

CHAPTER L.

Peculiarities of Modern Palestine.

Jews—Greek Church—Visit to the Patriarch—Russian Church and Pilgrims—Armenians—Copts—Abyssinians—Roman Catholics—Protestants—Places of Amusement—Society—Sect of the "German Temple"—Lunatics—The "American Colony"—Lepers and Leprosy.

MODERN Jerusalem is a study in human nature. There the Jews make an unfavorable impression. With due allowance for a minority there for business purposes or from religious considerations, they are filthy, superstitious, and fanatical, many being practically paupers. In the Polish synagogue I saw ancient men at their early service. Their howlings were dissonant; hair and beards unkempt; skin clammy and cadaverous. In the intervals of reading they took snuff, exhibiting large capacity, the result of decades of assiduous practice; but failing to absorb all, their hideous aspect was even more defiled. This was the lowest point, as respects worship, which I touched. Matters are better in some of the synagogues. Thousands, many of them being sent by charity, have come to Jerusalem solely to die in the Holy Land. An excellent system has been devised for taking care of them. So soon as a Jew arrives he is registered in the synagogues of his own nationality, and funds are collected throughout the world for the support of these poor Jews. Sir Moses Montefiore constructed a system of tenement houses, which are rented at low rates to Jews; and the Rothschilds have built hospitals for them.

How much importance is to be attached to the supposed rapid return of the Jews to Palestine? Those whose views of Scripture prophecy lead them to believe that the Holy Land will finally be occupied exclusively by Jews find encouragement in this tendency. But my inquiries led me to think that, in view of the character of the Jews migrating thither, nothing of significance is indicated.

The Greek Church is the most powerful body of Christians in Syria. They have many churches, schools, monasteries, and other institutions. The convents of St. Theodore, St. Spiridon, St. Michael, St. Katharine, Caralombos, John the Baptist, Demetrius, St. Nicholas, and Spirito, will accommodate three thousand pilgrims; several five hundred each, and the rest from fifty to three hundred. I visited two of these: no one need starve, and pilgrims are not fastidious.

Dr. Bancroft and I called upon the patriarch, who is of imposing presence and received us with honor; Father Stephanos, who formerly lived in the United States and speaks English well, acting as interpreter. It was impossible to make the patriarch realize that Dr. Bancroft is only a distant relative of the historian George Bancroft, with whom he was determined to confound him. The conversation was formal; the tones of the patriarch as deep and heavy as the pedal notes of an organ, and his utterance correspondingly slow.

Large sums of money have been expended within a few years by the Russian government for the Russo-Greek Church in Jerusalem and other parts of Syria. Outside the wall is an elaborate system of buildings and a fine church. How many thousand pilgrims could be accommodated there I could not ascertain; but I attended service in their church on my last Sabbath in the city.

The Russian pilgrims, in outward demonstration, are devout; and their natural expression being as stolid as that of a bronze statue, the effect is intensified. So liberal are they, and so many taxes does the Church put upon them, that, if not restrained, they would give away all the money they have, and be unable to get back to Russia. On arriving they report to the Russian consul, who takes away from them enough money to pay their expenses home. When their pilgrimage is over usually they have nothing but that on which to depend.

I visited the Armenian monastery behind the Tower of David, near the Zion Gate. It is a large institution in which live several hundred monks and brethren, and which can entertain twelve hundred pilgrims. The patriarch resides in the monastery. We caught a glimpse of him passing through one of the chapels. Priests can be distinguished from the Greeks by

long pointed hoods, the others wearing round caps, not dissimilar to the traveling caps used in this country, but higher in the crown.

The old Armenian Church has a character peculiar to itself; standing midway between the Greek and Latin Churches, but maintaining its independent position ever since the sixth century, when it practically cut itself off from Rome. Armenian ecclesiastics are a fine-tempered, dignified, exceedingly gentlemanly body of men, with little of the stoic in their compositions, or natural inclination to monkish forms. The services are conducted with dignity and splendor, though the musical part is not equal to that of the Russian Church.

