significance of the place, and the weight of history crowding upon him, where battles raged for a thousand years, and where the greatest victory of all was won when Christ commanded Peter to put up his sword. Near here Titus formed his columns which stormed the walls and captured the heroic city after its houses, and all this valley itself, were filled with Jewish dead; but all this is as nothing to the event of that awful night when the servants of the high-priest led away the unresisting

Lord.

It is this event, and not any other, that puts an immeasurable gulf between this and all other cities, and perhaps this difference is more felt the farther one is from Jerusalem. The visitor expects too much; he is unreasonably impatient of the contrast between the mean appearance of the theatre and the great events that have been enacted on it; perhaps he is not prepared for the ignorance, the cupidity, the credulity, the audacious impostures under Christian names, on the spot where Christianity was born.

When one has exhausted the stock sights of Jerusalem, it is probably the dullest, least entertaining city of the Orient; I mean, in itself, for its pilgrims and its religious fêtes, in the spring of the year, offer always some novelties to the sight-seer; and, besides, there is a certain melancholy pleasure to be derived from roaming about outside the walls, enveloped in a historic illusion that colors and clothes the nakedness of the landscape.

The chief business of the city and the region seems to be the manufacture of religious playthings for the large children who come here. If there is any factory of relics here I did not see it. Nor do I know whether the true cross has still the power of growing, which it had in the fourth century, to renew itself under the constant demand for pieces of it. I did not go to see the place where the tree grew of which it was made; the exact spot is shown in a Greek convent about a mile and a half west of the city. The tree is said to have been planted by Abraham and Noah. This is evidently an error; it may have been planted by Adam and

watered by Noah.

There is not much trade in antiquities in the city; the shops offer little to tempt the curiosity-hunter. Copper coins of the Roman period abound, and are constantly turned up in the fields outside the city, most of them battered and defaced beyond recognition. Jewish mites are plenty enough, but the silver shekel would be rare if the ingenious Jews did not keep counterfeits on hand. The tourist is waited on at his hotel by a few patient and sleek sharks with cases of cheap jewelry and doubtful antiques, and if he seeks the shops of the gold and silver bazaars he will find little more. I will not say that he will not now and then pick up a piece of old pottery that has made the journey from Central Asia, or chance upon a singular stone with a talismanic inscription. The hope that he may do so carries the traveller through a great many Eastern slums. The chief shops, however, are those of trinkets manufactured for the pilgrims, of olive-wood, ivory, bone, camels' teeth, and all manner of nuts and seeds. There are more than fifty sorts of beads, strung for profane use or arranged for rosaries, and some of them have pathetic names, like "Job's tears." Jerusalem is entitled to be called the City of Beads.

There is considerable activity in Jewish objects that are old and rather unclean; and I think I discovered something like an attempt to make a "corner" in phylacteries, that is, in old ones, for the new are made in excess of the demand. If a person desires to carry home a phylactery to exhibit to his Sunday school, in

illustration of the religion of the Jews, he wants one that has been a long time in use. I do not suppose it possible that the education of any other person is as deficient as mine was in the matter of these ornamental aids in worship. But if there is one, this description is for him: the phylactery, common size, is a leathern box about an inch and a half square, with two narrow straps of leather, about three feet long, sewed to the bottom corners. The box contains a parchment roll of sacred writing. When the worshipper performs his devotions in the synagogue, he binds one of the phylacteries about his left arm and the other about his head, so that the little box has something of the appearance of a leathern horn sprouting out of his forehead. Phylacteries are worn only in the synagogue, and in this respect differ from the greasy leathern talismans of the Nubians, which contain scraps from the Koran, and are never taken off. Whatever significance the phylactery once had to the Jew it seems now to have lost, since he is willing to make it an article of merchandise. Perhaps it is poverty that compels him also to sell his ancient scriptures; parchment rolls of favorite books, such as Esther, that are some centuries old, are occasionally to be bought, and new rolls, deceitfully doctored into an appearance of antiquity, are offered freely.

A few years ago the antiquarian world was put into a ferment by what was called the "Shoepira collection," a large quantity of clay pottery,—gods, votive offerings, images, jars, and other vessels,—with inscriptions in unknown characters, which was

said to have been dug up in the land of Moab, beyond the Jordan, and was expected to throw great light upon certain passages of Jewish history, and especially upon the religion of the heathen who occupied Palestine at the time of the conquest. The collection was sent to Berlin; some eminent German *savans* pronounced it genuine; nearly all the English scholars branded it as an impudent imposture. Two collections of the articles have been sent to Berlin, where they are stored out of sight of the public generally, and Mr. Shoepira has made a third collection, which he still retains.