The Copts have a monastery and chapels, and jurisdiction over a part of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, where two Coptic priests are continually shut in to conduct services night and day.

The Abyssinians have a monastery near the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, but, not satisfied with their treatment and position, for several years they have been erecting a church behind the Russian establishments, and outside the wall. It occupies an imposing position.

I had noticed in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher a dignified-looking priest performing his devotions. He was so dark that I made inquiry concerning his nativity, and found that he was an Abyssinian. On a visit to the new edifices I met him coming out of the dormitory, and induced him by signs to show me about the buildings, not dreaming that he was the head of the establishment. When I informed Dr. Bancroft of the visit he proposed another. This time we were accompanied by an interpreter, and I had an interesting conversation with the representative of, perhaps, the most peculiar form of Christianity in the world.

The Abyssinians are but a half-civilized people. When we had entered Nubia we were separated from their country by but a comparatively short journey. Accounts of Abyssinian Christianity by travelers represent it as intolerant, and formal to an astonishing degree.

They are required to fast even oftener than the Greeks, the number of regular days being more than two out of three in

the whole year, besides special fasts, and they have to abstain from drink as well as food, but have plenty of feasts. Ceremonies on funeral occasions and marriages are barbarous.

The ecclesiastical connection is with the Copts of Egypt, the chief hierarch being elected at Alexandria. They call him an Abuna; next in importance are bishops; then the Alaka, who takes care of the money; and finally priests and deacons. Their services are so elaborate that it requires twenty priests and deacons for one church. The head priest told me that the war between Abyssinia and Italy prevented their getting funds, and in consequence of this they cannot complete the building, and suffer many privations. They seemed devout, and the one with whom we talked was very gentlemanly.

Before leaving we drank with him a glass of sherbet, a sweet, unintoxicating fluid, resembling raspberry syrup. Coffee also was served. An exciting incident of the conversation was his account of being captured a few years before, while endeavoring to reach Abyssinia, to make a statement to the king of the progress of the enterprise. The interpreter, who had often heard the Abyssinians perform, and who was a Catholic, declared that they were a barbarous people, and would strike the floor with their staves, and howl at certain parts of the service.

Roman Catholics are increasing in Jerusalem, but are inferior in numbers and power either to the orthodox Greeks or the Russians. The Franciscan monastery occupies a commanding situation, and the services conducted by the Latins are performed with more than their usual attention to details. The absence of any one government disposed to appropriate large funds to maintain the honor of the Church in Jerusalem accounts for their inferior position. It is an occasion for wonder that the Vatican, with its immense receipts, does not pay more attention to Jerusalem.

Protestantism is doing little in the city, though it is the seat of a bishopric. Theoretically this bishopric is supported half by Prussia and half by England. There have been three incumbents: Bishop Alexander, Bishop Gobat, and the present Bishop Blythe. We were introduced to Bishop Blythe by our

consul, who attended his services, and learned that it is a bishopric of no special importance.

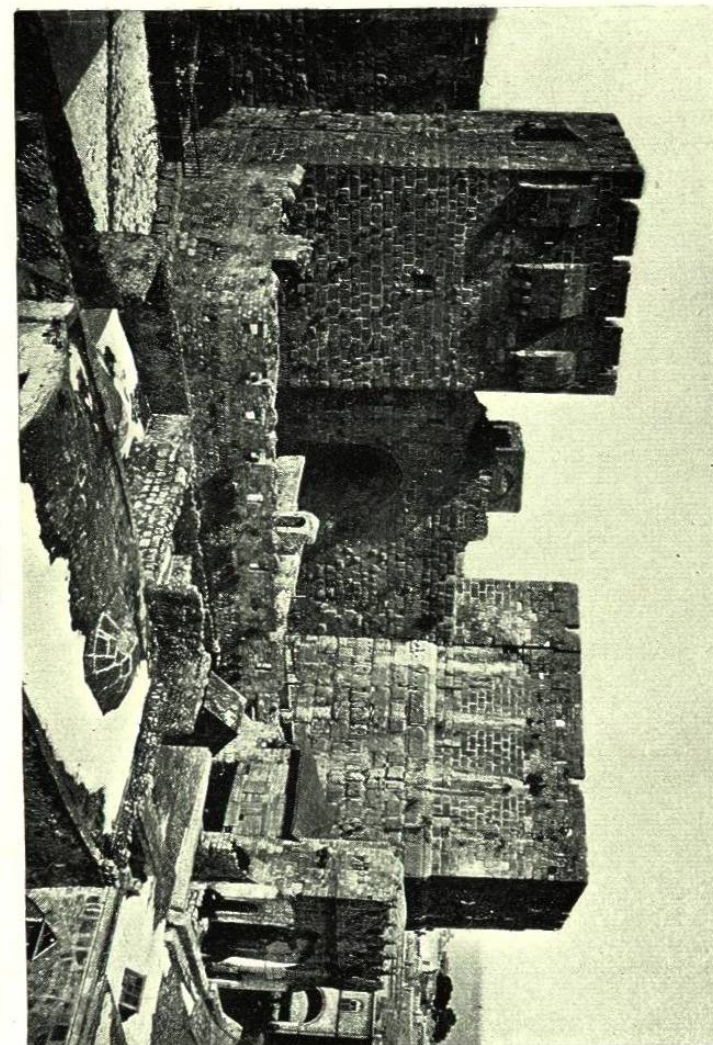
Christ Church, nearly opposite the Tower of David, on Mount Zion, is a fine building. There are various schools supported by the mission, one in which the services are entirely in Arabic. The funds of the mission have much to do with supporting the outward show of work. The Germans sustain several orphanages and a fine hospital under the charge of the deaconesses of Kaiserswerth, similar to that already described.

There appear to be in the holy city very few places of amusement, of the kind ordinarily found. Society is divided into cliques. Some of the missions are battlefields; charges are bandied about against members, and scandal is afloat. Of course, in a general statement of this kind, allowance must be made for exceptions. There, as everywhere, scandal makes notoriety, while private virtue is unnoticed; yet the conversations I had led me to think that there is more backbiting and retailing of personal gossip among the foreign residents of Jerusalem than in any other city of its size.

One of the Protestant colonies is near Jaffa. It is twenty-three years old, founded by the Wurtemberg sect of the "German Temple." They hold a peculiar doctrine, based on the prophecies, that Christians are obliged to settle in Palestine.

In 1866 an American colony, led by one Adams, settled there. The majority were sincere Christians, deceived and swindled by fanatical leaders and their dishonest employees. Their hardships were equal to those endured by the early settlers of Massachusetts, and incredible sufferings, followed by many deaths, occurred. When the *Quaker City* visited Jaffa, it benevolently took away the starving people to Egypt, whence they were helped back to America. Rollo Floyd, the guide, is one of the survivors.

Lunatics come to Jerusalem from all parts of the world. One was in the habit for years of walking about carrying a heavy cross. A woman came with the revelation that Christ was to descend to the Mount of Olives, and she was to make the first cup of tea for him; several times she ascended the mount for the purpose. Her lunacy now is of a mild form.



Tower of David.

A conspicuous household of an eccentric character now existing in Palestine is known as the American colony. It consists of a number of persons, chiefly from Chicago, who went there some years ago, under the leadership of Mr. Spofford and his wife. We spent a Sabbath evening at their residence, listening to their singing, and conversing with them concerning their principles. From some points of view they make an excellent impression, being active in benevolent work, self-denying, sweet in spirit, and having unusual facility for securing the affections of their beneficiaries.