Mr. Shoepira is a Hebrew antiquarian and bookseller, of somewhat eccentric manners, but an enthusiast. He makes the impression of a man who believes in his discoveries, and it is generally thought in Jerusalem that if his collection is a forgery, he himself is imposed on. The account which he gives of the places where the images and utensils were found is anything but clear or definite. We are required to believe that they have been dug up in caves at night and by stealth, and at the peril of the lives of the discoverers, and that it is not safe to visit these caves in the daytime on account of the Bedaween. The fresh-baked appearance of some of the articles is admitted, and it is said that it was necessary to roast them to prevent their crumbling when exposed to the air. Our theory in regard to these singular objects is that a few of those first shown were actually discovered, and that all the remainder have been made in imitation of them. Of the characters (or alphabet) of the inscriptions, Mr. Schepira says

he has determined twenty-three; sixteen of these are Phoenician, and the others, his critics say, are meaningless. All the objects are exceedingly rude and devoid of the slightest art; the images are many of them indecent; the jars are clumsy in shape, but the inscriptions are put on with some skill. The figures are supposed to have been votive offerings, and the jars either memorial or sepulchral urns.

The hideous collection appeared to me *sui generis*, although some of the images resemble the rudest of those called Phoenician which General di Cesnola unearthed in Cyprus. Without merit, they seem to belong to a rude age rather than to be the inartistic product of this age. That is, supposing them to be forgeries, I cannot see how these figures could be conceived by a modern man, who was capable of inventing a fraud of this sort. He would have devised something better, at least something less simple, something that would have somewhere betrayed a little modern knowledge and feeling. All the objects have the same barbarous tone, a kind of character that is distinct from their rudeness, and the same images and designs are repeated over and over again. This gives color to the theory that a few genuine pieces of Moabite pottery were found, which gave the idea for a large manufacture of them. And yet, there are people who see these things, and visit all the holy places, and then go away and lament that there are no manufactories in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem attracts while it repels; and both it and all Palestine exercise a spell out of all proportion to the consideration they had

in the ancient world. The student of the mere facts of history, especially if his studies were made in Jerusalem itself, would be at a loss to account for the place that the Holy City occupies in the thought of the modern world, and the importance attached to the history of the handful of people who made themselves a home in this rocky country. The Hebrew nation itself, during the little time it was a nation, did not play a part in Oriental affairs at all commensurate with its posthumous reputation. It was not one of the great kingdoms of antiquity, and in that theatre of war and conquest which spread from Ethiopia to the Caspian Sea, it was scarcely an appreciable force in the great drama.

The country the Hebrews occupied was small; they never conquered or occupied the whole of the Promised Land, which extended from the Mediterranean Sea to the Arabian plain, from Hamath to Sinai. Their territory in actual possession reached only from Dan to Beersheba. The coast they never subdued; the Philistines, who came from Crete and grew to be a great people in the plain, held the lower portion of Palestine on the sea, and the Phoenicians the upper. Except during a brief period in their history, the Jews were confined to the hill-country. Only during the latter part of the reign of David and two thirds of that of Solomon did the Jewish kingdom take on the proportions of a great state. David extended the Israelitish power from the Gulf of Akaba to the Euphrates; Damascus paid him tribute; he occupied the cities of his old enemies, the Philistines, but the kingdom of Tyre, still in the possession of Hiram, marked the limit of Jewish

sway in that direction. This period of territorial consequence was indeed brief. Before Solomon was in his grave, the conquests bequeathed to him by his father began to slip from his hand. The life of the Israelites as a united nation, as anything but discordant and warring tribes, after the death of Joshua, is all included in the reigns of David and Solomon,—perhaps sixty or seventy years.

The Israelites were essentially highlanders. Some one has noticed their resemblance to the Scotch Highlanders in modes of warfare. In fighting they aimed to occupy the heights. They descended into the plain reluctantly; they made occasional forays into the lowlands, but their hills were their strength, as the Psalmist said; and they found security among their crags and secluded glens from the agitations which shook the great empires of the Eastern world. Invasions, retreats, pursuits, the advance of devouring hosts or the flight of panic-stricken masses, for a long time passed by their ridge of country on either side, along the Mediterranean or through the land of Moab. They were out of the track of Oriental commerce as well as of war. So removed were they from participation in the stirring affairs of their era that they seem even to have escaped the omnivorous Egyptian conquerors. For a long period conquest passed them by, and it was not till their accumulation of wealth tempted the avarice of the great Asiatic powers that they were involved in the conflicts which finally destroyed them. The small kingdom of Judah, long after that of Israel had been utterly swept away, owed its continuance of life to its very defensible position. Solomon left Jerusalem a

strong city, well supplied with water, and capable of sustaining a long siege, while the rugged country around it offered little comfort to a besieging army.