Their singing is charming, their spirit devout and trustful, and their bearing toward each other not such as to suggest anything evil; but it requires only a fair measure of discernment to see that a dangerous fanaticism lies beneath the attractive surface, which will make impossible the permanent success of the colony and prevent the fulfillment of the enthusiastic hopes which originally inspired it. They act upon the faith cure, anti-medicine theory, and the number of deaths since the colony was founded is considerably in excess of the average number of persons dying of the same age in an ordinary society. They eschew matrimony, and are theoretically Shakers. They also profess to be guided in all particulars by direct revelation from God. Financially they have been in difficulty so often that only the interposition of the American consuls has prevented their being dispossessed; but they claim to have property enough in the United States to pay all bills, which property they allege is kept back by relatives on the ground that they are insane. Some who have recently joined the society obviously dwell in the borderland between sanity and mental aberration.

I am glad that Jerusalem is under the control of the Turks rather than that of the Jews, or of the Greek or Latin Christians. The Jews would care little for Christian antiquities, the Greeks and Latins would be exclusive, the Mohammedans are impartial, and their forces often needed to suppress disturbances between rival sects of degenerate Christians in the very precincts of the sacred places. I went away thinking more of the new than of the old Jerusalem, but abundantly repaid for the visit.

Jerusalem lepers are almost ubiquitous on account of their habit of sitting by gates and in thoroughfares begging. Their horrible aspect fortunately defies description, while the piercing cry, "Leprous! leprous!! leprous!!!" must echo for months in the memory of every traveler. Some are blind, and with their faces upturned toward the sun, the last vestige of the eye gone, arms, hands, and necks covered with hideous sores, they excite pity mingled with disgust.

Hospitals have been built, but they will not stay in them if they can avoid it, preferring to beg and to enjoy the liberty of travel and domestic life. Different views have been held as to whether modern leprosy is identical with that described in the Bible.

An attack of modern leprosy is preceded for some months by languor, chills, shivering, and irregular attacks of fever. The spots upon the skin, generally the first visible symptoms, are reddish and rapidly pushed outward by dark lumps, which in time form clusters "resembling bunches of grapes." This is followed by general deterioration of the tissues. Sight, hearing, and speech are interfered with, and last of all come dreadful festering sores. These from time to time heal and appear elsewhere. There is another sort called "smooth leprosy," in which the patches are inflamed, but do not swell. Such is the vital tenacity, however, that many of these horrible cases linger on from ten to twenty-five years. The disease is generally hereditary, and the children of lepers are usually attacked by it; yet I visited a quarter where they live together and marry, and are thus perpetuating this frightful scourge.

The disease is spreading throughout the world, and English magazines have of late been considering it. Sir Morell Mackenzie had an article in the *Nineteenth Century* on the "Dreadful Revival of Leprosy." The New York Academy of Medicine discussed the subject, and a distinguished physician and traveler gave an account of what he had seen in various parts of this continent and in the Sandwich Islands. He considers that there are millions of lepers; shows how the Chinese took the disease into the Sandwich Islands about forty years ago, and declares that some also carried it to Australia

and California. According to an official report there are one hundred and thirty-five thousand lepers in India.

About twenty-five years ago the London College of Physicians decided that the disease is not contagious, and not necessarily hereditary; but Sir Morell Mackenzie denies both propositions, as do other eminent authorities, all of whom appear to agree in thinking it incurable.

CHAPTER LI.

Leaving Jerusalem.

Description of the Caravan—Shafut—Ramallah—El-Bireh—Bethel—Ai—A Slave Lost—Robbers' Glen—Caravan of Camels—A Night of Storm and Terror at Sinjil.

THE time had now come to depart from Jerusalem. We designed to visit every sacred spot in the manner best adapted to allow close examination, vivid impression, and the greatest amount of familiarity with the people and country. Our preparations took some days. The first essential was a dragoman, who selected a cook with one or two assistants, a waiter, a muleteer, and several subordinates; six mules and four horses. Our tent was large, supplied with iron bedsteads, good mattresses, a table, washbasin, Persian rugs, and a partition which transformed the front part into a dining room and parlor. There were other tents for the men. The tents with their poles and cords, stove, fuel, food, furniture, bedsteads, etc., had to be carried upon mules.

Our dragoman, Selim, who proved to be guide, philosopher, and friend, was the supreme authority. The time for breakfast was fixed each night on retiring, and half an hour before it was ready we were aroused. Before we had finished dressing, breakfast was announced, the men began to take down all the tents but our own, and while the cook, his helper, and the waiter were washing the dishes, everything else was made ready for an early start. Luncheon was put up, and the dragoman, accompanied by one man and a mule, went with us on our various tours of exploration, while the rest of the caravan went by the directest route to the spot agreed upon for the camp. We usually rested from one to two hours at the lunching place, and found—unless the journey for the day was very long—the tents pitched and dinner being prepared on arriving in the evening.

We had been warned that we were starting rather too early

in the season, and would be likely to encounter severe storms. The "former rain" of the Bible occurs late in October and early in November; the "latter rain" falls in March and April. But my experience has not been favorable to postponing the starting on long journeys by sea or land on account of weather.

At nine o'clock on Monday morning our cavalcade, nearly a hundred yards long, was formed; the dragoman riding at the head, and Dr. Bancroft and I immediately following. We had learned that three tourists had started in advance of us, without tents, having only a dragoman and intending to lodge at night at the khans and convents. Drops of rain soon compelled us to cover ourselves with rubber blankets and coats procured in anticipation of a storm. While attempting to make this change the wind rose to the proportions of a blizzard, and it was with extreme difficulty that we kept our seats. Fortunately the clouds were high, so that the view of Jerusalem and the surrounding country was not seriously obscured. We were now above the city and could clearly see its position and relation to the Mount of Olives, to Bethlehem and the Jaffa road, and to other features of the country.

The road descending rapidly, we saw Jerusalem no more. Following the caravan route, we rode due north, and soon reached Shafut, built of fine old materials, the ruins of former fortifications and houses. It is believed by the best authorities to be the ancient Gibeah, where was committed the frightful crime that almost caused the annihilation of the tribe of Benjamin. It was here that the seven sons of Saul were hanged, and that afflicted Rizpah sustained her unparalleled vigil.

Ancient villages and ruins of walls were numerous. Instead of farmhouses scattered over the cultivated plain, as in the countries with which we are familiar, insecurity of life and property is so great, on account of wandering bands of marauders, that the people dwell, as in former times, in villages; and only the houses of watchmen can be seen upon the plains or in the fields.

Ramallah, at a little distance from the road, is inhabited chiefly by Christians. Both the Greeks and Latins have

monasteries there, where travelers can be entertained, and the Protestant missionaries keep a school.

We tarried first at El-Bireh, identified with the Bible Beeroth. There has been a tradition for some centuries that this is the spot where Joseph and Mary, when they were departing from Jerusalem, first noticed that Jesus was not in their company. It is certain that they were traveling by this route.

Half an hour later we reached Bethel. The very huts of the people are built out of materials plainly used in edifices in ancient times. Sitting on the wall of an old cistern, built in a costly and careful manner, we talked of the wonderful events which had taken place at Bethel. Here Abraham reared his altar and called upon the name of the Lord; here Jacob took the stones for his pillow, lay down to sleep, and saw the angels ascending and descending upon the ladder. He changed the name of the place from Luz to Bethel, "the house of God." Here Jeroboam set up the golden calf, as described in the First and Second Book of Kings. Says a writer: "Here or hereabouts there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare the forty and two children who scoffed at Elisha." The modern name of Bethel is Betin. Only about four hundred persons now live there.

The pond, of which the spring is in the center inclosed in a circular basin, is one hundred and five yards long and seventy-two wide, the whole inclosed in solid masonry. The view of the undulating valley was beautiful, now and then glorified by rays of sunlight piercing the heavy clouds which had hung dark over the mountains and plains all the morning.

Within sight of Bethel is Ai, which Joshua besieged with thirty thousand mighty men of valor, but so strong was the place that this force was not able to conquer it without the use of stratagem. A shrewd subterfuge it was, having been intentionally paralleled by several of the greatest generals of the world: "And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness." The inhabitants of Ai rushed forth to pursue, but an ambush provided for the emergency arose and entered the forsaken city.