For a short time David made the name of Israel a power in the world, and Solomon, inheriting his reputation, added the triumphs of commerce to those of conquest. By a judicious heathen alliance with Hiram of Tyre he was able to build vessels on the Red Sea and man them with Phoenician sailors, for voyages to India and Ceylon; and he was admitted by Hiram to a partnership in his trading adventures to the Pillars of Hercules. But these are only episodes in the Jewish career; the nation's part in Oriental history is comparatively insignificant until the days of their great calamities. How much attention its heroism and suffering attracted at that time we do not know.

Though the Israelites during their occupation of the hill-country of Palestine were not concerned in the great dynastic struggles of the Orient, they were not, however, at peace. Either the tribes were fighting among themselves or they were involved in sanguinary fights with the petty heathen chiefs about them. We get a lively picture of the habits of the time in a sentence in the second book of Samuel: "And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah." It was a pretty custom. In that season when birds pair and build their nests, when the sap mounts in the trees and travellers long

to go into far countries, kings felt a noble impulse in their veins to go out and fight other kings. But this primitive simplicity was mingled with shocking barbarity; David once put his captives under the saw, and there is nothing to show that the Israelites were more moved by sentiments of pity and compassion than their heathen neighbors. There was occasionally, however, a grim humor in their cruelty. When Judah captured King Adoni-bezek, in Bezek, he cut off his great toes and his thumbs. Adoni-bezek, who could appreciate a good thing, accepted the mutilation in the spirit in which it was offered, and said that he had himself served seventy kings in that fashion; “threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table.”

From the death of Joshua to the fall of Samaria, the history of the Jews is largely a history of civil war. From about seven hundred years before Christ, Palestine was essentially a satrapy of the Assyrian kings, as it was later to become one of the small provinces of the Roman empire. At the time when Sennacherib was waiting before Jerusalem for Hezekiah to purchase his withdrawal by stripping the gold from the doors of the Temple, the foundations of a city were laid on the banks of the Tiber, which was to extend its sway over the known world, to whose dominion the utmost power of Jerusalem was only a petty sovereignty, and which was destined to rival Jerusalem itself as the spiritual capital of the earth.

If we do not find in the military power or territorial

consequence of the Jews an explanation of their influence in the modern world, still less do we find it in any faithfulness to a spiritual religion, the knowledge of which was their chief distinction among the tribes about them. Their lapses from the worship of Jehovah were so frequent, and of such long duration, that their returns to the worship of the true God seem little more than breaks in their practice of idolatry. And these spasmodic returns were due to calamities, and fears of worse judgments. Solomon sanctioned by national authority gross idolatries which had been long practised. At his death, ten of the tribes seceded from the dominion of Judah and set up a kingdom in which idolatry was made and remained the state religion, until the ten tribes vanished from the theatre of history. The kingdom of Israel, in order to emphasize its separation from that of Judah, set up the worship of Jehovah in the image of a golden calf. Against this state religion of image-worship the prophets seem to have thought it in vain to protest; they contented themselves with battling against the more gross and licentious idolatries of Baal and Ashtaroth; and Israel always continued the idol-worship established by Jeroboam. The worship of Jehovah was the state religion of the little kingdom of Judah, but during the period of its existence, before the Captivity, I think that only four of its kings were not idolaters. The people were constantly falling away into the heathenish practices of their neighbors.

If neither territorial consequence nor religious steadfastness gave the Jews rank among the great nations of antiquity, they

would equally fail of the consideration they now enjoy but for one thing, and that is, after all, the chief and enduring product of any nationality; we mean, of course, its literature. It is by that, that the little kingdoms of Judah and Israel hold their sway over the world. It is that which invests ancient Jerusalem with its charm and dignity. Not what the Jews did, but the songs of their poets, the warnings and lamentations of their prophets, the touching tales of their story-tellers, draw us to Jerusalem by the most powerful influences that affect the human mind. And most of this unequalled literature is the product of seasons of turbulence, passion, and insecurity. Except the Proverbs and Song of Solomon, and such pieces as the poem of Job and the story of Ruth, which seem to be the outcome of literary leisure, the Hebrew writings were all the offspring of exciting periods. David composed his Psalms—the most marvellous interpreters of every human aspiration, exaltation, want, and passion—with his sword in his hand; and the prophets always appear to ride upon a whirlwind. The power of Jerusalem over the world is as truly a literary one as that of Athens is one of art. That literature was unknown to the ancients, or unappreciated: otherwise contemporary history would have considered its creators of more consequence than it did.