For a while after departing from Bethel the route was toilsome, but like most regions in Palestine, amazing desolation leads by constant surprises to equally astonishing fertility. Where there is no irrigation the sun's fierce heat makes the land but a heap of ashes; but the same sun, with water to cool its parching rays, reproduces the Garden of Eden in every valley and on every hill, where even a thin covering of soil affords a place for the seed of the sower or the germs of life carried by birds and winds. A land of vineyards and orchards was before us, illustrating the blessings pronounced upon Joseph: "The precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills, and for the precious things of the earth and fullness thereof."

A man, dressed in a somewhat distinguished manner, and mounted upon a horse finer than any we had seen in Syria, riding rapidly across the plains and over the hills, turning aside to speak to everyone, attracted my attention. I said to Selim: "What is that man doing? Is he a superintendent of the district, a courier delivering messages, or an officer upon a search?" "I will find out for you," said Selim, and engaged him in conversation. It was a reminder in that far-off land of what for two centuries took place every day in every year in the United States. This man was an owner of slaves, and a valuable black woman, whom he had purchased from the Soudan, had run away. She had been gone half a day, and he was riding to and fro offering every man five pounds of English money as a reward if he should bring her back.

Ruins, of whose origin no satisfactory account can be given, were passed from time to time, but nothing to dispute the supremacy of the natural scenery. The walls of an old castle and a Byzantine church stimulated imagination. Olive plantations were numerous, and are always pleasing. The young trees are beautiful; the old, suggestive of hoary antiquity, are considered types of venerable age. Old men sitting under olive trees seemed to unite two forms of nature and gave life to scores of scriptural symbols.

We descended into a beautiful glen, known as the "Robbers' Glen," and proceeded to the "Robbers' Spring." The water is sweet, pure, and cool, the scenery exquisite, but the place has had a bad reputation for hundreds of years, and has not at all improved. Without a large force it would be dangerous to encamp there. A magnificent caravan of more than sixty camels was resting at the spring.

Four or five were riding camels, as different in shape and action from ordinary baggage camels as the finest saddle horses are from the slow-moving truck horses. Like all their race they indulged in growling, but some had a benignant look, and one displayed considerable affection for his rider, who used a code of signals understood by himself and the camel.

At six o'clock we encamped on a threshing floor near the village of Sinjil, and had the first real test of camping accommodations. The tents were set up with rapidity, our own fulfilling all the conditions promised, and a dinner was served in a style to gratify appetites sharpened by nearly ten hours' riding. But the heavens were ominous, and the wind made the cordage creak and snap like the rigging of a ship in a storm. Selim acknowledged that the prospect was not encouraging.

At 8:30 we went to bed, taking the precaution to spread our rubber blankets and waterproofs within reach. At half past ten it began to rain, and the night was one of horror. An old camper-out in the wilds of Maine, the Adirondacks, the Rocky Mountains, and the Sierra Nevada, I never experienced such a night. The amount of rain that fell, its violence, and the tempestuous manner in which it beat upon and into the tent, defy description. During the few moments that we lost consciousness, dreams of shipwreck, fire, earthquake, and volcanic eruptions terrified the mind. Selim and the muleteers were engaged in fastening down the tents the greater part of the night. Mud was six inches deep upon the hillside and plain. In the tent of the muleteers, a sticky mixture of water and clay was so thick that it would have been impossible for one wearing English shoes to take a second step without unshoeing himself. It was the longest night ever experienced by me on land, and I caution travelers through Palestine, in early March, to go prepared for such an experience.

CHAPTER LII.

From Shiloh to Gerizim.

A Day in a Mohammedan Village—Children and Dogs—A Mohammedan Cemetery—Shiloh—Bible Events Connected with the Place—Jacob's Well—Discovery Made by Bishop Barclay—Climbing the "Mount of Blessing"—Formation of the Summit—Ruins Found There.

WHEN daylight came we found everything so wet that it was out of the question to dry the bedding, curtains, and tents, so as to make it safe to camp out the next night, and it was decided to spend that day in Sinjil, there being prospect of "drying" weather. Selim went to the village, and arranged with a Mohammedan to surrender to us his best house, which contained only one room. The building was of stone, plastered, and had a chimney and fireplace. Our beds were brought in and plans made to spend the day. This Mohammedan had several wives and a corresponding number of children; also several dogs; and the day, which would otherwise have been lost, gave us a rare opportunity of studying Mohammedan life. The houses are crowded together, as in Egypt and other Mohammedan countries. If a man is able, he has half a dozen houses, in one of which cooking is done. In sleeping, they crowd together more like beasts than human beings. Each little hut has its dog, which, though obedient to the owner and the members of his family, will fight furiously with other dogs, and keep a jealous eye upon strangers. It was some time before we dared venture more than a few feet from the house, on account of dogs perched upon the tops of smaller buildings, who threatened to descend upon us, after the manner of panthers.

The children were handsome and bright, and stared with large, round eyes, as if we had been animals from a tempest-shattered menagerie. We agreed to give them no money until going away, lest the entire village should besiege us. This resolution was adhered to for a few hours, but in an evil

moment we yielded, and from that time until our departure, except during the hours of sleep, they rivaled the beggars of Egypt. We expected extortionate charges in addition to what was paid by the dragoman as a part of his responsibility, but had no particular cause to complain.

Several occurrences during that day and night illustrated human nature, and I am sure that, if the doctor and I could have spoken Arabic, we would have found as many opportunities for pleasant and instructive conversation as if overtaken by such a storm in England, Germany, or any of the rural districts of the United States. Half a dozen short excursions gave us a good view of the village.

Our start the next morning was by no means so jubilant a proceeding as that of two days before. The horses and mules drooped, all the men had colds, and Selim, having had but little sleep either night, had to summon philosophy to his aid. The tents were not yet dry, everything smelled musty, but the air was keen and stimulating.

Passing by the Mohammedan cemetery we heard loud lamentations. Beyond the wall we saw a company of twelve or fifteen women wailing about the grave of one who had been buried ten days. Each successive day, for a certain period of time, those women assemble and mourn. There was little music, but all seemed solemn and did not cast a glance toward the passers. The sound was a monotone, with gusts of emphasis on certain words, and peculiar pauses, some rhythmical, others arbitrary. As they sang they gently swayed forward and backward.

The village of Seilun is upon the ground of the Shiloh of the Bible. There is little doubt of the authenticity of this site, though, from the time of St. Jerome to 1838, it was lost. It is described so perfectly in the Bible, that none can question it. A mass of stones, fragments of columns, and literally a heap of ruins, with a solitary tree hanging over the broken wall, it presents a sad contrast to its former glory. Here Joshua and the leaders assembled to divide the land among the tribes, and here the first tabernacle was erected. It was at this place that Eli dwelt. There Hannah visited her son Samuel, taking his little coat every year. Here dwelt the ark of the Lord, and

thence it was stolen by the Philistines. There Ahijah the prophet lived, and it was to that sacred place that the wife of Jeroboam went to learn the doom of her husband.

Ascending to the summit of a barren mountain we descended into another valley, and then rose to a desolate plateau, from which we saw the vast plain of Makhnaa and, beyond and around it, the mountains of Samaria. On our left was Gerizim, with Ebal opposite to it, and in the distant north snow-clad Hermon reared its massive head. A few miles from this point we came to Jacob's Well, upon which all traditions, whether of Jews, Samaritans, Mohammedans, or Christians, agree. Stanley says that this is the undisputed site of the well, with every claim to be considered the original well in which Jacob, according to the customs of Abraham and Isaac, marked his first possession by digging a "well to give drink thereof to himself, his children, and his cattle." It is at present a great cistern, a shaft cut through the rock, about three yards wide, and twenty-four yards deep. From the amount of rubbish which has fallen down it, it is believed to have been originally two or three times as deep as it is now. Once there was a church over it; this has fallen into decay, and many of the stones composing it have tumbled into the well.