We speak, we have been speaking, of the Jerusalem before our era, and of the interest it has independent of the great event which is, after all, its chief claim to immortal estimation. It becomes sacred ground to us because there, in Bethlehem,

Christ was born; because here—not in these streets, but upon this soil—he walked and talked and taught and ministered; because upon Olivet, yonder, he often sat with his disciples, and here, somewhere,—it matters not where,—he suffered death and conquered death.

This is the scene of these transcendent events. We say it to ourselves while we stand here. We can clearly conceive it when we are at a distance. But with the actual Jerusalem of to-day before our eyes, its naked desolation, its superstition, its squalor, its vivid contrast to what we conceive should be the City of our King, we find it easier to feel that Christ was born in New England than in Judæa.

V.—GOING DOWN TO JERICHO

IT is on a lovely spring morning that we set out through the land of Benjamin to go down among the thieves of Jericho, and to the Jordan and the Dead Sea. For protection against the thieves we take some of them with us, since you cannot in these days rely upon finding any good Samaritans there.

For some days Abd-el-Atti has been in mysterious diplomatic relations with the robbers of the wilderness, who live in Jerusalem, and farm out their territory. "Thim is great rascals," says the dragoman; and it is solely on that account that we seek their friendship: the real Bedawee is never known to go back on his word to the traveller who trusts him, so long as it is more profitable to keep it than to break it. We are under the escort of the second sheykh, who shares with the first sheykh the rule of all the Bedaween who patrol the extensive territory from Hebron to the fords of the Jordan, including Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Mar Saba, and the shores of the Dead Sea; these rulers would have been called kings in the old time, and the second sheykh bears the same relation to the first that the Cæsar did to the Augustus in the Roman Empire.

Our train is assembled in the little market-place opposite the hotel, or rather it is assembling, for horses and donkeys are slow to arrive, saddles are wanting, the bridles are broken, and the unpunctuality and shiftlessness of the East manifest themselves.

Abd-el-Atti is in fierce altercation with a Koorland nobleman about a horse, which you would not say would be likely to be a bone of contention with anybody. They are both endeavoring to mount at once. Friends are backing each combatant, and the air is thick with curses in guttural German and maledictions in shrill Arabic. Unfortunately I am appealed to.

“What for this Dutchman, he take my horse?”

“Perhaps he hired it first?”

“P’aps not. I make bargain for him with the owner day before yesterday.”

“I have become dis *pferd* for four days,” cries the Baron.

There seems to be no reason to doubt the Baron’s word; he has ridden the horse to Bethlehem, and become accustomed to his jolts, and no doubt has the prior lien on the animal. The owner has let him to both parties, a thing that often happens when the second comer offers a piastre more. Another horse is sent for, and we mount and begin to disentangle ourselves from the crowd. It is no easy matter, especially for the ladies. Our own baggage-mules head in every direction. Donkeys laden with mountains of brushwood push through the throng, scraping right and left; camels shamble against us, their contemptuous noses in the air, stretching their long necks over our heads; market-women from Bethlehem scream at us; and greasy pilgrims block our way and curse our horses’ hoofs.

One by one we emerge and get into a straggling line, and begin to comprehend the size of our expedition. Our dragoman

has made as extensive preparations as if we were to be the first to occupy Gilgal and Jericho, and that portion of the Promised Land. We are equipped equally well for fighting and for famine. A party of Syrians, who desire to make the pilgrimage to the Jordan, have asked permission to join us, in order to share the protection of our sheykh, and they add both picturesqueness and strength to the grand cavalcade which clatters out of Jaffa Gate and sweeps round the city wall. Heaven keep us from undue pride in our noble appearance!

Perhaps our train would impress a spectator as somewhat mixed, and he would be unable to determine the order of its march. It is true that the horses and the donkeys and the mules all have different rates of speed, and that the Syrian horse has only two gaits,—a run and a slow walk. As soon as we gain the freedom of the open country, these differences develop. The ambitious dragomen and the warlike sheykh put their horses into a run and scour over the hills, and then come charging back upon us, like Don Quixote upon the flock of sheep. The Syrians imitate this madness. The other horses begin to agitate their stiff legs; the donkeys stand still and protest by braying; the pack-mules get temporarily crazy, charge into us with the protruding luggage, and suddenly wheel into the ditch and stop. This playfulness is repeated in various ways, and adds to the excitement without improving the dignity of our march.

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