Bishop Barclay, in 1881, made an interesting discovery—that of the circular mouth of this well, then blocked by a mass of stone. Securing the aid of men, the bishop and his wife managed to clear it, and the ledge was uncovered on which doubtless the Saviour rested. The grooves were found in the stone, caused by the ropes with which the waterpots were drawn up. Between 1866 and 1881, the bottom of the well had risen eight feet, on account of the débris therein accumulated. He who will turn to the fourth chapter of John, will find in a few master touches, bearing equally the impress of truth, simplicity, and genius, a perfect picture of the country as it now is, and of the well.

Abraham had built his first altar at this spot. Jacob died, but, with an undying love, bequeathed it to his favorite son, Joseph, saying: "I took it out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow." When Joseph was dying he gave commandment concerning his bones, that they were to

be brought and buried there. They showed us the tomb of Joseph near the well, but it is obviously a comparatively modern structure. Yet near this spot Joseph was buried, and in his early youth he wandered around this field, looking for his brethren.

The woman of Samaria said to Jesus: "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain" (Gerizim). We passed from the well, through a beautifully cultivated valley, in which were fine olive groves. Mount Gerizim was now upon our left, and Ebal on the right. After riding up the steep path, so far as was convenient, we dismounted and climbed to the summit of the "Mount of Blessing." A beautiful spring gushes out about a sixth of the way from the valley to the top. The water was cold and clear, but sparkling, as though artificially charged. Halfway up is a plain, and just above is a spot, where, for indefinite ages, the Samaritans have pitched their tents at the Feast of the Passover. Gerizim is a true mountain, lacking but a hundred and forty-five feet of being three thousand feet above the sea level. It is a huge mass of limestone of the tertiary formation.

No traveler should be deterred from making the ascent. The summit is a broad table-land, affording the finest opportunities for comprehending the landscape—the blue line of the Mediterranean, the whole route over which we had traveled, the plain of Makhnaa, and the mountains of Gilead. Dean Stanley believed that this was the scene of Abraham's encounter with Melchizedek and the sacrifice of Isaac. He regards the smooth sheet of rock on the top, with the cave beside it, as the most authentic remnant of primitive worship now existing in Palestine. It was the sacred place of Shechem.

Jotham delivered his satirical parable from the top of the mount; and at the base of the mountain, and in the valley below, may be seen specimens of the trees which Jotham uses: "The olive tree," "the fig tree," "the vine," "the bramble."

Apart from its natural scenery, the summit of Gerizim is a surprise to the traveler, in the extent and number of the ruins existing there. The mountain does not culminate in a cone or sharp point, but in a flat surface, at one end of which are the ruins of an immense castle, square, and flanked with

towers. It is supposed to belong to the time of Justinian, but some maintain that the walls, nearly ten feet thick, are of later date. A large reservoir is to the north of the castle, and on the east side are several chambers; one has a Greek cross over the door. The old church was built in the time of Justinian, more than thirteen hundred years ago. There were chapels, and the building was octagonal. Long pavements extend from north to south, and the very stones of the altar erected by Joshua are pointed out.

I should have been glad to ascend Ebal, the "Mount of Cursing." Three hours would have been sufficient, but, having lost a day, we were content to view it from Gerizim. Over this valley, and on the hillsides, the whole host of Israel was gathered. The Levites stood on Gerizim to pronounce blessing upon the obedient, and from Ebal denounced curses upon the rebellious. Joshua (viii) tells when and how it was done, and Deut. xi-xiv gives the order by Moses for the ceremony. We tested the echoes from the slope of Gerizim, and brought back sounds that appeared to come from Ebal. Various travelers have stationed friends on both mountains, they themselves standing in the center of the plain, and have declared that they could hear distinctly what both said.

We lunched by the wayside, that day, not far from the spot where Jesus, being wearied, rested upon Jacob's Well, and had meat to eat that his disciples "knew not of."